

From: "!SurreyPCC (Surrey)" <SurreyPCC@surrey.police.uk>

Subject: Surrey Police Response to Retail Crime re. Draft minutes from meeting with PCC / CC / Borough Commander.

Date: 18 December 2023 at 11:44:30 GMT

Dear Sophie,

Thanks again for the extremely useful meeting with local retailers in Oxted that I attended last month.

I wanted to ensure that you were provided with details on how Surrey Police propose to tackle retail crime including how incidents will be graded and the type of police response to expect. To that aim, please see the below from T/ACC Clive Davies (in blue) who is leading on the subject.

A national retail crime action plan has been set out, led by C/Supt Goss, from North Wales Police, and is being embedded into our response to retail theft, to ensure a consistent response and provide reassurance to the industry. Within the action plan is guidance on police attendance at the scene, and it will be prioritised in the following circumstances:

1) Where violence has been used.

2) Where an offender has been detained (for example, by store security) police will attend the scene with urgency and repeat / prolific or juvenile offenders will be treated with elevated priority. All police attendance will be subject to a THRIVE risk assessment (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, Engagement)

3) Where evidence needs to be promptly secured which can only be done in person by police personnel e.g., securing forensic evidence.

Surrey Police has a gradings policy where we aim to respond to an emergency call within 15 minutes.

Another part of the action plan is in relation to following reasonable lines of enquiry, whether officers attend at the scene or initiate a subsequent investigation, including obtaining CCTV, checking images against the Police National Database and securing witness evidence. Following a closer review of CCTV requests to retailers it is clear that uploading CCTV directly to NICE is not straightforward for some retailers, therefore Safer Neighbourhood Teams are following up, where needed, to ensure CCTV is obtained. Some of these issues include internal company policies requiring management, or a 'central office', to upload the footage, CCTV computers that aren't connected to the internet, and concerns about GDPR compliance. These are being collated and will be raised nationally as they often relate to large retailers.

Following reasonable lines of enquiry and increasing our charge rate, has been the direction from CC De Meyer for sometime, and this, and the specific focus on improving our response to retail theft, is showing positive progress in the weeks ending 22nd and 29th November, with both reporting charge/summons rates for shoplifting above the 20% target (28.9% and 24.7% respectively).

Taking a problem solving approach to repeat offenders and locations, using ancillary orders, and developing intelligence around organised crime groups also forms part of the plan.

In addition to the above a force wide day of action to target repeat offenders and deal with outstanding offences took place on the 12th December across Surrey. Operational activities included:

- 1. Mobilising 109 colleagues across multiple departments, specifically for the prevention and deterrence of shoplifting*
- 2. Visiting the most prominent shoplifting nominals for each borough and making sure all the correct referrals are in place to support them staying out of criminality*

3. *Visiting the top 10 shoplifting hotspots across the county, speaking to shop owners and workers about their concerns and providing crime prevention and specialist security advice*
4. *Increased uniformed patrols in hotspots*
5. *Increased plain clothes presence in hotspots to gather intelligence and deal with any crimes in action*
6. *The review of all new and recent shoplifting investigations with the emphasis on identifying any links between incidents*
7. *Focusing our intelligence activity on prolific offenders and emerging trends*

This day resulted in 20 arrests, 8 charges for 23 different offences, 135 engagement visits to commercial premises and 12 prevention visits to known nominals.

I hope that this will reassure you that the force are taking the matter seriously but please contact my office at any time should you require any further assistance.

Best wishes

Lisa Townsend

Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

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