



AS – Central South

## BRIEFING NOTE

COVID19 – 7 – 24/03/2020

Dear all,

I am sure that you saw the Prime Minister's speech last night about COVID-19 and you will no doubt have many questions about what this means for policing in London.

I hope to provide you with some clarity on this now.

### **Policing**

This is a very serious time for the country and for our city. We all have a key role to play in encouraging our communities and businesses to adhere to the new measures. At this difficult time, our relationships with our communities matter more than ever. As we do every day, we, alongside you, will be treating the people of London with respect, kindness and courtesy.

We fully anticipate the public and businesses in London will want to adhere to the new restrictions to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. In helping people to understand and comply with this new guidance, we will of course not be expecting officers to stop everyone in the street. We do not at this stage have additional powers to enforce these new measures, but these will follow. We will be applying our common sense and experience, taking a sensible and graduated approach to the situation. For example, if people are on their own or in a household group there will be no need to speak to them. If however officers see a group of more than two people who do not appear to be a household, they will speak to them and talk to them about the new guidance. They may then need to ask them to go their separate ways and play their part in protecting the NHS and saving lives. If a business is open which should not be then we will remind them of the need to follow government advice.

Met officers are all used to navigating challenging situations that require good judgement and in many ways this is no different. Whilst the circumstances we are dealing with are unprecedented and fast moving, alongside you we will be working to keep people safe and encourage everyone to play their part in this significant national response to reduce the impact of COVID-19.

## **Business Crime**

The Met Police Business Crime Hub (BCH) works to improve partnership and communication with the business community to reduce the impact of crime.

Now that all 'non-essential' business have closed, or are in the process of closing, our BCH have shared the attached advice to help support businesses.

Patrolling officers will be keeping an eye on properties as part of their daily duties.

## **Rumours of threats against NHS Staff**

There continue to be rumours of NHS workers being victims of robbery at hospitals.

Our medical and health colleagues are working tirelessly to protect the public from COVID-19, and the police are continuing to support and assist them during this time.

I would like to reiterate that we have no knowledge of such crimes taking place at this time and I ask that if you do hear of rumours or speculation please let me or a member of my team know and we will be able to provide some clarity.

## **Religious funerals**

Government ministers have assured Jewish and Muslim communities that their religious burial rights will be respected during the coronavirus outbreak, after concerns were raised over forced cremations.

We are working with our Independent Advisory Groups (IAG's) to support these communities.

## **Thank you to our educational colleagues**

Whilst most business have closed, our colleagues in the education system and schools remain at work looking after the children of 'Key Workers' – which includes police officers and staff.

I would like to personally thank the Teachers and Teaching Assistants on our BCU who are continuing to work under these circumstances and are allowing frontline police, police staff and other emergency workers to do their bit to keep the public safe.

We thank you for your continued support and wish you well. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions.

Kind regards

BCU Commander

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colin Wingrove". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned centrally below the "Regards," text.

**Colin Wingrove**  
**Chief Superintendent**  
**BCU Commander – Central South**