

AS – Central South

BRIEFING NOTE

COVID19 – 9 – 26/03/2020

Dear all,

I am pleased to say that we have seen a great deal of compliance by the public and business with regard to the new Government restrictions put in place to control the spread of Coronavirus.

On the occasions where current restrictions are not being followed there has been some good engagement by officers to resolve the situation. Our role is to continue to be as visible as possible, and engage with our communities to help them understand the restrictions and adhere to them.

We are expecting the government to confirm shortly what the specific policing enforcement powers will be for those rare occasions where the below approach does not work and individuals continue to flout the restrictions. Current legislation remains valid where we are dealing with criminality or antisocial behaviour.

Policing

Our policing approach to the restrictions remains that we are highly visible – this will act as a deterrent to anyone thinking of not complying and will serve to reassure others.

Our officers will continue to proactively engage with people and businesses, applying common sense and using their experience. If people are on their own or obviously in a household group, there is no need to speak to them. If they see a group of more than two people who do not appear to be from the same household – they will talk to them about the new guidance and ask them to go their separate ways.

If a business is open which should not be, we will remind them of the government advice. Local authorities are visiting businesses to advise them too.

Commercial premises advice

Earlier in the week, we circulated some advice for those who may be concerned about theft or robbery from their commercial properties.

Today we are circulating some further advice.

Whilst we are maintaining a visible policing presence across the capital in order to deter criminals, we also need the help of business owners to support us. Please take a couple of

minutes to read the attachment in order to best understand how businesses can protect their properties.

You are welcome to share this attachment with your partners and contacts.

Rumours of NHS staff being targeted

There continue to be rumours circulating on social media that NHS staff are being targeted for their passes. Numerous checks have been made throughout the organisation and we have been unable to find any evidence that NHS workers - or police officers for that matter - are being deliberately targeted for their staff passes, for their hand gel or targeted for any other reason.

If you hear this rumour please help us dispel it and reassure health workers and NHS staff in our communities.

Safeguarding

Whilst most children are out of school now for the foreseeable future, our safeguarding officers continue to work to protect those who may be most vulnerable. This includes remaining in contact with relevant families and also considering what the new needs of families may be during these weeks.

One of the areas where more support may be needed is on-line safety. We are aware that children may have more access to digital devices than normal and they may want to go out and play with their friends, or if this is not possible look for other ways of interacting.

Please help us and our local authority partners in supporting others on these issues. In particular, we, and partners, are working to share relevant information with parents through, for example, social media. The information reminds parents of the risks that may present themselves on-line and the steps they can take to monitor the online use of their children.

Advice about staying safe online is available here: <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud/online-fraud/cyber-crime-fraud/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>

Thank you for your continued support

Finally, it has been uplifting to see the kind acts and thanks we continue to get from the public and our partners. For example, TfL has offered free Santander bikes to officers and staff to help them get to and from work and a number of local councils are allowing Met employees to use their car parks as well.

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

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin Wingrove". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and a long, sweeping underline.

Colin Wingrove
Chief Superintendent
BCU Commander – Central South