



Our ref: ACPO/CC/37131

Date: 01st April 2020

Sent by email to:

All Parish & Town Councils in Cheshire

Dear Colleagues,

We wanted to write to you in order to provide an overview of the role, played by policing in Cheshire, in dealing with the ongoing national emergency concerning the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our policing style is defined by our Neighbourhood Policing model, where police officers with PCSO's and partners work to protect and reassure our communities. The model has served us well and enabled critical relationships to be developed with partners and the public, which have never been as important as they are at the moment.

We have well developed plans to ensure that operational resilience is maintained in the face of increased demand or reduced levels of resourcing. If it is necessary to do so, the Chief Constable will divert police officers and staff from 'non-essential' roles to support front line operational duties, in order to ensure that we work together to 'Keep Cheshire Safe'.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 were introduced on 26th March 2020, and provide powers to *a relevant person* to:

- Require the closure of premises and businesses
- Restrict movements and gatherings.

Whilst the legislation is complex and comprehensive, we would like to emphasise that the approach, adopted by Cheshire Constabulary, will be to:

- Support Local Authority Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers who will lead on the enforcement and closure of business premises and issue of prohibition notices, if necessary.
- Engage, explain and encourage people to comply with the government request. However, if it is necessary, proportionate and appropriate to do so, enforcement action will be taken.

A guidance document has been produced by the College of Policing, and will be made available to our staff, which explains the legislation.

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The vast majority of the public in Cheshire have been supportive and fully complied with the legislation. However, there have been a small number of cases when members of the public have refused. There have also been incidents where individuals have deliberately coughed in the faces of police officers, claiming to be infected with Coronavirus. This is clearly unacceptable and in such cases the Constabulary has, and will continue to, take enforcement action against those individuals involved.

We would also like to provide an assurance that members of our communities, will continue to be supported by vital services commissioned by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The OPCC has been working with key services such as victim support service Cheshire CARES, the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC), restorative justice provider Remedi and under-18s victims' service Got Your Back to ensure the continuity of services supporting individuals whilst face to face contact isn't possible.

We will ensure that our police officers and staff are as visible as possible, providing confidence and support to our communities. A visible presence will be provided in all our communities but, specifically supermarkets and shops that are permitted to remain open. Our officers will also provide attention to premises that remain closed, whilst complying with legislative requirements.

Whilst the immediate future is likely to present significant challenges, we would like to assure you that each and every member of Cheshire Constabulary and the OPCC, will work with partners to protect and reassure our communities. We have no doubt that we can count on your continued help and support but, if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us on the number shown below.

Yours faithfully

Darren Martland
Chief Constable

David Keane
Police and Crime Commissioner