

DATE: November 2020

Hello! And welcome to Issue 7. There may be a 'Lockdown' but it is business as usual for the BCU

Harlow Business Crime Reduction Partnership

Several successful meetings have been held between the Business Crime Unit, Harlow Council and the Harlow Community Policing Team to discuss ways a new business crime reduction partnership can be set up and implemented within the town centre, who should play which part and as importantly look at the failings of previous schemes.

The elements under discussion at this time are an online secure members information sharing system that all members will have access to and it will allow them to submit information in the interests of the scheme. It will allow us to submit police briefings and make the community aware of local issues. The scheme might also include a modernised radio system that will allow members to support each other by broadcasting information of incidents or interest as it happens. We are also looking at a bi-monthly meeting of business leaders to discuss issues and form an advisory group.

We want to see local businesses have their say about how they would like a supportive partnership to work. Obviously the latest COVID restrictions see non-essential retailers close and then hopefully on re-opening around 2nd December 2020 their priority will be the Christmas shopping period, so we have arranged a virtual meeting for businesses in Harlow to attend at 10:00 hours on Tuesday 12th January 2021. If you would like to be present to hear of the new plans and ask any questions, please email business.crime.unit@essex.police.uk

'Closed for Crime'

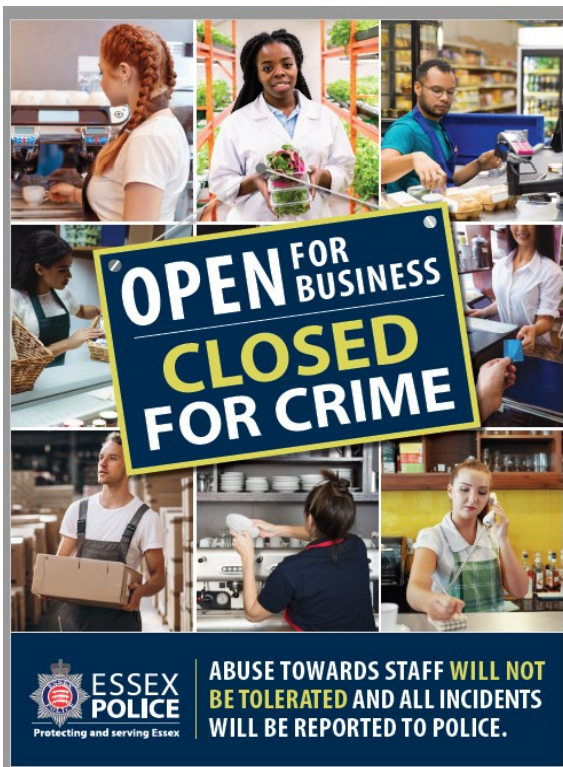
Although most retailers and public facing businesses are closed due to current COVID-19 health regulations, it doesn't stop the Business Crime Unit planning work for their return to opening in the next few weeks.

Amazingly, during the pandemic we have seen incidents of abuse, violence and public order towards retail staff. There have been incidents of assault, abusive language and even spitting at others.

We believe that everybody should have the right to feel safe in their working environment and want to assure the public that incidents of abuse towards staff will be taken extremely seriously. We are currently planning a 'Closed for Crime' campaign which will focus on addressing awareness and prevention of such incidents. We will be contacting as many businesses as physically possible and reaching out through our contacts and social media to ask if they would like to be involved and display the campaign poster.

We understand that businesses may not be in a position to receive the campaign at this time, but if you would like to be involved, please contact us at business.crime.unit@essex.police.uk

We will bring you updates as the campaign is launched.



COVID-19 News:

Police were called to a gym in Harlow after reports from the public that it remained open despite the latest government COVID-19 regulations calling for them to close for health and safety reasons. The current regulations state that gyms should be closed due to the exercising environment possibly transmitting the virus.

Unfortunately, on arrival officers were not able to engage with the owner or members present therefore we were left with no choice but to consider enforcement. The owner refused to give details to officers so a penalty could be issued and therefore they were arrested and appeared before a court.

Although we sympathise with business owners, the police do not write the laws and have a duty of care for others above all else.

We understand that these are unprecedented times and we will always adopt the '4Es' approach to all situations of suspected non-compliance;

Engage: Officers speak to people and try to establish their awareness and understanding of the situation. They may ask people about their circumstances if they are out in public. Officers give people the opportunity to express their views. They listen and take people's responses into account.

Explain: We will try to educate people about any personal risks they are taking, they will explain the social distancing regulations and highlight the responsibilities we all share. Officers treat people with dignity and respect. They highlight their trustworthy motives by explaining wider social factors, such as the risks to public health and the NHS by not sticking to social distancing

Encourage: We may need to guide individuals, suggesting they return home. Officers can encourage people to act reasonably, emphasising that staying alert and safe (social distancing) saves lives. They demonstrate consistency in their approach and are willing to explain why they are requesting a certain course of action

Enforce: Officers may remove a person, using reasonable force only if it is a necessary and proportionate. They may also fine individuals or businesses for breach of the Regulations

Enforcing COVID-19 regulations is not something officers enjoy doing, but the public expect us to uphold the law and to keep them safe.



Sgt Terry Jacobs

Terry has had a career on frontline local policing teams and in his most recent role managed service recovery and complaints



PC Alex Plakhtienko

Alex has extensive partnership experience working in Community Policing Teams within South Essex



PC Michael Lee

Michael has worked within partnership policing for several years and leads the force CSAS training accreditation.



PSE Katie Roberts

Katie is an experienced analyst and joins the Business Crime Unit from her previous role in force performance analysis

If we can offer any advice or support, please contact us at

business.crime.unit@essex.police.uk

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