

Committee(s): Police Authority Board	Dated: 7 February 2024
Subject: National Business Crime Portfolio- Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1- People are safe and feel safe
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Commissioner of Police Pol 13-24	For Discussion
Report author: Supt Patrick Holdaway, National Business Crime Portfolio	

Summary

The City of London Police (CoLP) has held the responsibility for the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Business Crime Portfolio since January 2020. Assistant Commissioner Paul Betts is the NPCC lead, and the National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) falls under his portfolio.

In September 2023, C/Supt. Alex Goss from North Wales Police was appointed as the NPCC lead for retail crime to recognise the particular challenges that sector faces; the NBCC will support C/Supt. Goss with the portfolio.

The National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) represents UK policing when engaging with business. Its primary purpose is:

1. Partnership – Improve partnership with business and Police nationally
2. Intelligence – Improve business crime intelligence and information exchange
3. Prevention – Assist business to protect themselves from crime

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update of the work of the NBCC since its last update in October 2023.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Police (CoLP) has held the responsibility for the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Business Crime Portfolio since January 2020. Under the portfolio, the National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) was launched in October 2017. The National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) represents UK policing when engaging with business
2. The NBCC update was last provided to Members at the October 2023 Police Authority Board.

Current Position

3. In November, the Retail Crime Action Plan (RCAP) was published by the NPCC¹. The NBCC played a major role in its development and continues to support the NPCC lead, C/Supt Alex Goss, with the embedding and monitoring of the plan across forces. This work will include providing data to present to the policing minister at the National Retail Crime Steering Group on the 1st February 2024.
4. One area that has created a lot of interest is police attendance at incidents of shop theft involving violence and incidents where the store has detained a shoplifter. A recent audit of shop theft in CoLP showed that police attendance to these incidents is 100%.
5. A key element of the RCAP is that police follow all reasonable lines of enquiry, often this involves the retailer being able to share CCTV electronically with police so as to progress with the investigation. For some retailers this is a challenge as they have not invested in the right technology. The NBCC are chairing a series of national meetings with the police and retailers so as to identify any barriers and share best practice.
6. The National Week of Action to support businesses, known as the Safer Business Action Week, took place on the week of the 9th October 2023. Updates from forces showed that over 300 arrests took place as part of the week with thousands of officers engaged across forces to support businesses. The Safer Business Action Week is now a permanent feature in the NPCC calendar with plans already being drafted for October 2024.
7. Conscious of the appetite to support businesses the NBCC are now leading on a Safer Business Action Month in March 24. Chief Constables were written to in December with a request that all forces conduct at least one Safer Business Action Day during the month of March 2024. At the time of writing 40 police forces have committed to supporting the initiative with the objective to get all forces taking part.

¹ [Retail Crime Action Plan - October 2023.pdf \(nbcc.police.uk\)](#)

8. Several forces have already conducted Safer Business Action Days as part of their week of action and they have proven to be an effective and popular activity to engage with retailers to tackle offenders, protect businesses and increase business confidence in policing. The Safer Business Action Day concept is also recognised as best practice by the College of Policing and is included in their Practice Bank.
9. By spreading the activity over a month it allows police forces, retailers and private security companies to plan their resources so as to support the initiative over various locations. The timing of the activity also supports the run up the PCC elections in May, therefore creating additional interest and opportunities for engagement.
10. In the last paper mention was made of Operation Portum, the NBCC's safe spaces scheme aimed at the retail sector. Interest continues to grow, and the scheme now includes just short of 11,000 retail locations with another national retailer shortly to join. As well as retail, focus is now on hotels and restaurants as well as security companies who provide security services in public areas.

Conclusion

11. The NBCC continues to demonstrate its importance in supporting the response to Business Crime nationally in what is an area of increasing threat. The City of London Police as national portfolio lead is key to promoting this asset to stakeholders in the City of London.

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