

Committee(s): Police Authority Board	Dated: October 2024
Subject: Commissioner's Update-	Public
Which outcomes in the <i>City Corporation's Corporate Plan</i> 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 49-22	For Information
Report author: Peter O'Doherty, T/Commissioner	

Summary

The *public* updates for Operations and Security and Economic and Cyber Crime are attached.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Police Authority Board – Commissioner’s Update –

Operations and Security

Prolific Phone snatcher sentenced to 20 months imprisonment

With theft being such a prevalent offence in the City, tackling phone theft has remained a priority for the City of London Police. We have recently seen excellent teamwork, which resulted in the arrest and conviction of a prolific phone snatcher who attempted to evade officers on an E-Bike. The Force Control Room utilised the City’s CCTV network to locate and direct trained pursuit and containment officers, who successfully apprehended the offender resulting in the recovery of 24 mobile stolen mobile phones. The suspect was found guilty for 10 counts of theft, dangerous driving and driving with no insurance for which he received a 4 month driving ban and 20 months imprisonment for the theft offences.

Theft convictions

Another successful recent operation included a diligent and victim focused investigation into an organised crime network who were attaching devices on ATM machines to steal from unexpected users. The Criminal Investigation Department identified the suspects and quickly apprehended them ensuring the safety of those in the City. Their arrest led to the recovery of large quantities of cash and equipment to carry out their criminality. The City of London Police are committed to cracking down on organised crime groups, focussing on pursuing and disrupting their network, and holding them accountable for their actions.

Violence against Woman and Girls (VAWG)

In line with the current Policing Plan, a principle priority remains to be apprehending offenders who pose a risk of violence against women and girls in the City. Through taking a victim focussed approach to minimise the risk of harm to vulnerable and repeat victims, our officers work closely with partner agencies to ensure that victims receive continuous support via personalised safeguarding plans. A recent investigation led to the Support Group locating and arresting a prolific sex offender who was linked to several sexual offences within the past three months. Having interviewed the offender, the Public Protection Unit completed a full case file which was submitted to the Crown Prosecution System (CPS), who authorised 4 charges for sexual assault. The offender remains in custody pending trial, while a vulnerable victim is supported by specialist officers.

Targeted Intercept and Tactical ANPR Unit (TITAN) Launch

To enhance the City’s ongoing commitment to protecting the public from organised crime, the new Targeted Intercept and Tactical ANPR (TITAN) Unit was launched on 5th August 2024. This unit provides a dedicated resource to tackle serious and organised crime activity in the City, providing investigative resources and resilience to prevent and detect crime. Since its launch, the team have achieved significant success in keeping the public safe, including 12 arrests, 11 vehicle seizures, the recovery of weapons, and the seizure of Class A drugs and quantities of cash.

Zombie Knife surrender

Reducing knife crime both nationally and locally in the City is a priority. Following recent changes to the Criminal Justice Act 1988, ‘zombie-style’ knives and machetes will be added to the list of prohibited offensive weapons. The amendment will make it an offence to possess, manufacture, import, sell or supply of these items. The Home Office is appealing for anyone who owns these weapons to surrender them to police. To protect residents and visitors to the city, the City of London Police is actively promoting the scheme to encourage members of the public to surrender zombie-style knives and machetes to Bishopsgate Police Station’s front office.

Cycle Team

The Cycle Team continues to uphold safety for road users in the City. This has included holding several road safety show events for the public. One priority area has been the prevention and proactive work around the issue of offenders using cycles to commit phone thefts. With the increase of illegally adapted E-Bikes on the street, the team have focussed on the seizure of illegal E-Bikes/scooters. Op Lewis is the operation run by the cycle team to reduce anti-social behaviour in the City which has brought great success including: 16 arrests, 13 stop searches, 205 traffic offence reports, 116 fixed penalty notices, 2 drug warnings, 34 intelligence reports, 74 cycles security marked, 50 response calls answered, 87 hours patrolling key TFL red routes and the seizure of 38 E-bikes/scooters.

Strategic Leadership and Engagement

On 1st September 2024, AC Nik Adams provided a keynote speech at the 41st Cambridge International Symposium on Economic Crime held at Cambridge University. The event which ran over the week was attended by senior leaders of law enforcement, education & industry. Guests from around the world listened to lectures and joined in discussion around economic crime, asset recovery and counter corruption.

Operational activity highlights

A person who submitted a series of fake home insurance claims has been jailed for 20 months. The individual made a total of 15 fake claims utilising fictitious identities and received accumulative payments of £11,750 from the insurers. Working with the insurance industry, the City of London Police’s Insurance Fraud Department was able to gather significant amount of evidence which resulted in an early guilty plea.

A father and son have been jailed for a total of five years after stealing £136,000 in an elaborate scheme of purchasing reconditioned steam irons and returning them with forged receipts to a well known retailer. The offending dated back to 2021. Both pled guilty to conspiracy to commit fraud and money laundering and were sentenced to three years and two years, respectively, at Norwich Crown Court on 13 August 2024.

A veterinary nurse has been sentenced, after they made over £13,000 worth of fraudulent insurance claims for their pets using the systems at their workplace. The member of staff had insurance for her cats and dogs and using her insider knowledge of processes submitted false claims for non-existent treatment. The veterinary nurse entered an early guilty plea and was sentenced to 8 months imprisonment suspended for 12 months.

In 2021, the Police Intellectual Property Crime Unit (PIPCU) executed warrants at addresses in relation to a counterfeit watch investigation. During the raids, the Police seized 2,361 counterfeit watches. There was no evidence to indicate the individual interviewed by Police knew the watches were counterfeit despite a thorough investigation. The individual further insisted they were genuine and refused to disclaim them. Utilising a power under the Trade Marks Act, PIPCU pursued a forfeiture application against the individual for the watches which was contested. The court ruled the watches to be counterfeit and ordered the forfeiture, additionally the individual was instructed to pay City of London Police’s legal fees amounting to £10,090.

National Support & Co-ordination

The City of London Police’s economic crime teams had been trialling auto redaction software to assist with disclosure. During the course of an investigation a significant amount of material needs redacting when sending it to the Crown Prosecution Service to comply with GDPR. The pilot ran between 1st July – 19th August, in which 118 hours of officers time was saved. This software has now been rollout to the rest of the force to assist with investigations.

Media

On the 26th August Action Fraud launched the Student Safety Campaign. This has been deliberately timed to coincide with the start of the university term. Students are often targeted by organised crime groups when they start university. The Action Fraud campaign list the top five threats to University Students (Investment Fraud, Job Application Fraud, Rental Fraud, Online Shopping Scams & Ticket Fraud). The campaign provides practical advice on how to stay safe and what to do if they are a victim.

Peter O’Doherty
T/Commissioner
City of London Police