

Licensing Committee - 9th October 2007

8. Operation Relentless

Executive Portfolio Holder: Ric Pallister, Housing, Environmental Health & Inclusion
Head of Service: Laurence Willis, Head of Service Environmental Health and Community Protection
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Purpose of the Report

To update members on Operation Relentless.

Recommendation

That Members note the report

Background

Operation Relentless is an on-going police led operation, with the Council being a partner. The remit of the operation is to carry out investigations into matters which affect the night-time economy. Matters of direct interest to the licensing service include under-age sales of alcohol and ensuring that the drivers and proprietors of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles adhere to their conditions of use and local bye-laws. It was launched in June 2005 to target criminals and turn the 'spotlight of fear' on those who commit crime.

The main aims of the operation are to ensure that more criminals are caught, to reduce crime and the fear of crime and to deter potential criminals, thereby helping to prevent drink-related violence and anti-social behaviour.

On the evening of 24 August 2007, police officers and partners across the Avon and Somerset Area, including Licensing, Trading Standards, and the Fire Service took part in a dedicated day of action, targeting those who were deliberately evading the criminal justice system. More than 300 arrests were made and the campaign attracted widespread media coverage.

Report Detail

In the South Somerset area, it was decided that one team of licensing officers would cover the Yeovil Area and the other team would cover Crewkerne and Chard. Each team consisted of two licensing officers, two police officers/police community support officers, an officer from Trading Standards and a Fire Service officer.

Both teams commenced the evening at 18:30 with an all partner briefing at either Yeovil or Crewkerne Police Station. Afterwards they visited licensed premises and conducted a number of hackney carriage/private hire checks.

In the Yeovil area, one hackney carriage vehicle was taken off the road as it proved to be un-roadworthy and another hackney carriage vehicle received a suspension notice for failure to comply with conditions. A small amount of cocaine was also found by a drug detector on a licensed premise and 837 personal safety cards were also handed out.

Once the team in the Crewkerne and Chard area had finished their checks at 23:00 hours, they joined the Yeovil team until 01:30 hours when that stage of the operation ceased.

Licensed premises were advised that anyone who sells alcohol has a huge responsibility to ensure people do not drink excessively, and, if under 18, not allowed to drink at all; the latter message also included making sure that young people do not bring alcohol onto licensed premises in their pockets or handbags and drink it surreptitiously, particularly in any outside parts of premises.

Across the Somerset East District, (which includes the Mendip area) there were 14 arrests, two of which were for robbery and assault; the other arrests were mainly for assault, public order offences and possession of cannabis.

Financial Implications

Overtime payments for officers involved on the evening.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

Relate to Corporate Aim Four – to ensure safer, sustainable and cohesive communities.

Other Implications

None

Background Papers: None
