

SUMMARY OVERVIEW - FIXED PENALTY NOTICES RELATING TO COVID-19 REGULATIONS



Wiltshire and Swindon

pcc

Lockdown period covering 24 July - 27 September 2020

In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, the Government introduced new legislation on 24 July aimed at slowing the spread of the virus and protecting the public as lockdown eases and businesses begin to re-open. The legislation requires members of the public who do not hold an exemption card to wear face coverings in a number of different spaces including shops/supermarkets and public transport.

Further to this, legislation also requires members of the public to self-isolate for 14 days after return to the UK from a number of countries on the COVID-19 'at risk' list.

On 14 September further legislation was put in place regarding the 'rule of six' and 24 September saw legislation extending the wearing of face coverings to hospitality areas and curfews placed on bars, restaurants and pubs to 10pm.

Failure to comply with this government legislation gives police the power to sanction a now increased fine of £200 with the serving of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).

Throughout the easing of lockdown period, Wiltshire Police have continually adopted an approach to Engage, Explain, and Encourage compliance with COVID guidelines and we resort to Enforcement only as a last resort. We are delighted to report that this approach has been very successful, with very high levels of compliance from the public.

This updated summary of the use of FPNs in Wiltshire and Swindon covers the new regulations in order to ensure transparency and openness with our communities around any enforcement action that Wiltshire Police officers have taken.

During this timeframe, Wiltshire Police have created **557 COVID-19 logs**, which includes online reports relating to COVID-19. Out of these logs, Wiltshire Police received **19 calls for assistance** to help enforce the face covering legislation from businesses and concerned members of the public.

Wiltshire Police have issued **2 COVID-related FPNs** in this period. The first COVID-related FPN issued in this period related to an individual repeatedly failing to wear a face covering in a shop. The second FPN issued related to a gathering of 100+ people. Prior to this, there had been no FPNs issued by Wiltshire Police since 31 May 2020.

Wiltshire Police have, so far, issued **1 FPN** regarding individuals not wearing a face covering in public. Wiltshire Police have issued **0 FPNs** to individuals who are required to self-isolate post travel.

Wiltshire's Police and Crime Commissioner has approved a process to provide scrutiny and oversight of the legality and proportionality of FPNs. A Scrutiny Panel meets regularly to review and test all pro-forma templates issued in Wiltshire and Swindon with an option to rescind unlawful and/or disproportionate notices.

A second scrutiny panel has been put in place to specifically oversee disproportionality. The group is chaired at Superintendent level, and has representation from the OPCC, it reviews every FPN issued to members of the BAME community, it ensures a consistent approach and allows for both feedback to officers at the individual level but also has the authority to amend policy should any corporate issues be highlighted.

These reviews also ensure learning is captured at an organisational and individual level. As part of the scrutiny, disproportionality is considered and, if appropriate, local Inspectors will be tasked to engage with their local Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs).

The Scrutiny Panel reports into a Strategic Leaders meeting and is also reported into the Wiltshire Police strategic oversight governance meeting which is attended by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner. The process as a whole is overseen by the Deputy PCC and Deputy Chief Constable.

We would like to thank the majority of the public within our county for their compliance with the Government measures, and the effort our communities are making in the fight against the spread of this virus. Coronavirus is still a threat - please remember 'Hands, Face, Space**'. Stay alert and help control the virus**