

Police face busy weekend with almost 5,000 calls



The increasing demand on police resources as lockdown restrictions ease was again evident over the weekend with almost 5,000 calls to our control room.

Between 8pm on Friday 24 July and 8am on Monday 27 July, police arrested 141 people who were taken into custody.

We received almost 2,000 emergency 999 calls from the public and a further 2,976 non-emergency 101 calls. Of those, 896 were graded as requiring an immediate deployment and a further 963 were classified as 'priority' jobs.

Significant incidents from over the weekend included the following:

- **Suspected unauthorised music events were prevented in various parts of the force area.** A generator was seized at one site in Avon Meads that was being set up for an event on Friday evening, and a unit of officers dedicated for tackling such instances blocked off a site in Pensford where people were arriving in the early hours of Saturday morning. We attended other suspected sites on Saturday, including in Langport where loud music was being played and dozens of people were beginning to arrive, so power to the generator was cut off.
- Officers attended an **assault in Frome on Friday night** where a man sustained a number of stab wounds. He has been discharged from hospital and enquiries are continuing.
- A number of our most wanted offenders were tracked down and arrested, including those wanted for prison recalls, assaults and criminal damage.
- A pub in Frome was closed by police after disorder on Saturday night. One man sustained a head injury but has been released from hospital. A 29-year-old man was arrested.

- 14 emergency workers, including nine police officers, were assaulted, with numerous arrests made, including a 59-year-old woman arrested on suspicion of kicking one officer and racially abusing a second yesterday evening in Bristol.
- We had 220 concern for welfare calls.
- 23 reports about missing persons were received.
- And we received 27 reports about potential coronavirus breaches.

Chief Constable Andy Marsh said: "The past few days have been extremely busy for the force, dealing with not just critical emergencies, but also taking crucial preventative measures to safeguard our communities.

"Outstanding work by officers and staff helped to prevent suspected unauthorised music events taking place across the force area this weekend. A lot of unseen work goes on behind the scenes to monitor how these events are planned and that combined with the vital support from the public calling in with information meant we were able to act swiftly and decisively.

"Early intervention with events of this nature is the key so I'd like to thank everyone who contacted us over the weekend about them and urge people to continue to flag concerns with us.

"People in Frome will no doubt have noticed the increased police presence in recent days. While we do not believe there is a heightened risk to the public, we are treating these separate incidents very seriously and detectives continue to work hard to bring those responsible to justice.

"And in recent days we have been asked to take on new responsibilities in terms of face masks in shops and supermarkets. Our message is quite simple and it has been consistent through this coronavirus pandemic. We want to police with the public's consent and we will continue to explain what the current rules are and why they are important to follow. Enforcement through fines is an option, but it remains a last resort and we've found the public have engaged with us and are responding brilliantly, for which I'd like to thank them.

"I have been heartened to see so many people observing the new rules around face masks and would urge everyone to continue with these measures to help prevent the spread of this virus."