

# BRIEFING NOTE:

## DISTRICT CENTRES AND OPEN SPACES

### OVERVIEW

As of the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020, non-essential businesses have been allowed to open as long as they do so in line with Government Guidance. The Council, with Partners, has therefore put a plan in place to manage the public spaces around them to aid in social distancing, as well as assist businesses to get town centres open again

### DISTRICT APPROACH

All main shopping districts had been identified and plans put in place to:

- Identification of where pavements / pedestrian areas are narrow and can be widened including suspending loading bays and barring them off
- Queuing systems outside premises to ensure don't encroach
- Bus stops that can impact social distancing measures, and working with TfL to move
- Marking out pedestrian areas and using "nudge" tactics to encourage sub conscious use, rather than have barriers everywhere
- Identification of tables and chairs requirements and putting in place a safe means to do this ready for July

Not all areas can be addressed due to space, but a plan is in place for all district main areas, with the main ones being actioned by the 15<sup>th</sup> June to coincide with non-essential shops opening.

The approach will be a 3 stage approach:

- Stage 1: Getting plans in place and implementing in main areas for 15<sup>th</sup>
- Stage 2: Finalising implementation and adjusting where necessary
- Stage 3: Preparing for further openings announced for July (Restaurants and Cafes)

### DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The following is a brief overview of the main districts looked at and the main steps being taken:

| Area                         | Social Distancing Measures | Bus Stop Movement | Widening Pavements |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| St Annes Road, Harrow        |                            |                   |                    |
| College Road, Harrow         |                            |                   |                    |
| Station Road, HTC            |                            |                   |                    |
| Station Rd (near Mosque)     |                            |                   |                    |
| Porlock Avenue               |                            |                   |                    |
| Harrow & Wealdstone Station  |                            |                   |                    |
| Broadway, Hatch End          |                            |                   |                    |
| Broadway, Stanmore           |                            |                   |                    |
| Streatfield Road             |                            |                   |                    |
| Honeypot Lane                |                            |                   |                    |
| Burnt Oak Broadway           |                            |                   |                    |
| Northolt Rd (Petts Hill)     |                            |                   |                    |
| Kenton Rd (Kingsbury End)    |                            |                   |                    |
| Kenton Lane (Belmont circle) |                            |                   |                    |
| High Rd, Harrow Weald        |                            |                   |                    |
| Northolt Road (Main)         |                            |                   |                    |
| Rayners Lane                 |                            |                   |                    |
| Pinner (Main)                |                            |                   |                    |
| Pinner Marsh Road            |                            |                   |                    |
| North Harrow                 |                            |                   |                    |
| Wealdstone                   |                            |                   |                    |

## **UPDATE FOLLOWING 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

The Town Centre was very busy on the 15<sup>th</sup> June with the main issues being Primark but tripled their queuing length and solved the vast majority of the issues, and Sports Direct that has had 50+ queueing all the time for a single frontage shop but all kept in order. As per the plan, moving into Stage 2, adjustments have been made over the last 2 days to assist these areas and build on what was in place. Footlocker and Next open Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June, and work taking place with them to ensure controls in place. St Georges and St Annes well managed, Debenhams and New Look have limited queuing issues. Police, BID, Public Protection and Police have been on site to ensure any issues dealt with quickly and efficiently, but more through engage and educate, and been light touch

All other district centres on the whole been fine, Officers aiding premises and only had issues with Pinner (café with chairs outside) and South Harrow (incident of someone being beaten up, Police attending). South Harrow Sports Direct had 3 hour queues that led to initial closure but all controlled now. Stanmore, Hatch End, Wealdstone, Harrow Weald and all main shopping areas are being monitored directly and are ok, advice given and some markings put in place.

Betting Shops have received the most assistance due to concerns over gatherings inside and potential ASB, but Officers have been in contact with their security teams to ensure all addressed. Banks continue to have the most consistent long queues, which are being managed

Officers are on site all week, and increased presence at weekend in case any further surges in areas by customers.

Therefore district opening plan survived contact, and will improve as signage comes in this week and when further TfL schemes come into play. Work will not continue to manage the public spaces, adjust as necessary and plan for next re-openings

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

All teams feed into a central whatsapp group to collate, triage and task resources as needed. Any large gatherings or immediate problems will be reported directly to the Police Bronze Command for Police to attend. All of this is co-ordinated by a designated Manager for the day and is set out at the bottom of the staffing schedule on the spreadsheet.

Communications provide proactive messaging over social media in the lead up to, and continuing over, weekends. They also form part of the whatsapp group so can feed in intel from social media, as well as get real time messaging back out to residents. MPS will lead on "action based" communications and we will share, retweet and update our website on a required basis.

A status report will be provided to Harrow Gold Command every morning at 09:30(BCU normally meet at 08:30) and then only by exception. This plan will form the basis of the operations taking place, and any update / details provided in the email as required.

In terms of district opening, the Council has signed up to, and use the commonplace website to be the single portal for this. The following links give example of sites the Council has setup for the liveable neighbourhood bid previously <https://wealdstoneinmap.commonplace.is/>

<https://wealdstoneinproposals.commonplace.is/>

As part of the funding agreement, reference must be made to the European Regional Development Fund on some of the posters in the area, and this is taking place at key areas

Further communication methods will include:

- Use of Clearchannel units around the Borough
- Signage
- Use of BID newsletters to businesses
- Social Media
- Updates to Ward Councillors
- Letter from Community & Public Protection to all businesses with advice and guidance

Initial feedback in the media around district openings in Harrow has been positive

<https://harrowonline.org/2020/06/15/hundreds-queue-outside-primark-in-harrow-as-town-centre-shops-reopen/>