

## Police and Crime Commissioners Retail Roundtable Violence and Abuse Against Retail Workers

### Key Points

- Violence and Abuse is on the rise and is becoming more severe – the increasing use of weapons.
- Police response is poor, and improvement has been slow in recent years.
- Too many barriers to reporting – the length of time it takes and the complexity of the system.
- Some retailers have set up their own centralised system of reporting.
- Reporting remains low as there is a common view across the industry that little/nothing will be done, and the police will not respond robustly.
- There are some green shoots – effective work taking place in Sussex with PCC, Katy Bourne, and in some other local forces.
- Northamptonshire police have employed an evidence gathering worker to work with the local force to gather sufficient evidence and target persistent shoplifters. Keen to learn if anyone has been involved with similar initiatives and any key learnings.
- Concerns were expressed around the issue of age verification and the way in which it acts as a trigger for abuse or violence.
- Katy Bourne gave a strong message to PCCs that they should not see this as shop theft or think shop theft is not important.
- As PCCs consult on their Police and Crime Plans, they must reflect what local people care about and this matters to local people.
- Katy is on the NRCSG to represent PCCs and will send out regular briefings.
- Sussex police have undertaken some work with Coop and have piloted a **one touch reporting** system. An app where a report goes straight through to the police. In first week, reporting increased by 150% and three prolific offenders were caught.
- They have also trained individuals to spot business crime and spot trends – linked to neighbourhood policing teams.
- Consensus that prevention behavioural programmes are needed for prolific offenders.
- Chief Inspector, Patrick Holdaway urged PCCs to appoint a business crime lead to tackle local business crime.
- There was consensus that PCCs need to develop strategies to prevent prolific offenders from entering shops in the first place - this could begin from mapping out best practice across forces.

### Useful Resources

<https://brc.org.uk/media/677737/brc-crime-survey-2021.pdf>

<https://brc.org.uk/nrcsg-against-shop-worker-abuse-and-violence/>

<https://brc.org.uk/nrcsg-against-shop-worker-abuse-and-violence/de-escalation-training/>

<https://nbcc.police.uk/crime-prevention/shopkind-webpage>

<https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/news/item/new-guidelines-for-sentencing-common-assault-and-attempted-murder-published/>



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