

Item 13.20 – Operation Heat Shield

File reference	P1039099
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Reporting Service Unit and Alliance	Community Services, Community Development Alliance
Report author disclosure of interest	Nil
Date of report	26 June 2020
Nature of Council's role	Advocacy
Voting requirement	Simple Majority
Attachments	Nil

Purpose

This report seeks approval for the Chair Commissioner to write to the Premier of Western Australia to request the extension of WA Police's *Operation Heat Shield* which concluded on 31 May 2020.

Background

Operation Heat Shield was a WA Government funded project to increase the provision of policing resources over summer by providing an additional 55,000 hours of police in the central business district. Working collaboratively with the City's Safe City Rangers and Citywatch, the additional policing resulted in positive benefits for local businesses and visitors to the City.

The operation concluded on 31 May 2020 and maintaining this level of police resourcing is considered critical for supporting the City's economic rebound from the consequences COVID-19 pandemic.

Details

Operation Heat Shield commenced in December 2019 and concluded on 31 May 2020. The Operation funded additional police (through the provision of overtime shifts) to patrol the city and other known metropolitan hotspots over the summer months. The patrols were welcomed by retailers and business owners as the additional police targeted anti-social behaviour in the city's malls and retail theft, both of which have negatively impacted business and visitors to the city.

In January (mid-operation) the Government of Western Australia released a media statement highlighting the positive response from retailers about the highly visible police presence. The media release references some positive results compared to the previous quarter (October to December) which included 53 more offenders apprehended and an increase in 134 apprehensions for retail theft related offences.

The Operation has highlighted the effectiveness of additional police and the City has received feedback from the local business community about the benefits of the additional policing, noting that crime and anti-social behaviour has increased since Operational Heat Shield ceased at the end of May.

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholders were engaged as part of the City's COVID-19 Recovery and Rebound Project. At a City Amenity Advisory Committee workshop the value of the additional police resourcing during Operational Heat Shield and the importance of continuing this level of policing, to support the City's economic recovery was acknowledged. The Committee requested a letter be sent to the Premier as an urgent priority to advocate for additional funding to be allocated to the extension of Operation Heat Shield within the city.

Strategic alignment

Strategic Community Plan

This item addresses the community's vision for the future and is aligned with all the Aspirations of our Strategic Community Plan 2019 – 2029.

Aspiration:	People
Strategic Objective:	1.1 Safe, clean and inviting public places that are well patronised and enjoyed by all.

Legal and statutory implications

There are no legal or statutory implications related to this report.

Connection with mandates in the *City of Perth Act 2016*

8(1)(c) - to provide a safe, clean and aesthetic environment for the community, city workers, visitors and tourists

Risk implications

Impact of decision	
Organisation	Medium
Community	Medium

The following risks assessment has been conducted based on this report:

Risk domain	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk rating
Financial	Insignificant	Rare	Low
Reputation and External Stakeholders	Moderate	Possible	Medium

The approval of the recommendation within this report carries a medium level risk to the Reputational and External Stakeholder risk category and a low-level risk to the financial category.

Approval implications

If the request to advocate to the Premier for additional police resources to support the City's economic recovery is not approved, it will negatively impact on the City's reputation as a strong advocate for the City's stakeholders.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications with this report.

Comments

Operation Heat Shield highlighted the benefit of additional police within the City, with local businesses and visitors experiencing less anti-social behaviour, reduced crime and an increased perception of safety.

As the City of Perth recovers from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic there is an even greater need for a highly visible and responsive police presence and the continuation of Operational Heat Shield is considered critical to supporting businesses and workers, and encouraging visitors back to the City.

Officer Recommendation

That Council APPROVE sending a letter to the Premier of Western Australia from the Chair Commissioner requesting the extension of WA Police's Operation Heat Shield to support the City's Economic Rebound.

