

Supplementary written evidence submitted by Assistant Chief Constable Owen Weatherill, National Police Chiefs' Council (COR0193)

1. Thank you for the opportunity to update the committee on the policing response to the COVID-19 pandemic on Wednesday 21st October 2020.
2. During the session a question was raised about a possible incongruity between The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Local COVID-19 Alert Level) (High) (England) Regulations 2020 and the guidance issued to policing by the College of Policing and NPCC.
3. I want to provide the committee with assurance that all the guidance produced goes through extensive legal due diligence both internally and with the Home Office and is only published once it has been through this process.
4. The confusion related to whether household mixing was permitted under the Regulations. But both the Regulations and the police guidance are consistent on this point.
5. The Regulations provide in paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 1 that in relation to gatherings indoors:
No person may participate in a gathering in the Tier 2 area
which –
 - (a) consists of two or more people, and
 - (b) takes place indoors.
6. A number of exceptions apply to this restriction as set out in paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 of the Regulations. This includes Exception 1, where all of the people in the gathering are members of the same household or linked households (referred to as support bubbles in government guidance).
7. The wording in the joint College of Policing and NPCC guidance mirrors the wording in the Regulations:
Slide 6 – No person may participate in a gathering in the Tier 2 area which:
 - a. consists of two or more people, and
 - b. takes place indoors.
8. The exceptions to this are also covered. As such, the police guidance is clear that households cannot mix indoors, unless one of the exceptions apply.
9. With regards to outdoor gatherings, the guidance again mirrors the Regulations, paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 1, by stating in:
Slide 7 – No person may participate in a gathering in the Tier 2 area which:
 - a. consists of more than six people, and
 - b. takes place outdoors.
10. Again, the exceptions to this restriction are listed, including Exception 1 in paragraph 5 of Schedule 1, in the same terms as Exception 1 in paragraph 4 noted above.

11. Both of these restrictions apply equally to people who live in the Tier 2 areas with regards to participation in a gathering outside of that area- see paragraph 1(2) and 2(2) of Schedule 1.
12. I hope that this helps to clarify the situation, however, please don't hesitate to let me know if I can provide any further detail that will help the committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Owen Weatherill', written over a horizontal line.

Assistant Chief Constable Owen Weatherill
Operation Talla National Silver

October 2020