

1. **Summary:** To be considered, each **Entry Requirements** entry must begin with a summary of your project. The summary should be between 300 and 400 words. Begin with the project title, and then, using the four-stage SARA model, explain the nature of the problem addressed, give a brief account of the measures taken, and show results using the most important measures of success. You may use headings and bullet points.

**(Summary Word Count – 399 words)**



### **The Warehouse Project – Theft of Mobile Phones, Trafford, Greater Manchester**



#### Scanning

The “Warehouse Project” (will be referred to as TWP from now) is a music and dance venue within a converted warehouse, accommodating 5,300 customers for each of the 35 events within the 2012/13 calendar. Conditions within the venue are extremely crowded with low lighting levels - *(Please see Appendix 1)*

The modal age of attendees is estimated at 18-30, an unknown number of whom carry a mobile phone. Such phones are vulnerable to theft in the dark, crowded confines of the venue. Intelligence suggests similar events are targets for organized crime groups as risk of detection is small compared to high financial rewards of phone re-sales.

#### Analysis

37 phones were stolen at the first 6 events at TWP from September-October 2012, i.e. average 6 thefts per event. This contrasted with an average of 1 phone theft per TWP event in the previous year when TWP was at a different venue holding 2,500 customers.

Victim analysis showed 80% were Female, particularly aged 19-25.

Due to the conditions in TWP analysis highlighted only the entry and exit points were points of contact with offenders and victims.

Limited intelligence was only indicator of offenders due to no previous detections.

#### Response

Based on the analysis, the points of contact drew comparisons with boarding an aircraft. A new system of queuing with particular questions was developed, using airport security as a guide, to identify suspicious behaviour of attendees who were there for criminal purposes. When suspicion was raised a more stringent activity was conducted. If suspicions were high the attendee would be refused entry under the guidelines of the management’s right to refuse entry. As well as this crime prevention advice was given to ‘at risk’ groups identified in the analysis stage.

Responses had to be altered throughout the calendar as offenders altered their approaches when TWP implemented new responses. These were flagged by regular planned evaluations.

### Assessment

The response was fully implemented by 02/02/13. At this point there remained 8 events in the 2012/13 calendar. In these final 8 events only 2 phones were stolen, compared to the 37 in the first 6 events, all of which had similar conditions, i.e. type of music and number of attendees.

Detections improved as 2 individuals were charged with 51 offences.

Of the 185,00 intending attendees, only 119 were refused entry with 2 individuals applying for a refund suggesting the others were not genuine customers.

2. **Description:** In **no more than 4,000 words** (approximately 15 pages double-spaced), not including charts, tables and graphs, provide a detailed description of the project *using the following four-step SARA problem-solving model outline*. Submissions exceeding the length limitation will be penalized in the judges' scoring. Although you should cover as many of these questions as are applicable, they are intended to guide you, not to serve as a blueprint for your project description. In any case, tell the story of your POP project. Be aware that the committee is particularly interested in well-presented data, especially at the analysis and assessment stage. All tables, charts, graphs, and photos should be located in the appendices.

**(Description Word Count – 3,969 words)**

## **A. Scanning:**

- **What was the nature of the problem?**

**Location** - TWP is a late night music and dance venue in the Trafford area of Greater Manchester, England. The building is a converted Victorian warehouse that has been adapted to accommodate up to 5,000 customers at each event.

The 2012/13 season comprised 35 events. The estimated numbers attending these events totaled 175,000.

When full to capacity the attendees tend to be concentrated closely together on a large dance floor facing the stage. Lighting within the venue is reduced for atmospheric purposes.

*(Please see Appendix 1)*

Such is the popularity of the events that attendees will travel considerable distances due to the events being hosted by DJs of international renown.

**Victim** - Attendees are of both sexes and have an age profile of 18-30. Many will have consumed intoxicants and stimulants prior to attending.

The vast majority of attendees are in possession of the latest mobile phones/cameras which many use to film the event for their own use. These are valued at approx £500 per item and are a 'craved' object by would be thieves due to their appeal and ease at which they can be converted into cash. These offences formed part of an emerging trend of "pickpocket" type crime reported at music venues across the U.K. including outdoor summer festivals.

**Offenders** - Little was known about the offenders as no detections had been made. Within the United Kingdom it was known that Organized Crime Groups from Eastern Europe would regularly target the theft of mobile phones at events similar to this and then move the phones to Eastern Europe and North Africa where the mobile phones would be sold and used to fund criminal activity or purchase properties, in these countries.

- **How was the problem identified?**

Attendees at the venue would report large numbers of phones as lost or stolen either at the event or shortly afterwards. These reports would be made to the venue management or the police.

- **Who identified the problem (e.g., community, police managers, officers, politicians, press, etc.)?**

The scale of the problem was first noticed by police crime recorders as this was unusual both in terms of the volume and nature of offences committed. Management at the venue was also made aware by disgruntled customers.

- **Far more problems are identified than can be explored adequately. How and why was this problem selected from among problems?**

The numbers of offences being committed were seen as a significant reputational threat to the company. The planned prospect of future events to be staged at the venue within the calendar year highlighted future risk to the public sustaining considerable financial loss.

- **What was the initial level of diagnosis/unit of analysis (e.g. crime type, neighbourhood, specific premise, specific offender group, etc.)?**

The initial diagnosis was that people attending the venue were using this as opportunity to falsely report the theft of their mobile phones in order that they could obtain an upgraded replacement from their provider.

Subsequent investigations and the arrest of offenders with large numbers of stolen phones in their possession quickly changed this perspective. It became clear that offending organized groups were mainly responsible.

## **B. Analysis:**

- **What methods, data and information sources were used to analyze the problem (e.g., surveys, interviews, observation, crime analysis, etc.)?**

It was not believed that crimes would be under reported due to the situation of the thefts however the police and analysts were conscious of the potential for over reporting of the crime i.e. individuals wanting a new handset would report a theft to obtain a crime number for insurance purposes. The source of the data has predominantly come from the analysis of crime figures.

- **History: How often and for how long was it a problem?**

The venue first opened in September 2012. The criminal activity remained a problem until an effective preventative system of measures could be developed.

- **Who was involved in the problem (offenders, victims, others) and what were their respective motivations, gains and losses?**

Victims were exclusively paying customers at TWP. This group comprised of both sexes, with the males generally being subject to “pick-pocketing” criminal tactics whilst the females were subject to handbag thefts.

Phones would also be snatched from both males and females whilst they held the phones over their heads to film the stage. The motivation was distinctly financial gain as at approximately £500 per phone from used property sellers, there is massive profit to be made. The risk against reward argument was particularly swayed in favour of reward prior to the problem solving technique.

- **What harms resulted from the problem?**

The ultra modern mobile phones are multi function devices. As such their use as personal organizers holding a host of personal information such as diaries, appointments, banking detail, email account details, in addition to phone and camera function, meant their loss was felt in more than monetary terms.

The scale of the thefts were also damaging the reputation of the event and posing a risk to the commercial viability of the company.

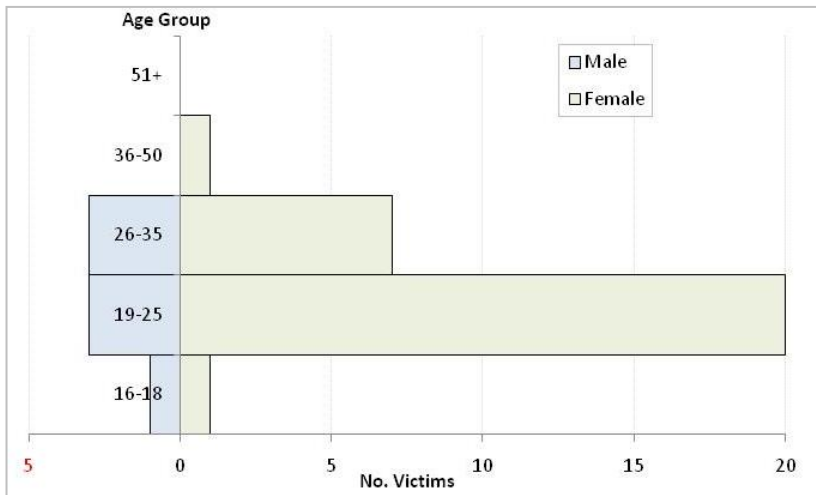
- **How was the problem being addressed before the problem-solving project? What were the results of those responses?**

The management of TWP paid for police officers to work undercover within the venue at a significant cost to themselves, and supplemented by their own security officers. This tactic was primarily aimed at being able to identify the crime being committed and arrest offenders. Due to the lighting associated within dance venues i.e., flashing strobe lighting and the close proximity of people dancing it was impossible to identify offenders or the crime being committed.

- **What did the analysis reveal about the causes and underlying conditions that precipitated the problem?**

**Location** - When full to capacity the attendees tend to be concentrated closely together on a large dance floor facing the stage. Lighting within the venue is reduced for atmospheric purposes.

**Victim** – Victim profile analysis revealed that the majority of victims were aged 19-35 however over 80% were females, this helped guide crime prevention activity.



**Victim Profile:**

56% aged 19-25 and Female

As well as this it was known many have consumed intoxicants and stimulants prior to attending and in possession of the latest mobile phone (Apple Iphone identified during analysis). Valued at £500 per item and are a 'craved' object due to availability and resale value ('craved' - Concealable/Removable/Available/Valuable/Enjoyable/Disposable,Clarke 1999).

Phones are constantly on view, taking pictures and videos then placed in back pockets or open bags, making them easy to steal - *(Please see Appendix 1)*

**Offender** – For the analysis stage, little was known about the offenders due to no prior detections. Within the UK it was known that Eastern European gangs often operate with the MO of stealing mobile phones however there was no intelligence stating this was the threat for TWP. All that was



known was the dark warehouse and high volume of attendees placed the reward firmly in their favour against the risk of being caught.

- **What did the analysis reveal about the nature and extent of the problem?**

The problem was identified by looking at the increase in theft of mobile phones during September and October (first 6 events). Brief analysis showed TWP was a key location with 37 crimes being recorded when across Trafford there was only a further 12 offences recorded. (67% of the thefts of mobile phone in Trafford were recorded at TWP)

September/October 2011; 29 theft of mobile phones in Trafford – No TWP in Trafford

September/October 2012; 55 theft of mobile phones in Trafford – TWP in Trafford

Without TWP September/October 2012 Trafford would have shown a 38% decrease in offences however a 90% increase was seen.

Comparison was also drawn to TWP when it was situated in the City Centre. Data from the last 3 years was taken and over 3 years, there were 101 mobile phones stolen from 97 event dates. This gave an average of approximately 1 phone theft per night. Whereas in Trafford the average number of mobile phones stolen from September to October was 6, highlighting the problem.

- **What situational information was needed to better understand the problem (e.g., time of occurrence, location, and other particulars re: the environment, etc.)?**

Other than the actual crime taking place, little attention was paid to location or time of occurrence. The reason for this was decided that the venue was the problem location and offences were not happening elsewhere. No detail of which room the offence location took place could be established

as the victims did not know when the offence took place and this also led to the temporal aspect being ignored as the victims did not know a time other than when they entered the location and when they left the location, spanning the whole evening and would add no extra benefit.

- **Was there an open discussion with the community about the problem?**

The business community, in the form of the venue management, was liaised with on a regular basis and was at the heart of discussions in relation to how effective tactics could be developed both inside and outside the venue in order to address this problem.

Organizers' of similar events nationally were contacted in an attempt to identify best practice tactics that could be implemented in either whole or part at the Manchester venue.

## C. Response:

- **What range of possible response alternatives were considered to deal with the problem?**

**More extensive media** – Albeit this was used the overall impact was considered to be minimal. It was acknowledged that striking a balance between complacency and unrealistic fear of crime. Concerns were also raised by the venue management regarding their commercial reputation.

**Safe storage** - Introducing a system which allowed attendees to deposit phones with TWP and retrieve after the event was considered finished

**Voluntary Property Marking** – This was considered as it would assist with the return of recovered stolen property to the owners and if marked overtly it would make the item less desirable.

**Plain-clothed operation** – This tactic was employed in the early stages. It proved to be both expensive and ineffective.

**Screening of Customers** – Changes were made to the queuing system and each customer was asked a series of structured questions to establish if they were bone fide attendees or those with an ulterior-motive.

- **What responses did you use to address the problem?**

Early evaluation identified the initial response of undercover police officers inside the venue was costly and had no impact in identifying offenders. The response chosen to address the problem was aimed at tackling the theory of Rational Choice (Cornish & Clarke 1984), increase the risk for the offender.

As the analysis identified, once an offender has entered the venue it became very difficult to identify them committing the offence due to the volume of attendees and reduced lighting. Analysis revealed the entrance and exit are the only two points of identifying offenders and as such parallels

were drawn to boarding of aircrafts. It was then decided that TWP could employ a system of questions similar to airport security that would either heighten or allay suspicions of individuals upon entry.

To aid in this the queuing system was altered so there was more interaction points with security in a one to one scenario. Initially simple questions were asked, such as **“Who are you with?”**

This simple question would very quickly identify people who were on their own or dotted throughout the queue to gain entry unnoticed, arousing initial suspicions as normal attendees were usually next to friends or partners. This was also a point of crime prevention advice to attendees.

Another change was undercover operatives were placed at the initial customer entry point with the task of identifying groups who arrived together but dispersed amongst the queue.

Once completing the initial contact stage, attendees would walk across an area known as the void where undercover operatives would visually scan them and identify any suspicious behaviour.

Another additional tactic that was employed was attendees wearing trousers were asked to reveal their lower leg as offenders were using these to hide stolen mobile phones. However, following this, offenders adjusted their methods and began wearing cycling shorts tied at the knees which then meant TWP response had to be adjusted.

If at any stage above there were adequate suspicions raised, the individuals would be taken to a screening area where they were asked a series of simple questions which would identify if the person was attending the venue for genuine reasons or criminal reasons - *(Please see Appendix 2)*

If the decision at this point was that they were not there genuinely to attend the event, they are refused entry as the management has the right to do so. A letter would be provided explaining the situation along with means of obtaining a refund for their ticket - *(Please see Appendix 3 and 4)*

Inside the venue a lost/stolen report location was created to be able to identify real time offending rather than wait to the following morning for a report to come into the police. This allowed a secondary trigger plan of screening attendees on the way out to be setup to identify offenders as they left the venue if they had managed to get through the screening on the way in.

- **What, specifically, did you learn from your analysis of the problem that led to your choice of a new response to the problem?**

The analysis revealed that theft of mobile phones massively increased within Trafford in September/October. Analysis revealed that there was no understanding as to who was committing the offences due to none being detected which made it difficult to perform specific offender targeting. De-briefs from staff within the venue also demonstrated the difficulty of preventing offences from occurring within the venue due to the low level of lighting and the high volume of attendees. Through this it was therefore decided that the only point of influence police had on the crime was either as individuals entered into the venue or as they exited the venue. The analysis showed no crime prevention advice was currently being provided.

- **What evaluation criteria were most important to the department before implementation of the response alternative(s) (e.g., legality, community values, potential effectiveness, cost, practicality, etc.)?**

The primary evaluation criterion was a reduction in incidents of theft of mobile phone.

In devising appropriate screening activity which filtered out suspected offenders consideration was given to the legality of the activity. It was concluded that although a person had purchased a ticket, that alone did not give automatic right of entry, as the organizer has the right to refuse entry to any individual or group. The response was always aimed at enhancing the customer care and did not become an oppressive process which detracted from the event. The chosen intervention had to be cost effective and make the best possible use of available resources in terms of appropriate tactical deployments.

- **What did you intend to accomplish with your response plan (i.e., project goal and corresponding measurable objectives)?**

**Crime Reduction** - The primary goal was to protect the law abiding public from the organized activity of criminals. This would be measured by a reduction in the number of reported thefts.

**Enhanced Intelligence Picture** - Information gleaned from the screening process in relation to the individuals and groups refused entry would provide more information to the police about who was targeting the event.

**Arrest/Prosecution** -A secondary measure was the arrest and prosecution of those offenders who were caught in possession of stolen phones.

- **What resources were available to help solve the problem?**

A number of both police and partner resources were already in place e.g. in house security, dedicated police officers. It was concluded however that that they needed improved direction so that they could form part of the coordinated activity being proposed. Partner resources were subsequently briefed by the police in relation to how to identify potential offenders.

- **What difficulties were encountered during response implementation?**

Immediately following implementation the initial evaluation showed it was clear not all offenders were being identified. It was incorrectly perceived by staff that the threat was posed solely by offenders of Eastern European origin and thereby they became less vigilant in relation to other offending groups. Through further analysis this was identified and then rectified through dissemination of key finding from the evaluation. Offenders were reacting to the measures being implemented such as employing distraction tactics, highlighting the need for constant review and improvement of the response.

- **Who was involved in the response to your problem?**

The main partners involved in this response were TWP management, security, undercover operatives and the police.

## **D. Assessment:**

- **What were the results? What degree of impact did the response plan have on this problem?**

In total 219 mobile phones were reported stolen, valued at approximately £100,000. However results showed that there was a reduction in theft of mobile phones from TWP towards the end of the calendar. Initial analysis revealed 6 mobile phones per night were being stolen but in the final 8 nights only 2 mobile phones were stolen overall. Detections improved with two individuals being charged with 51 offences, improving intelligence as both were Eastern European and well known to the Mobile Phone Organized Crime Unit in London, allowing better intelligence sharing.

When looking at overall performance, the count of 219 mobile phones thefts represents an increase of 80% for the division of Trafford. Without the mobile phone thefts recorded from TWP Trafford would have seen a decrease of 2% in theft of mobile phones over the period September 2012 - April 2013 compared to 2011/12. This shows the influence that WHP has had on Trafford.

**Screening Questions** - Total attendees at all the events were 175,000 with 119 attendees being refused entry during the screening process. Of these 119 attendees only 2 requested a refund, indicating that perhaps the individuals were not genuine customers.

**Secondary Trigger Plan** - The creation of the location to report offences during the event was proved successful when during one event reports came in of thefts being committed and this was instantly reported to the exit points that then screened attendees as they left and identified the offender who had stolen numerous phones that evening. All mobile phones stolen were returned to their owners.

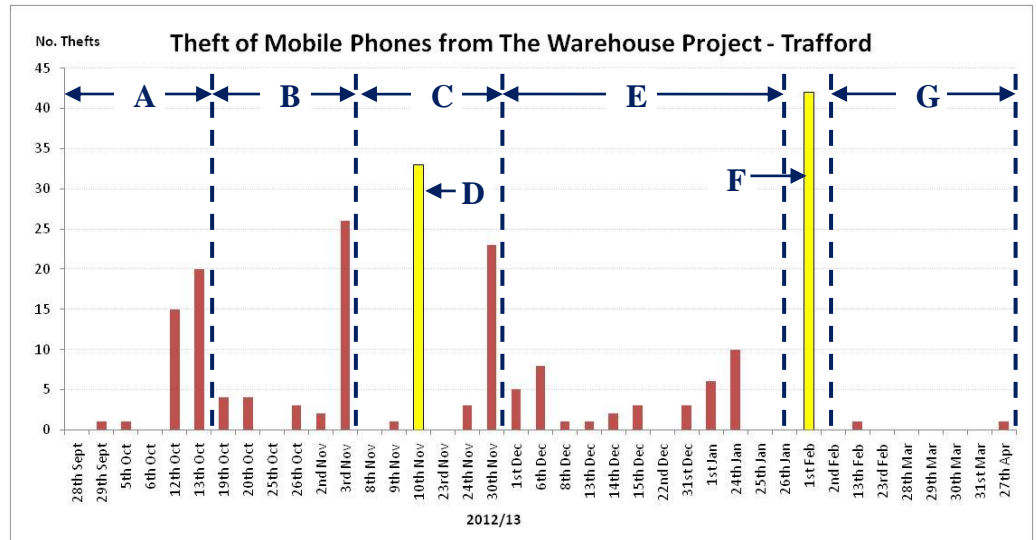
Both methods were the main contributing factor to identification of offenders, decrease in crimes recorded and increased detection rates. This arrest showed the change in offender behaviour as the offender was wearing cycling shorts tied off at the knees to store the stolen mobile phones. It was believe this was because of the response put in place of asking to see the lower part of the



attendees leg if wearing trousers and this was why this individual had managed to gain entrance to the venue to commit the crimes.

The changing activity can be seen graphically below.

The red bars indicate number of thefts; the yellow bars indicate number of detections with the theft.



**A** – Conventional security tactics, end of period analysis revealed problem of mobile phone theft.

**B** – Covert security measures implemented, evaluation conducted at end of period revealed not effective.

**C** – New airport style customer screening implemented

**D** – Offender identified outside the venue with tights concealing 33 mobile phones. Evaluation at end of period revealed that security were only stopping certain types of individuals who fit the mould of an offender rather than being open to judging everyone individually.

**E** – Customer screening improved to judge attendees individually. On average 3 phones a night stolen

**F** – Customer screening failed as offender gained entrance but due to creation of location within venue for reporting and secondary screening tactic on the exit offender identified and all phones recovered.

**G** – Utilization of the improved customer screening from lessons learnt and thorough interim evaluations.

- **What were your methods of evaluation and for how long was the effectiveness of the problem-solving effort evaluated?**

Evaluation of the responses was undertaken by a police analyst. Prior to implementation interim evaluations were planned to identify new methods employed by the offenders, taking in crime information and de-briefs from staff at the venue. Two evaluations were written during the course of the calendar of events and a final evaluation after the final event of the calendar with key findings being distributed to TWP and police management.

- **How did you measure your results?**

The evaluation was devised so that it would use data for the three years when TWP was situated in the City Centre as a comparison against a base rate. A reduction in the number of thefts of mobile phones from crime reports would determine the success of the problem solving initiative.

- **What data supported your conclusions?**

The evidence for the successful implementation of the response came from crime figures created from reports by individuals attending the venue. Reporting rates were not thought to be an issue as only people who had their mobile phones stolen would be reporting offences. As well as crime figures relating to number of thefts, crime figures relating to detection rates also demonstrated that individuals were arrested and charged for offences which had not occurred prior to the implementation of the response.

- **How could you have made the response more effective?**

In the absence of examples of other initiatives to address theft problems at similar venues, this by nature was a journey of creative thinking, application, evaluation, alteration and re-application. Initial

briefings to security staff could have been improved and the simplistic view that all offenders were of Eastern European origin, been effectively dealt with.

- **Was there a concern about displacement (i.e., shifting the problem somewhere else or to some other form of problematic behavior)?**

It was a real concern that any preventative measures implemented at TWP could lead to offenders targeting alternative venues with increased vigor. The problem of large scale mobile phone thefts at similar venues and events across the United Kingdom was well known, especially to TWP management, however no increases were seen at other licensed premises within Trafford or Greater Manchester. TWP management used their industry networks to circulate intelligence and alert them to changes in offending behaviour. These industry linkages, which assisted in the promulgation of effective practice, minimized any displacement issues.

- **Will your response require continued monitoring or a continuing effort to maintain your results?**

This venue is only open from September to April and evaluations are scheduled for the 2013/14 season where the lessons identified through analysis and evaluation can be implemented from the beginning. Planned evaluations will constantly monitor offences but it is not thought that the response will need to be drastically altered during the 2013/14 calendar. The system will be employed at events being run by the TWP management throughout Greater Manchester over the summer with the management team. Evaluation at these events will hopefully demonstrate the transferability of the approach to other events.

Below is a written statement from Sacha Lord-Marchionne, managing director of the Ugly Ducking Group, responsible for The Warehouse Project.

*"This has been a perfect example of synergy between the police and the event organizer. It highlights that co-problem solving can be effective and help achieve the final goal of reducing the problem.*

*Since our co-success, I have been inundated with requests for help from other national promoters and press.*

*The support that we have received from the police, has been the main contributing factor in reducing our thefts, and at the same time, has lead to a better customer experience...and in return, helped the reputation of our brand, The Warehouse Project.*

*We look forward to continuing the partnership and would like to particularly thank both Simon Collister and*

*Brian Whittaker from GMP, whom both went above and beyond the call of duty."*

**Agency and Officer Information:**

Name: James Liggett

Position/Rank: Superintendent

Address: Trafford Divisional Headquarters, Talbot Road, Stretford.

City/State: Manchester

Telephone: 0044 161 856 7501

Email James.Liggett@gmp.police.uk

Appendix:

1. Demonstrating low lighting, high volume of people and use of mobile phones



## 2. Standard questions to ask customers on entry

Once potential offenders were in the secure area, they were then asked simple set of questions (attached). The standardized questions asked, although simple, would serve to identify if a person was attending the venue for the genuine reason and alternatively those who were not.

### WAREHOUSE PROJECT

Here at the Warehouse Project we strive to make our events a "safe and secure" environment for all our customers.

As a condition of entry we question and on occasions request to search our customers.

In recent weeks we have seen an increase in the theft of mobile phones from our customers. This is a national problem which we are making every effort to stop at our events.

In response to this we have a very stringent entry policy and have undercover security operatives working with Greater Manchester Police.

Unfortunately on this occasion you have been refused entry to the venue.

We will offer you a full refund if you write to our head office and meet the below conditions.

- You have entered the venue prior to the doors closing at 10.30pm.
- You return your ticket (within 7 days) including a signature of the undercover operative who refused you entry.
- A copy of photo ID (passport or driving licence)
- A recent utility bill with your address.

Thank you for your cooperation – The Warehouse Project Team.

THE WAREHOUSE PROJECT  
17 BURTON PLACE  
MANCHESTER  
M15 4PT  
T: 0161 835 5000  
F: 0161 835 3377  
W: THEWAREHOUSEPROJECT.COM

### TRAFFORD BOROUGH LICENSING PARTNERSHIP

#### Warehouse Project

Revised plan to reduce thefts of mobile phones from within the venue.

**Method**  
Private Security, it is essential to have the right people in key places using good communication skills to engage with customers and to weed out potential criminals before they enter the premises.  
At the main entry points Security will be alert to suspects and by a series of questions identify suspects.

- Who are you with? (ask the person to point out the people they are attending with)
- Are they already together in a group or dispersed elsewhere in the queue? (groups of friends would generally be attending together)
- Do they fit offended profile from intelligence?
- Evaluate and if unsure ask the person or persons to go to search area.

At search area more robust questions will be asked as below.

- Again asked who they are attending with?
- Do they have any ID? (At a minimum most people will carry a bank card).
- Where they live? Have they travelled any distance to the event, unlikely to do this on their own?
- Where did they buy their ticket? (internet or from a tout)
- Do they know who the main act is?
- Check if they wearing any other clothing under their outer pants.
- Check coat linings to see if there are holes or potential hiding places.
- Are they carrying a bag or rucksack? (what is in the bag)
- Do they have car keys in their possession? Where is it parked? (Think if they have told you they are on their own and travelled some distance to the venue and don't have a car key of ticket or a return ticket for public transport, there is a good chance they are part of a criminal team.)
- Public Transport are they in possession of return ticket, if so where is it to?

Simple questions should quickly identify if the person is a genuine customer.

**If in doubt keep them out.**

## 3. Point of entry refusal letter

If the decision at this point was that they were not their genuinely to attend the event. They are refused entry.

#### 4. Photographs showing the new entry system



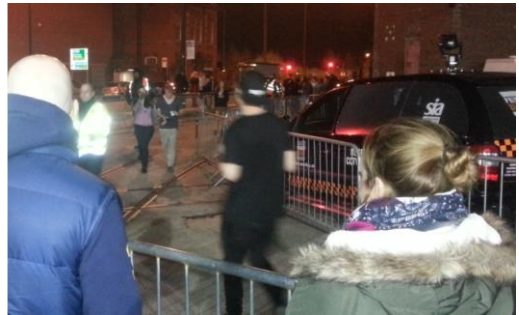
Initial contact point to provide customer service to the attendee and check identification.

Once past this point individuals walk across and behavior is monitored by security and officers to determine if there is anything suspicious

Officers watching individuals walking from the first check point to identify suspicious behaviour.

Suspicious behaviour may include looking to see if friends further back in the queue get through, walking through on your own and type of clothing.

Also there is CCTV recording individuals as they enter premise on top of CCTV vehicle.



Further check point following the sniffer dog where individuals are searched and if suspicious will be asked further questions.

Final checkpoint with further one to one conversations to identify suspicious characters.

