

## **Arrest Update And Launch Of New Tactical Enforcement Unit - 19.12.19**

### **Man Jailed For Spraying Corrosive Fluid At Victim As He Was Trying To Rob Him**

A man who sprayed a corrosive fluid in the face of his victim as he was trying to rob him has been jailed.

Matthew Wojcik was convicted of attempting to commit a robbery and applying a corrosive fluid with intent to cause grievous bodily harm following an incident in Bexhill earlier this year.

On the morning of Sunday, March 18, Wojcik saw his victim - a man known to him - at a cashpoint in Devonshire Road, Bexhill. As the victim walked away, Wojcik followed.

The victim stopped in nearby Mitten Road when Wojcik called out his name, and the pair engaged in a brief conversation. However, moments later, Wojcik demanded the victim hand over cash and sprayed him in the face with a corrosive fluid.

The victim ran away but suffered facial injuries as a result of the incident.

Wojcik, 19, unemployed, of no fixed address, was sentenced to three years imprisonment for attempting to commit a robbery, and five years and six months for applying a corrosive fluid with intent. The sentences will run concurrently.

Detective Constable David Brown said: "This was a serious but isolated incident for the area, and the defendant and the victim in this case were known to each other. Local residents do not have to be concerned about a wider threat to the community."

### **Sussex Police Launches New Tactical Enforcement Unit**

A new proactive police unit which will help make Sussex a "hostile environment" for dangerous and persistent criminals targeting the county has already made its first arrest on its first day.

The Tactical Enforcement Unit will be dedicated to capturing some of Sussex's most wanted and prolific offenders, including those involved in serious violence, organised crime and county lines drugs gangs.

The team, made up of officers with specialist skills in proactive policing, will carry out targeted disruption, enforcement and patrol activities wherever it is most needed.

One initial central team made up of eight PCs, a sergeant and led by an inspector, will grow to form three geographically-based enforcement teams, one each based in East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove, by April 2020.

It carried out its first operation on Monday (16 December) on its first day in action at an address in East Street, Seaford, where 56-year-old Stephen Mcateer, who has been charged

with importing 23 kilos of heroin in France was arrested on suspicion of breaching his court conditions.

He was later remanded in custody to reappear at City of London Magistrates Court

Deputy Chief Constable Jo Shiner said: "We want Sussex to be a hostile environment for criminals and especially those involved in serious violence and targeting vulnerable people across our county, whether through county lines drugs gangs or other organised crime.

"The Tactical Enforcement Unit will be a visible, proactive deterrent to those at the centre of the serious offending, supporting local policing teams in dealing with specific spikes in crimes that impact on the community and it is already making a difference with a successful operation on its first day.

"They will work where the need is greatest and provide public reassurance by being present and proactively disrupting and taking off the streets some of our most prolific criminals." The new unit has been established through an uplift in police officers with the force on track to recruit a net gain of 129 officers by March 2021, thanks to a combination of additional precept and Government funding.

Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne said: "This is great news for our residents and bad news for our most dangerous criminals who will now be more proactively and robustly targeted.

"The public have been calling for increased visibility and more preventative action and I'm pleased that the increase in government funding, that we've all lobbied hard for, is making this possible.

"This is sending out a warning to those who continue to exploit, endanger and threaten any of our residents that they will face harsh consequences for their actions."

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Alternatively you can contact the independent charity **Crimestoppers**, anonymously, on **0800 555 111**, or online at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)