

Coronavirus – Edinburgh police not proactive over travel restrictions

by Joseph Anderson Local Democracy Reporter

Appearing at a meeting of The City of Edinburgh Council's Policy and Sustainability Committee on Tuesday, Chief Superintendent Sean Scott said that his officers try to 'engage, explain and encourage' before enforcing lockdown laws.

People living in a Level three or Level four region of Scotland must not, by law, leave their local authority area, except for essential travel. Edinburgh is currently in Level three of the coronavirus restrictions.

The Scottish Government has said that 'unless you have a reasonable excuse you must not travel between Scotland and the rest of the UK: England, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, and Wales'.

But there is no infrastructure capable of preventing travel across the England/Scotland border.



Cllr Cammy Day, Deputy Council Leader. Photo: Martin P. McAdam

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At the Policy and Sustainability committee meeting, Depute Leader Cllr Cammy Day, asked the Chief Superintendent: "Are you enforcing the regulations that have been applied, or are you taking a light touch to it?"

"And have you had any issues that you've had to deal with?"

Chief Superintendent Sean Scott said his force is not 'proactively enforcing the travel regulations'.

He said: "The four 'E's' approach is used, where we engage, explain and encourage before getting to that fourth one of enforcement. It's still our posture nationally, that will not change.

"You've probably heard as well, in terms of travel regulations, the Chief Constable of Police Scotland, Iain Livingstone, was really clear about the fact we will not be enforcing them.

"However, if we encounter people in normal operational activity, and it transpires they've breached the travel regulations then clearly that's something we'll consider, but we're not proactively enforcing the travel regulations."

Culture Convener, Cllr Donald Wilson said: "I just wanted to emphasise the point about us all playing our part and sticking to the rules over Christmas and Hogmanay, as those of us with longer memories will remember that one of the reasons we brought in a planned Christmas and Hogmanay was because of safety fears, and that was before Covid.

"The idea that people will come out and do something is a real one, and is something we should take seriously, and we should play our part and make sure the message gets out on that one."

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