

Hot wheels for City cops

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POLICE could soon be patrolling the streets of Greater Manchester on this bizarre three-wheel electric scooter.

The T3 personal mobility vehicle was unveiled at the annual conference of the Association of Chief Police Officers which is being held in the city. Its makers say they have already had interests from a number of forces including Greater Manchester.

Some 600 of them are already being used by police across America but following its European unveiling in Manchester it is now set to cross the Atlantic and make its mark on the streets here.

It costs £4,000, can do a top speed of 25mph and has a range of more than 20 miles and costs just 20p a day to run, according to T3.

It is equipped with a police siren and blue flashing lights.

But while it may not do much for the waistline of cops on the beat it will turn heads and provide reassurance to the public over a much greater area than could be reached by bobbies on foot.

Profile

Noel Cherowbrier, managing director of T3 Motion, said: "The purpose of it is to increase the profile on the streets. OK, you're not going to be as fit driving this around than walking but the intention is to raise the profile of people and raise the profile of the police."

The T3 was invented by Korean-born American Ki Nam who wanted to see how green friendly electric motors could be adopted to different uses. He has already designed another version with a trailer which is being used by the US Postal Service.

Mr Cherowbrier added: "The first police force to use it was in Orange County. Now it's used in a lot of airports, shopping malls, pedestrian area, parks and beaches in America. This is the first time it's been shown here in Europe.

"I actually think there is going to be more demand for it in Europe as Europe is greener than America. The actual running costs of it is 20p a day. You could not out-run it, it's not really designed as a pursuit vehicle but if you wanted to go after someone who is running you could not go quicker than this thing.

"I've had some interest from police in Manchester and the Met, Dorset and Bristol. People look at it and think, wow, that's cool and it attracts attention."

PC Colin Chamberlain, 45 of Great Manchester Police, became the first British officer to test drive the scooter outside the conference hall and said: "It's great. I have a vintage Vespa scooter at home and the controls are very similar and easy to use.

Excellent

"It would be excellent to use in the city centre."

When it was suggested some police could do with the exercise rather than being ferried around on an electric scooter he said: "I agree, but I think because of the number of jobs coming in, we need to get to some of them faster. Walking on foot limits the number of jobs you can attend. With this, we could get to more jobs."

After test driving the scooter, he said: "It's very nippy and easy to manoeuvre, especially in heavy traffic. It feels quite safe. I only went up to 11mph as it is restricted here, but you can do up to 30mph, which seems quite fast.

"For city working, we can go from inquiry to inquiry and job to job and I can't see a problem with it. It seems quite good."