

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to Cabinet

On 19th June 2018

Report prepared by:
Carl Robinson, Director for Public Protection

Agenda
Item No.

Community Safety Resources

Place Scrutiny Committee – Cabinet Member: Councillor Mark Flewitt A Part 1 Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the recommendations of the 2017/18 Scrutiny Review of the Council's enforcement services and structures and to seek Cabinet's agreement to fund the proposal for additional resources to support the Community Safety Team.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes the Findings and Conclusions from the Scrutiny review;
- 2.2 Approve the additional resources and funding of £250,000 p.a. as detailed in section 4 and 7.2 of this report;
- 2.3 Approve that the new staffing requirement be positioned in the Council's Community Safety Unit.

3. Background

- 3.1 Members will be aware of growing concerns amongst residents, community groups and businesses related to community safety across the Borough, but particularly focused in central Southend and the town centre itself. Much of this concern has focused around rough sleeping, homelessness, street drinking and anti-social behaviour associated with drug related crime. There have been a number of high profile incidents in recent months some of which have attracted national media attention and sadly the most recent of which resulted in a fatality.
- 3.2 What has become clear during this period is that the Council's existing Community Safety Team is not sufficiently resourced to be able to respond and support partner agencies like the Police, as it would wish to both at a strategic and operational level.
- 3.3 The Scrutiny Project Team considered the Council's role in providing an enhanced enforcement presence across Southend in respect of:

- tackling anti-social behaviour (e.g. neighbour on neighbour disputes, low level youth issues, car cruise activity and town centre generated ASB);
- Problem solving in partnership with other agencies, in areas across the Borough where ASB/crime is prevalent (e.g. local public parks, street drinking/begging in public places);
- Resource support to high footfall events and anticipated busy days, such as Bank Holidays and regular weekends during the summer months, and the community safety cover required over most weekends on the seafront and other key areas across the town;
- In addition, the resource will integrate with existing and proposed resources in the Southend Community Safety Hub (primarily supporting Essex Police), to increase visibility and 'eyes and ears' presence on the streets, and will be armed with specific powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices under Essex Police's Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) to address cycling on the footway, littering, dog fouling, begging and graffiti (not exhaustive).

3.4 The aim of the Scrutiny Project Team was to consider existing Council resources including those in South Essex Homes as well as the remit of the Police, and to focus on how best to provide a more effective enforcement function which could best meet the demands that the town and Council were facing.

3.5 The Scrutiny Project Team considered the Council's role in providing an enhanced enforcement presence across Southend in respect of anti-social behaviour; support to high footfall events and anticipated busy days such as Bank Holidays, and how any additional resource would integrate with existing and proposed resources in the Southend Community Safety Hub to tackle and solve problems in areas affected by anti-social behaviour and crime, in partnership with other services.

3.6 The membership of the Project Team was - Councillors Ayling (Chairman), B Arcscott, D Burzotta, M Davidson, D Garston, I Gilbert, R Hadley, M Stafford and C Willis. Officer support was provided by Carl Robinson, Simon Ford, Fiona Abbott and Beverley Gallacher. The Project Team held 4 meetings in total. In support of the review, Officers visited Guildford Council in October 2017 to see how they tackle issues and how they organise their enforcement resources. They have also visited the London Borough of Southwark to consider their partnership tasking process and enforcement team set up.

4. Scrutiny Review – Findings & Conclusions

4.1 The findings and conclusions from the review are set out below. These were considered by the Project Team at its meeting on 29th March 2018 and by the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12th April 2018 at which it was also agreed that the Chairman of the Project Team would present the report to a future Cabinet meeting (Minute 908 refers).

4.2 The Project Review Team was made aware that current Council resources consisted of 2 x 0.5TE in the anti-social behaviour team (SMAART) responsible for responding to complaints and enforcement in respect of anti-social behaviour. South Essex Homes has a Warden Service that responds to issues

of anti-social behaviour in respect of the Council's social housing, which has also undergone a review.

- 4.3 Due to the limited resources currently available, it was not possible to have a regular visible presence across the Borough and activity was generally concentrated on priority response only, often in support of Police activity.
- 4.4 As part of the review of the Community Safety Hub which was being undertaken in parallel to the Scrutiny review, the Project Review Team were made aware of the proposals to integrate the additional enforcement resource as a key component of the Hub, to provide an enhanced partnership response to tackle and solve issues in respect of anti-social behaviour.
- 4.5 It was concluded that additional resource was required to provide an enhanced enforcement presence in Southend. Appendix 1 details the proposed new Community Safety Team which includes a Team Leader and six Community Safety Officers under the remit of the Group Manager Community Safety. The new team would include the current 2 x 0.5TE from the current SMAART Team. (These 2x 0.5 posts would make up one post of the six new Community Safety Officer team).
- 4.6 It was concluded that any additional enforcement resource be placed in the Council's Community Safety Group and integrated into the Community Safety Hub to provide a key response, alongside partners, to the Community Safety Partnership and other strategic partnership priorities across Southend.
- 4.7 It was concluded that any additional enforcement resource should be deployed on a flexible working arrangement to include evening and weekend response and to be considered alongside other existing Council, South Essex Homes and Police resources, to provide an out of hours response to tackling anti-social behaviour.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The recommendation supports the Council's wish and the community's expectation that it plays an increasingly more active role, particularly at a more operational level. The proposal seeks additional funding to enable this role to be undertaken by enhancing the Community Safety Team's capacity to respond to local partnership tasking requirements, and to support delivery of the community safety partnership's strategic priorities particularly around violence and vulnerability.

6. Other Options

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to invest additional resource within the financial year and wait for the proposal to be considered as part of the annual budget cycle. However, doing this would not enable the Council to respond to some immediate and pressing safety concerns in the way that it and its partners would wish and therefore this is not considered to be appropriate in this circumstance

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to Council's Vision and Critical Priorities

7.1.1 Becoming an excellent and high performing organisation.

7.2 Financial Implications

7.2.1 The proposed new Community Safety Team as proposed in Appendix 1 is estimated to cost an additional £250,000 p.a.

7.2.2 Some existing posts in the SMAART Team will be integrated into the new team, as well as some additional budget requirement. This will be 2 x 0.5 FTE staff and therefore will equate to one of the proposed six new Community Safety Officers.

7.2.3 A breakdown of the additional resource requirement is as follows:

- New additional staffing resource of 1 x Level 10 Team Leader and 5 x new Community Safety Officers at level 7.
- Allowances have been calculated on the assumption that approximately 2 members of staff will work night shifts at any one time which may attract a night time working allowance.
- Equipment of £1k per person and a residual £5k budget for uniforms etc.

Staffing (1 Team Leader and 5 new Community Safety Officers)	217
Allowances	21
Equipment	7
Uniforms	5
TOTAL	250

7.2.4 As currently no revenue or capital budgets exist for the proposals in this report, it is recommended to use £125,000 from the Business Transformation Fund to establish the running of the Team for the remainder of 2018/19. The additional ongoing full year budget of £250,000 will then be included as part of budget setting for 2019/20.

7.3 Legal Implications

7.3.1 There are no legal implications at this stage.

7.4 People Implications

7.4.1 There are no people implications at this stage.

7.5 Property Implications

7.5.1 There are no property implications at this stage.

7.6 Consultation

7.6.1 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny review team undertook a number of review meetings which gave them the opportunity to further explore community safety

issues and resource pressures, which had been identified through the joint in-depth review undertaken by the Place and Policy & Resources Scrutiny in 2016/17 (meeting with partners such as the Police, PCC, the BID, and community organisations, such as Seafront Traders, HARP, YMCA). Officers supporting the Scrutiny Review also visited other local authorities to see at first-hand how their community safety teams were resourced and operated.

7.7 Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.7.1 Providing additional enforcement resources for tackling anti-social behaviour and other crime will have a positive impact on all sections of the community.

7.8 Risk Assessment

- 7.8.1 There are no risk assessment implications at this stage.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Reports of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Review Team to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee 12th July 2017 and 12th April 2018

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Proposed New Community Safety Team Structure Chart.