

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee – 15th October 2015

Public Questions

Question from Mr Webb to the Executive Councillor for Community & Organisational Development

Question

“Does the portfolio holder agree with the statements and the effects by Nick Alston, and the former Councillor Paul Collins as he fears the stabbing in Eastwood could lead to more attacks because police can no longer afford to respond to antisocial behaviour complaints. As Police Crime Commissioner Nick Alston has warned Government cuts will mean officers will have to focus instead on the most serious incidents?”

Answer

The Police have advised that the recent incident in Eastwood, where a man suffered knife injuries in Mansell Close, was not linked to anti-social behaviour, so should not be used as a reference point in relation to the consequences of police taking a different approach to calls for low-level anti-social behaviour.

The change to the Police’s approach to low-level incidents must be framed by the significant cuts to policing and the changes to local policing that were widely reported in the media on Tuesday 6th October. Essex Police is quite simply unable to do everything for everyone when required to save £63 million over the next 5 years.

The changed approach to tackling anti-social behaviour should not be interpreted as a withdrawal from that area of business. The Police will be supported by data provided by Police headquarters, to identify repeat and vulnerable victims and will continue to work with partners to identify those situations where there is potential for serious harm, to people and communities. I have some reservations about the way that the announcement on ASB was handled by the Police, which I intend to follow up with the PCC and Chief Constable, as mentioned in my Police & Crime Panel report.

As has been the case in relation to recent problems in Sherwood Way, we will continue to work in partnership with the Police to utilise the full range of powers available to us in tackling anti-social behaviour wherever we can.