

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee – 12th October 2017
Public Questions

Question from Mr Webb to Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism & the Economy: Cllr Ann Holland

Question 1

“In May monthly performance all crimes have been reduced except Pedal Cycle theft has increased in the town centre. Who are the partners that Southend Council will talk to and when will the council be applying to the PCC or the Proceeds of Crime Act funding to purchase bicycle tagging equipment and how much will it cost?”

Answer

Essex Police and Southend Borough Council run a number of crime reduction initiatives on the High Street, in the past, these have included cycle theft. There is a current issue with insecure bikes being stolen so there has been more of a focus on providing advice re cycle security in recent weeks.

A Retail Crime Police Officer has also been appointed specifically for Southend and part of this officer's role is to look at cycle theft collectively as a problem with a view to reducing the number of offences. The Officer is also reviewing the use of Social Media to engage with local cycle groups on sites like Facebook – to raise the awareness of where and how cycles get stolen. This has generated a lot of interest from these groups who use such sites and applications. There is no current ambition to apply for Proceeds of Crime Act (PoCA) funding. Part of the issue around having a tagging system in place is that it would require some resource (a post) to manage and oversee its operation – unfortunately the PoCA funding doesn't support posts or positions.

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Question 2

“The special police officer has more powers than PCSO. How much would it cost to have a special police officer in each ward as this would be something the council could implement to tackle antisocial behaviour, crime in our neighbourhood and tackle low level crime where the police are over stretch in resource and numbers of police officer being cut of the past few years?”

Answer

The Special Police Officer has more powers than a Police Community Support Officer. The total cost for a Special (which would include training and equipment provision) would be approximately £3,500 per year.

Southend Borough Council is currently undertaking a review of its enforcement approach and activity. Any new recommendations or decisions taken from that review will be in consultation with Essex Police to ensure that current policing activity across the Borough is supported by a partnership approach to increase deployment of resources where and when it is required.

In the meantime, the Council will continue to support policing through a range of services, including the Enforcement Support Team (EST), Community Safety Unit, and CCTV.