

SOUTHEND ON SEA CITY COUNCIL
Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Meeting
16th December 2024

Question 1. from Mr Webb for Cllr Terry (Cabinet Member for Community Safety)

Can the Cabinet Member explain how Southend-on-Sea City Council are tackling anti-social behaviour issues of drunk people, homelessness and beggars in and around Southend High Street, including the role and number of street rangers and how their powers differ to those of Essex Police officers.

Response:

The Council have a range of services that tackle street related issues. This includes enforcement activity through the Community Safety Unit. Enforcement is undertaken via Fixed Penalty Notices following a breach of the Town Centre's Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), including for street drinking, begging, urinating, and/or rough sleeping on the highway.

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, the team employ additional enforcement tools such as Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs), to address disruptive individuals in the High Street, ultimately followed by Community Behaviour Orders (CBO's) which come with higher fines and/or imprisonment and are dealt with at Magistrates Courts.

The Council applies a policy of engagement and welfare support first, particularly for rough sleepers, using enforcement activity as a last option. The Council's Rough Sleeper Team work closely with the Community Safety Unit around this element, providing support services, accommodation, and help to any individuals open to engagement.

The BID Street Rangers are a team of 4 officers and deal with street

issues in similar fashion to that of the Community Safety Unit, albeit more focused on supporting businesses, administering first aid, and preventing retail crime. Their patrols focus solely on the High St, while the Community Safety Unit operate city-wide.

Both the Community Safety Unit and the BID Street Rangers differ from Essex Police in relation to powers; they are not police officers. Neither team have the power of arrest, or bring a person into custody.