

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Public Protection Streetscene and Community	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	8 October 2015

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY - POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER DEPLOYMENT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To enable Members of O&S to meet the Councils statutory obligation to undertake an annual scrutiny review of the Chorley and South Ribble Community Safety Partnership. The subject of review is PCSO deployment.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. Members undertake scrutiny of the current and future deployment of PCSO's in the Chorley area and provide recommendations to the Executive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) are employed by Lancashire Constabulary to support the work of the police particularly in the role of neighbourhood or community policing. Whilst they are not 'warranted' officers and do not have powers of arrest they do have certain powers delegated such as the issue of fixed penalty notices for certain offences.
4. PCSO numbers have increased steadily since their introduction several years ago and in Chorley the base number of Constabulary PCSO's has been around 22 in number.
5. For a number of years Chorley Council, through a Memorandum of Understanding, has augmented this base number through an arrangement with the Constabulary that originally part funded 50% of the cost of an additional PCSO.
6. In 2009 this amounted to 22 additional PCSO's at a cost to the Council of £242,000. Hence at that time Chorley area had 44 PCSO's who could be tasked and deployed on a range of duties across the Borough.
7. In 2012 we agreed with the Constabulary to part fund a further 5 PCSO's at the same rate increasing our annual contribution to £297,000.
8. This means there are currently have a total of 49 PCSO's in Chorley, of which 22 are base provision and 27 additional provision part funded by the Council.
9. Members should note that whilst our contribution of £11,000 per PCSO has remained static it now no longer provides 50% of the cost of a PCSO. In real terms it now amounts to approximately 33% of the cost. Therefore it can be argued that for the annual Council contribution of £297,000 we lever an additional £584,000 worth of resource from the Constabulary who fund the remaining 66% of the cost of each additional PCSO.
10. Members will be aware of the financial constraints being placed on the Constabulary and as a result of those constraints a review of PCSO numbers across Lancashire has been

undertaken. The review is based on risk and threat and clearly where the greatest risk and threat in terms of crime, disorder and public reassurance exists then resource will be directed there.

11. On that basis the Constabulary have determined that the optimum number of PCSO's for the Chorley area be set at 14. However given our current contributions they have indicated that they will support a total of 27 PCSO's.
12. On that basis Members could take the view that the Council is part funding all proposed 27 PCSO's or fully funding a proportion of them. Either way our contribution currently levers additional PCSO resource than would otherwise have been forthcoming.
13. In addition the Constabulary are seeking to task and deploy a small number of the PCSO resource away from geographic policing duties (i.e. patrols and visibility), to early intervention and prevention case work.
14. Members should note that the application of resources to early intervention and prevention work is one that accords with the Councils focus for resource allocation, in that directing resources upstream reduces the need for expensive crisis intervention later.
15. Members will have the opportunity to question the following as part of the scrutiny of this area of work:

Cllr Paul Walmsley – Executive Member Public Protection
 Chief Inspector Nick Emmet – Lancashire Constabulary
 DCI Jonathan Clegg – Lancashire Constabulary
 Simon Clark – Head of Health Environment and Neighbourhoods

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

16. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	√	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	√

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

17. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	√	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	√	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

BACKGROUND

18. Overview and Scrutiny Committee have a statutory obligation to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership and as a key partner the police provide significant resources to deliver a safe community across the Chorley Borough area.
19. Chorley Council has made increasing financial contributions to the police over recent years to support the provision of Police Community Support Officers.
20. In 2015/16 the Council will contribute £297,000 and to date this supports the deployment a total of 47 PCSO's.
21. Current financial constraints has led to a review of PCSO deployment by the police and assuming the Council made no contribution the level of PCSO numbers in Chorley would fall to 14 in total.
22. However due to current contribution levels from the Council the number of PCSO's in Chorley is boosted to 27 in total.

EARLY INTERVENTION

23. Early intervention work is a key aspect of community safety in terms of identifying issues that arise and putting in place appropriate interventions before they escalate to a crisis point where greater resource is required to resolve.
24. The Police Early Action team seeks to coordinate early intervention work and will be utilising a proportion of the PCSO resource in this regard.
25. This work fits well with the Councils approach to early intervention and prevention.

SCRUTINY QUESTIONS

26. Members may wish to cover the following matters as part of the scrutiny process:
 - What scope is there to review the Councils contribution to PCSO funding?
 - What information and data can be made available on PCSO activity?
 - What is the level of resource in terms of PCSO deployment to Early Action?
 - What impact is this likely to have on neighbourhood and high visibility policing?
 - What kind of work will PCSO's be involved as part of the Early Action Team?
 - How flexible are the deployment decisions made with regard to PCSO's
 - What influence can Chorley Council have on deployment decisions

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

27. The cost of PCSO's on an annual basis is £297, 000. The annual cost is funded on a one-of annual basis from the New Homes Bonus monies received. The budget provision, therefore, is not held within the Council base budget on a recurring basis. It is assumed that the funding of PCSO's is reviewed each year and the level of funding allocated in accordance with the Council's priorities.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

28. The report correctly states there is a statutory duty to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership and this is an appropriate area for the Committee to consider.

JAMIE CARSON

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROTECTION STREETSCENE AND COMMUNITY

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Simon Clark	5732	7 September 2015	O&SPCSO