

Central Bedfordshire Council

**Sustainable Communities Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

24 January 2019

Community Safety Resources

Report of: Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Executive Member for Community Services

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This report relates to a decision that is Non-Key

Purpose of this presentation

1. The purpose of the presentation is to seek support from the Committee for proposals for additional resources to support the Council's response to community safety issues in Central Bedfordshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. **Consider the information provided in the presentation**
2. **Support the proposal for additional community safety resources set out in the presentation, and recommend to Executive that the required funding be included in the Council's current MTFP from 2019/20**

Issues

2. The presentation sets out the proposed approach and the required resources for consideration.

Council Priorities

3. Developing the Councils community safety response supports the following priorities:
 - a. Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – the approach set out in the presentation will enable the Council to deliver a proactive approach to addressing a range of community safety issues that are of concern to our communities and it will also support improved community cohesion and collaboration.
 - b. Protecting the Vulnerable; Improving Wellbeing – community safety work covers a wide range of issues, some of which impact on the most vulnerable people in our communities. The approach set out will help the Council to identify vulnerability earlier and intervene.
 - c. Creating Stronger Communities – the approach set out will work in and with local communities which in turn develops a collaborative working approach. This supports communities to tackle issues in their local areas and helps to improve community cohesion, volunteering and participation.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

4. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Council has various duties with regard to crime and disorder under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Police and Justice Act 2006 and Policing & Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Financial and Risk Implications

5. The cost of the proposed approach is estimated at £500k per annum. This includes:
 - a. 12 new community safety posts
 - b. Additional responsibility costs for existing posts e.g. extra role/managerial duties etc.
 - c. Operational budget for the new approach

This additional funding would need to be managed through the MTFP process from 2019/20.

6. There would be some capital costs as the additional resources will need vehicles and it is anticipated that the costs for these would be procured from corporate capital funding for fleet vehicles. It is estimated that the capital costs for the purchase of three additional vehicles is in the region of £45k.

7. 2018 Resident survey results show that our residents feel less safe than they did two years ago. Whilst it is well known that there is a gap between perceived fear of crime and actual crime the survey results show a statistically significant reduction in people feeling safe. The reason for this is complex and it is not the case that this is purely a 'council' issue, but the Council does have a statutory duty to do all that it can to reduce crime and disorder in its area. Not responding effectively to community safety issues in our communities poses a risk to the Councils reputation and its duty to tackle crime and disorder.
8. The impact of crime and disorder on victims and communities in terms of financial loss, health and well-being and quality of life is well documented. The Council bears a proportion of these costs because many of our services directly engage with those people who are victims of crime, those who may be exploited through crime and those who are most vulnerable to crime. The impact on the life chances for young people involved in gangs, exploitation, drugs and disorder is also well documented.

Investing additional resource into tackling these issues provides the Council with an opportunity to not only improve the quality of life for residents, businesses and communities but also to reduce the financial costs of crime and disorder to the community, the Council and its partners.

Equalities Implications

9. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
10. Community safety work is wide ranging covering a multitude of issues. Many issues are often linked to protected characteristics – Hate Crime, Domestic Abuse, exploitation. The proposal set out will facilitate an improved response to identifying and tackling community safety issues where inequality is a factor.

Conclusion and next Steps

11. The presentation sets out how additional community safety resources, set within the context of an approach that considers partnership, community, intelligence and prevention, enables the council to deliver outcomes that make a tangible difference to community safety in communities and addresses the community safety concerns residents have raised in the Residents Survey.
12. The next steps will involve:
 - a. Executive approval – 2 April 2019
 - b. Develop job profiles for evaluation and begin recruitment process
 - c. Initiate the Community Safety Accreditation work with Bedfordshire Police

Appendices

Appendix A – Community Safety Resources Presentation

Background Papers

None

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