

Police

David Whitehouse, Head of Community Safety for Police

Other Bodies/Individuals

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FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee

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To Council

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To Cabinet

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To an O & S Committee

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To an Area Committee

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Further Consultation

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Agenda No

Community Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committee 18 November 2008.

Virement Proposal - Community Safety

Report of the Strategic Director for Community Protection and County Fire Officer

Recommendation

That Committee recommend the proposed virement to Cabinet as set out in Para 3 of this report.

1. Background

- 1.1 The WCC Budget settlement for this financial year included a sum of £125,000 to be allocated (via the community safety cost centre) to Warwickshire Police to establish five additional Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), specifically to address Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) within each of the five Districts/Boroughs.
- 1.2 The focus of the PCSO role is to co-ordinate problem solving activity and work with a range of partner agencies to resolve ongoing ASB issues. The officers are District/ Borough based and are line managed by the police. This initiative is in line with the county Local Area Agreement safer block priority and is a key issue throughout the county where public perception of ASB indicates ongoing community concern.

2. Current Situation

- 2.1 Police have now recruited and trained the five PCSOs, and four of them commenced work on 1st October. Members may be interested to know that the appointments are as follows.

Warwick - Joanne Graham (currently on maternity leave, returning Jan 2009)
Stratford - Claire Miller
Rugby - Rebecca Fenton
Nuneaton and Bedworth - Rebecca Twigger
North Warwickshire - Kate Martin

- 2.2 As the PCSOs have only come into post at the half year point, there will be an underspend on this allocation. The full yearly cost of employing a PCSO is £25,388.00. The shortfall of £1,940 in a full year will be picked up within the police budget.

Salary costs for this financial year will be £57,119 and some additional costs relating to initial set up and training have already been agreed for this first year. These amount to approximately £3,000.

- 2.3 There is therefore a sum of £64,881 which is available for reallocation.

3. Proposal to use remaining funding

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's views on the proposal that the uncommitted funding for this financial year be utilised on a series of alternative, one off measures, all designed to address ASB.

- 3.2 It is proposed that the first call on this funding be to fund legal measures to address a serious and ongoing problem of 'car cruising' - where hundreds of young people come together to race on public roads. This is creating significant danger for road users and misery for affected residents. The main location for this activity is around Hams Hall in North Warwickshire, although there could be displacement to other sites a Warwickshire wide approach is not pursued. Measures thus far put in place by police have not been sufficient to resolve the problem. Engineering measures around Hams Hall are not considered appropriate although discussions relating to a possible scheme to remove access to the Hams Hall site are still ongoing. However, there is evidence that the problem is beginning to spread to other roads in the area and it appears that a Warwickshire wide solution should be considered.

It is therefore proposed to put in place an injunction which prevents car cruising and which would enable quicker, more effective measures (including imprisonment and confiscation of the car) to be taken against those who breach the injunction. The injunction would prohibit car cruising across the whole county, to ensure that we do not displace the problem to another Warwickshire location. The measure has been used in other areas of the country, including Nottingham, where after a small number of early prosecutions, the deterrent effect has completely resolved the problem.

The County Council would need to take this action under Section 22 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 2 of the Local Government Act 200 and section 130 of the Highways Act 1980. The County Council would therefore need to pick up the costs of the initial application for the injunction and ongoing court action against offenders. Our estimate of the costs of the injunction and related enforcement activity over two years are that it would cost a maximum of £25,000. (This allocation, if agreed, would need to be carried forward into the next financial year if not spent before March 2009.)

- 3.3 It is further proposed that the remaining uncommitted funding be used to support additional interventions to address ASB. All of these interventions are included in the ASB strategy which has the support of both the Warwickshire

Safer Communities Partnership and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and which Cabinet approved in September 2008. This funding would allow for one or two unfunded activities identified in the action plan and for an increase in the numbers of interventions and could include:

- Community Payback scheme for graffiti removal
- Capital expenditure to 'Design out Crime' at specific vulnerable locations
- Promotion of '21 Campaign' for the purchase of alcohol
- Information for schools on Drug and Alcohol misuse
- Additional licensing Test Purchase Operations
- Contributions towards the ASB case management IT system
- A pilot scheme to address nuisance motor-cycle use.

3.4 It is recommended that the remaining funds therefore be allocated to the Community Safety budget and that spending is determined by the Head of Community Safety in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and relevant spokespersons.

3.5 Warwickshire Police have been fully involved in the development of these proposals and are supportive of them.

4. Recommendation

That the Committee recommend to Cabinet that the proposed virement as set out above be approved.

WILLIAM BROWN
Strategic Director for
Community Protection and
County Fire Officer

Shire Hall
Warwick

3 November 2008