

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 31 JANUARY 2013

**PETITION IN RELATION TO FUNDING OF POLICE COMMUNITY
SUPPORT OFFICERS**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a short briefing on the funding of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) by the County Council following the submission of a petition calling upon the County Council to reverse its decision to withdraw PCSO funding.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The following changes to PCSO funding were included in the MTFS approved by County Council in February 2012.

Financial Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Proposed funding	£525,000	£434,000	£0
Change from previous year	£0	(£91,000)	(£434,000)

Background

3. PCSOs were first introduced by Leicestershire Police in 2005/06, funded via a set of complex Home Office funding streams. In addition to the Home Office funding, the County Council have contributed to the funding of a further 50 PCSO posts since 2005/06, with a first tranche of 28 posts recruited in 2006 and 22 PCSO posts in 2006/07.
4. The £525k in the budget was made up of £210k (50% of the additional income from the reduction in second home council tax discount) and the £315k remainder being growth. The funding has remained at £525k since 2005/06, representing less than half the total gross cost of the posts.

Role of PCSOs

5. PCSOs are deployed in Neighbourhood Policing Teams across the county and their role is to support police officers and communities in addressing such issues as vandalism and minor public disorder. They deal with low level anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues which affect the lives of

residents. They can issue fixed penalty notices for cycling on the footpath, dog fouling and dropping litter. Amongst other things, they have powers to confiscate alcohol and tobacco, remove abandoned vehicles and carry out road checks.

Police and Crime Commissioner

6. The introduction of an elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in November means that the commissioning of community safety services is now a matter for the PCC. Accordingly, the County Council resolved in February 2012 to cease the financial support for PCSOs made by the County Council from 2014/15. The County Council has made clear that it regards 2014/15 as a transitional year, and is maintaining the great majority of its support funding with the small reduction recognising the County Council's overall financial position.

Recommendation

7. The Commission is asked to note the contents of this briefing paper.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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