

COUNCIL – 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR M WYATT TO COUNCILLOR A WOODMAN

“Since the precinct owners removed the barriers at the entrance of the shopping centre we have seen a dramatic increase in anti-social behaviour, vandalism and burglaries within the town centre. We have also seen an increase in incidents of bad behaviour involving scooters and cyclists within the town and several incidents where pedestrians have been hit or harassed.

Can I ask what steps the council are able to take to help address this problem including increasing cctv coverage in the town so it's easier for the police to identify the perpetrators and take appropriate legal action against those causing criminal damage and advising the precinct owners to install appropriate cctv and look at banning scooters and cyclist from their property?”

REPNSE FROM COUNCILLOR A WOODMAN TO COUNCILLOR M WYATT

“Officers are aware of one break-in and instances of windows being smashed recently as these have all been reported to the police. Other reports to the police consist of low-level vandalism incidents including the pulling up of the plants that have recently been installed. The suspects have been identified and dealt with by the police beat team.

Officers are already working closely with the shopping centre owners looking at how the CCTV coverage can be made more effective. Both the Council and the police have concluded that at least one additional camera is required to provide the necessary coverage and this is currently being looked into by the owners alongside the council's upcoming investment in cabling infrastructure to facilitate this installation. The Council provides CCTV surveillance to the shopping centre under a Service Level Agreement and a review of the processes followed by the Council's CCTV operatives is currently underway with the objective being to increase efficiency, creating more time for the operatives to proactively monitor the cameras and increase communication with both shop keepers and the police through the radios.

More resource is required in the shopping centre to respond to instances identified through the CCTV and officers are currently encouraging the shopping centre owners to increase their security presence in the centre to provide a visible deterrent and improve the ability to respond to an incident. Limited police resourcing levels means that they are unable to respond to every incident.

The Council will also continue to respond to any request from the police for CCTV footage for crime and disorder purposes.

The Council monitors the cameras between 10.30 and 18.30 Monday to Thursday and 10.30 to 03.00 on a Friday and Saturday. The hours of monitoring will be changing soon to provide better coverage early morning and on a bank holiday Sunday.”