

Committee	COUNCIL
Date	12th February 2018
Agenda Item	12

Special Constables for Halstead

Facing growing pressure from local residents on the lack of a police presence in Halstead, the council has been exploring the possibility of taking on a number of special constables. Several councils have signed up to this.

Cllr Munday and the Town Clerk arranged to meet with Les Hawkins, the Specials Supported Policing Coordinator to get full information on the topic, as various reports had been put out in the local paper which were not entirely factual.

Facts:

- Several councils have signed up to this but none as yet have functioning specials (Witham, Leigh-on-sea, Billericay, Bicknacre, Woodham Ferrers, West Bergholt)
- Special Constables are volunteer police officers with full powers to arrest
- Volunteers will need to pass a fitness test, and a written test as part of the recruitment process
- They are paid a very small duty allowance and mileage to and from work, and this amount would normally come to less than £1k per officer per year
- They are provided with training by Essex Police, and normally work 16 – 45 hours per month.
- The police are looking for the kind of people who would like to do something for their community (not for people who may see it as a backdoor into joining the police)
- They need a base in the town for their equipment- CS spray and uniform. In Halstead the Fire station might provide a suitable base.
- Generally specials will be trained for and deployed in the town in which they live

Recruitment:

- The Police, Fire and Crime commissioner has committed to achieving a headcount of 700 specials = 1 for every community
- A town the size of Halstead would generally need 2 specials – Witham is thinking of having 5
- Essex police will give help in recruiting, particularly online
- Applications can be made through the Essex Police website and via a bespoke webpage promoting the opportunity specifically for Halstead.

Funds are allocated in the HTC budget to allow for 2 specials.

Recommendation : that HTC considers whether to commit to having specials.

Sarah Greateorex

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Town Clerk