

**Marysia Rudgley**

---

**From:** Matt Cornish CH/INSP 42074231 [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 February 2019 14:23  
**To:** Marysia Rudgley  
**Cc:** Tony Walker INSP 42002525; Craig Saunders SUPT 42077475  
**Subject:** Begging consultation

Hi Marysia,

I understand the PSPO consultation is ongoing at the moment. You will be aware from previous conversations we have had, I am of the view begging should be included. I have given this view to both the leader and the opposition leader in conversations with them.

Within Harlow town centre we are experiencing an increase in begging, and I am aware of public comments around a perceived lack of police activity in this area. It's worth pointing out from the outset that my officers do, and will continue, to deal with aggressive begging within Harlow which can be demonstrated by the recent CBO we have obtained against a known offender.

My concern is around the 'lower level' begging activity, which is not being dealt with at the moment. If we take the view these beggars are vulnerable or homeless, then we are missing safeguarding and referral opportunities; if, however, some are 'professional beggars' then we are enabling their behaviour and allowing it to go unchecked, thereby creating bigger issues such as aggressive begging and ASB. My understanding from our previous conversations is this view is shared by the local homeless charity.

The reason I make this distinction is because I have been given anecdotal information that within Harlow the recent increase is in part because other towns are enforcing their PSPO's, thereby displacing a number of 'professional beggars' to Harlow.

There seems to be a misconception that simply placing begging on the PSPO means we move straight to enforcement, which is something that I think needs to be corrected. Placing it on the PSPO means we have a framework by which we can deal with an individual, and prevent the begging occurring. What the actual intervention looks like in practise can be discussed and we can easily draw up a joint policy to ensure it hits the right level of sensitivity and support. I would see it as something like the first conversation with an individual being 'welfare led' to understand their needs and signpost the correct referrals, should they be seen begging again, having received the referrals then we can consider this is a lifestyle choice and not a necessity, and deal appropriately.

In my view dealing with this at the 'lower' level means we are ensuring vulnerable people are safeguarded properly, preventing 'professional beggars' from operating in Harlow, and preventing escalation to criminal behaviour.

I understand there is a view this should be dealt with under ASB legislation, which I support (and we are doing) for the criminal behaviour, but feel it won't serve to deal with the lower level issues we are currently facing. In my view the PSPO is the mechanism by which this matter can, and should, be managed, and will best serve Harlow.

thanks

**Matthew Cornish**  
**Chief Inspector 74231**  
Harlow District Commander  
Harlow Police Station, The High, Harlow CM20 1HG

☎ 101 [REDACTED]





This email and any other accompanying document(s) contain information from Kent Police and/or Essex Police, which is confidential or privileged. The information is intended to be for the exclusive use of the individual(s) or bodies to whom it is addressed. The content, including any subsequent replies, could be disclosable if relating to a criminal investigation or civil proceedings. If you are not the intended recipient, be aware that any disclosure, copying, distribution or other use of the contents of this information is prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please notify us immediately by contacting the sender or telephoning Kent Police on 01622 690690 or Essex Police on 01245 491491, as appropriate. For further information regarding Kent Police's or Essex Police's use of personal data please go to <https://www.kent.police.uk/policy/privacy,-cookies-and-legal-notice/> or <https://www.essex.police.uk/copyright-privacy/>