

CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2020
THE KEY, 15 ST MARGARET'S PLAIN, IP4 2BB
7.00 PM

Present: Alexandra Ward Councillors: J Cook, A Rae and J Riley
St Margaret's Ward Councillors: O Holmes, I Lockington and T Lockington
Westgate Ward Councillors: J Gibbs, C Jones and C Kreidewolf
SCC Councillors: J Abbott and I Lockington

There were 18 members of the public in attendance.

55. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Chris Chambers.

56. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 be signed as a true record.

57. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

Resolved:

that the Order of Business be confirmed as printed on the Agenda.

58. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Inga Lockington, having allocated some of her SCC Locality Budget to Ipswich Community Church towards the installation of security fencing, declared an interest in Agenda Item 10 (report CAC/19/19).

59. To Confirm the Venues of Future Meetings

Resolved:

that the meetings and venues be confirmed as follows:

- **Wednesday 10 June 2020, 7pm – The Smokehouse, South Street Studios, IP1 3NU**
- **Wednesday 15 July 2020, 7pm – Alexandra ward**
- **Wednesday 9 September 2020, 7pm – St Margaret’s ward**
- **Wednesday 11 November 2020, 7pm – Westgate ward**
- **Wednesday 6 January 2021, 7pm – Alexandra ward**
- **Wednesday 3 March 2021, 7pm – St Margaret’s ward**

60. Responses to Public Questions Received and Open Discussion on Local Issues

- 60.1. The Chair introduced Inspector Vicky McParland of the Ipswich Central Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), who provided the following policing updates:
- 60.2. The Ipswich Central SNT was based on Museum Street and this office was open Monday to Saturday. PC Dominic Woodmansee was the Police Community Engagement Officer for Central Ipswich and represented the Police out in the community at schools, outreach centres and on the Cornhill, and could be contacted in relation to non-urgent community matters by emailing: CEOipcentral@Suffolk.pnn.police.uk.
- 60.3. Inspector McParland reassured the public that the two recent serious crimes in the town centre were isolated incidents and arrests had been made in relation to these offences. The current SNT resource allocation was 3 Sergeants and 12 PCs; however, only 6 of these PCs were currently available, so it was not possible to allocate resource to the ticketing of vehicles illegally entering restricted areas of the town centre.
- 60.4. For non-urgent incidents, the Police could be contacted by calling 101 or through the website: <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us/report-something>, or alternatively, through the Central Ipswich ward Councillors who have a good relationship with the Ipswich Central SNT.
- 60.5. Performance Data: Across the Southern Area, which included Hadleigh and Felixstowe, there had been a reduction in theft from vehicles; two Police Link Officers had carried out a crime prevention exercise of trying the door handles of 695 vehicles, of which 40 were unlocked and 17 had valuable items on display inside. There had also been an 18% drop in the number of residential burglaries, and similarly some of these incidents had been as a result of doors not being locked.
- 60.6. Despite the two recent serious incidents, Suffolk was ranked 6th out of 8 similar Police forces for knife crime. Inspector McParland reiterated the importance of people reporting incidents to ensure that resource could be allocated to target

- priorities.
- 60.7. Councillor Rae asked whether the drop in the number of burglaries was because the number of incidents had fallen or whether people were not reporting crimes. Inspector McParland reported that the performance data was based on reported crimes and was a 12-month comparison, and stressed the importance of people reporting incidents.
- 60.8. Councillor Cook commented on the cut in Police Officers in recent years and highlighted that the SNT was currently missing 40% of its Officers. Inspector McParland commented that resource levels were being addressed, with 20,000 additional Officers across the country, but it would take time to get this additional resource in place. Officers were allocated across the SNTs and the Response Unit based at Landmark House, but there was a 'One Team' ethos across the force with the flexibility to deploy Officers across teams to meet priorities and other initiatives.
- 60.9. Councillor T Lockington commented that it had been suggested that crimes be reported via the website in light of issues with the 101 service. Inspector McParland advised that 999 should only be used for emergencies, where a crime was still taking place and there was a threat to personal safety, otherwise 101 could be used to report non-urgent crimes, but there would not be an immediate response; alternatively non-urgent crimes could be also reported through the Suffolk Police website, which also provided links to other agencies and the option to report anonymously to Crimestoppers.
- 60.10. Councillor Holmes commented that he had reported a matter via the website and was surprised to receive a call back within a few minutes and asked whether the website was always monitored. Inspector McParland reported that incidents were graded in terms of 'threat, harm, risk and vulnerability'; the website was monitored by the Control Room and follow up contact would be made if more information was required or if a matter looked more urgent, whereas the SNT email account was only monitored when staff were in the SNT office, i.e. not 24/7.
- 60.11. Local resident: I work with the community based in Norwich Road and have noticed the turnover in Police Officers and was not sure how to get in contact as Officers move on to other posts. Inspector McParland commented that she herself had been in 4 different posts in recent times; for non-urgent matters, it was best to use the generic email address for the SNT, ipswichcentral.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk, or alternatively contact the front desk at the SNT base who could confirm who was in the office at that time.

61. Presentation: Eastern Angles Theatre Company - Gatacre Centre

- 61.1. Ms Alyson Tipping, Eastern Angles Engagement Manager, and Jess Baker, General Manager, gave a presentation about the Gatacre Centre with the following key points:

- Eastern Angles has been based on Gatacre Road since 1982, operating as a rural touring theatre company that played at 50 venues across the East of England
 - An opportunity had arisen to take over the rest of the site on Gatacre Road, currently shared with the Suffolk Records Office, which would be moving to new premises on the Waterfront later in the year, to create an arts and heritage hub to be known as the Gatacre Centre
 - The hub would provide meeting rooms, with hot-desking facilities, rehearsal space, community/gallery spaces, and provide a safe space for all in an iconic heritage building
 - The Gatacre Centre would be available to local schools and community groups, providing opportunities for youth theatre, after school classes, adult classes, including ESOL groups and hard to reach groups
- 61.2. Councillor I Lockington asked how the Gatacre Centre was being funded. Eastern Angles had a cost-neutral lease with Suffolk County Council (SCC) and had applied to the Arts Council capital fund, who had funded the New Wolsey Theatre (NWT) and Gecko Theatre last year. Eastern Angles had healthy reserves and were already looking for another performance space. As one of the 8 National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) in Ipswich, Eastern Angles received £200k of funding from the Arts Council, which covered the staff costs.
- 61.3. Local resident: Ipswich has a strong theatre scene; would there be any conflict with the NWT who were developing their own performance space? Eastern Angles worked closely with the NWT, who had strong connections with youth theatre, and were writing funding bids together. Ipswich led the way in how its cultural organisations worked together under the 'We Are Ipswich' strategy; mapping of where organisations worked with schools had been done to limit duplication.
- 61.4. Councillor Cook commented that part of the Suffolk Record Office site was not being moved to the Waterfront. The strongroom would remain with Suffolk Archives and would be available for use by other Archive Branches.

62. CAC/19/17 Spending Proposal: Jumpers for Goalposts Programme

- 62.1. Ms Colafrancesco, Sports and Leisure Manager, reported that £1,871 was requested to deliver the Jumpers for Goalposts Programme in 2020, which would be linked with the summer iCard programme to complement the summer holiday activities programme.
- 62.2. The success of the basketball and Wildcats girls' football sessions had led to these activities now being delivered as part of the mainstream junior sports programme. Additionally, 3 young people had qualified under the Sports Leadership Programme, one of whom was now employed as a coach within the Sports and Leisure Service.
- 62.3. Councillor I Lockington highlighted that there were no activities being proposed in the St Margaret's ward area and asked how young people would be

encouraged to engage in activities, especially as no play area had been delivered on the former Hayhill Allotments site.

Activities for Central Ipswich were to be delivered at Maple Park and Alexandra Park; some further outreach activities could be considered.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £1,871 from the Central Area Committee budget to deliver the programme of Easter, summer holiday and half-term activities in Central Ipswich in 2020.

Reason: The Jumpers for Goalposts programme has increased participation numbers over the last 5 years and this will allow young people across the town to participate in physical activity over the Easter, summer and half-term holidays.

63. CAC/19/18 Funding Request: Rock Paper Scissors 'Twisted History'

63.1. Ms Lulu Horsfield, Creative Director at Rock Paper Scissors Art Group, reported that Rock Paper Scissors offered quality creative art provision and inspiring after-school activities to a range of young people to enable them to tell stories through creative art.

63.2. The 'Twisted History' experience would give schoolchildren access to exhibits at Ipswich Museum to allow them to immerse themselves in history through a range of activities and create artwork from recycled materials. £1,270 was requested to enable St Helen's Primary School to take part in the pilot 'Twisted History' experience at Ipswich Museum.

63.3. Councillor Rae noted that free workshops had been provided on the Cornhill previously and asked why the proposed activities needed to be paid for. Not all of Rock Paper Scissors workshops were free, some were provided at low cost (e.g. £5 for 2-hour Saturday workshop). 'Twisted History' was being developed as part of the school creative curriculum. Some of the costs were for the development of the package and promotion to other schools in the area.

63.4. Councillor Rae queried the cost of the session leaders (£180 per person per day) which equated to a gross equivalent salary of £43,000. The Arts Council provide gradings for qualified staff costs for the education of children. Ms Horsfield commented that she had over 20 years' experience of developing high quality art tuition.

63.5. Councillor Jones commented that the pilot project would need to be affordable to schools for it to be sustainable; schools would not be able to afford £1,270 for 2 days' creative education. The pilot would be the first step of the process, which would be subject to Arts Council review, before considering the packaging and promotion of the project. Over the last year, Rock Paper Scissors have demonstrated that their projects were sustainable.

- 63.6. Councillor T Lockington commented that as this project was to be delivered as part of the school term, there needed to be better understanding of the purpose of this one-off activity and how its outcomes would be measured, and whether it was appropriate to deliver it as part of school curriculum.
- 63.7. Councillor Cook reported that there were at least 5 primary schools in Central Ipswich and asked about the cost of delivering this project to other schools if the pilot was successful.
The cost to other schools would be less as it would not include the development costs. The Arts Council were consulted with regard to costs involved and £280 per day for a session leader was not considered expensive. The project aims to deliver something not currently being provided at schools.
[** Note: This minute was subsequently amended at the meeting held on 10 June 2020.]
- 63.8. Councillor Riley commented that creative education sessions had recently been developed by Ipswich Museum and were now offered at no additional cost as part of the school visit package and asked whether schools had been consulted as to whether the proposed costs would be affordable.
St Helen's Primary, PRUs, St John's Primary, Westbourne Academy and the Arts Council have been consulted about appropriate costs, bearing in mind the experience of the staff who would be delivering the project, and the proposed costs were 20% less than the Arts Council's recommendation. The project would enable Ipswich schoolchildren to be immersed in their local history and children learnt so much in this environment; a Saturday club had already been held at Ipswich Museum.
- 63.9. County Councillor Abbott commented that school budgets were tight and the arts and history were often the first areas to be subject to funding cuts. County Councillor Abbott asked whether SCC had been approached for funding as it was the responsible authority for the provision of education.
Rock Paper Scissors had been in contact with Jayne Knight, Arts Development Manager at SCC's Suffolk Arts Service. The costs of the project had been well researched and Rock Paper Scissors had demonstrated their ability to engage with the local community.
- 63.10. Councillor I Lockington proposed that a lesser amount of £635 of funding be awarded to Rock Paper Scissors Art Group as a contribution to enable St Helen's Primary School to take part in the 'Twisted History' experience, subject to the remaining funding being secured from other funding sources, and this was agreed.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £635 from the Central Area Committee budget to the Rock Paper Scissors Art Group CIC to enable St Helen's Primary School to take part in the 'Twisted History' experience, subject to the remaining funding being secured from other funding sources.

Reason: To give the children a unique and exciting learning experience and to support the Ipswich Museum to broaden its engagement.

64. CAC/19/19 Funding Request: Ipswich Community Church Security Fencing

- 64.1. Mr Shammi Jalota and Mr Jamie Clarke, Trustees of the Ipswich Community Church, highlighted the challenges faced by the Church being located in a very deprived part of the town, but it had built a good relationship with its immediate neighbours and had operated as a night shelter and soup kitchen, in addition to providing free English classes to people for whom English was not their first language.
- 64.2. Over the last 18 months, there has been considerable antisocial behaviour and drug issues outside the front of the church, which had been reported to the Police and other agencies, but it was still causing anxiety to the local community. The proposed security measures would ease the tension of neighbours whilst still allowing the church to be opened up to enable community activities to be provided and in time raise the level of aspiration of young people in the area.
- 64.3. A planning application had been submitted to the Council for the proposed works and funding had already been secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner and from SCC Locality Budgets, and funding was being requested to cover the shortfall of £2,440.
- 64.4. Councillor Riley asked how high the proposed fencing would be. The fencing would be at head height, and whilst people could potentially climb over it, it would not be easy to do so and should provide a safe zone around the grounds of the church. The fencing would be decorative and in keep with other fencing in the vicinity. Inspector McParland reported that the designs had been drawn up in consultation with the Police's Design Out Crime Officer to minimise opportunity for antisocial behaviour and the fencing would comply with the 'Safer by Design' principles.
- 64.5. Councillor Rae commented that needles could still be deposited through the fencing and added that the fencing could merely displace problems elsewhere. Whilst this was a possibility, further work would be done to provide diversionary activities at the Church.
- 64.6. Councillor Rae asked whether this was more of a law enforcement issue and therefore a matter for the Police. The antisocial behaviour issues required a multi-agency approach involving the Church, the Police and other agencies.
- 64.7. Councillor Cook commented that the drug paraphernalia found outside the church was probably due to drug using taking place in the churchyard and added that the security fencing could act as a deterrent and would enhance the amenity of the area, subject to planning permission being granted.

- 64.8. Councillor Jones commented that whilst the fencing might displace the drug-taking and antisocial behaviour elsewhere, it was important to protect this community space.
- 64.9. Mr Rod Stone, Senior Church Leader, commented that the existing fencing had been erected as a last resort to deter the antisocial behaviour. CCTV had been installed in the area in 2012, but had had minimal impact. The current HERAS fencing was not secure and was easy to get round, resulting in public nuisance on the premises. The proposed secure fencing would incorporate sliding gates at the front of the church to enable the premises to be used by the community.
- 64.10. Councillor Cook proposed that the funding be approved subject to planning permission being granted and this was agreed.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £2,440 from the Central Area Committee budget to Ipswich Community Church as a contribution towards the installation of security fencing, subject to planning permission being granted for the proposed works.

Reason: To contribute towards the installation of increased security measures at Ipswich Community Church in an effort to deter anti-social behaviour and remove opportunities for criminal activity to occur.

65. Chair's Update on Actions from Previous Meetings

- 65.1. The Chair reported that County Councillor West had provided the following update in relation to issues arising from changes in traffic light sequencing:

Argyle Street/Grimwade Street/St Helen's Street traffic lights: Although there might be a slightly longer wait for traffic turning left, the change had created greater capacity at this junction overall as it allowed straight ahead traffic to use both lanes. Additional signs and lines have been provided as there appeared to be some confusion when the changes were initially made, but this has now settled down as road users got used to the change.

Spring Road/Warwick Road/Grove Lane traffic lights: The changes to the signals have had a positive effect, particularly for buses as this had allowed them to get out of Warwick Road more easily.

Both of these issues were discussed at a joint Officer and Portfolio Holders' meeting of Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council where representatives agreed to keep the changes that had been made.

- 65.2. The Chair reported that the Norwich Road Carnival was scheduled for Saturday 20 June 2020, 10am to 4pm, and would be part of BBC Suffolk's Suffolk Day 2020 Big Weekender. The Events Team were aware of the revised date and were working with the organisers.

66. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Ward Councillors

- 66.1. Councillor Cook reported that budget provision had been agreed to provide new play area equipment in Alexandra Park in the coming year.
- 66.2. County Councillor Abbott reported that a lorry had got stuck on a one-way street at the junction with Turret Lane, resulting in it hitting a building; Traffic Regulation Orders were being considered to prevent HGVs from accessing Lower Brook Street and Lower Orwell Street.
- 66.3. County Councillor Abbott reported that Suffolk County Council's consultation on its Children's Centre Review had now closed; the proposals had included cuts to the services offered at the Highfield, Hawthorn, Hillside and Wooden House Children's Centres and the closure of the Chatterbox Children's Centre.
- 66.4. Councillor I Lockington reported that the East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust were holding a public consultation until 1 April 2020 on the proposal to build a new centre for planned orthopaedic surgery at Colchester Hospital and encouraged people to raise any concerns they might have about the impact this could have on both patients and staff from Ipswich.

67. CAC/19/20 Area Committee Budget Update

- 67.1. Mr Fairclough, Head of Culture and Environment, reported that at the start of the meeting the Central Area Committee had an unallocated budget of £6,869.92 available to spend on its priorities.
- 67.2. Following the financial commitment of £4,946 arising from the approved funding requests, the unallocated Central Area Committee budget was now £1,923.92.

Resolved:

that the financial statement in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

Reason: To provide clear and transparent details of the amount of funds available to the Area Committee to deliver the priorities in its Action Plan.

The meeting closed at 8.37 pm

Chair