

CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 22 JUNE 2022
MUSEUM STREET METHODIST CHURCH,
17 BLACK HORSE LANE, IP1 2EF
7.00 PM

Present: Alexandra Ward Councillors: John Cook, Adam Rae and Jane Riley
St Margaret's Ward Councillors: Oliver Holmes, Inga Lockington and Tim Lockington
Westgate Ward Councillors: Julian Gibbs and Colin Kreidewolf
SCC Councillors: Rob Bridgeman and Debbie Richards

1. Election of Chair

Resolved:

that Councillor Riley be elected Chair of the Central Area Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jones and County Councillor Johnson.

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting - 2 March 2022

Resolved:

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2022 be signed as a true record.

4. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

4.1. The Chair reported that Agenda Item 10 (report CAC/22/03) had been deferred.

Resolved:

that, subject to Agenda Item 10 being deferred, the Order of Business be confirmed as printed on the Agenda.

5. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Bridgeman declared that he was an employee of Ipswich Borough Council.

6. Responses to Public Questions

- 6.1. The Chair reported that one question had been submitted in advance of the meeting by a local resident.
- 6.2. Question 1: "Please advise on how the Police and IBC Park Security work together to ensure that Christchurch Park is a safe place for all. I would like to understand this from both the perspective of the Police and the Security personnel. In addition, could you advise on how incidents are recorded by both organisations, and do you have the figures available for types of incidents and numbers? This question is specific to Christchurch Park, but could you advise if there are different arrangements in other Ipswich parks and also if the same data is available?"
- 6.3. The following response was provided by the Council's Operations Manager for Parks and Cemeteries:

Ipswich Borough Council had a team of Park Patrol Officers whose role was to signpost and assist park users, inspect play equipment, litter pick, change bins, lock and unlock sites and resolve/report any issues including ASB. The team covered all of the parks and open spaces across Ipswich and worked alongside the Grounds Maintenance Team and their associated tasks, some of which were similar, including litter picking, emptying bins, visual inspections within the parks, locking and unlocking sites.

Due to its central location, the Park Patrol Team were based within Christchurch Park and there was at least one static Officer on site at all times, seven days a week. With regards to other parks, there was a static Officer at both Bourne Park and Holywells Park during the summer months to oversee the management of water features. There was also a static Park Patrol Officer at Holywells Park at the weekends when there was no officer presence in the Stable Block.

Coordination meetings were held with the Police and Parks Team every 6 weeks where issues were discussed to ensure that the teams worked effectively together, with the next meeting due to take place on 28 June 2022. Due to other operational services that were delivered by the Council, there were other coordination meetings that took place on a regular basis with the Police, but their focus was not solely on parks matters.

Any incidents that required Police attendance were reported via online reporting, dialling 101 or 999 depending on the type of issue, and these

incidents would be recorded within the Police statistics. Other issues related to all parks and open spaces, such as lost property, dogs off leads, littering etc were recorded on Council systems and averaged 16 issues per day during the busier months when the parks were open for longer.

Parks were safe places to visit, but should there be a significant issue, which was rare, there were processes in place involving multiple agencies.

6.4. The following response was provided by Inspector Domenic Mann:

Christchurch Park was managed by the Council and its Park Rangers, who have direct radio contact with the Council's Emergency Service Centre, who in turn have direct contact with the Police. As such, any priority incidents or information could be passed immediately to the Police or vice versa to ensure that everyone was kept safe.

The Police were required to record allegations of crime in accordance with the National Crime Recording Standards, which meant that all crime data was auditable and available. Any specific requests for crime data could be made via a Freedom of Information request on the Suffolk Police website www.suffolk.police.uk or via www.police.uk.

Over the last 28 days, only 3 crimes had been recorded in Christchurch Park, a common assault between dog walkers and two common assaults that were the result of a dispute between 2 families known to each other.

7. **Policing Update**

- 7.1. The Chair introduced Inspector Domenic Mann from the Ipswich Central Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) who provided the following policing update.
- 7.2. County Lines: 4 people had been charged in relation to Class A drug dealing activities in the Broomhill Park area; additional resource had been allocated to the town centre in the evenings to provide reassurance to residents.
- 7.3. Youth ASB on Waterfront: Individuals from outside of Ipswich had been identified through liaison work with schools and this issue had been resolved.
- 7.4. Town Centre vandalism: A few incidents relating to town centre businesses had been reported, including Urban Vintage and Geek Retreat, and this had been dealt with.
- 7.5. Operation Silverton: There had been no report of sightings of street prostitution since February 2022, which was a positive result for the community.
- 7.6. The recent Domestic Abuse Act 2021 had introduced new offences relating to non-fatal strangulation or suffocation of another person and the disclosure of private photographic materials; consideration would need to be given to the impact of these types of assault in domestic abuse cases, especially in terms of

mental health.

- 7.7. No date had been set for the Police moving into the new blue-light hub on Princes Street. A new PCSO had been recruited for the Ipswich Central area in addition to the 2 PCSOs already operating in this area.
- 7.8. Councillor I Lockington highlighted that a resident had reported a tenant smoking cannabis in premises on Kitchener Road that led to a serious fire and asked whether the Police could take more action when residents reported issues. Councillor Lockington also highlighted the hazard caused by the lack of firewalls in the lofts of terraced housing that allowed fire/smoke to travel rapidly along the length of these buildings.
Inspector Mann commented that the Police would need a warrant in order to enter premises in relation to drug activities and the courts would be unlikely to grant a warrant if the issue only related to the possession of drugs; there would need to be evidence of supply/drug dealing for the Police to enter the premises.
- 7.9. Councillor I Lockington commented that travellers had broken a gate to gain access onto Christchurch Park and asked whether the Police had been involved in the response to this issue.
Inspector Mann commented that there were multi-agency policies and procedures in place to deal with travellers and the matter had been dealt with swiftly. This had been the first time that the gate had been broken to gain access to Christchurch Park and the travellers had since moved on.
- 7.10. County Councillor Richards commented that there had been a cannabis farm at the Kitchener Road premises and that the Police had been unsympathetic to tenants who had been made homeless by the fire.
Inspector Mann commented that the Police could only act if intelligence had been reported to the Police and added that they did not have any place to re-home people.
- 7.11. Councillor Holmes reported that there had been incidents of people trying car doors to gain access at night and asked whether any Police operation was in place to address this.
Inspector Mann commented that crime prevention work had previously been done in relation to this issue and this matter was still being targeted.
- 7.12. Councillor Gibbs asked whether it was the same people involved in the recent spate of town centre vandalism that had affected a number of shops and one of the owls in the Big Hoot trail (on Dial Lane) as local businesses were concerned.
Inspector Mann commented that the Geek Retreat and Urban Vintage incidents involved 2 adult males that were not known to each other, but there was no CCTV coverage of the owl statue on Dial Lane; there was no evidence to suggest that it was the same group of people involved across the incidents.
- 7.13. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that information about a cannabis factory at the Kitchener Road premises had been hearsay and added that the Police required evidence to be able to get a warrant to enter the building. The Police

- did make a request to the Council to re-home 3 people displaced by the fire, and they were placed in temporary accommodation even though there was no statutory duty for the Council to do so.
- 7.14. Councillor J Cook commented that he had attended the Crucial Crew event as part of his mayoral role where Police Officers across Ipswich engaged with Year 6 primary school pupils, and this had been a very positive experience.
- 7.15. Councillor Riley highlighted how the 2 recent fires had been made worse by the lack of firewalls in properties and asked if Fire Officers could provide advice to landlords and homeowners to highlight this risk.
County Councillor Bridgeman offered to raise this matter with the Chief Fire Officer to see if a campaign could be done to raise awareness.
- 7.16. Local resident: One of properties adjacent to the fire was a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO); would the need for firewalls be covered under an HMO licence.
Councillor Kreidewolf commented that an HMO licence was only required if an HMO was for more than 6 occupants.
- 7.17. Local resident: There were still issues on Barrack Corner and Clarkson Street with fly-tipping and littering, people gathering and street prostitution at night-time.
Inspector Mann commented that there had been no reports to the Police since February; there had recently been significant investment in CCTV cameras in this area to assist the Police, but incidents needed to be reported so that action could be taken.

8. CAC/22/01 Area Committee Budget Update

- 8.1. Mr Jupp, Assistant Director for Sport & Programmes, reported that at the start of the year the Central Area Committee had an unallocated budget of £12,078.60.
- 8.2. Mr Jupp highlighted the unspent budget items from the previous year relating to Venue Hire and Publicity and Making a Difference funding that were to be returned to the unallocated budget. The Committee was asked to consider how much funding to allocate to establish a Making a Difference (MAD) budget for 2022/23.
- 8.3. Councillor Riley queried whether all of the MAD budget for 2021/22 had been spent. Mr Jupp highlighted that the MAD budget allocated for Alexandra ward had been spent, but there had been funding unspent for the other 2 wards.
- 8.4. It was agreed that the Making a Difference budget for 2022/23 be set at £1,500.

Resolved:

that the Committee:

- a) note the financial statement in Appendix 1 to the report;
- b) approve the return of the unspent budgets to the main unallocated Central Area Committee budget as follows:
£700 Venue Hire [2021/22];
£566.66 Making a Difference [2021/22];
- c) allocate £500 per ward, a total of £1,500, from the Central Area Committee budget to establish a Making a Difference (MAD) budget for 2022/23.

Reasons:

- a) To provide clear and transparent details of the amount of funds available to the Area Committee to deliver the priorities in its Action Plan;
- b) To release any Central Area Committee budget funding where there was no further expenditure anticipated;
- c) To allow the Central Area Committee to devolve up to 10% of its annual budget to support small scale community initiatives.

9. **CAC/22/02 Funding Request: Lofty Heights**

- 9.1. Mr Garry Mills, CEO of Lofty Heights, reported that there were high levels of deprivation and hoarding within Ipswich and funding was being sought for a project to provide de-cluttering and deep cleaning services where this was not covered by statutory organisations. Most jobs would take up to one day's work and could include clearance of loft spaces, sheds and garages and facilitating bulky waste removal. Referrals were received from various agencies, such as GP services, Citizens Advice and Social Services, and last year 51 jobs were carried out within Central Ipswich. £2,000 was being sought from each of the Area Committees.
- 9.2. Councillor T Lockington highlighted that this was not just a housing issue, but also a social/health issue and asked whether other agencies recognised this service and were willing to offer support.
- 9.3. Mr Mills reported that Lofty Heights worked with the Fire Service where hoarding had created a fire risk; with hospitals as part of the discharge process by initially tidying properties in preparation for people to return home (only up to 4 hours was funded); and visiting homes to provide initial support before signposting onto other services, including Hoarding Prevention Counselling.
- 9.4. Councillor I Lockington noted that food parcels had been delivered during the pandemic and some items were not used and were subsequently hoarded, and asked whether non-perishable goods could be re-distributed if still in date. Councillor Lockington added that she could be approached for SCC locality funding.
- 9.5. Mr Mills commented that a lot of the food waste was out of date, but where it could be used, it was passed onto other agencies or charities in the VCSE network.

- 9.6. Councillor J Cook highlighted that from the referral graphs that there was greater usage within SW Ipswich, which covered 4 wards rather than 3, and requested that future applications across multiple areas be allocated funding either based on usage or the number of wards.
- 9.7. Councillor Rae asked how much funding was spent in Ipswich.
- 9.8. Mr Mills reported that funding was ring-fenced to each project, e.g. £20k Carers project covered all of Suffolk, £10k UK Power Networks for energy saving efficiencies was split across East Suffolk and West Suffolk. Lofty Heights was a not-for-profit organisation with any revenue reinvested into its services; most of Lofty Heights' work was currently done in East Suffolk, but services were now moving into West Suffolk. Often a small amount of funding was used to carry out initial works to enable signposting onto other organisations.
- 9.9. County Councillor Bridgeman asked what happened to items removed from cluttered homes and whether Lofty Heights had any links with charity shops.
- 9.10. Mr Mills reported that a lot of items went into skips, but materials were reused/recycled wherever possible; scrap metal could be used for vehicle maintenance; white goods were held for up to 4 weeks for customers and then passed onto charity shops; likewise, furniture/books in good condition were passed to charity shops.
- 9.11. County Councillor Bridgeman commented that he could also be approached for SCC locality funded for the Bridge area.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee allocate £2,000 from the Central Area Committee budget to Lofty Heights to enable the provision of urgent practical help to people who were not eligible for funded support.

Reason: To support people on the outskirts of support agencies who have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

10. CAC/22/03 Funding Request: Emmaus Suffolk

This report was deferred.

11. CAC/22/04 Funding Request: Venue Hire and Publicity Budget 2022/23

- 11.1. Mr Turnbull, Community Engagement Officer, reported that £500 was requested towards the costs associated with advertising and venue hire for the Central Area Committee for 2022/23.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee allocate £500 from the Central Area Committee budget for costs associated with advertising and venue hire for the Central Area Committee for 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Reason: To facilitate the good running of the Area Committee, meeting the goal to devolve power closer to the people.

12. CAC/22/05 Area Action Plan

- 12.1. Mr Turnbull reported that the priorities of the Central Area Committee Area Action Plan needed to be reviewed for 2022/23. Demographic information relating to the 3 wards had been provided, along with the previous year's Area Action Plan, to help inform the priorities for 2022/23.
- 12.2. Councillor I Lockington commented that previously, before the pandemic, ward Councillors had met with Officers to discuss whether the priorities were still relevant.
- 12.3. Councillor J Cook commented that funding decisions tended to be taken on a piecemeal basis across the year and asked if there was any breakdown of spend across the priorities; for example, how much had been spent on crime issues in the last year.
- 12.4. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that the priorities were broad enough to cover most of funding applications, but there would still be some merit in a brief meeting, say one hour, to discuss the priorities.
Councillor Gibbs concurred that this would be of some value.
- 12.5. Councillor I Lockington proposed that the report be deferred to the next meeting to enable a meeting to be held with Officers and ward Councillors to discuss the priorities for the Area Action Plan, and this was agreed.

Resolved:

that the Area Action Plan report be deferred to the next meeting to enable a meeting to be held with ward Councillors.

Reason: To allow further consultation with ward Councillors to take place.

13. Chair's Update on Actions from Previous Meetings

The Chair reported that there were no updates to feedback from previous meetings.

14. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Councillors

- 14.1. County Councillor Bridgeman reported that SCC were holding a listening event on the Cornhill on 23 June 2022, 11am to 1pm, as part of its 'Local Matters – We are Listening' consultations.

- 14.2. Councillor Kreidewolf reported that a 'Power of Youth' event had been held on Christchurch Mansion where young people were given the opportunity to give their views, including local issues such as crime; a street party celebrating the Queen's Platinum jubilee had been held in the Eastern Angles car park; and the walls at Maple Park had been prepared ready for the new mural.
- 14.3. Councillor Gibbs reported that the multi-agency meetings to address issues on Charles Street and Fonnereau Road had been reinstated to tackle noise and ASB issues; there had already been some good intervention work by SCC Education Welfare Team and Police patrols were ongoing in this area.
- 14.4. County Councillor Richards reported that a Community Speedwatch group had been set up in St Margaret's ward and trained by the Police and this was going well. Exploratory works had been undertaken on Borrowdale Avenue for 3 new trees on the highway, of which 2 would be ok, but the third would need to be planted elsewhere; the trees would be planted in November and people had offered to be tree wardens.
- 14.5. Councillor T Lockington commented that the community intelligence from residents had been a key factor in the successful joint working with the Police that had led to prosecutions relating to drug activities.
- 14.6. Councillor I Lockington highlighted that the Council's Executive had approved proposals to change the on-street parking tariffs on Fonnereau Road and extend the charging hours from 9am to 6pm to 8am to 8pm. Councillor Lockington commented that residents currently parked on Fonnereau Road for free after 6pm and extending the charging hours to 8pm could lead to other vehicles parking on the single yellow lines on Fonnereau Road after 6pm, leaving residents with nowhere to park on their street for free. Councillor Lockington added that residents had similar parking issues on Lower Brook Street at the weekend with people parking on single yellow lines and suggested that IBC and SCC work together on these issues.
- 14.7. Councillor J Cook commented that food poverty was becoming more prevalent with an increased number of referrals to food banks this year.
- 14.8. Councillor Riley reported that a successful Queens Platinum Jubilee tea party event had led to the creation of a new community hub at the Marlborough Bowling Club and there were plans to introduce social bowling on Fridays.

15. Dates and Times of Meetings for 2022/23:

The Chair reported that the dates and times of the meetings for 2022/23 were listed on the agenda, with the next meeting due to take place on Wednesday 7 September 2022 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Chair