

CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 4 JANUARY 2023
MUSEUM STREET METHODIST CHURCH,
17 BLACK HORSE LANE, IP1 2EF
7.00 PM

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

40. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Cook and Councillor T Lockington.

41. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting - 2 November 2022

Resolved:

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

42. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

Resolved:

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

43. Declarations of Interest

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

44. Responses to Public Questions

44.1. A resident referred to a streetlight that had not been fixed in 6 months and commented that this would add to the perceived fear of crime mentioned at the

last meeting.

Councillor Inga Lockington commented that this streetlight had been reported previously and added that she had reported it again and would follow this up with Suffolk County Council (SCC) in the next few days.

45. Policing Update

- 45.1. The Chair introduced Inspector Domenic Mann from the Ipswich Central Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) who provided the following policing update.
- 45.2. Since the last meeting there had been no incidents reported relating to street prostitution or serious gang-related crime, and no significant criminal activity reported in the town centre during the busy Christmas/New Year party season. The recent spree of dwelling burglaries had reduced significantly following the arrest of 2 offenders.
- 45.3. ASB issues: a tenant had been evicted from Mountbatten Court in response to drug-related criminal activity; an arrest had been made relating to drug offences and intimidation at St Lawrence Church/Buttermarket; alcohol-related ASB was being addressed on St Matthew's Street/Civic Drive; the Council's Community Safety Team had been tackling drug-related activity at Woodville Road; and intelligence was being sought in relation to drug-related activity on Wells Close.
- 45.4. Novotel Hotel: whilst there had been a few incidents relating to the change of use, there had been no significant impact on the Police. A second Police Community Engagement Officer would be starting next week to provide a presence in target areas and help people feel safer.
- 45.5. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that parking enforcement was a low priority for the Police as most enforcement was delegated to the Council, but there were frequently vehicles parked on Westgate Street that could not be enforced by the Council as SCC had not enacted the town centre Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Councillor Kreidewolf added that PC Austin had requested that the tenants at St Lawrence Church switch off the free WiFi as young people were gathering in the churchyard to use the WiFi, and highlighted that there could be similar issues with the proposed BT WiFi hubs in the town centre, which had been approved by Planning Officers.
- 45.6. Inspector Mann commented that he would look into the parking on Westgate Street which was probably related to people visiting the Mosque. Inspector Mann commented that the proposed BT Hubs were more open and exposed than St Lawrence Church and BT would be able to switch off the WiFi; this issue had been raised by the Design Out Crime Officer.
- 45.7. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that the Council's Chief Executive and Leader had met with their counterparts at SCC to expedite the implementation of the town centre TRO.
- 45.8. Councillor Jones commented that although it had been relatively peaceful at the Novotel hotel, there had been some protestors with unpleasantly worded

placards regarding the legality of the asylum seekers.

- 45.9. Councillor Inga Lockington commented that the Police had not responded to an elderly resident regarding a burglary within the given timescale and asked if there was a process in place to ensure that the Police update residents in a timely manner.

Inspector Mann commented that when an incident was logged on their system, notifications were produced to provide an update to the victim and if not actioned, a task would be sent to the supervisor; however, the reminder could be acknowledged even if it had not been possible to contact the resident. Councillor Lockington added that it was important to keep residents updated even if no action had been taken.

- 45.10. Councillor Rae commented that he would raise the matter of switching off the free WiFi at the proposed BT booths with the Planning Officers.

46. Chair's Update on Actions from Previous Meetings

- 46.1. The Chair reported the following updates to the meeting:

46.2. Performance of the Police 101 Service

The following response was received from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC):

The Constabulary Contact and Control Room (CCR) continued to experience a significant rise in demand in both 101 and 999 calls at all times of the night and day. Whilst any delay in call answering was understandably frustrating, the following work had been undertaken to try to improve the service.

The Constabulary had recruited additional call takers during the last 12 months and further vacancies were expected to be filled throughout the year because of retirements and career progression. In addition to the call answering function, the Constabulary operated a Crime Coordination Centre that allowed officers and staff to deal with incidents with members of the public where the specific attendance of an officer was not needed.

The PCC had announced that improvements to the 101 service would be fundamental as part of the funds generated via the precept increase, which would fund the recruitment of additional staff to deal with calls and contact from the public more quickly and manage resources responding to calls for service more effectively. Additional Police Sergeants would be recruited to manage operations and the Constabulary would be able to create a digital desk to ensure that it had the required capacity and capability to deal with public expectation regarding online and social media contact. This recruitment was ongoing, with the first of 5 Sergeants joining the CCR in July 2022, with the remaining Sergeants to join in due course. The CCR would have an increase in numbers and enhanced training which would see call takers dealing with some 101 calls rather than placing them into a queue.

This comprehensive and ambitious programme would ensure that the CCR continued to be able to deliver these essential services effectively and efficiently. The programme would be led by the Assistant Chief Constable, with improvements being implemented in a sequenced and managed way to maintain business continuity.

Alternatively, details on how to contact the Constabulary electronically could be found on the Contact Us page of the Suffolk Police website:

<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us>.

46.3. Air Quality and Anti-Idling matters:

The following responses were received from County Councillor Paul West:

County Councillor West did now have responsibility for Air Quality matters within his SCC Cabinet responsibilities.

What was being done to address air pollution issues:

- SCC Public Health and Communities had co-produced with colleagues in the Growth, Highways and Infrastructure directorate a SCC Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan, which consolidated SCC's levers around air quality. It was anticipated to be published in January 2023 and progress against the Action Plan would be monitored and updated regularly.
- Some public engagement work, including a survey and an event held in Ipswich town centre with an evening webinar on 24 October, had been conducted to raise awareness of the health impacts of air pollution and to understand the public's views on air quality in Ipswich and where there might be potential for behaviour change initiatives. A public engagement plan would be developed in January 2023 with system partners, informed by the findings of this initial engagement work, to set out how SCC would target and engage with local communities in Ipswich and more widely across Suffolk to deliver tailored advice and behaviour change initiatives.
- System partners had agreed to scope and explore a Suffolk Air Quality network to facilitate increased collaboration across the system and improve engagement with local communities; this work would commence in January 2023.

Anti-Idling Policies:

There was no anti-idling policy in place for the Central Ipswich Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's); however, SCC had developed resources with partners to work with schools across Suffolk to promote anti-idling campaigns outside schools, encouraging drivers to switch off their engines when stationary. The relevant legislation allowed the designating authority for the AQMA's to apply for an anti-idling zone and to enforce this by way of fixed penalties; this would be Ipswich Borough Council as the designating authority for Ipswich.

- 46.4. A resident asked whether the Council would consider implementing an anti-idling zone within the AQMAs in Ipswich and highlighted the following events taking place:
- Love Nature events at Christchurch Mansion, 10am-3pm, on 14 and 15 February 2023
 - Earth Day on Saturday 22 April 2023

47. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Councillors

- 47.1. County Councillor Bridgeman reported that he was trying to get improvements to the lighting on the Waterfront, especially as some of the lighting was solar powered and not effective in the winter, to make the area feel safer to walk around at night.
- 47.2. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that he and Councillor Jones had recently visited the Clarkson Street area with the Council's new ASB Officer and had been impressed by their 'can do' attitude.
- 47.3. Councillor Rae thanked SCC for the prompt response to the dangerous layout of planters on the Milner Road closure after a cyclist had ridden into one of the planters.
- 47.4. Councillor Inga Lockington commented that some residents had been littering and leaving bags of waste on the street and highlighted that the letters and information sent out to residents were written in English and might need to be provided in other language formats for non-English speaking residents.
- 47.5. County Councillor Richards commented that the Police were now responding to the ASB experienced on Kitchener Road.
- 47.6. Councillor Riley commented that she had reported the rubbish in the Cox Lane and Tacket Street car parks to NCP as it was their responsibility to keep these sites tidy.
- 47.7. A resident asked whether the fines for fly-tipping were paid to the Council and asked whether a sign indicating the maximum fine for fly-tipping would act as a deterrent.
- 47.8. Councillor Jones commented that the Council would prosecute for fly-tipping offences, but there needed to be robust evidence of the offence and then the outcome would be dependent on the decision of the Magistrates' Court.
- 47.9. Councillor Gibbs added that the Council had to weigh up the potential outcome of any prosecution against the cost of taking the matter to Court as if the prosecution was to fail, the costs would be borne by taxpayers; however, the Council did still take some cases to Court.

48. CAC/22/12 Area Committee Budget Update

- 48.1. Mr Blofield, Director for Finance and Housing, reported that following the updates from the previous meeting, the Central Area Committee had an unallocated budget of £3,845.26 available to spend on its priorities.
- 48.2. Councillor Inga Lockington confirmed that she had allocated some of her SCC locality budget to Emmaus Suffolk towards the extension of their Well-being Hub provision.

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.

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

The Chair highlighted that the next meeting was due to take place on Wednesday 1 March 2023 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 7.37 pm

Chair