

# **CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2023**  
**REG DRIVER VISITOR CENTRE,**  
**CHRISTCHURCH PARK, IPSWICH, IP4 2BX**  
**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, Carole Jones and Colin Kreidewolf  
SCC Councillors: Rob Bridgeman and Debbie Richards

**17. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**18. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**Resolved:**

**that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023 be signed as a true record.**

**19. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business**

**Resolved:**

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

**20. Declarations of Interest**

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

**21. Responses to Public Questions**

21.1. The Chair reported that 1 question had been received in advance of the meeting.

21.2. Question 1: Based on the 'on-line' reporting system - could the Council advise me which end of Ann Street has the most incidents of vehicles parking on the pavement in the street. Is it the Orford Street end or the Cumberland Street end? I ask this as it may have an impact on the decisions being made about resident parking zones and the use of single and double yellow lines in the street.

21.3. The following response was provided by the Council's Parking Services Manager:

The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers only have powers in relation to vehicles contravening yellow lines. The issue of parking on pavements was an obstruction issue and would be a matter for Suffolk Police to enforce, but this would depend on their available resources.

In terms of parking enforcement of yellow lines, it would not be possible to determine from the online reporting system which end of Ann Street was more of an issue, as the recording of the contravention would only be recorded as Ann Street, for example.

Historically from an enforcement point of view, Orford Street had been the more prominent location where members of the public tended to park illegally.

For the year 2022/23, on Ann Street there were 142 recorded incidents, leading to 65 penalty charges notices (PCNs) being issued, whereas on Orford Street there were 344 recorded incidents, leading to 166 PCNs being issued.

For this year to date, on Ann Street there were 88 recording incidents, leading to 53 PCNs being issued, whereas on Orford Street there were 204 recorded incidents, leading to 106 PCNs being issued.

## **22. Policing Update**

22.1. The Chair introduced PC Gary Austin, Link Officer, from the Ipswich Central Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) who provided the following policing update.

22.2. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Westgate ward: The Police were collaborating with Council Officers to address ASB issues being caused by young children and were also working with Handford Hall and St Matthew's Primary Schools to engage with these children. Multi-agency work was also being undertaken with the Eastern European community to address ASB issues at the London Road flats.

22.3. There were still issues with large groups of young people congregating around Suffolk New College/University of Suffolk/Waterfront; CCTV and BodyCam footage had been used to identify those involved and the Police had contacted their parents.

22.4. ASB at St Lawrence's Church had been reduced through the use of CCTV and rough sleeper outreach; however, the NCP car park and Cattle Market area

- was now a priority. Patrols were also continuing on Wingfield Street and there had been a couple of incidents on High Street, which had been resolved.
- 22.5. Cuckoo addresses were continuing to be monitored and the Council's Housing ASB Team were dealing with issues at properties in Wellington Court, Blenheim Court and Rendlesham Court, with potential evictions being considered in some cases.
- 22.6. The Kestrel Team and PCSOs had provided an increased presence in the town centre over the summer to help reduce ASB and violent crime and this had been appreciated by businesses.
- 22.7. Councillor Rae asked whether some statistics could be provided to reassure the public.  
PC Austin commented that data could be provided; for example, incidents around McDonalds/St Lawrence's Church had gone down from 140+ to 70. PC Austin would feedback this request to Inspector Turner for the next meeting.
- 22.8. Councillor Inga Lockington asked whether County Lines dealers were still operating in Ipswich or whether it was mostly local drug dealers.  
PC Austin commented that both were in operation, but it tended to be more dispersed across local dealers; Operation Velocity and Operation Hull continued to tackle drug related crime; there were 4 known cuckoo addresses in Central Ipswich, with 2 more addresses under watch.
- 22.9. Councillor Inga Lockington asked whether County Lines was still coming into Ipswich via trains.  
PC Austin commented that drug dealers could use any mode of transport; the Police held intelligence on known vehicles associated with drug crime and utilised ANPR to track these vehicles entering Ipswich. Suffolk Police also worked with the British Transport Police who had their own resource dedicated to tackling County Lines.
- 22.10. Local resident: There has been a lot of drug issues at Wellington Court; what is being done to address this?  
PC Austin commented that the Police were working with the Council's Housing ASB Team; tenants would be offered support, but if they did not engage, then prosecution would be considered, subject to evidence being available, which could lead to eviction.
- 22.11. Local resident: A chain link fence between properties on London Road has been stolen.  
PC Austin commented that he was not aware of any such theft, but some parts of London Road were covered by the Ipswich West SNT.
- 22.12. Local resident: Is Handford Hall Primary School considering a ban on parents dropping their children off at school by car?  
PC Austin was not aware of this proposal but would be meeting with the Headteacher of the school shortly; there had been parking issues in nearby

Surrey Road and Sirdar Road.

22.13. Local press: Why is Police resource stretched thin?

PC Austin commented that all Police forces were busy due to the range of services provided and the area covered; the Police also needed to be able to respond to emerging issues e.g. Westgate ward and town centre ASB. Most of the cost of policing was spent on staffing, and resources had to be allocated as effectively as possible. New Officers would be joining Suffolk Police shortly.

22.14. Councillor Jones commented that there were now 2 additional PCSOs in the town centre, part-funded by the Council, and their presence had been welcomed by the market traders.

22.15. Councillor Gibbs expressed disappointment at the delayed Police response to a serious incident he had reported recently when there was no response for 24 hours.

PC Austin commented that ideally contact should have been made within the hour and added that failure to respond in a timely manner could deter the public from reporting incidents.

## **23. Beat the Street Initiative - Verbal Update**

23.1. Ms Kate Maynard, Health and Well-Being Project Officer, reported that the Beat the Street initiative would be delivered by the Intelligent Health Team and would utilise a 6-week game to encourage greater activity levels through walking. Participants would compete by collecting points, by tapping a sensor on beat boxes located across the town either with a smart card or the phone app, and would be able to follow their progress on leader boards. Prizes would also be made available to encourage involvement and keep people motivated.

23.2. There would be 6 themed weeks:

- Week 1 – Go Play – introduction to the game
- Week 2 – Go Explore – exploring local heritage/arts venues
- Week 3 – Go Travel – promoting active travel
- Week 4 – Go Wild – exploring parks and outdoor spaces
- Week 5 – Go Active – promoting activity providers
- Week 6 – Go Celebrate – double points week to motivate

23.3. Participants could either compete as individuals or as part of a team, and there would be a separate competition for all schools in Ipswich. Every school pupil would receive a free pack with their own smart card, plus a spare smart card for parents/carers. Maps showing beat box locations and supporting information would also be available from 10 distribution points (i.e. 2 locations per area) and an Engagement Coordinator would be assigned to work with schools.

23.4. The aim of the project was to involve approximately 14,000 people and 43 schools in Ipswich. The game stage would start in February 2024 and 140 beat boxes would be installed across the town. Progress updates would be provided

for key stakeholders and Councillors.

- 23.5. Councillor Rae asked whether this initiative would be accessible to people with disabilities.  
Ms Maynard confirmed that the scheme would be inclusive to all who could access the beat boxes and participants could either compete individually or as part of a team.
- 23.6. Councillor Inga Lockington asked whether people needed a smart phone to participate.  
Ms Maynard reported that people could either participate by using the free smart card or an app on their smart phone.
- 23.7. Councillor Tim Lockington asked what would happen to all the beat box equipment after the project ended.  
Ms Maynard highlighted that the equipment was owned by Intelligent Health and would be installed by them and then removed after the project so that it could be used in other towns.
- 23.8. Local resident: How would this scheme be advertised to the public?  
Ms Maynard reported that a communication plan would be developed and would utilise websites and social media platforms to publicise the project.
- 23.9. Councillor Jones asked whether public health data could be used to target those people experiencing poor health and deprivation.  
Ms Maynard commented that a Steering Group would be set up from key organisations to deliver the project and sustain the health and well-being outcomes; population health data could be used to target those areas most in need.

## **24. CAC/23/07 Area Committee Application Form and Funding Guidelines**

- 24.1. Ms Beth Robinson, Community Engagement Officer, reported that the Area Committee Funding Guidelines and Application Form had been reviewed and changes were proposed to provide greater clarity and encourage applicants to provide the requisite information to support their bids.
- 24.2. The proposed changes were documented in Appendix 3 and included:
- Greater focus on the use of volunteers
  - Under 'What we don't fund': definition of core funding and the link to a map showing the 5 areas to ensure that projects were specific to a given area
  - Requirement for applicants to attend each Area Committee that funding was being requested from, and request that applicants provide feedback on the outcome of their project to the Area Committee
  - Multi-area bids: provide reasons why the project would be relevant to more than one area and the rationale for the allocation of funding across areas

- 24.3. Ms Robinson confirmed that if the revised documents were approved, they would be uploaded onto the Council's webpage.
- 24.4. Councillor Jones commented that some of the wording could be simplified as not all applicants were well versed in the English language. Councillor Jones also queried whether a wordcount of 500 words was too high as applicants might feel obliged to pad out their responses. A wordcount of 300 would encourage applicants to be more concise and bullet points could be used. Ms Robinson commented that applicants were offered support if they had language difficulties and the responses given to the questions were summarised equitably in the covering report regardless of the length of response.
- 24.5. Councillor Holmes asked whether any applications were turned down as they didn't meet the criteria and if this was reported to the Area Committee. Ms Robinson reported the Community Engagement Officers would check the applications to make sure all the required information had been provided; some applicants had been asked to provide further information, for example, evidence of the benefit that their project would provide for the area, but had not responded to that request.
- 24.6. Councillor Tim Lockington highlighted that Area Committees would not fund national charities; however, Headway Suffolk, whilst affiliated to the national Headway charity, was hyperlocal. Ms Robinson commented that hyperlocal charities could be checked by the Council's Legal Team to confirm whether they would be eligible. Ms Hanman, Community Engagement Officer for West Ipswich, added that if the charity had its own bank account that was local to the area covered, then it could be eligible for Area Committee funding.
- 24.7. Councillor John Cook commented that Headway Suffolk did operate as a charity in its own right; the same was true for individual Scouts Groups.
- 24.8. County Councillor Bridgeman asked what had been changed in relation to multi-area bids. Ms Robinson commented that where an applicant was seeking funding from more than one area, they would need to demonstrate the need/benefit of their project to each area in line with the relevant Area Action Plan and be able to quantify the proportion of funding to be allocated to each area funded, for example, based on postcode data of participants.

**Resolved:**

**that the Area Committee Funding Guidelines, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, and the Area Committee Application Form, as attached at Appendix 2 of the report, be adopted.**

Reason: To clearly set out the approach to providing financial support via Area Committee funding.

## **25. CAC/23/08 Area Action Plan**

- 25.1. Ms Robinson reported that the Indices of Multiple Deprivation data had not been refreshed since 2019, but the data supplied by the Suffolk Office of Data Analytics (SODA) was based on the 2021 Census data. The Council had recently adopted its new Corporate Strategy, replacing the priorities of its former Corporate Plan.
- 25.2. Councillor Jones proposed that the priorities based on the Domains of Deprivation be carried forward from last year's Area Action Plan together with the fourth priority from the new Corporate Strategy, and this was agreed.

### **Resolved:**

**that the following priorities be adopted as the priorities of the Central Area Committee Area Action Plan for 2023/24:**

- **Domains of Deprivation: 'Crime', 'Education, Skills and Training' and 'Health and Disability'**
- **Corporate Strategy: 'Promoting Community Wellbeing and Fairness in Ipswich'**

Reason: Priorities provide the basis of an action plan that will enable the Area Committee to clearly communicate its vision and priorities for the area and will help demonstrate how its budget is being allocated to deliver the priorities set for the area.

## **26. Chair's Update on Actions from Previous Meetings**

- 26.1. The Chair commented that there were no actions to update on from the previous meeting.
- 26.2. Mr Mark Whiting, Head of Vibrant Town Services, provided an update on the Family Fun Day held in Alexandra Park on 28 July 2023. Over 1,000 people attended the event, which utilised different areas of the park, including the new play area. The fun fair elements were offered at reduced cost in addition to the free activities. There were opportunities for the public to speak with representatives from the Police, Community Engagement and Sports & Leisure and the public feedback on the event had been positive. The Events Team would continue to review these events to ensure that they provided active and engaging facilities in accessible local settings in a cost-effective manner.
- 26.3. Councillor Kreidewolf highlighted the benefit of the Family Fun Days and free events on the Cornhill to Ipswich residents, especially the location of these events across the town as not all families could afford transport to activities, e.g. to attend sports centres to use free i-cards.  
Mr Whiting added that the aim of the Family Fun Days was to provide activities within walking distance of families.
- 26.4. Councillor John Cook commented that he had attended with his grandchildren and was pleased to see the range of free activities for children, including a well-

received children's entertainer and the new play area.

- 26.5. Councillor Riley added that it had been useful to have free activities to occupy children whilst the parents were speaking to the community partners in attendance.

## **27. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Councillors**

- 27.1. County Councillor Bridgeman reported that SCC had signed a new 20-year contract with Milestone to deliver highway projects and improvements and a separate 7-year contract with J McCann for streetlighting. County Councillor Bridgeman was awaiting a progress update on the new school to be delivered on Carr Street, previously due to be completed by September 2025; this development would help regenerate that area of the town centre. Councillor Kreidewolf reported that a planning application had been submitted to vary the planning consent for the school to allow the 1960's mural to be replicated in the foyer vestibule, with the original mural to be taken down and moved elsewhere. Councillor Jones added that the mural had recently been listed by Historic England.
- 27.2. County Councillor Bridgeman commented that he would be raising the issue of the infrequent cutting of grass verges with the SCC Portfolio Holder. A resident added that there were also issues with overgrown weeds on pavements and in drainage gullies.
- 27.3. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that he had seen an increase in housing casework, including tenants at risk of eviction in the private rental sector. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that PC Austin had been helpful with an issue affecting Orford Street residents, which was now being tackled by partner agencies.
- 27.4. Councillor Gibbs added that some private landlords had been taking a more than robust approach to their tenants and thanked the Council's Housing Officers for their support to those at risk of eviction.
- 27.5. Councillor John Cook reported that there had been ongoing speeding issues on Cauldwell Hall Road, which he had raised with PC Austin and County Councillors, and a partial solution was being considered.
- 27.6. Councillor Rae highlighted that there was an increasing demand for Council housing from private tenants as Council housing was of a better standard, with cheaper rents and better support for its tenants.
- 27.7. Councillor Holmes commented that there had been an increase in large mastiff-type dogs in parks and asked if the Council's dog control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was working, i.e. had there been a reduction in complaints. Ms Stannard, Head of Parks and Cemeteries, commented that there had been a reduction in complaints about dogs off lead, even though there had been some issues with people removing the PSPO signage. Where there had been



reports of unruly dogs, people were encouraged to give information about the time and location so that the Park Patrol Team could target patrols at those times to tackle any issues. There had been one dog walker who was walking 5 or 6 mastiff dogs together who had been requested to walk the dogs in smaller groups.

- 27.8. Councillor Inga Lockington commented that there could be housing supply issues going forward as some private landlords were not able to afford to fix damp/mould issues and were choosing to sell their properties rather than rent them out. Councillor Lockington commented that grass verge cutting had been delayed due to SCC appointing a new contractor who then needed to procure the appropriate equipment and train its staff how to operate the machinery on the highway. There had also been issues with SCC using a more environmentally friendly vinegar-based weedkiller, which was not as effective as it didn't kill the roots and couldn't be used in wet weather. Additionally, when the mass of weeds had been cut back by SCC, the resulting detritus had become a littering issue for the Council instead.
- 27.9. Councillor T Lockington added that the high growth of weeds had also resulted in some paving slabs being lifted. Councillor Lockington also highlighted overgrowing vegetation from the Council's parks, for example, brambles spreading out of Christchurch Park, and suggested that a system be put in place to monitor overhanging growth from the Council's green spaces.
- 27.10. County Councillor Richards noted that Community Payback had recently done some good landscaping work at the allotments next to Alexandra Park and would ask County Councillor West whether Community Payback could be involved in manual weeding. County Councillor Richards reported that the new Woodbridge Road Academy building was now complete and would be formally opened in a few weeks' time; this school provided SEND education.
- 27.11. County Councillor Richards reported that the Museum of the Environment had been established to combat climate change and would be holding weekly Saturday morning talks from 7 October 2023. More information was available on their website: [www.mote-uk.org](http://www.mote-uk.org).

## **28. CAC/23/09 Area Committee Budget Update**

- 28.1. Ms Lisa Stannard, Head of Parks and Cemeteries, reported that after the financial commitments made at the previous meeting, the Central Area Committee had £2,552 available to spend on its priorities.
- 28.2. Since the last meeting, the following Making a Difference spend had been made:
- £405 from the Alexandra ward budget to Christ Church for their Holiday at Home summer scheme

**Resolved:**

**that the financial statement in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.**

Reason: To provide details of the amount of funds available to the Area Committee to support priorities in Central Ipswich.

**29. Dates of Future Meetings**

29.1. The Chair reported that the dates of future meetings were listed on the Agenda, with the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 1 November 2023 at 7pm in Alexandra ward.

The meeting closed at 8.13 pm

**Chair**