

CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2018
REG DRIVER VISITOR CENTRE,
CHRISTCHURCH PARK, IP4 2BX
7.00 PM**

Present: Alexandra Ward Councillors: J Cook, A Leeder and J Riley
St Margaret's Ward Councillors: O Holmes, I Lockington and L Reynolds
Westgate Ward Councillors: J Gibbs, C Jones and C Kreidewolf
SCC Councillors: J Abbott, C Chambers, I Lockington

There were 11 members of the public in attendance.

50. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Gaylard.

51. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2017 be signed as a true record.

52. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

Resolved:

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

53. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

54. To Confirm the Times and Venues of Future Meetings

Resolved:

that the meetings and venues be confirmed as follows:

- **Wednesday 7 March 2018, 7pm – Bramford Road Methodist Church, Bramford Road, IP1 4AY**
- **Wednesday 30 May 2018, 7pm – Alexandra ward**
- **Wednesday 11 July 2018, 7pm – St Margaret’s ward**
- **Wednesday 5 September 2018, 7pm – Westgate ward**
- **Wednesday 7 November 2018, 7pm – Alexandra ward**
- **Wednesday 9 January 2019, 7pm – St Margaret’s ward**
- **Wednesday 6 March 2019, 7pm – Westgate ward**

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

55.1. The Chair introduced Inspector Weaver of the Central Ipswich Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), who provided the following update on policing priorities:

Shoplifting in the Town Centre: A meeting was held with Ipswich Central to consider the greater involvement of the Street Rangers in the response to shoplifting and how shops report crime in order to free up Police Officers for deployment elsewhere.

Youth gangs and drug-related crime: The new Gangs Co-ordinator for the multi-agency response to youth gangs and drug-related crime started in this role on 15 January 2018 on a 2-year secondment from the Youth Offending Service. The level of crime had currently subsided, most likely due to the wintry weather.

Street drinking/begging in town centre: Early morning patrols were being undertaken in the town centre area to engage with homeless people and signpost them onto the appropriate agencies; the Help our Homeless initiative was trying to educate the public not to donate to homeless people or those begging, but to instead donate directly to the agencies dealing with these issues.

Prostitution: Operation Silverton had been set up as a result of recent intelligence and a multi-agency response was being put together with Turning Point, Health partners and Adult and Social Care to identify any women who might be getting drawn into prostitution in order to provide early intervention and support to tackle substance abuse issues and get them into safe accommodation. The number of cases reported had increased, but there were still very few involved; people caught soliciting would have letters sent to their home address in the first instance.

55.2. Councillor Lockington: Was the Urban Street Gang Unit a multi-agency team or just Police?

The Urban Street Gang Unit was established out of Operation Woven and comprised one Sergeant and 8 PCs; this team was now being overseen by the newly appointed Gangs Coordinator.

55.3. Councillor Cook: Do the Street Rangers have citizen arrest powers in relation to shoplifting?

The Street Rangers have been asked what powers they currently had and how often they were used. The Police would be providing training and support in order that they could be confident in using powers; in order to perform a citizen arrest, there must be certainty that an offence has been committed.

55.4. The Chair reported that 2 questions/issues had been received in writing in advance of the meeting.

55.5. Question 1: Local resident

“Every time it rains, a large puddle is formed outside the Nail Bar Shop and the Chinese Herbal Shop on St Matthews Street, opposite Tesco Express. Can anything be done to address this?”

Responsibility for drainage issues fell under the remit of Suffolk County Council and this issue had been referred to Suffolk County Council for a response.

55.6. Question 2: Local resident

“There is some graffiti in the South Street Car Park on the wall opposite Gymnasium Street – if you go up Orford Street from Norwich Road, as you approach the South Street Car Park, it is on the wall to the left”.

This matter was referred to the Council’s Graffiti Squad and the graffiti has now been removed.

55.7. Local resident: What has happened to the ‘No entry’ sign that was to be replaced at the end of Little Bramford Road?

Councillor Lockington reported that this was being progressed, but was waiting on the ‘Except cycles’ plate that would need to go under the ‘No entry’ sign.

55.8. Local resident: Was there still a problem with motorcycles racing around St Matthews Street and Northgate Street?

Inspector Weaver commented that he was not aware of this issue being reported recently.

56. Presentation: Upper Orwell Crossings Project Update

56.1. The Chair introduced Ms Suzanne Buck, Project Manager for the Upper Orwell Crossings, who gave a presentation with the following key points:

- The Ground Investigation works had been started this week by specialists Fugro Geo Services Ltd in order to map the local geology of the area and determine the strength of materials.
- Works had already commenced in the compound, and river works were due to start on 19 January, subject to weather conditions.
- 28 bore holes would be drilled out, as well as cone penetration testing and excavated trial pits on land.
- Archaeologists would be undertaking a watching brief during the excavation works.

- Barriers would be employed to mitigate noise and the compound would operate off battery pack power overnight; noise levels would be monitored throughout the operations.
- 4,800 newsletters had been sent out to residents and local businesses to advise of changes in noise levels arising from the works, and the equipment and rigs used would be clearly marked with project banners.
- Project updates as the works progress could be found on the website: www.suffolk.gov.uk/upperorwellcrossings, along with telephone and email contact information.
- Following the Ground Investigation works, public consultation on the proposed designs would take place in autumn 2018, including focus groups, and the application for Development Consent Order (DCO) would be submitted in spring 2019; if consent was granted, construction would commence in 2020.

56.2. Councillor Kreidewolf: Surely the location of the bridge must be known at this stage?

There had to be certainty about the location of the bridge before this information could be released for consultation to avoid unnecessary blight to businesses that might no longer fall within the affected area. Once this information was available, it would be shared.

56.3. Councillor Kreidewolf: Residents would also be impacted by the location of the bridge.

Yes, it was acknowledged that there would be an impact along the approach road and some properties might need to be bought to be demolished.

57. Presentation: Urban Buzz

57.1. Mr David Dowding, Urban Buzz Project Officer, gave a presentation on the Buglife Urban Buzz project with the following key points:

- This 2-year initiative has been joint funded by BIFFA and the Council's Greenways Project in order to create 100 new wildlife hot spots across Ipswich and the surrounding area to attract pollinators.
- The aim was to create 25 hectares of new habitats, e.g. wildflower meadows, hedgerows, ponds, to attract wildlife.
- The project was launched in association with ActivLives, who would be cultivating plants and germinating seeds for this project.
- Strips of land currently of minimal habitat value would be dug up and re-seeded.
- Site plans for areas to be created would be circulated to local Friends groups, community groups, ward Councillors and local businesses to make them aware before the works commence.
- The project would engage with wildlife groups and community groups, with events being held at various locations, such as Holywells Park and Sidegate Lane School. The University of Suffolk would also be undertaking recording of insects as part of their Biosciences course.

- Some of the preparatory works would be undertaken by the Council's Ground Maintenance Team.
 - For more information, see www.buglife.org.uk/urban-buzz or email: david.dowding@buglife.org.uk.
- 57.2. Councillor Riley: Are more sites still required? For example, there are small strips on the edge of allotments that were not suitable for cultivation.
Yes, any suggestions for sites were welcome, please email details to the above address.
- 57.3. Councillor Cook: There has previously been unmown wildflower areas in Alexandra Park; however, there wasn't currently an established Friends Group for Alexandra Park.
A wildflower strip could be added to the existing area of long grass; ward Councillors would be emailed in advance of any works being undertaken.
- 57.4. Councillor Jones: Could primary schools get involved? Handford Hall Primary School has a wildlife area and a large field, and Springfield Infants School has a little space that could be utilised.
Yes, please email through details of any schools or community groups who might like to get involved.

58. CAC/17/15 Funding Request: ActivLives ActivHubs Programme 2018/19

- 58.1. Ms Julie Stokes, CEO ActivLives, and Ms Lindsay Bennett, ActivHubs Project Development Officer, outlined the range of activities provided by ActivLives, which were focused on people in the 45+ age range, especially within some of the more deprived areas of Ipswich. £5,575 was requested to develop 2 new ActivHubs within Central Ipswich to deliver a range of activities to help combat social isolation, improve health and reduced the risk of falls in the elderly.
- 58.2. Councillor Holmes: Both of the proposed hub venues in the report fall within the Westgate ward, so this wouldn't cater for people living in the Alexandra and St Margaret's wards; ideally the second hub venue should be in the Alexandra ward or the bottom end of St Margaret's ward.
If there were other venues that could be used, then please let us know so they could be assessed; free taster sessions could be offered to help identify where the need was. It was difficult to find locations that were available, so there might need to be some flexibility over the locations used.
- 58.3. Councillor Cook: The California Club on Foxhall Road, listed under North East Ipswich in the report, is in fact in Central Ipswich.
This location was on the cusp of Central, North East and South East Ipswich; when ActivLives were looking for another venue within North East Ipswich, a suitable venue couldn't be found in North East Ipswich, but this venue was suggested and has been very successful.
- 58.4. Councillor Cook: There is the Manor Ballroom and Ipswich Labour Club that could be suitable.
The Manor Ballroom has been used in the past and there was currently

ActivIpswich activities taking place in the Ipswich Labour Club; so these venues could be used if they have availability.

- 58.5. Councillor Jones: Are any activities held in the Westgate Ward Social Club?
There have been some healthy eating classes held there.
- 58.6. Councillor Jones: The Westgate ward has areas of deprivation and anti-social behaviour, so it is essential that one of the hub venues is located in this area.
- 58.7. Councillor Lockington: How would the programme be financed in the following year? Will any income be collected from those taking part? The Government has announced that funding would be made available to help combat loneliness.
ActivLives was constantly applying to various funding sources and a new person had been allocated to focus on fundraising. Consideration would be given to asking members to contribute towards activities, but this would have to be balanced against what people could afford.
- 58.8. Councillor Kreidewolf proposed that the funding should be conditional on one of the hubs being located in the Westgate ward, otherwise that element of the funding should not be released, and this was agreed.

Resolved:

that, subject to one of the ActivHubs being located in the Westgate ward, the Central Area Committee approve funding of £5,575 from the Central Area Committee budget for the delivery of the ActivHubs 2018-19 Programme in Central Ipswich; in the event that a suitable venue cannot be found in the Westgate ward, that element of the funding is not to be released.

Reason: The ActivHubs project will provide a service in Central Ipswich to improve the opportunity for social support of older people, to improve the opportunity for exercise for older people and to reduce the incidence of falls for older people.

59. CAC/17/16 Funding Request: Lofty Heights

- 59.1. Ms Olive Quinton, Chief Executive of Lofty Heights, reported that Lofty Heights was established as a loft clearance service to enable those facing fuel poverty to have free loft insulation installed. The service has been expanded to offer a general de-cluttering service and has provided employment and training opportunities to young people currently not in education/employment/training (NEETs). £945 was requested as a contribution towards the purchase of a more reliable van to help undertake this work.
- 59.2. County Councillor Chambers reported that he had already donated some of his locality funding to Lofty Heights for this purpose and added that Lofty Heights did excellent work whilst helping young people to get on in life.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £945 from the Central Area Committee budget for Lofty Heights as a contribution towards the purchase of a van.

Reason: The purchase of a van will increase capacity and improve the efficiency of the organisation's work in Ipswich.

60. CAC/17/17 Funding Request: Help our Homeless Campaign

60.1. Ms Susie Mills, Ipswich Locality Homelessness Partnership (ILHP) Manager, introduced a video presentation that outlined the purpose of the Help Our Homeless campaign, which aimed to educate people as to what help was available to the homeless and provide a better way for people to donate to help the homeless. If people were concerned about someone sleeping rough on the streets or otherwise homeless, this could be reported via the Street Link website: www.streetlink.org.uk. £1,864.22 was requested for promotional materials to support the campaign.

60.2. Councillor Kreidewolf thanked PCSO Ben Wilding and PCSO Justin Berry who were instrumental in the launch of this initiative.

60.3. Councillor Lockington: Rucksacks are on the list of items to support the campaign; these need to be lined inside to ensure that any contents do not get wet.

60.4. Councillor Jones: Are homeless people aware of how they can get help? *A multi-purpose card has been produced as part of the campaign that could be passed onto people on the streets. Additionally, as part of the early morning patrols, homeless people were invited to attend the Chapman Centre breakfast club, where they could also be signposted onto other agencies for help.*

60.5. County Councillor West commented that this application could have been considered across all of the Area Committees as this issue affected all parts of Ipswich, but people tended to gravitate towards the town centre.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £1,864.22 from the Central Area Committee budget for the Ipswich Housing Action Group, acting on behalf of the Help Our Homeless Steering Group, to purchase stationery, collection boxes and promotional materials.

Reason: To help raise awareness and ensure the success of the Help Our Homeless campaign in Ipswich, to reduce the incentive to beg in Central Ipswich and to direct public giving toward organisations providing practical support for rough sleepers to make the transition to permanent accommodation.

61. CAC/17/18 Funding Request: Fly-tipping and Graffiti Removal

- 61.1. Mr Fairclough, Head of Culture and Environment, reported that £3,000 was requested to establish a budget to enable the clearance of fly-tipping and removal of graffiti within Central Ipswich where it was not possible to establish the ownership/responsibility for the land.
- 61.2. Councillor Lockington requested that all relevant officers be made aware of this funding and how it could be accessed as a previous request had been turned down. Mr Fairclough reported that Councillors could email him or Ian Kerrison, Operations Manager for Waste and Fleet, if there were any issues with the process.
- 61.3. Local resident: There have been issues in St Margaret's ward when street furniture (Virgin Media cabinets) had been defaced and not cleaned up, despite raising the matter with Council Officers and getting no response.

Mr Fairclough reported that legislation had changed in recent years, which had made it more difficult for the Council to enforce the cleansing of street furniture. Companies were now required to be notified a couple of times before action could be taken, and contractors only came on site periodically, i.e. every 6-8 weeks.

Local resident: The Council has not served any Defacement Removal Notices since 2015. BT used to have the contract to maintain these cabinets, but the work was not being done and they have not been held to account. The cabinets look awful and were a detriment to the area. If the graffiti was obscene, it would have been removed immediately.

- 61.4. Councillor Riley: If an issue is reported via the My Ipswich section of the Council's website, you should receive feedback to say that the matter has been received.

Action: Mr Fairclough to check that a response was provided to issues logged via My Ipswich.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £3,000 from the Central Area Committee budget to establish a budget for the clearance of fly-tipped waste and graffiti in areas within Central Ipswich where the Council does not have a statutory responsibility to maintain.

Reason: To enable the prompt response to reports of fly tipping and graffiti in the Central wards' area; to enable the effective and efficient removal and clearance of waste and graffiti in areas that would not normally be attended; to reduce the impact of such nuisance on the environment; and to improve the appearance of the Central area for residents and visitors.

62. CAC/17/19 Funding Request: Alley Gate Funding

- 62.1. Mr Fairclough reported that £6,000 was requested to establish a budget to support future applications for alley gates within the Central Ipswich area. A report would be taken to Executive in March 2018 to set out an Alley Gates Policy and applications would then be determined in line with the criteria within that policy. Mr Fairclough added that the Monitoring Officer had advised that paragraphs 10.3 and 10.4 of the report be disregarded, as they applied to the decision to be taken by Executive in regards to the proposed Alley Gates Policy, and not to this report to set up a budget for that purpose.
- 62.2. Councillor Holmes: Is this report pre-emptive as we do not know the criteria for the use of this fund? Paragraphs 10.3 and 10.4 set out significant legal issues; are we voting on a lawful policy?
The Area Committee was not being asked to vote on the Alley Gates Policy or the legal considerations relating to the installation of alley gates. The Area Committee was merely being asked to consider establishing a budget to enable an alley gate to be funded once the Alley Gate Policy was in place.
- 62.3. Councillor Leeder: Establishing this budget would enable requests for alley gates to be acted on quicker, rather than wait for the next meeting of the Area Committee. Any request for an alley gate in the area would still need to meet the criteria in the proposed Alley Gates Policy.
- 62.4. Councillor Lockington: This report has been written in a hurry. The Alley Gates Policy is not going to Executive until March and then there will be local elections; money cannot be allocated during the pre-election period, so can we legally be doing any works before the election? Why not get the Alley Gates Policy in place first and then decide on this funding?
- 62.5. Councillor Cook: It is legal to install alley gates, as this has been done before. This is an enabling report that will remove the need for the approval of funding for an alley gate to have to wait until the next available Central Area Committee meeting before it can be progressed. Residents have been dissatisfied over the length of time taken before any action can take place.
- 62.6. Councillor Kreidewolf: There is already a procedure in place for installing alley gates, as they have been installed in Westgate previously, which requires obtaining consent from property owners. The Alley Gates Policy going to Executive in March is a new policy, with new criteria, that will formalise this process.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee approve funding of £6,000 from the Central Area Committee budget to establish a fund towards alley gate requests for the Central area, subject to the requirements of the forthcoming Alley Gates Policy, which will be considered by Executive, having been met.

Reason: Ward Councillors have identified a need for alley gates in accordance with the forthcoming Policy (to be determined by Executive).

63. Chairman's Update on Actions from Previous Meetings

- 63.1. Equalities Panel: The Chair reported that the local resident who had shown an interest in the Council's Equalities Panel had been sent information about the Panel and was provided with an Expression of Interest Form to enable him to attend the meetings as a community member.
- 63.2. Youth Gangs and Drug-Related Crime: The Chair reported that an additional meeting had been held on 19 December 2017 at the request of local residents and thanked those partners who attended the meeting. One of the outcomes from the meeting was the need for better communications and regular updates, and this would be taken forward by the newly appointed Gangs Coordinator.

64. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Ward Councillors

- 64.1. Councillor Lockington reported that she had requested that the Council's leaflet about how to deal with waste and the responsibility of private landlords be updated as there had been many incidents of fly-tipping. Mr Fairclough reported that this was being progressed.
- 64.2. Councillor Jones reported that the following events were taking place at the Westgate Ward Social Club:
- Quiz Night on 2 February
 - Ipswich Reggae Choir concert on 3 February in aid of Cancer Research.
- 64.3. Councillor Cook reported that he had been working with St Helens School, St Helens Playgroup and the Police in response to the drug-related issues occurring in the vicinity of the school. The Police had been very active in this area and PCSO Ramirez had made a positive impact.

65. CAC/17/20 Area Committee Budget Update

- 65.1. Mr Fairclough reported that at the start of the meeting the Central Area Committee had an unallocated budget of £29,956.77 available to spend on its priorities.
- 65.2. Following the financial commitment of £17,384.22 arising from the approved funding requests, the Central Area Committee now had a budget of £12,572.55 available.

Resolved:

that the financial statement of the Central Area Committee in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

Reason: To provide an audit trail of funding that has been spent from the Central Area Committee budget

The meeting closed at 8.53 pm

Chair