

**COMMITTEE:** CENTRAL AREA      **REF NO:** CAC/19/19  
**DATE:** 11 MARCH 2020  
**SUBJECT:** FUNDING REQUEST: IPSWICH COMMUNITY  
CHURCH SECURITY FENCING  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** JAMES TURNBULL  
**HEAD OF SERVICE:** JAMES FAIRCLOUGH

***Short description of report content and the decision requested:***

This report requests that the Central Area Committee consider allocating £2,440.00 to Ipswich Community Church to enable the installation of fencing to the perimeter of the church.

The area directly outside the church is a hotspot for anti-social behaviour and drug activity, with the steps to the entrance providing an easily accessible and suitable location for perpetrators to gather.

***List of Appendices included in this report:***

a) Appendix 1 – Designs for security fencing

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***This report was prepared after consultation with:***

*Internal consultees*

*External consultees*

*Shammi Jalota, Ipswich Community Church*

***The following policies form a context to this report:***

*(all relevant policies must also be referred to in the body of the report)*

*Building a Better Ipswich 2017*

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

(papers relied on to write the report but which are not published and do not contain exempt information)

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**OTHER HELPFUL PAPERS**

*(papers which the report author considers might be helpful – this might include published material)*

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## **1. Introduction**

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- 1.1 This report requests that the Central Area Committee consider allocating £2,440.00 to Ipswich Community Church to enable the installation of fencing to the perimeter of the church.
- 1.2 The area directly outside the church is a hotspot for anti-social behaviour and drug activity, with the steps to the entrance providing an easily accessible and suitable location for perpetrators to gather.

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## **2. Background**

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- 2.1 Westgate Ward in Ipswich is one of the most deprived wards in Suffolk. Over the past two to three years, it has been particularly blighted by drug-dealing crime and anti-social behaviour. To combat this, strenuous efforts are being made to construct a sense of togetherness and tolerance.
- 2.2 The Ipswich Community Church Centre (ICCC) works in collaboration with the Friends of Jubilee Park, local Councillors and the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team to build cohesive communities, and the church is a key partner in the annual Street Party. However, over the last 18 months the people congregating around the centre's perimeter and the anti-social behaviour that takes place has blighted the lives of local residents.
- 2.3 Between 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, Police received 19 calls where the perpetrators had gathered at the steps of the centre - over this period, damage had been caused to the building. All but two of those calls related to incidents after 18:00, and nine of the calls occurred after 20:45.
- 2.4 Where reported by the caller, the group sizes ranged from 5 to 20 young people aged between 10 and 20 years-old, with a mixture of males and females. Anti-social behaviour reported included playing music loudly, drinking, drug activity including use, being in possession of knives, throwing bottles, verbally abusing passers-by and fighting.
- 2.5 Following a site visit by Design Out Crime Officers from Suffolk Constabulary, it was advised that erecting a secure fence around the whole site was necessary to prevent further incidents. This would complement the existing measures in place including outreach workers and CCTV. The beneficiaries will be the immediate neighbourhood as it will assist in reducing the fear of crime and hopefully start to help building community cohesion. A quote has been sought from an Ipswich-based engineering company for the cost of these proposed works (designs attached in Appendix 1).



**Figure 1 – Ipswich Community Church on the corner of Wilberforce Street and Clarkson Street (Google Maps).**

- 2.6 The organisation is keen to work with these young people to give them a sense of belonging and to explore what medium-term interventions can be taken forward to support them. However, with community tensions mounting, the organisation wants to be able to act in the short-term in response to local concerns.
- 2.7 The project is simply to make the area feel safer by providing security measures around the church building. This in turn will help address immediate community concerns as well improve community cohesion. However, there are 3 key wider outcomes:
- Increased safety and well and wellbeing for immediate neighbours;
  - A reduction in drug taking, drug litter and other antisocial behaviour within the proximity of the centre (although may displace the problem elsewhere);
  - An improved sense of community cohesion for residents immediately local to the church.
- 2.8 The amount requested of the Central Area Committee budget is £2,440.00.

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### **3. Relevant Policies and Area Action considerations**

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- 3.1 Building a Better Ipswich underlying principles:
- Priority 6: Safe Communities

- 3.2 To alleviate deprivation in the domain of:
- Crime

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#### 4. Options Considered / Under Consideration

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- 4.1 **Option 1** – Approve allocation of funding of £2,440.00 to Ipswich Community Church.
- 4.2 **Option 2** – Approve allocation of less than £2,440.00 as contribution to the same.
- 4.3 **Option 3** – Do not fund.

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#### 5. Consultations

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- 5.1 Immediate neighbours to the church have been consulted although this has not been documented, other than issues raised at committee meetings. The organisation does however have supporting letters from key partners such as the Police and Ward Councillors.

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#### 6. Risk Management

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- 6.1 The risks outlined here relate to the Committee providing funding to Ipswich Community Church, the risks associated with the proposed works belong to the Church.

Risk Description	Consequence of risk	Risk Controls	Probability of risk occurring taking account of controls (1: almost impossible - 6: very high)	Impact of risk, if it occurred taking account of actions (1: negligible - 4: catastrophic)
Works not completed	Issues continue for a longer period.  Poor use of public funds.	Ensuring early sight of drawings and proposals are shared with IBC officers.	2	2
<b>Actions to mitigate risk</b>	Plans will be shared with the relative authorities at the earliest opportunity to ensure all conditions are met, and progress monitored by the church throughout until completion of the works.			

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#### 7. Environmental Impact Assessment

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- 7.1 Immediate neighbours of the premises will be briefed about the work, and hours of work will be fixed to normal construction hours to allow minimum disruption to residents.

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#### 8. Equalities and Diversity Implications

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- 8.1 The organisation recognises that the local area is very diverse and consists of many cultures and communities from different backgrounds - this is one

of the main reasons that ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes are hosted from the centre. The facilities are open to people from all different backgrounds and this difference is welcomed and embraced at every given occasion.

- 8.2 The church will need to consider the access requirements for people of all abilities.

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## 9. Financial Considerations

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Item	Cost
<b>Fencing installation</b> To fabricate and install approximately 31 linear metres of handrail and sliding gates, to include necessary building works (plans included in appendix 1).	£8,700.00 + VAT
<b>Total project cost</b>	£10,440.00
<b>Amount requested from Central Area Committee</b>	£2,440.00

- 9.1 The amount requested of the Central Area Committee is £2,440.00.
- 9.2 The organisation has already been granted £8,000.00 from other sources of funding towards the project:
- Police & Crime Commissioner £2,000
  - Ipswich Community Church £1,000
  - Suffolk County Councillor Locality Budgets £5,000
- 9.3 As this is capital spend, there will be no need to sustain the project other than any repairs required, which will be completed by the trustees of the organisation.
- 9.4 There are sufficient funds remaining in the Central Area Committee budget for this funding request to be considered.

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## 10. Legal Considerations

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- 10.1 The Council has the power to make grants to community projects through the Area Committees. The Area Committees have delegated Executive powers and devolved budgets.
- 10.2 Area Committees have the power to award grants in accordance with part 3, section 2 of the Council's Constitution i.e. the Area Committee terms of reference.
- 10.3 The Funding Guidelines expectation of the applicant being a constituted organisation, with named post holders was met by the Companies House

registration (05518551) and articles supplied. Year-end accounts were also supplied and the named bank account was already verified through the Council's payments system.

- 10.4 A planning application has been submitted to Ipswich Borough Council for the works to take place, of which the church is currently awaiting the outcome.

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## **11. Performance Monitoring**

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- 11.1 Ipswich Community Church would be required to complete the Area Committee monitoring report as part of the standard funding agreement and may be invited to present to the Central Area Committee after a year.
- 11.2 Part of the performance management framework will involve pre and post-work surveys, supported by qualitative interviews with a range of individuals and families affected. The committee will be notified once the works are completed so that a visit can be arranged.

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## **12. Conclusions**

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- 12.1 The Central Area Committee is asked to consider allocating funding to Ipswich Community Church for security fencing to be installed on site. The area is recognised as a hotspot for anti-social behaviour and drug activity by the church, Police and local residents, which in turn contributes to an unsafe and intimidating environment for those living in the area.

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## **13. Recommendation**

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- 13.1 That the Central Area Committee considers the options for funding set out in section 4 and determines the allocation of funding from the Central Area Committee budget to Ipswich Community Church as a contribution towards the installation of security fencing.**

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.