

CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 3 JANUARY 2024
ALL SAINTS CHURCH HALL,
32 BLENHEIM ROAD, IPSWICH IP1 4EB
7.00 PM

Present: Alexandra Ward Councillors: 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: Robert Bridgeman and Debbie Richards

41. Apologies for Absence

The Committee observed a minute's silence to reflect upon the loss of Councillor Sophie Connelly, who was a member of the Executive and resident of Westgate ward.

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

42. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting - 1 November 2023

Resolved:

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023 be signed as a true record.

43. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

Resolved:

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

44. Declarations of Interest

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

45. Responses to Public Questions

45.1. The Chair reported that 7 questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting.

45.2. **Question 1:** Since the TRO signs disappeared from Westgate Street in November 2019, what steps has the Borough Council taken in getting the County Council to reinstate it so that there are not more cars parking there in the evening than in Cromwell Street Car Park?
Suffolk County Council Highways had subsequently advised that the sign would be reinstated by the end of December 2023, but this has not happened.

45.3. The following response was provided by the Integrated Transport Officer:

The existing restrictions, which prohibited driving motor vehicles on Westgate Street, were access restrictions that could only be enforced by the Police. The Council had made a formal request to Suffolk County Council in January 2020 for them to make a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to prohibit parking at all times and to prohibit the loading and unloading of goods between 11am and 4.30pm, as these were restrictions that the Council could enforce on behalf of the County Council. This request applied to most streets within the town centre pedestrianised zone.

Since then, the Council had had extensive contact with the County Council seeking progress on this request. The County Council had drafted a TRO and Borough Council officers understood that it was close to being put out to public consultation. If the TRO was approved, new replacement signage would be erected.

45.4. **Question 2:** According to IBC Parking Services, they have no power over what I consider to be misuse of parking in residents' parking bays by permit holders, particularly drivers who park deliberately to block a parking space to keep it for their second car or park taking up space preventing others to park.
One of my neighbours is a 'consistent repeat offender' and has 2 parking permits within Zone 1, with either 1 car parked blocking a second space or two cars parked blocking a 3rd parking space; they park 1 car in the middle of a parking space for 2 cars, then turn up in a second car and park taking up another parking space; this should not be permitted.

45.5. Response provided by the Parking Services Manager:

Zone 1 residents could buy up to two permits, which were valid in residents' parking bays in any of the streets located in Zone 1. These permits allowed those who had purchased their permits to park within the zone for as little or as often as they needed with no time constraints.

Whilst Officers had sympathy with residents over the situation caused by inconsiderate parking, this was not a contravention that was enforceable by the Civil Enforcement Team and therefore Officers would not be able to enforce against those with a valid permit who park inconsiderately, i.e. leaving gaps between vehicles, within the residents' parking bays.

Unfortunately, bays were not designated to individual properties within the scheme which was why residents could park anywhere within their designated Zones as it was not always a given that a space would be available outside their property.

If bays were being blocked by bins to save a space, then the Civil Enforcement Team would move the bins from the parking bay back onto the pavement if noticed whilst on patrol or reported to them by the public.

If there were legitimate concerns over whether a permit might be being misused e.g. being re-sold for profit or re-sale, it should be reported to Parking.services@ipswich.gov.uk; this could lead to a further application from the individual being rejected, or a permit being cancelled in exceptional circumstances.

The resident commented that bays for more than one vehicle were set out as one long space and asked whether it was possible for these bays to have markings to sub-divide them into individual spaces.

Action: Officers to confirm whether it would be feasible to sub-divide residents' parking bays.

- 45.6. **Question 3:** On 30 November, I took a walk in Alexandra Park for the first time keeping to the paths; on returning home, I realised my shoes were caked in 'dog poo' and I had to walk in my house wearing the shoes as I had a twisted ankle. Alexandra Park is being used as a dog fouling ground and so are the paths on Back Hamlet. As I've often noticed dog fouling, I made an online report to IBC requesting enforcement. I would like to know what action has been or will be taken in response to this issue.

- 45.7. Response provided by the Head of Parks and Cemeteries:

Thank you for raising this issue, Park Patrols would be increased in this area to pro-actively encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs. As yet, Officers had not encountered any activity 'in the moment' that would enable enforcement of this offence.

Response provided by the Environmental Protection Team:

The Waste Enforcement Team had not received any notifications of dog fouling on Back Hamlet. Proactive patrols would be undertaken in the area and signage increased where appropriate. If further details could be provided, including when dog fouling incidents have been witnessed in the area, this would allow patrols to be focused at the correct times/days and locations to enable enforcement.

- 45.8. **Question 4:** The route through Suffolk University Car Park is used as a 'rat run'; already this year there has been a collision, which I have no doubt was due to speed. Even so, this area is designated with warning signs advising caution needed for elderly/disabled road users/pedestrians; I've reported this and so far, 1 of these signs was repaired and illuminated at night and the second illuminated sign is awaiting repair, but I feel a 20mph speed limit is

needed.

45.9. Response provided by Suffolk Highways Officers:

The route through the College, which included Long Street and New Street, were not adopted public highway, therefore the Local Authority could not impose changes on these roads. The ownership of this land might sit with the College / University; Suffolk Highways did not own or maintain the car park area. The owners of this land might wish to install a speed restriction or provide signs to advise drivers to drive with consideration and care. They could also implement an unofficial speed limit change; however, this would likely not be legally binding in terms of any enforcement. These matters would need to be raised with the respective owners.

45.10. The resident commented on the speed of traffic on Back Hamlet and asked whether a 20mph zone could be considered for this road.

Action: Request for 20mph zone on Back Hamlet to be referred to Suffolk County Council.

45.11. **Question 5:** There seems to be some fad with noisy car and motorcycle engines and exhausts resulting in high numbers of vehicles using Back Hamlet that cause annoyance. This is probably a road traffic offence issue that needs enforcing.

45.12. Response provided by Suffolk Police:

Regarding motorcycles and engines being heard on Back Hamlet, this was difficult to police. It requires Roads Policing (RAPT) Officers with decibel meters to take readings on how loud the exhaust was. There have been minimal/no complaints logged about engine noise in this area. RAPT colleagues focus on the 'Fatal 4' priorities: using mobile phones whilst driving, speeding, drink and drug driving and non-wearing of seat belts. If a specific vehicle was seen driving antisocially on a repeat basis, then please provide the Police with the number plate/vehicle details.

45.13. **Question 6:** Back Hamlet is a hill that is used by a considerable number of cyclists who are difficult to see if wearing black and not using lights whilst coming down the hill at hair-raising speeds. Enforcing the use of lights on bicycles across Ipswich needs to be given Police attention.

45.14. Response provided by Suffolk Police:

Cycle lights were not a priority for the Police, who deployed their resources based on threat, harm and risk, and this matter would not make the threshold for police deployment. However, individual Officers on patrol had the discretion to deal with cyclists should they witness offences that were clearly causing public safety issues.

45.15. **Question 7:** A number of pedestrians take no notice of the pedestrian crossing at the traffic lights on Back Hamlet/Foxhall Road and walk straight into traffic

often busy looking at their mobile phone and completely oblivious that this junction exists. Could something be done to make this crossing safer/more visible?

45.16. Response provided by Suffolk Highways Officers:

Pedestrians, alongside all road users, had a personal responsibility in how to use the public highway and the facilities provided. Pedestrian crossings were well recognised across country, and they were uniform. Therefore, pedestrians should be aware of their role in using this type of facility. This location had street lighting, alongside tactile paving which indicated to pedestrians, and those visually impaired, that a crossing was in place. These crossings were relatively new in terms of infrastructure, forcing pedestrians to look towards traffic to determine if the red or green man was visible. Currently there were no additional warnings that could be put in place for pedestrians, who had the responsibility to adhere to the Highway Code when using these facilities.

46. Policing Update

- 46.1. The Chair introduced PC Kim Butler from the Ipswich Central Community Policing Team who provided the following policing update.
- 46.2. PC Butler commented that the Safer Neighbourhood Team had recently been replaced by Community Policing Teams (CPTs) with dedicated community teams at ward level: Ipswich Central comprised Inspector Nicola Turner and Sergeant Ben Throssell, with 2 CPTs – Alexandra and Westgate & St Margaret's, both having 3 dedicated PCs and 3 PCSOs each.
- 46.3. Anti-social behaviour at the Old Cattle Market bus station: the seating had been removed to prevent people congregating but this had dispersed the problem to the bus stands instead; patrols were ongoing by the Kestrel and Response Teams.
- 46.4. Town Centre patrols were ongoing by the Kestrel, Response and Community Policing Teams to provide a visible presence and support licensed premises and businesses.
- 46.5. Councillor I Lockington asked whether there had been any issues relating to the brightly coloured American candy stores that had been selling sweets and vapes.
Councillor Kreidewolf commented that there had been rumours on social media about money laundering.
PC Butler commented that the inappropriate sales of vapes would be a matter for Suffolk Trading Standards.
- 46.6. Councillor Jones commented that these shops were a valid retail use in the town centre but added that Officers were looking at whether anything could be done to tone down the lurid appearance of these outlets.

- 46.7. County Councillor Richards welcomed the increased Police presence in the town centre over the Christmas period.
PC Butler commented that the increased presence would continue under the new policing model, as the CPT Officers would be spending 80-90% of their time on patrol going forward.
- 46.8. Councillor Gibbs commented that there had been a national increase in shoplifting but many businesses had stopped reporting incidents to the Police due to the delay in response. Councillor Gibbs asked whether shoplifting had increased in Ipswich and what the Police were doing to address this issue, i.e. could the Police give businesses the reassurance that if an offence was reported the Police would visit the premises.
PC Butler commented she was not aware of an increase in shoplifting but this was dealt with by the Response Investigation Team (RIT). PC Butler added that there would be an increased presence in the town centre going forward with more Officers on site to deal with issues. Businesses could also sign up to the Town Link radio system that provided a direct link to the Police; alternatively, incidents could be reported to the Street Rangers.
- 46.9. Councillor Gibbs commented that although shoplifting was a low level crime, businesses still needed to have the confidence to report incidents. Councillor Gibbs asked for shoplifting statistics to be provided at the next meeting.
Councillor Riley added this would be helpful to provide a baseline to measure the impact of the new CPTs.
PC Butler commented that if the addresses of the affected businesses were provided, Officers from the Alexandra CPT could visit them.
Action: Police to provide shoplifting statistics to the next meeting.

47. CAC/23/12 Area Committee Budget Update

- 47.1. Ms Hannah Leys, Assistant Director for Operations, reported that the Central Area Committee currently had £2,552 available to spend on its priorities, and highlighted that the 3 funding requests due to be considered, if funded in full, would total £3,230.39. Ms Leys drew attention to the utilisation of the Fly-Tipping and Graffiti Removal budget, with only 2 transactions being made against this budget since 2019, and added that the Committee could, if minded to, release some of this funding to enable it to be allocated to other projects.
- 47.2. Councillor Riley commented that there had been few transactions made against the Fly-Tipping and Graffiti Removal budget which was a reflection on the efficiency of the Council's Cleansing and Waste Enforcement Teams.
- 47.3. Councillor Jones suggested that £2,000 could be released from the Fly-Tipping and Graffiti Removal budget. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that it would be preferable to retain this budget until it was required to be allocated elsewhere.
- 47.4. The Committee decided to hear all of the funding request presentations before considering how much money to allocate to each request.

Resolved:

- i) **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.

- ii) **that the Committee note the potential to release funding from the Fly-Tipping and Graffiti Removal budget to the main unallocated Central Area Committee budget.**

Reason: To enable any surplus budget to be reallocated to support other projects if required.

48. CAC/23/13 Funding Request: Ipswich Greyfriars Roundtable Defibrillator Project

- 48.1. Mr Adrian Game and Mr Grant Houlden from Ipswich Greyfriars Roundtable requested £2,000 towards the purchase and installation of defibrillators in 2 external locations, The Greyhound public house (IP1 3SE) and Gilmour Piper healthcare practice (IP1 3JP), to improve cardiac arrest survival rates in Central Ipswich. It was noted that there were also defibrillators in Christchurch Park, but they were not accessible when the park gates were locked. The Greyhound and Gilmour Piper had not only offered a contribution towards the defibrillators, but would also act as guardians of the defibrillators, undertaking weekly checks and covering running costs and replacement parts.
- 48.2. Councillor Rae commented that defibrillators in the Council's parks should be moved so that they were accessible 24/7. Ms Lisa Stannard, Head of Parks and Cemeteries, commented that there were defibrillators at the Reg Driver Visitor Centre and in the arboretum in Christchurch Park and at Ipswich Cemetery. The Reg Driver defibrillator could be moved to outside the entrance on Bolton Lane. Mr Houlden commented that The Woolpack public house nearby at the bottom of Tuddenham Road had a defibrillator; Ms Stannard commented that the Reg Driver defibrillator could be located outside the entrance on Soane Street instead.
- 48.3. Councillor Gibbs commented that the 2 proposed sites were close together and asked whether Gilmore Piper could be encouraged to increase their contribution. Mr Game commented that a contribution had not been requested; the key element was getting the commitment to act as the guardian of the defibrillator unit and any contribution was a bonus.
- 48.4. County Councillor Richards commented that The Woolpack, The Greyhound and Gilmour Piper were close together and asked whether there could be any provision on Bramford Road. Mr Game commented that a social media campaign had been undertaken to find sites, but not all organisations were able to provide guardian support. Councillor I Lockington commented that there was a defibrillator at Bramford Road Methodist Church.
- 48.5. It was agreed that, given the proximity of the 2 proposed locations and there being less footfall on Fonnereau Road, £1,000 be allocated for the purchase

and installation of an external defibrillator at The Greyhound public house.

- 48.6. It was requested that the location of the defibrillators in Christchurch Park and Ipswich Cemetery be revisited with a view to making the defibrillators accessible 24/7.

Action: Lisa Stannard to review the location of the defibrillators in Christchurch Park and Ipswich Cemetery.

- 48.7. County Councillor Bridgeman commented that there was a spare defibrillator at Crown Pools, in addition to the one located inside the building, that could be sited outside of Crown Pools.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee allocate £1,000 from the Central Area Committee budget to Ipswich Greyfriars Roundtable to purchase and install an Artificial External Defibrillator at The Greyhound Public House.

Reason: Access to more public defibrillators will improve cardiac arrest survival rates in Central Ipswich.

49. CAC/23/14 Funding Request: Home Start in Suffolk

- 49.1. Ms Tracy Clark and Ms Wendy Haycock from Home Start in Suffolk (HSIS) requested £730.39 towards the funding of a Special Educational Needs navigator to support families with children aged 0-12 that had special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and were dealing with temporary crises, such as isolation and poor mental health. Referrals to HSIS could be made by professional services or by the families themselves. The SEND Navigator would visit families and provide advice and guidance to help navigate families through getting the diagnosis and subsequent support required for SEND children. 18 families were currently being supported in Central Ipswich and a bespoke approach was taken for each family, with online or face-to-face meetings, online workshops and support groups in the community.
- 49.2. Councillor Jones noted that 18 families were to be supported in Central Ipswich and asked whether the support offered would be online or face-to-face. Ms Clark commented that this would depend on the needs of each family and whether they were able to attend in person, otherwise support would be offered online.
- 49.3. Councillor I Lockington asked what part of the service was funded by SCC and whether there was an SLA in place. Ms Clark reported that SCC provided 35% of the funding for HSIS in accordance with an SLA, but this service did not cover the SEND offer which had been identified as a separate need.
- 49.4. Councillor T Lockington recognised the need for navigator support following SEND diagnosis and discharge by professional services, and support groups were an effective way to support families.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee allocate £730.39 from the Central Area Committee budget to Home Start in Suffolk towards supporting families with children that have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Reason: To support parents/carers and assist with navigation through the health, social care and education systems.

50. CAC/23/15 Funding Request: Bows and Arrows

50.1. Ms Heather Pearne from Bows and Arrows requested £500 towards the delivery of Forest School sessions for disadvantaged children in Central Ipswich, many of whom had English as their second language or complex needs. Bows and Arrows operated the Wellington Nursery in Westgate ward, which was attended by many children who were living in flats with no access to outside spaces. The weekly Forest School sessions offered an opportunity to learn and play in a woodland environment, boosting skills and self-confidence. The coach travel and waterproof clothing was provided for free as many families would find the costs a barrier to participation. Separate groups were now being offered for children with additional needs.

50.2. Councillor Gibbs commented on the financial pressures on the charitable sector and asked whether Bows and Arrows was financially robust. Ms Pearne commented that Bows and Arrows had started using some reserves during the last year; if funding was not provided, then some elements of the nursery service would need to be cut back, such as the Forest School sessions, which currently cost £23k pa to run.

50.3. Councillor Jones proposed that £800 be allocated to continue to run the Forest School sessions at Wellington Nursery and this was agreed.

Resolved:

that the Central Area Committee allocate £800 from the Central Area Committee to continue the delivery of the Forest School sessions at the Wellington Nursery in Central Ipswich.

Reason: To provide encouraging outdoor learning and play with positive consequences for disadvantaged children.

51. Chair's Update on Actions from Previous Meetings

The Chair reported that there were no actions to update on from the previous meeting.

52. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Councillors

There were no updates provided by Councillors on this occasion.

53. Dates of Future Meetings

The Chair reported that the dates of future meetings were listed on the Agenda, with the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 21 February 2024 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Chair