

NORTH AREA COMMITTEE

27 September 2012

7.30 - 8.30 pm

Present: Councillors Todd-Jones (Chair), Price (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Boyce, Bird, Brierley, Kerr, O'Reilly, Pitt, Tunnacliffe and Ward

County Councillors: Manning, Pellew and Wilkins

Officers (City Council): Jonathan James (Head of Customer Services), and Glenn Burgess (Committee Manager)

Others in attendance: Jason Wragg (Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant), James Thorne (Police Constable) and Jim Meikle (Community Fire Safety Officer)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

12/52/NAC Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from City Councillor Gawthrop.

12/53/NAC Welcome and Introduction (including Declarations of Interest)

The Chair welcomed the public and explained the format of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest:

None.

12/54/NAC TO CONFIRM WHAT WAS SAID (MINUTES) AT THE LAST MEETING AND WHAT WE HAVE DONE (ACTION LIST)

County Councillor Manning requested further clarity in the minutes regarding his and Councillor Kerr's request for Fen Road to be reinstated as a police priority (minute item 12/47/NAC).

It was agreed that the Chair would approve any revised wording and that the minutes would be formally signed at the next meeting.

12/55/NAC YOU WANT TO KNOW (OPEN FORUM)**1) Resident: Raised concern about fly tipping and suggested that local recycling units needed to be cleaned more regularly by the City Council.**

Councillor Pitt confirmed that the recycling units were a valuable resource for the City and should be cleaned and maintained regularly. He agreed to discuss the issue with the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services and the Executive Councillor for Housing.

2) Resident: Questioned why the City Council was forcibly relocating dozens of vulnerable households in Campkin Road and elsewhere in the City. It was noted that more than 150 local residents had signed a petition against the Campkin Road relocations.

Councillor Ward confirmed that this issue came under the remit of the Housing Management Board.

Councillor Price stated that he did not support these forcible relocations and had attended a meeting of local residents and Council officers to discuss the issue. Councillor Price highlighted the need for a full consultation with local residents.

Councillor Todd-Jones suggested that the resident contact the City Council to discuss the petition and options for presenting it to an upcoming meeting.

3) Resident: Questioned how local residents could influence the work schedule of those sentenced to undertake community service. The railings at Midsummer Common and Jesus Green were in need of maintenance and this, and other local projects, would benefit from this work.

The City Ranger confirmed that until recently he had been allocated 10 workers every Thursday to undertake maintenance across the City. Unfortunately, due to regular placements being made to Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambs District Council, he was now only guaranteed 2 workers on a Sunday.

Councillor Pitt agreed to discuss the issues with the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services and feedback at the next meeting.

Councillor Manning noted that he had been working with the Probation Service in East Chesterton and would also make enquiries.

4) Resident: Noted that many of the young trees planted by the City Council (especially in Milton Road, Frazer Road and on Midsummer Common) did not survive and the issue needed to be looked in to.

Councillor Ward confirmed that newly planted trees were regularly monitored by the City Council. It was agreed that Councillor Ward would discuss the issue further with the resident outside of the meeting.

Councillor Manning confirmed that a rolling tree replacement programme was in place.

A local resident suggested that the City Council plant slightly older, stronger trees so that they would not get damaged as easily.

This comment was noted.

5) Resident: Highlighted the need for the newly planted trees in Campkin Road to be looked at urgently by the City Council.

Councillor Price agreed to raise this with the Arboricultural Team at the City Council.

6) Resident: Suggested that the banning of right turns (southbound) from Milton Road into Arbury Road and the banning of traffic exiting Union Lane would ease traffic congestion.

Councillor Ward raised concern about the affect that this would have on cyclists using this area.

Councillor Manning agreed to make further enquiries and discuss with the resident outside of the meeting.

Councillor Boyce stated that the location of the southbound bus stop resulted in much of the congestion. It was noted that, whilst Stagecoach had indicated support for the relocation of this bus stop, it would require reconfiguration of other local stops.

A resident expressed concern about the proposal to stop traffic using Union Lane as many local residents used this to access the library, GP surgery and shops. Councillor Pitt agreed that local residents would not support this proposal.

A resident suggested that, as the pavement was very wide, a lay-by could be designed at the bus stop in order to ease congestion.

This comment was noted.

7) Resident: Expressed concern about the cut-through between Hawkins Road and Downhams Lane. A blind bend on the cycle lane made this very dangerous for all users.

It was suggested that switching the pedestrian lane and the cycle lane would make this safer.

Councillor Ward agreed to discuss this with the resident outside of the meeting.

Councillor Price agreed with the concerns highlighted by the resident and suggested that placing a pillar in the middle of the two lanes may make the area safer and also stop vehicles from accessing.

Councillor Ward confirmed that this suggestion would be taken into account during further discussions.

12/56/NAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods

The committee received a verbal update from the Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant and the Community Fire Safety Officer on crime and policing in the four wards. A new member of the neighbourhood Policing Team, PC James Thorne, was also introduced to the committee.

1) Councillor Manning and Bird: Expressed concern regarding the abandoned vehicles in Moss Bank.

2) Councillor Bird: Confirmed that many local residents were concerned about this issue.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that, as the City Council were responsible for removal of the vehicles; all issues and concerns should be forwarded to them.

The City Ranger confirmed that the City Council were aware of the issue and regularly removed between 4 and 6 per month from Moss Bank.

3) Councillor Bird: Expressed concern about youngsters breaking up cycles in the area.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant noted this comment.

4) Councillor Bird: Requested further information on the reasons for the rise in violent crime.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that a large percentage of the increase was due to a rise in domestic violence, which was harder for the police to target and address. It was however noted that overall crime overall in the area was down.

5) Councillor Price: Asked for clarification on the Police definition of 'robbery'.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that theft by violence, or with the threat of violence, constituted a robbery.

6) Resident: Expressed concern that he had reported an incident of three charity workers calling at his house, but after a week the Police had still not contacted him.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant agreed to discuss the issue with the resident outside of the meeting.

7) Councillor Manning and Kerr: Highlighted the need for 'Anti-social driving in Fen Road' to be reinstated as a Policy Priority for the upcoming reporting period.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that very little had been reported to the Police concerning this issue and that the figures were down on this time last year.

8) Councillor Manning: Noted that local residents were reporting incidents to Ward Councillors but not necessarily the Police. Many residents had also contacted the Committee Manager expressing support for this priority to be reinstated.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant noted this comment.

9) Resident: As a resident of Long Reach Road, he felt that reinstating this priority would be a waste of Police time and resource. 99% of the issues in Fen Road had been mitigated by the speed humps, and there had been no serious accidents in many years.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant noted this comment.

10) Councillor Price: Questioned whether the arson issues had been resolved or if the problem had just been dispersed.

The Community Fire Safety Officer confirmed that a number of offenders had been tackled, and the continuing issues were by a different set of offenders.

On a show of hands the following three Neighbourhood Priorities were agreed unanimously:

- i. Continuation of arson preventative work in East Chesterton.
- ii. Anti-social cycling issues across the area
- iii. Anti-social driving in Fen Road

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

CHAIR