

EAST AREA COMMITTEE

5 April 2018
7.00 - 8.50 pm

Present

Area Committee Members: Councillors Barnett (Chair), R. Moore (Vice-Chair), Roberts, Blencowe, Baigent, Benstead, Hart, Johnson, Robertson, Sinnott, Smith and Whitehead

Officers:

Community Funding & Development Manager: Jackie Hanson

Enforcement Officer: Nick Kester

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

18/20/EAC Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Herbert, Jones and Kavanagh.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Taylor to the meeting.

18/21/EAC Declarations Of Interest

No declarations were declared.

18/22/EAC Minutes

Georgie Deards informed the Committee no action had been taken regarding the arrangements for the Ward Walk About for Tiverton Close and the surrounding area as discussed at the January meeting. Councillor Moore replied it had taken time to organise relevant Officers to ensure their attendance, but the Ward Walk About would take place in May **(ACTION)**.

Councillor Baigent proposed the following changes to the minute of the Environment Improvement Programme 18/19/EAC (additional text underlined).

- iv. Would investigate why the highways outside the Post Office on Mill Road had not been improved with the possibility of the installation of bike racks (ACTION).

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2018 were then signed as a correct record by the Chair.

18/23/EAC Matters & Actions Arising From The Minutes

The Action Sheet was noted and an updated copy could be viewed at the following link under 'Committee Action Sheet':

<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=147&MId=3362&Ver=4>

18/24/EAC Open Forum

Member of the Public (MOP): Residents in Cambridge, off Hills Road, and the local area would like to make sure that the Police and Street Life authorities continue to give high priority to keeping their neighbourhood safe by dealing with the escalating 24/7 problems of drug taking, betting and rough sleeping in Hills Road roughly between St Paul's Church and the HSBC Bank building. Those involved appear to have refused to engage with the help they have been offered to change their life style. This is intimidating to people who live and work in the vicinity as well as the wider public.

In August 2016 local residents met with the Police and the Safer Street Team to discuss concerns about the area being made a hot spot for beggars and drug taking, in particular one individual who has been around for 6 years or so. Action was taken and there was improvement for a while.

The current problems started gradually last autumn, with the odd beggar outside Tesco's or Co-op. It has escalated with the return of the individual from 2016 and then with the addition of another regular just before or after Christmas. Gradually more have joined them.

It has now reached the point when 4 or 5 individuals are effectively living on the street night and day, joined by others during the day – sites used are:

- HSBC Steps.
- Side door to Davies Pharmacy.
- Outside Co-op.
- Outside Tesco's.
- Corner of Chosen Bun Take Away. During the day up to 9 pavement sitters / sleepers have been spotted in the vicinity.

The area is now a street life encampment and drug hub. They leave their belongings unattended. They are so at home they have hung sleeping bags/blankets to dry on a traffic sign and line rigged up outside a building on Cambridge Place. Most of them beg overtly. They take drugs openly, people have witnessed them using crack cocaine pipes and syringes.

Suspected dealers often appear on bicycles throughout the day, usually scruffily dressed, stay for a transaction and then move on. Often they use yellow bikes and leave them in the middle of the pavement. They appear in neighbouring streets too. Some suspected dealers are more smartly dressed and have been seen talking to the regular street people.

The areas behind the Chosen Bun and the empty Abbey College building at the entrance to Cambridge Place are used for defecating, taking drugs (needles are often found) and dealing. This is the only way in and out of Cambridge Place and occupants cannot predict when or if they will stumble on one of these activities.

They use the Costa Coffee's toilets but the staff there are powerless to stop them.

Graffiti's on the buildings adds to the deterioration of the area, so does uncleared rubbish, and attracts these unfortunate characters. On Chosen Bun, graffiti has not been removed since reported last year; more has arrived since the New Year on the now closed Chinese Restaurant by St Paul's Walk. St Paul's Walk beside the church has uncleared rubbish. We hope our further reporting this week leads to action.

All this has had an impact on the safety and wellbeing of those who live, work or pass by the area, there is also a high concentration of school children with at least 6 schools nearby. It causes:

- Obstruction of the pavement, especially where it is narrow already outside Tesco's.
- Those who live or work in Cambridge feel intimidated and fearful for their safety by having every move watched going in and out of the street's only exit / entrance.
- People feel threatened to use local amenities such as the shops and cash machines, especially the one outside the HSBC.
- Fear of verbal abuse.
- Fear of violence or being caught up in it.

In addition:

- **Why do more people not complain? We believe many ordinary citizens are unaware that these street people have been offered help with accommodation and to come off their addictions, so feel sorry and do not get involved (some offer food or money). Others may fear retaliation if their home or business could be affected.**
- **We are aware that some of these street people have themselves be victims of criminal activity even though they have turned down the usual channels of help; their situation is needed to be addressed firmly and compassionately if so.**

Councillor Blencowe thanked the member of the public for raising the issue to a wider audience. The Police were aware but actions had obviously not been sufficient or effective. However it was difficult for the Police, the demand for their time was unrelenting. Arrests were made but others simply replaced those who have been arrested.

Councillor Blencowe concluded that criminal activity was a Police matter and Cambridge City Council could only do so much.

MOP: Two years ago the Police were informed of drug dealing and drug taking in Ashley Court which is now used by 20-30 drug users. Nothing had been done and action is needed. I am appalled at the lack of response and the lack of Policing. This week a resident left Ashley Court as she could no longer live in such a dangerous environment.

MOP: I do not see Police taking any action; they are not dispersing these people on Cambridge Place and the surrounding areas so there is no disruption to their daily life. These problems had been regularly reported to the City Council's ASB team over a number of years.

Councillor Sinnott replied that she was pleased these issues had be brought into the public forum and believed the problems on Cambridge Place to be much worse than had been reported. However, she was not aware of the issues on Ashley Court and would speak with the member of the public who had raised this issue in the break.

Councillor Sinnott advised the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team were trying to prosecute four individuals in the area but could not give any further information. There had been illegal activity on the East Road estate and the ASB Team had been successful in dealing with this. However there were those

individuals who would not engage with the help offered and it was difficult to know what could be done for those people.

MOP: This week I have witnessed drugs being delivered in Burnside to individuals waiting on cycles which I believe are then taken to Mill Road.

Councillor Baigent instructed he sat on the Police Liaison Panel and requested those members of the public who had raised issues concerning Cambridge Place, Ashley Court and Burnside send an e-mail with their concerns which he would be pass on to the Detective responsible **(ACTION)**.

MOP: I meet with Councillor Blencowe two years ago to discuss one individual, who is the epicentre of the problem; he is known to claim benefits but begs all day which is very lucrative. The Outreach Team are not effective with this individual. Effective action is needed to stop the beggars and the public need to be educated not to give money. Tourists believe these individuals to be beggars and not drug users. The City Council has appointed an Officer in this field who needs to educate the public. Cambridge Street Aid has been successful to help individuals off the street permanently but more is needed to be done.

Councillor Sinnott agreed the Cambridge Street Aid Charity had been very effective in helping those living rough but it needed to be promoted more which could be done with Councillors help.

Councillor Baigent stated the City Council did what it could with the resources available but they did not control the Police and these issues were a Police matter.

Margaret Cranmer: The County Council has refused permission of the closure of Tenison Road for 2-3 hours each month so that children with small back gardens can play in the street and residents can get to know each other. The proposal was strongly supported by residents, Councillors Jones and Sergeant Stevenson who offered assistance from his officers during this brief closure. The refusal was on the grounds that the road is too busy, although the Water Board has just been given a three day closure.

The increased traffic in Tension Road is ruining life for residents and it will gradually spread onto neighbouring streets. I propose that the additional £150,000 for the calming scheme from the construction of 10 & 20 Station Road should be used for the closure of half of Tenison Road

at the Great Northern Way Junction, so that traffic going to the station has to use the appropriately named Station Road.

Councillor Robertson explained information had been placed in the latest Petersfield newsletter explaining of a proposal to change the direction of traffic flow to the station. With the aim to remove a large portion of traffic from Great Northern Road which should improve the quality of life for those living on the road Brookgate and Greater Anglia representatives who controlled Station Square had been consulted.

Councillor Robertson said he did not believe that a road closure would be authorised for Tenison Road but would enquire with the relevant County Council Highway Officers **(ACTION)**. Work was being undertaken to determine how traffic could be encouraged to use Station Road which should eliminate some traffic from Tenison Road as the main access to the Station.

Councillor Blencowe responded that the County Council reaction for Tenison Road to a Sunday closure had not been favourable and questioned if the decision should be accepted or challenged. Further investigation would be needed to the suggestion to close half of Tenison Road at the Great Northern Way Junction as this would have an impact on the surrounding road network.

Councillor Moore stated she supported the principle of a car free day (such as Sunday closure) and closing Tenison Road for a few hours each month for the children to play in the road. Unfortunately it was a Cambridgeshire County Council decision and suggested that other outside partners needed to work with the County to persuade officers to grant authorisation.

Frank Gawthrop: On Monday 9th April, Tension Road will be closed between Great Northern Road and Station Road. This means no traffic from the South will be able to access the Station unless through the residential streets on South Petersfield. What remedial measures is the Council taking, in particular, will a temporary taxi rank be established on Station Road near Station Square? The Road Closure signs had been put up in advance but had blown away in the wind and had not been replaced.

Councillor Robertson stated there was a permanent taxi rank on Station Road which was part of the solution but he would contact the County Council to enquire what had been planned for the taxis and other traffic during this period **(ACTION)**.

Councillor Blencowe expected that Taxi representatives would have worked with the County Council to ensure their needs would be met during the three day period.

Mr Ollie Digny: A new parking scheme is to come into effect between Mill Road and Cherry Hinton Road; this to stop commuters parking in the area when using the train station. The proposal will have a detrimental effect on Coleridge Bowls club as no parking is permitted between 10.00am – 8.00pm. But matches are played from 6.00pm onwards and parking from this time is needed. Could the enforcement end at 5.00pm and / or additional spaces added in the area, what solution could the Committee suggest?

Councillor Moore advised there had been a series of consultation meetings with residents on West Coleridge parking. Concerns had been raised regarding the impact of the scheme on the Bowls Club but residents at those meetings had elected the schemes hours. Due to the concerns raised by The Bowls Club the number of parking spaces on Davy Road for parking up to four hours had increased. Money was available after the scheme came into effect for any issues raised.

Councillor Taylor informed the Committee that the hours of the scheme would finish at 7.00pm and not 8.00pm. She reiterated the situation would be looked at when the scheme was in the place to determine if those issues could be negated with the funding available.

Janet Griffiths & Georgie Deards: Could the Committee advise what are the future plans for Cambridge Lakes?

Councillor Baigent stated that the Lakes had been opened for the first time to the public in March with 1,000 people visiting the site.

It was hoped this would become a monthly event throughout the year up to the winter months.

Councillor Baigent acknowledged the comments from Mrs Griffiths and Mrs Deards regarding vehicle and cycle parking but the message had been to leave the car at home; there was no parking available. A number of cycles had been brought into the site and it may be a possibility that cycle racks could be installed.

Councillor Moore replied that during the Ward Walk About organised for May, the location of cycle racks could be considered in Tiverton Way.

Councillor Smith advised that she would speak with City Council Officers to discuss with Councillor Moore the possible locations for the installation of bike racks in Tiverton Way **(ACTION)**

James Woodburn: Now that such a large amount of money is being allocated to upgrade the City Centre monitoring cameras. Could the Area Committee ask for much greater attention to be given to cycle theft which is such a problem in the City Centre.

Councillor Barnett advised that the Police would be present at the next East Area Committee and the matter could be brought to their attention.

Councillor Sinnott suggested a 'crack down' on cycle theft in the City when Police Officers could be allocated to spend time with CCTV operators looking at cycle theft for a period of time in the month.

Councillor Benstead stated the CCTV operators when observing a street crime would know straight away a crime was occurring. But it was very difficult to determine whether it was the owner or the thief who was removing the cycle.

Councillor Barnett recommended bringing this matter to the attention of Councillor Hebert as he was the Councillor responsible for CCTV.

18/25/EAC Area Committee Grants 2018-19

The Committee received a report from the Community Funding & Development Manager which detailed applications received for 2018-19 funding for projects in the East Area.

In reply to a Member's question, the Community Funding & Development Manager said the following:

- i. **Menagerie Theatre**
- ii. Company: A review of the previous grant of 2017/18 had shown that only six individuals had benefited from the award to what had been outlined in their proposal as staff costs were high. The Cultural and Community Manager was currently offering advice and her expertise on compiling a realistic deliverable project and therefore a reduction in the grant requested and been awarded.

Petersfield Area Community Trust (PACT):

- iii. The organisation had received an increased award the previous year which had been underspent. Officers were working with the organisation to look at the funds which remained. The award was proportionate to those festivals which were organised across the city.

The Committee **resolved** unanimously to approve the awards detailed in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report as summarised in the table below:

Ref	Organisation	Purpose	Award £
E1	Abbey People	2 trips, Pumpkin Festival, Christmas event	2,000
E2	Abbey People	Annual Big Lunch	2,000
E3	Cambridge United Community Trust	Multi sports sessions for children and young people	3,500
E4	Friends of Mill Road Cemetery	Support for volunteers to carry out maintenance & hold community events	165
E5	Menagerie Theatre Company	Drama workshops for young mothers	1,500
E6	Merry-Go-Round Toy Library	Toys	300
E7	Oblique Arts	Theatre projects for adults with learning disabilities	2,250
E8	Petersfield Area Community Trust (PACT)	Annual summer event; quarterly community meetings; AGM and resident's survey	2,750
E9	Power 2 Inspire	Inclusive sports project	1,513
E10	Romsey Mill Trust	Weekly term time youth sessions	4,880

Budget available	£20,858
Total awards	£20,858
Budget remaining	£0

18/26/EAC Environmental Report -EAC

The Committee received a report from the Enforcement Officer.

The report outlined an overview of City Council Refuse and Environment and Streets and Open Spaces service activity relating to the geographical area served by the East Area Committee. The report identified the reactive and proactive service actions undertaken in the previous quarter, including the

requested priority targets, and reported back on the recommended issues and associated actions. It also included key officer contacts for the reporting of waste and refuse and public realm issues.

The following were suggestions to the Committee on what action could be considered for priority within the East Area.

- i. Early morning, daytime and weekend patrols for dog fouling Mill Road Cemetery.
- ii. Enforcement patrols to tackle environmental crime at Thorpe Way estate and St Matthews Street area
- iii. Enforcement patrols to tackle fly tipping, litter, side waste and trade waste along in the Petersfield area of Mill Road.

In response to the discussion concerning graffiti on the Elizabeth Way underpass the Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces advised there were plans to look at a possible arts project for the underpass in the next round of Section 106 funding. Until the project could be delivered Officers were working very hard to ensure that the underpass was kept as clean and tidy as possible.

In response to Members' questions and questions from the public the Enforcement Officer and the Executive Councillor for Environmental Services and City Centre said the following:

- i. Ekin Road would be kept as priority for fly tipping patrols which incorporated Thorpe Way and the surrounding areas.
- ii. Noted the bin request for Barnes Close.
- iii. Would speak to the dog warden to patrol the surrounding areas to Barnes Close, in particular the play park.
- iv. The Community Pay Back Service was being used to remove graffiti in East Area including the Elizabeth Way underpass.
- v. With regards to fly tipping the Council had the option to prosecute or issue a fixed penalty of up to £400; generally fly tipping 15 to 20 black bags would produce a fixed penalty. Fly tipping on a larger scale would be an automatic prosecution. Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices could also be issued by Officers in the first instance.
- vi. There had a number of fixed penalty notices issued to individuals on St Matthews estate and East Road estate. An individual name could be entered on a data base suspected of fly tipping to determine if they had been prosecuted previously.

- vii. Abandoned cycles were taken to a secure site on Mill Road Depot where they were held for 14 days; if there was a serial number on the bike this would be sent to the Police for information; unclaimed cycles would be given to a charity called Owl in Sawston to sell the cycles.
- viii. Noise complaints were provided by Environmental Health and a breakdown of ward location could not be supplied but would enquire with Officers if this could be done **(ACTION)**.
- ix. Noise complaints did not always need to be investigated or a warning letter issued, as a majority of complaints were 'a one off, such as a party could generate a number of complaints but there be no noise once the party had finished and no further action taken.
- x. When new needles were issued to drug users they were given sharps box dispensers. The Street Cleaning Team would regularly find these empty sharps boxes by the used needles. Therefore it was highly unlikely that mounting fixed sharps boxes would be used. These boxes would have to be checked throughout the day by the Street Cleaning Team but would look to see if there was any alternatives could be used.
- xi. Confirmed the fixed penalty notice charge for litter offences had increased to £150 from 1 April 2018. It was going to be proposed if this was paid within 10 days Cambridge City Council would reduce the fee to £60 but this had yet to be considered by the relevant scrutiny committee.

The Committee **resolved** unanimously to prioritise for action as amended (additional text underlined):

- i. Early morning, daytime and weekend patrols for dog fouling – Mill Road Cemetery, Brooks Road and Argyle Street
- ii. Enforcement patrols to tackle environment crime at Thorpe Way Estate and St Matthews Street
- ii. Enforcement patrols to tackle fly tipping, litter, side waste and trade waste along the Petersfield area of Mill Road.
- iii. To concentrate on the removal of needles and other drug paraphernalia on Cambridge Place and Hills Road.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm

CHAIR

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