

**WEST CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE**

5 July 2018  
7.05 - 9.35 pm

**Present**

**Area Committee Members:** Councillors Nethsingha (Chair), Holt (Vice-Chair), Bick, Cantrill, Gehring, Martinelli, Payne, Harrison and Richards

**Officers:**

Head of Property Services: Dave Prinsep

Public Realm & Project Delivery Team Leader: John Richards

Anti-Social Behaviour Officer: Sarah Steggles

Committee Manager: James Goddard

**Other Officers in Attendance:**

Police Inspector: Paul Rogerson

Police Sergeant: Kevin Mišík

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| <b>FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b> |
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**18/9/WAC Election of Chair and Vice Chair - WCAC**

The Committee Manager took the Chair whilst the West/Central Area Committee elected a Chair.

Councillor Cantrill proposed, and Councillor Bick seconded, the nomination of Councillor Nethsingha as Chair.

**Resolved (by 6 votes to 0)** that Councillor Nethsingha be Chair for the ensuing year.

Councillor Nethsingha assumed the Chair from the Committee Manager at this point.

Councillor Bick proposed, and Councillor Cantrill seconded, the nomination of Councillor Payne as Vice Chair.

**Resolved (by 5 votes to 0)** that Councillor Payne be Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

**18/10/WAC Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Hipkin.

**18/11/WAC Declarations of Interest**

| Name                | Item      | Interest                                       |
|---------------------|-----------|--|
| Councillor Cantrill | 18/16/WAC | Personal: Wintercomfort<br>Trustee since 2006. |

**18/12/WAC Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment to *18/5/WAC Open Forum*: 6. Mr Martinelli Montinelli raised concern about lighting on Parker's Piece, particularly the 'Reality Checkpoint' central crossing."

Councillor Scutt referred to the location of streets discussion in *18/6/WAC Environmental Report – WCAC*. Mitcham's Corner was located in Castle Ward according to County Council Ward boundaries.

Councillor Scutt referred to *17/37/WAC Open Forum*. She had advised the local resident who was responsible for the Carisbrooke Road Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bid for double yellow lines.

**18/13/WAC Matters and Actions Arising From the Minutes**

| ACTION   | PROGRESS   |
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| Member of public raised concern about unsuitable site for the location of containers at Canoe Club.  | Councillor Cantrill reported there were still on-going concerns about Canoe Club containers as they still needed "beautifying". The issue would be brought back to WCAC in future if required. |
| Councillor Nethsingha to ask Wendy Young if the Lammas Land bins are temporary; and if so, when would they be removed? Or, if they are permanent, will they be fixed properly into the ground? | Councillor Nethsingha to liaise with Anthony French (Assets Team) regarding Lammas Land bins.  |

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| <p>Request a report from the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner (PCC), plus officer in attendance at next WCAC if possible, regarding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of the review on numbers of Police Officers in Cambridgeshire, with particular regard to the City of Cambridge.</li> <li>Request more information from the PCC and the City Council regarding the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheme details.</li> <li>Consultees and consultation process.</li> <li>Who has/will be given powers and how can they be identified eg uniform?</li> </ul> </li> </ol> | <p><b>Action Point: Councillor Nethsingha to send Mr Taylor information she received from Officers regarding the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. Also to publish any details if found supplementary to those already published on committee action sheet listed in 05/07/18 agenda.</b></p>   |
| <p>To seek information about Local Highway Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding / decision making criteria.</li> <li>If Panel meetings could be held in public.</li> <li>If Panel role could be taken over by Cambridge City Joint Area Committee in future.</li> </ul>  | <p>Councillor Nethsingha was informed by the County Council that Panel meetings would not be held in public as other Panels (elsewhere) were not.</p> <p>Councillor Nethsingha to pursue if Panel role could be taken over by Cambridge City Joint Area Committee in future so discussions could be held in public.</p>  |
| <p>Councillor Harrison to follow up pothole issues raised by member of public. Areas affected are Honey Hill/St Peter's Street and Bridge Street.</p>   | <p>WCAC noted potholes were a general issue across the city.</p> <p>Councillor Harrison reported the Honey Hill et al issue through the County Council's on-line system and confirmed the issue was now closed on the system.</p> <p>Councillor Scutt asked for WCAC minutes to reflect the Committee's thanks to two officers who were leaving the County Council pothole</p> |

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|  | team: Evan Laughlin and Graham Armstrong. |
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**6a Histon Road Recreation Ground Football Area**

The Committee noted a Record of Officer Delegated decision taken after consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Spokesperson of West/Central Area Committee.

**Action Point: Councillor Payne to seek clarification on behalf of Mrs Rundblad that Histon Road Recreation Ground Football Area project does not impact on local meadow.**

**18/14/WAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods**

The Committee received a report from Sergeant Mišík regarding policing and safer neighbourhoods trends.

The report outlined actions taken since the last reporting period. The current emerging issues/neighbourhood trends for each ward were also highlighted (see report for full details). Previous priorities and engagement activity noted in the report were:

- i. Brunswick, Maid's Causeway and Midsummer Common drug issues.
- ii. Road safety such as: Cycling down Burleigh Street, Fitzroy Street, Trinity Street and Sydney Street during the day time when cycling prohibited [and] Anti-social driving.
- iii. Other acquisitive crime including cycle theft.

Inspector Rogerson and Sergeant Mišík said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Recommendations for issues to address were not set out in the Officer's report. Instead the Police would attend Area Committees to listen to local concerns that needed to be followed up.
- ii. Police priorities for action were set by the Home Office, Police & Crime Commissioner plus crime trends (ie rising crime types). These priorities could be included in future reports to Area Committees.
- iii. Drug dealers had a wide range of tactics they used to operate. For example, "cuckooing" where drug dealers operated out of vulnerable people's houses. The Police had a range of tactics to address these.
- iv. Drug dealers travelled out of London to operate in areas such as Cambridge where there was a demand.
- v. Success in one area led to gangs moving on rather than stopping.
- vi. Help was available for homeless people if they wished to accept it.

- vii. A majority of people begging in Cambridge did so to fund drug habits, not because they were homeless. People giving cash to beggars gave them resources to buy drugs which attracted dealers.
- viii. The Police were working with partner agencies to address homelessness. It would take a joined up approach to address issues.
- ix. It was hard to tackle begging without a change to current legislation as the legislation did not provide an effective deterrent.

The Committee discussed the following policing issues:

- i. Drug dealing, drug use and associated anti-social behaviour affecting the city centre.
- ii. Policing of green spaces such as Lammas Land eg to address petty drug dealing.
- iii. Begging and associated anti-social behaviour affecting the city centre.

Members of the public raised the following issues:

- i. Homelessness and begging were separate issues.
- ii. People often begged to obtain money for drugs.
- iii. Begging was an issue that needed to be addressed.
- iv. People had reasons for substance and alcohol abuse.

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

- 1. Ms Rossier-Smith raised the following issues:
  - i. Expressed concern about begging in the city and how it was used to fund drug habits.
  - ii. Suggested the area around Burleigh Street and Adam & Eve Street were particularly affected. Queried if CCTV could be installed to address this.
  - iii. Queried how beggars/drug dealers could be reported to the Police.
  - iv. Queried how many beggars had been prosecuted.

Sergeant Mišík answered:

- The Police could be contacted via on-line reporting (and web chat) or ringing #101. The Police could be asked for an email on which to upload pictures.

Councillor Nethsingha said Ward Councillors could follow up non-urgent matters with the Police on Residents' behalf.

- There were insufficient police officers to set up a dedicated anti-begging team. Reported crimes would be allocated to officers on duty and added to statistics to prioritise further work.
  - The Police had to make daily decisions on which priorities to respond to. IE which crimes needed a response. Information reported was used as intelligence information to plan operations.
2. Mr Taylor asked for information on how the Probation Service managed offenders with suspended sentences. He asked if WCAC were satisfied with the level of service from the Probation Service.

Inspector Rogerson offered to liaise with Mr Taylor outside of the meeting.

**Action Point: Inspector Rogerson undertook to pass Mr Taylor's comments onto the Community Safety Partnership.**

The following priorities were unanimously **agreed (nem con)**:

- i. Drug dealing, associated begging and anti-social behaviour.
- ii. Dangerous driving by coaches on Queen's Road at key times on Saturdays

### **18/15/WAC Open Forum**

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

1. Mr Carpen submitted a written question asking for an update on the Hobson Street cinema.

**Action Point: Councillor Bick to update Mr Carpen on the Hobson Street cinema.**

2. Ms Nicolson: 16/0558/COND26 relates to the visitor cycle parking for the newly rebuilt/refurbished University Arms Hotel. The cycle parking installed did not meet this condition at all but a decision was due on it last month. What was the outcome?

**Action Point: Councillor Nethsingha to follow up Ms Nicolson's query about visitor cycle parking for the newly rebuilt/refurbished University Arms Hotel with City Council Senior Planner reviewing the application.**

3. Ms Nicolson: Toads, frogs and other small creatures can get stuck down cattle grids across the city. Is there a possibility the council could retrofit small ramps so that they can escape?

Councillor Nethsingha referred to the City Council Nature Conservation Projects Officer's response: The majority of cattle grids are on statutory footpaths and cycleway across our open spaces and are therefore the responsibility of the County Council. They should be contacted via <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults/>

Councillor Cantrill said that cattle grids were fitted with ramps 8-9 years ago, but they may now need maintenance or replacement.

Councillor Nethsingha said Lammas Land cattle grids were being reviewed now to ensure ramps were in place or needed replacing.

### **18/16/WAC City Centre Rough Sleeping**

The Committee received a report from Councillors Bick and Harrison regarding City Centre rough sleeping.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. There was a need to persuade members of the public to give money to Street Aid (charity) as an alternative to giving money to beggars. This unintentionally funded drug dealing rather than helped homeless people.
- ii. Generally expressed support for the Cambridge Charter to re-invigorate stakeholders and the public to work in a more co-ordinated way to address issues. Some councillors expressed concern that pursuing a charter may put bureaucracy in the way of taking action.
- iii. Rough sleeping was a particular issue for the West/Central area of Cambridge. Queried who to alert about rough sleepers.
- iv. Rough sleeping was not always caused by a lack of housing. Some individuals were choosing not to use the shelters available. How do we help individuals to make good choices?
- v. The number of homeless people was rising as a result of Central Government policies such as austerity. It was difficult for people to claim benefits or help eg Universal Credit required a bank account (which people may not have due to no fixed abode).

In response to the report a member of the public said there was a need to educate tourists not to give money to beggars. Suggested putting information in hotels.

The Head of Housing made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. There was a need to promote Street Aid.
- ii. The first contactless terminal for people to donate money to Street Aid was in place at the Tourist Information Centre. More would be rolled out in future in other locations.
- iii. A Street Aid Co-ordinator was now in place.
- iv. A successful bid had been made for Central Government funding so the City Council could support the Police with out of hours services.
- v. Housing First was slow to get up and running. The City Council was in discussion with Central Government to expand the programme.
- vi. The Council was undertaking work to address homelessness eg outreach work.
- vii. There was a need to review outreach services to see if they were still needed and/or fit for purpose. This was complicated when the council worked with delivery partners.
- viii. Peer mentoring schemes were hard to set up and resource intensive, so not currently supported.
- ix. Aside from substance addiction, the biggest problem in Cambridge was the flow into street counts ie number of rough sleepers. It was difficult to calculate this figure as the number of rough sleepers varied frequently.

**Action Point: Follow up report to be added to agenda for future WCAC to review how recommendations were being taken forward from July report.**

### **18/17/WAC EIP Briefing Note**

Councillor Smith (Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces) was unable to attend 5 July West Central Area Committee as she had another council commitment which she could not cancel. Councillor Smith would have been willing to attend if not for her other commitment.

The Committee received a report from the Public Realm & Project Delivery Team Leader.

WCAC welcomed the progress of projects in Appendix B.

There was a brief discussion of the Parker's Piece lighting scheme. The Public Realm & Project Delivery Team Leader said that for practical reasons the



lighting work was planned to take place in conjunction with s106 funded improvements to selective grass edges to paths across the Piece. However, this had become delayed by an opportunity to accommodate further path improvement work in conjunction with the County Council and, given the regular programme of events on the open space, was not now expected to take place until 2019. The Public Realm & Project Delivery Team Leader would investigate whether the lighting work could be brought forward to take place in advance of the other improvements planned.

The Chair expressed frustration that Area Committees appeared to be discouraged from bringing forward new projects, when funding was available, as 'old' ones had not yet been completed as there were insufficient resources to deliver them.

As Councillor Smith was unable to attend the WCAC meeting Councillor Nethsingha said she would request a specific meeting with the Executive Councillor to discuss EIP in general, plus the possibility of adding the Lammas Land Fountain to the program.

This was agreed **nem con**.

**Action Point: Councillor Nethsingha to seek specific meeting with Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces to discuss EIP in general, plus the possibility of adding Lammas Land Fountain to the program.**

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

**CHAIR**