

EAST AREA COMMITTEE

9 January 2020

7.00 - 8.00 pm

Present

Area Committee Members: Councillors Barnett (Chair), Moore (Vice-Chair), Crawford, Davies, Green, Hadley, Herbert, Johnson, Robertson, Jones and Kavanagh

Officers:

Head of Corporate Strategy: Andrew Limb
Anti-Social Behaviour Officer: Louise Willerton
Resident Engagement Officer: Emily Watts
Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Other Officers in Attendance:

Detective Sergeant Mazur

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

20/1/EAC Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Baigent, Davey, Massey, Taylor, Smith and Whitehead.

20/2/EAC Declarations of Interest

No declarations were declared.

20/3/EAC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2019 were signed as a correct record by the Chair of the Committee.

20/4/EAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods

Detective Sergeant Mazur presented a report which outlined policing and safer neighbourhood trends and 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). The following local areas of concern were recommended for consideration:

- Serious street-based violence, targeting offenders
- Serious street-based violence, youth-based interventions
- Drug-related crime and acquisition crime related to drugs

In response to questions and comments from the Committee, Detective Sergeant Mazur said the following:

- i. Noted the request from Councillor Herbert for a copy of the Environmental Audit that took place on St Matthews Gardens and Corrie Road but this had been undertaken by the Community Safety Team (Cambridge City Council).
- ii. A process had to be followed before a detailed media release could be given regarding the 39 cycles recovered in Coleridge Road. All serial numbers would be checked against the relevant database, and checked against a crime report, to identify cycle owners. Proof of ownership would be required for cycles where an owner could not be identified.
- iii. Staffing capacity had increased on the local police team with staff employed internally from various departments following a recruitment process.
- iv. Since the last area committee attended by the police, a great deal of focus had been placed on the train station to assess the scale of the cycle theft problem. Work had taken place to improve site security with time spent patrolling the site. However, the site was privately owned by Greater Anglia and the Police had put forward suggestions on how to make the site more secure. The Police had also undertaken viewing CCTV to scan for incidents and carry out investigations on those incidents if a crime had been spotted.
- v. In the six months; there had been one person charged with cycle theft and three under investigation (believed to be prolific offenders). This did look like a limited return on the work that had been carried out, but it was recognised there was a low success rate of solving crime where CCTV was the primary evidence.
- vi. The CCTV had to be of sufficient quality for a still image to be produced, and an individual available to view an image to positively identify an offender. This also applied to shop lifting crimes.
- vii. With reference to the burglaries that had taken place in Abbey Ward, likely offenders had been identified, they had also carried out burglaries

outside of east area which had led to joint working with neighbouring forces.

- viii. A new sergeant had been employed by the burglary division which increased investigatory capabilities; burglaries were often linked together, which took time to investigate which could be frustrating those who had been a victim of this type of crime.

The Committee:

Resolved unanimously to approve the following as local areas of concern:

- Serious street-based violence, targeting offenders
- Serious street-based violence, youth-based interventions
- Drug-related crime and acquisition crime related to drugs.

20/5/EAC Open Forum

Residents of St Mathews Gardens presented the following petition:

We the undersigned petition the council to fit three new cctv cameras. We, the residents of St Matthew's Gardens, have endured a notable increase in criminal activity and threatening behaviour in and around St Matthew's Gardens in recent years, with a noticeable increase this summer. Several of us have been in touch with police who tell us they believe county lines drug dealers are using our square because of its secluded location, darkness and lack of cctv monitoring. Events culminated in a stabbing, but we had all been aware before this of a surge in drug-selling and drug-taking activity across the summer. We need all local agencies to work together to improve the environment and security offered to residents, and to deter future antisocial and criminal behaviour. We petition the council to fit three police-linked cctv cameras on access routes in and out of St Matthews Gardens: - St Matthews Gardens / New Street - St Matthew's Gardens / York Street - St Matthews Gardens / Beehive cut-through.

We are also asking our residents management company, which maintains the green with service charges from residents, that:

- the sheltered seating areas in the corners of the central green are removed or blocked
- movement-sensitive lighting is fitted on the green

- two communal hallways open to public access are fitted with resident-access-only locks.

These measures in combination will discourage criminals from using our square as a meeting point.

A presentation was then given on the anti-social behaviour witnessed in the square and the affect this had on young and old residents.

In response, the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer thanked residents for their petition and advised increased observations and work had been carried out in the area the previous year; door knocking had also taken place to try to speak with residents to understand the problems they were experiencing.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Team would look at the incidents of anti-social behaviour and feasibility for a temporary CCTV camera would be considered but could not promise that a camera would be installed as resources would have to be considered and other issues that were investigated.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer advised that all incidents witnessed / experienced were reported to the Police which would support the case for CCTV in the area. This can be done either by calling or by reporting online via the Cambs Police website.

Councillor Robertson explained he had asked the Police and Officers to respond quickly to the petition as this should be treated as priority. Further visits by Officers would be undertaken in the spring.

He then reiterated the importance of reporting every incident to the Police, to keep an accurate record of what was taking place in the area. He would work with the local resident management company on the how the issues raised in the petition might be addressed.

Detective Sergeant Mazur advised she would like to reassure residents that St Matthews Gardens and the surrounding area was an area of focus was regularly patrolled by uniformed and plain clothes police. Anti-social behaviour has been regularly disrupted in the area. The Police would remain focused on the area when the patrol time was available; there was an issue on the number of available to patrol the whole of East area, but the message would be taken to Officers to keep this area as priority.

Due to an increase in staff numbers, it would be possible to identify one member of the team to own the issues in the area and make that their primary workload.

A resident advised that they had reported issues to the police but had been left with the feeling of being ignored as they sometimes could not give the level of detail that the operators required, even though a crime had clearly been committed.

Detective Sergeant Mazur advised that there were other platforms that could be used to report a crime apart from the telephone numbers 999 and 101. Various details could be reported online through Cambridgeshire Constabulary website for non-emergency situations and intelligence about anti-social behaviour which may not warrant a telephone call or an officer to be despatched. Information from the on-line service was an invaluable reporting system tool for the police neighbourhood teams. These was ideal for those incidents deemed suspicious but lacked the detail to record as a crime.

The Chair thanked the residents from St Matthews for their attendance and such a detailed presentation on the issues that they faced.

20/6/EAC Estate Improvement Scheme

The Committee received a report on the approval of funding for £1 million per annum as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) medium-term financial strategy by the Housing Scrutiny Committee for 5 years of capital funding for improvement to City Council owned housing estate.

The reported presented by the resident engagement officer outlined the criteria that must be met to qualify for funding and the various proposals of varying value mainly proposed by tenants and to raise the profile of the scheme.

In response to a question from Councillor Moore, the resident engagement officer confirmed that there would be increased fire safety measures by upgrading the bin store, ensuring the bin room was lockable, reconfiguring the drying area to better use space for drying and cycle storage at Lichfield Road. A first consultation had taken place, residents had requested less cycle storage but increased scooter storage.

Resident involvement was crucial to each stage of the proposals.

Councillor Herbert stated he welcomed all the work that had been done on the project so far and thanked officers for the work. It was positive to see monies being spent on open spaces.

20/7/EAC East Area Committee Dates 2020/21

The following dates were approved:

Thursday, 9 July 2020, 7.00pm

Thursday, 17 September 2020, 7.00pm

Thursday, 3 December 2020, 7.00pm

Thursday, 18 March 2020, 7.00pm

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

CHAIR