

NORTH AREA COMMITTEE

19 November 2020

6.30 - 8.06 pm

Present

Area Committee Members: Councillors Bird (Chair), Todd-Jones (Vice-Chair), Collis, Dalzell, McQueen, O'Reilly, Sargeant, Sheil, Smart, Tunnacliffe, Manning, Meschini and Scutt

Officers:

Head of Housing: David Greening
Play Development Officer: Dan Mitchell
Anti-Social Behaviour Officer: Louise Willerton
Committee Manager: Sarah Steed
Meeting Producer: Liam Martin

Other Officers in Attendance:

Senior Delivery Project Manager, Greater Cambridge Partnership: Paul Van de Bulk

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

20/25/NAC Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Thittala

20/26/NAC Declarations Of Interest

Item	Councillor	Interest
20/29/NAC	Collis	Personal: She worked at the Cherry Hinton Food Hub.

20/27/NAC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following correction:

Minute reference 20/21/NAC point i and v reference to 'Mirket' should be to 'Murkett Road' or the junction of Histon Road, Victoria Road and Huntingdon Road.

20/28/NAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods

The Committee received a report 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 local areas of concern and engagement activity noted in the report were:

- i. ASB and dangerous driving on Fen Road and the High Street and NO2 cannisters.
- ii. Street based drug dealing
- iii. Youth and knife crime

The Committee were advised that the Police had sent their apologies and were not able to attend the meeting and would instead attend the March 2021 meeting.

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

1. Noted in the national news about delays in court hearings and asked whether the courts in Cambridge were more efficient.

The ASB Officer responded that Courts were still hearing applications for injunctions via video link. Officers had physically attended the County Court and she noted that strict social distancing measures were in place

2. Noted that the link to the Police website within the report was incorrect and asked if this could be looked into and corrected.

Action: ASB Officer to liaise with the Police and the ASB Team to correct the link within the report.

3. Referred to the Safer Streets Initiative and noted that a significant amount of work had been undertaken in the Arbury area. He noted the ASB Officer had referred to an issue outside shops in Carlton Way, this was also being addressed as part of this initiative. The initiative was about ensuring that vulnerable residents who had been targeted by burglary or lived in an area with a significant number of burglaries, were being contacted by the Police proactively to offer support as necessary.
4. Asked if Councillor Massey had been in touch with officers regarding a permanent CCTV in Fen Road. Also noted that a burglary had taken place

where she lived a couple of days previously. She also noted that a couple of children had been approached by a couple of people in their 20s. She had spoken with the Police about this and if this occurred again she would liaise with the ASB Officer.

The ASB Officer was not aware of the request and any such request would need to go to the CCTV Manger rather than the ASB Team.

Action: ASB Officer to make enquiries with the CCTV Manager whether they had received a request for a permanent CCTV camera in Fen Road.

Members of the public asked the following questions:

5. There have been multiple incidents of drug dealing and drug taking in the public footpath next to Kirkby Close recently and these have been reported to police. Given the repetitive nature of these activities in the same place, what is being done and what else can be done to tackle the problem? For example, is CCTV an option?

Police response provided in advance of the Committee

Incidents such as those reported are frustrating for all involved – due to their nature, suspicious activity such as suspected drug dealing is very rapid, and often even with a rapid deployment, it can all be over once police arrive. Targeted patrols can be tried and this may temporarily displace the issue rather than remove it altogether, but I will add it to the areas the North Team do patrol and we will try our best to ensure we pay regular visits to the location to bring this to an end.

In addition, I can ask the Community Safety Officer to attend the location with me and the correspondent (if they are willing) to look at the issues and see if there are measures that can be taken to ‘target harden’ the location. Things such as additional lighting, removal of greenery that can act as a ‘shield’ can help. I would also request that residents continue to report the issues so that we have an up to date picture of what is happening at the location.

6. We saw the police attend Mariners Way on 16th November at 15:45 and speak to the group that have been loitering and dealing on the street.

On 17th November the group only appeared for 15 minutes, however today (18th November) they have been in situ since 2.45pm (it is now 4pm). This is repeated behaviour 7 days a week for over 4 weeks, often from 10am until 4pm each day.

Please can you advise what action can be taken to deter them from loitering, and dealing on the streets.

There is also a collection of 'items' behind the bushes which are frequented for collection. We would suggest that removing these bushes would make the area more visible, safe and less attractive for this type of behaviour.

Police response provided in advance of Committee

In relation to the below question, in terms of changes to the location, this would be something the police could be involved in providing advice. I can ask the Community Safety Officer to attend the location with me and the correspondent to look at the issues and see if there are measures that can be taken to 'target harden' the location. I can also ask the local policing team to carry out patrols of the area and request that residents continue to report the issues so that we have an up to date picture of what is happening at the location.

The following local areas of concern were unanimously **agreed**:

- i. ASB and dangerous driving on Fen Road and the High Street and NO2 cannisters.
- ii. Street based drug dealing
- iii. Youth and knife crime

20/29/NAC Food Hubs

The Committee received an oral presentation from Dan Mitchell Play Development Officer regarding Food Hub provision in the city. Details of the presentation can be found at

[Agenda for North Area Committee on Thursday, 19th November, 2020, 6.30 pm - Cambridge Council](#)

The Committee made the following comments in response to the presentation:
1. Asked what days and times food hubs were open.

Details for [Opening times for Food Hubs in Cambridge](#) and further information could be found via

[Cambridge Emergency Food Support — Cambridge Sustainable Food](#) webpage.

2. Had worked with a family who were suffering financial hardship and fuel poverty. The family's electricity supply was turned off as they weren't able to make electricity payments. The Councillor had worked with the family to get the electricity turned back on. This had happened over the weekend so they just wanted to make sure everyone was aware what support was available and when.

3. Referred to an article in the Economist 'Hungry for Answers' which explained the background to Food Hubs and might motivate people to get out and lend a hand.

4. Asked what support the council was providing to Food Hubs over the Christmas period and what consideration had been given to a potential increase in demand.

The Food Hub at Buchan Street Community Centre would remain open on selected dates over the Christmas period so the council could continue to deliver fair share food to Food Hubs. Chefs from the Meadows Community Centre were building up a stock of frozen meals which could be sent out to Food Hubs over the Christmas period. Feedback from Food Hubs was that they would be open at some points over the Christmas period. There may be some gaps in provision and the intention was that Food Hubs could stock up with frozen food so that people could stock up to cover any 'gaps' in provision.

5. Thanked Councillor Collis and officers who were providing food, support and assistance to residents during the covid-19 pandemic.

6. Food Hubs were open every day except Sunday. People did not need a voucher and could just turn up and there were no geographical restrictions to where people could go.

7. The Food Bank voucher scheme entitled people to emergency food 3 times. Lots of different places could refer people to a Food Bank including churches, schools and Citizen's Advice.

8. Asked if Food Hubs could provide seeds and plants to enable people to grow their own food.

Several Food Hubs had given out plants / herbs. There was also a herb garden at the rear of the Cherry Hinton Food Hub which was looked after by residents and which anyone could use. This was something being looked at as part of the Council's Sustainable Food Policy.

Councillor Collis agreed to ask the Steering Group at Cambridge Sustainable Food whether donations could be sought from garden centres to encourage people to grow their own food.

20/30/NAC Open Forum

There were no public questions for the Open Forum.

20/31/NAC Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) - Update on Histon Road

The Committee received a presentation from Paul Van de Bulk, Senior Delivery Project Manager, on Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) projects in the north of the city.

The Histon Road presentation outlined:

- i. The Histon Road project was under construction and there was an in-bound traffic closure in place.
- ii. Phase A (the junction between Victoria Road and Huntingdon Road) was virtually completed.
- iii. Footpaths had been left without top surfaces as they were working with the County Council to extend the scope of the resurfacing work. This work was hopefully to be completed by Christmas.
- iv. The works between Victoria Road and Gilbert Road had nearly completed on the eastern side and similarly the works between Gilbert Road and Kings Hedges had mostly been completed on the eastern side. This included diversion of services and kerbing. They were about to move on to the western side of the road. It was hoped that works on the Gilbert Road section would start in February / March 2021.
- v. Even though there had been a few minor delays, the works were still on target to finish in summer 2021.
- vi. Had been trying to liaise with the Darwin Green developers to see if their works could be completed whilst the GCP works were being undertaken so that there wasn't a second lot of works on Histon Road.

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

1. Had observed cyclists in the morning coming out of Histon Road into the end of Victoria Road going out to Huntingdon Road, it was safe and there was no traffic going at that time. Noted that cars coming from Victoria Road were waiting patiently for the lights to change. Asked about the footpaths in Victoria Road and asked whether these could be included as part of the works.

The Senior Delivery Project did not have the full extent of the additional works to hand but knew that there was going to be some additional works down Victoria Road. Noted an improvement for cyclists on the corner of Histon Road and Victoria Road but thought that there might still need to be a few additional improvements made to try and segregate the cycle lanes from the traffic lanes.

2. Was pleased that the Senior Delivery Project Manager was regularly liaising with the County Council Officers on the active travel covid-19 traffic related schemes as all the works were interrelated.

The Senior Delivery Project Manager noted that the difficulty with the Arbury Road works was that the diversion route was via the A14 and Milton Road and unfortunately they could not control where people physically drove. This could only be controlled by putting in hard physical measures. They would continue to monitor the situation and hoped it would not become significant enough to need harder measures to be implemented as this could just divert the issue to another location.

3. Thanked the Senior Delivery Project Manager for the work undertaken and for trying to coordinate work with CityFibre and the County Council so that there was as small an impact on residents and road users as possible.
4. Expressed concern regarding the diversion signage on the A14. This issue had also been raised at the GCP Assembly that day (19 November 2020). It wasn't clear whether the issue lay with Highways England as thought the overhead signage was owned by them. Noted the 3 small signs by the side of the road were hard to see. Asked why 'Cambridge' could not be removed from the overhead gantry signs.

Another issue was that when you pulled off the A14 you were then directed back the way you came.

The Senior Delivery Project Manager agreed the small signs on the side of the road were hard to see and that the GCP had actually paid for slightly bigger signs. Commented that the Gantry signs were the best way to direct people but they hadn't had a positive response from Highways England that Cambridge could be greyed out. They were left using variable message signage (VMS) the only issue with this was that messages could only be displayed for 2 week periods, then there had to be a rest period and then they had to request the message was displayed again. They had tried to time the use of the VMS signs during key periods.

The Senior Delivery Project Manager had spoken with Skanska about signage when you came off the A14 and people needed to continue round the roundabout and then carry on via the east bound exit.

5. Had raised the issue of 'Smart Signals' at the GCP Assembly that day (19 November 2020) and understood that the County Council were not keen to implement the project. The smart signalling trials in Cherry Hinton were not due to start until March 2021. Noted that CamCycle had also asked useful questions on this issue at the GCP Assembly meeting and whether Smart Signalling took into account cyclists.

The Senior Delivery Project Manager noted that there had been delays with the Smart Signals project and did not want an individual system put on Histon Road; a universal system was needed across the city.

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

6. The Senior Delivery Project Manager commented at the meeting in September that he was not aware of any particular congestion problems in North Cambridge as a result of the Histon Road works and asked whether that was still their assessment? Felt that Arbury Road had seen a large increase in traffic volumes particularly with heavy vehicles. Asked whether there were any plans to measure traffic flow on Arbury Road as part of monitoring the impact of the Histon Road scheme?

The Senior Delivery Project Manager commented that some monitoring of the roads had been undertaken including around the top end of Arbury Road and Stretton Avenue. The monitoring indicated that there wasn't a significant problem arising from the works. This could have been due to the pandemic and the fact that traffic levels were not at 'normal' levels. It should be noted that there was an increase in traffic just before the second lockdown. Noted that some residents had been doing their own monitoring and was aware of a

resident in Stretton Avenue who had sent pictures of HGVs using that road so monitoring would continue as they did not want HGVs using that road. There was a plan in place to introduce road narrowing if the issue continued.

The Senior Delivery Project Manager noted that various comments had been made about traffic levels on Arbury Road. Their opinion was that traffic levels had not increased. Was aware of a group pushing for a modal filter on that street.

7. At the meeting in September Councillor Scutt highlighted increased traffic on Carlton Way and Mere Way with the works happening on Histon Road.

Councillor Scutt expressed concern that if the right-hand turn from Gilbert Road onto Milton Road was stopped then there would be increased traffic through Stretton Avenue. Officers were requested to work together on such initiatives. Asked if officers had been working on a coordinated approach?

The Senior Delivery Project Manager said they had been in regular contact with the Team who were working on the Arbury Road project so they had an understanding of the project and timescales. With regard to traffic on Mere way and Stretton Avenue they didn't feel that there was a significant issue in that area at the moment.

8. The new signal system which was presently nearing the end of construction at the junction of Histon Road, Victoria Road and Huntingdon Road, had been promised to substantially improve the flow of traffic and reduce congestion during peak hours. Asked if this signal system was part of the GCP programme Smart Signals and also asked if there had been any trials?

The Senior Delivery Project Manager said that both sets of signals at junctions Gilbert Road / Warwick Road and Huntingdon / Histon Road had the infrastructure within them to ensure that whichever smart signal was chosen, it could be installed and implemented at those junctions. They weren't sure at what stage officers were on testing the Smart Signals but these could be implemented on the Histon Road junctions.

9. Cycling the wrong way on the inbound lane footpath to get to the Borrowdale entrance. Worried pedestrians. Have you noticed any incidence?

The Senior Delivery Project Manager noted that cycling inbound on Histon Road was, for most of the way, on a fairly wide path. There had been instances where the workers had had to direct cyclists round and stop traffic. One of the biggest issues was that cyclists were sometimes not listening to the workmen, which could cause a dangerous situation. Had witnessed cyclists on footpaths in a particular location and had asked Skanska to ensure that they were not directing cyclists on to footpaths. Were looking to ensure there was space on the carriageway for cyclists.

10. Have there been any reductions in cars driving the wrong way on the outbound lane?

The Senior Delivery Project Manager noted that there had been a significant reduction in cars driving down the wrong way on the outbound lane.

The Milton Road presentation outlined:

- ii. The detailed design was just about complete and then a road safety audit would then be required. The traffic regulation orders (TRO) would then need to be done and then works could begin.
- iii. Would need to wait for the Histon Road works to be completed and then a decision would need to be taken as to whether there would be a break between the Histon Road and Milton Road works or whether the Milton Road works would begin straight away.
- iv. There could be a stakeholder event or a Local Liaison Forum (LLF) before the TRO consultation.

The Better Public Transport project (Waterbeach to Cambridge) presentation outlined:

- i. A consultation was currently underway with a closing date 14 December 2020. [Waterbeach to Cambridge Consultation 2020 | Consult Cambridgeshire \(greatercambridge.org.uk\)](https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/consultation/waterbeach-to-cambridge-consultation-2020)

20/32/NAC Committee Action Sheet

The Action Sheet was noted and an updated copy could be viewed at the following link under 'Committee Action Sheet – updated post committee.

[Agenda for North Area Committee on Thursday, 19th November, 2020, 6.30 pm - Cambridge Council](#)

The meeting ended at 8.06 pm

CHAIR

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