

**LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL**

**POLICE LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 9 APRIL 2018 AT 1930 HOURS**

Present : Councillors R Berry  
A Dodwell  
J M Freeman  
T Morris – in the Chair  
A Brandham (substituting for C Chambers)  
C Palmer (substituting for B Spurr)  
C Perham  
G Perham

Also in attendance: M Saccocio, Town Clerk  
S Sandiford (Head of Democratic & Central Services)  
S Jewell (Best Bar None Co-ordinator)  
Inspector C Gurr (Bedfordshire Police)  
PCSO E Weedon (Bedfordshire Police)  
Sgt L Mitchell (Bedfordshire Police)

Members of the Public: 10

**087/PL APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor C Chambers (substituted by Councillor A Brandham) and from Councillor B Spurr (substituted by Councillor C Palmer).

**088/PL DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were asked to declare any interests, including the nature of those interests, which they had in any of the items under consideration at this meeting. No declarations were made and no dispensations had been requested.

**089/PL PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Members of the public and representatives of the local Shop Watch and Pub Watch schemes spoke to express concerns about local crime and the lack of police resources available to attend incidents, either at the time of the event or thereafter to take statements. Concerns were expressed about the finite police resources in the local area, particularly overnight, and the difficulty of being able to make reports to the police via the non emergency 101 number but also the emergency 999 number.

A concern regarding an increase in knife crime was raised and this was agreed by Bedfordshire Police officers to be the case, both across the county and at a national level.

Shop Watch representatives raised a concern that the analogue radios used for flagging up issues to the CCTV control room might not be useable in future,

should Central Bedfordshire Council proceed with a move to a digital CCTV system. It was agreed to seek clarification from Central Bedfordshire Council on this, but understood that the timescale for any changes to the CCTV system was medium term and unlikely to take place within the next couple of years.

Shop Watch representatives requested whether Bedfordshire Police officers could attend their next scheduled meeting. It was agreed that officers would attend if at all possible given operational constraints.

A query was raised regarding the £40,000 annual budget set by the Town Council for community safety. This had historically been predominantly delivered through the Operation Dodford service level agreement with Bedfordshire Police and included a focus on market day patrols, when the town centre had been at its busiest. The question was asked as to whether funds were being used in the most effective manner.

#### **090/PL MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Sub-Committee received the draft minutes of the Police Liaison Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 January 2018.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Police Liaison Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 January 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.**

#### **091/PL BEST BAR NONE**

The Best Bar None Co-Ordinator for Leighton-Linslade, Dunstable and Houghton Regis attended the meeting to provide a verbal update in respect of the scheme, which aimed to work with licensed premises to implement best practice initiatives and enhance safety for customers. Ten venues in the parish had achieved accreditation and the next step was the "People's Vote", which would be publicised via a number of mechanisms including social media. A presentation evening would be taking place on 4 June.

It was noted that there was a healthy Pub Watch scheme running in Leighton Buzzard and Linslade and that although this was run on an entirely separate and independent basis, it was intrinsically linked with the Best Bar None project and the Best Bar None Co-ordinator was invited to attend Pub Watch meetings.

#### **092/PL BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE REPORT: OPERATION DODFORD**

The Sub-Committee received a report from Bedfordshire Police on crime and antisocial behaviour for January - March 2018, as compared to the previous year and as a ratio per head of population compared with other local towns. For both crimes and antisocial behaviour incidents, there were increases in some categories but reductions in others, compared to the same period in 2017. Incidents of note relating to market day patrols and the night time economy were highlighted.

Clarification was given that although community safety teams were not in operation after 10pm, police response teams were operational throughout the night and would be assigned jobs by the police control room based on their assessment of potential risk or harm.

Committee members raised queries regarding specific locations of concern for antisocial behaviour. An "Operation Vision" exercise had recently taken place in the south of the town and it was hoped that this could be repeated later in the year. "Operation Night Owl" had been established since January 2018 to provide a dedicated response to the night time economy, with one van covering Leighton-Linslade, Dunstable and Luton.

It was noted that residents often expressed concerns or frustrations on social media but did not actually report these matters officially to the police. Police officers reminded those present that reports could also be submitted online as well as via the 101 telephone number.

Concerns were expressed regarding drugs issues, with various paraphernalia being uncovered during recent litter picking activity. Drugs had been set as a local priority and the police confirmed this meant that more resources could be dedicated to it, with intelligence officers targeting the most serious offences (relating to class A drugs) as first priority.

Further concerns were expressed in relation to ongoing antisocial behaviour by young people in the town centre. Feedback from residents indicated that people felt intimidated and unsafe and might therefore be deterred from visiting the town centre. It was confirmed that a lot of work continued to be done in respect of these issues, including gathering of evidence in order to progress through the system by way of issuing "acceptable behaviour contracts", warnings and ultimately injunctions to ban known offenders from specific locations. It was further confirmed that much pro-active work was being done with young people including liaison with schools and parents.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

A new Service Level Agreement for Operation Dodford for 2018-19 had yet to be received and was currently under consideration by Bedfordshire Police following recent case law. The Sub-Committee was therefore unable to make any specific recommendation to the Policy and Finance Committee in this respect. It was instead agreed that Insp.Gurr would consider whether there were any areas in which the Town Council could help to financially support Bedfordshire Police in preventing or addressing local crime and antisocial behaviour issues and if so, to discuss these further with the Town Clerk.

#### **093/PL "WATCH" SCHEMES UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report in respect of the local Street Watch and Speed Watch schemes, including patrols undertaken. Feedback to scheme members from local residents was positive.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**094/PL CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION**

The Sub-Committee received a report of recorded CCTV incidents in Leighton Buzzard from 1 January – 31 March 2018. It was noted that the number of arrests stated in the report was based solely on the information captured by the CCTV and did not reflect any action taken by the police following the captured incidents or where the incidents formed part of a wider investigation.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

The meeting closed at 20:57 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 APRIL 2018.

Chair

16 JULY 2018

DRAFT