

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

MONDAY 18 OCTOBER 2021 AT 1930 HOURS

Present: Councillors D Bowater
P Carberry
R Yates
V Harvey
J Silverstone (Chair)
A Gray
R Goodchild
G Perham (substituting for F Kharawala)
S Jones (substituting for R Berry)
T Morris (substituting for A Dodwell)

Also in attendance: S Sandiford, (Deputy Town Clerk)
I Haynes, (Head of Grounds & Environmental Services)
M Jahn, (Committee Officer)
Inspector C Gurr (Bedfordshire Police)
Graham Quick (Speed Watch)

Members of the Public: 0

87/CS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dodwell (substituted by Councillor Morris), Councillor Berry (substituted by Councillor Jones), Councillor Kharawala (substituted by Councillor Perham) and the Town Clerk.

88/CS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared and no dispensations were requested.

89/CS QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

90/CS MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The Sub-Committee received the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 12 July 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 12 July 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.

(b) Minute reference 80/CS Operation Dodford – it was confirmed the Town Clerk had written a letter to Andrew Selous MP as requested and that a response

back from Kit Malthouse MP suggested the issues be taken up with the Police Crime Commissioner. A meeting with the Commissioner had been scheduled for 8 November 2021.

Minute reference 83/CS OPCC Donation Request – further to the request from the OPCC a verbal communication had been made and the Town Clerk was awaiting a written update.

Minute reference 84/CS Activities for Young People – it was confirmed that Groundworks remained interested in providing two bike maintenance sessions and would come back to the Town Clerk with more information in due course.

91/CS OPERATION DODFORD

The Sub-Committee had received a written report regarding crime and anti-social behaviour in advance of the meeting and a verbal summary was given regarding activity undertaken in respect of Operation Dodford and incidents of note for the period June - September 2021. Overall, crime and antisocial behaviour figures were similar to the same period in the previous year.

A number of concerns were highlighted by Members including begging in the High Street, abuse targeted at Councillors on social media, problems with children riding bikes on pavements on the way home from school, littering and causing a nuisance in Bell Alley, enforcement of the temporary pedestrianisation of the High Street, anti-social behaviour and how this was reported and cold calling in the area.

Inspector Gurr confirmed his officers continued to address these problems to the best of their ability and with the resources available. He reiterated how important it was for any crime, no matter how small, to be reported to the police so demand could be noted and the need for more resources monitored. In many cases the crime had to be witnessed and evidenced before further action could be taken. In the case of malicious communications, a line had to be crossed before something could be considered as criminal activity.

A question was raised asking whether anti-social behaviour could be addressed by providing more activities for young people to attend. Members agreed that the Youth Club provided by Groundworks did help engage some young people but not always the children who needed the most help. The Sub-Committee also asked for more detail on antisocial behaviour offences so that any patterns and root causes could be established.

Inspector Gurr would ask PCSO Rachel Carne to engage with the School Liaison Officers regarding safe and responsible cycling.

Inspector Gurr confirmed that three new Community Police Officers had been appointed in September, two of whom had started work and one was due to start soon.

Thanks were given by Members to the local police who had had to deal with some very difficult traumatic incidents over recent weeks including fatal accidents, and for their continuing work in and around the town.

RESOLVED to note the report and updates.

92/CS CCTV & REDEPLOYABLE CAMERAS

The Sub-Committee received reports of recorded CCTV incidents in Leighton Buzzard during June, July and August 2021. These reports were publicly available and published monthly on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.

A question was raised regarding why the CCTV report for July ended at 17 July 2021. This would be followed up with the local authority.

Members were informed the digital upgrade of CCTV cameras and installation of the new control room was nearly complete. Hubs were now being installed and fibre lines were on order. The new digital system was anticipated to be operational by the end of January 2022.

RESOLVED to note the CCTV reports.

93/CS WATCH SCHEME UPDATES

Street Watch

The Sub-Committee received an update from Graham Quick, Street Watch. He confirmed that the numbers of volunteers were slowly returning after COVID-19 but the patrols were largely carried out by a regular five or six people. A regular two-hour patrol on market days, monitoring of the homeless in the High Street and cyclists using the road was carried out weekly. Patrols were also carried out in surrounding areas such as Parsons Close, Pages Park, Danes Way and Linslade.

One of the bigger problems encountered was the increase in use of e-scooters and the speed at which they travelled.

Speed Watch

Members were informed that Speed Watch took place on a weekly basis in various locations in the area. Twelve roads had been monitored since July and Leighton Road, by the garden centre, had been added to the list.

Members thanked all the volunteers for their continued work and a request was made for the Town Council to publicise their work via social media and promote the organisations with the aim of recruiting volunteers.

Pub Watch

Members were informed that Pub Watch had a closed Whatsapp group where information would be shared with the different public houses on incidents which

happened in the town. Any relevant incidents from this group could be passed to the police for their information if required. The Chair advised he would be attending the next Pub Watch meeting.

RESOLVED to note the information.

94/CS EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

There was no requirement to exclude the public.

95/CS OPERATIONAL POLICING (IF APPLICABLE)

No report was made.

The meeting closed at 2042 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2021.

Chair

17 JANUARY 2022