

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

MONDAY 17 OCTOBER 2022 AT 1930 HOURS

Present: Councillors D Bowater
V Harvey
J Silverstone
R Goodchild
A Dodwell
A Gray
P Carberry
S Hemmings (substituting for R Berry)

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)
S Sandiford (Deputy Town Clerk)
Inspector G Twyford (Bedfordshire Police)
Sgt A French (Bedfordshire Police)
PC S Arain (Bedfordshire Police)
Cllr S Owen

Members of the Public: 1

117/CS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Morris and Councillor Berry (substituted by Councillor Hemmings).

118/CS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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.

Councillor Dodwell declared a personal interest as a member of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel. Councillors Dodwell and Bowater declared a personal interests as volunteers with the Street Watch initiative.

119/CS QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

120/CS MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The Sub-Committee received the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 11 July 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 11 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.

(b) Updates from the previous minutes included discussion on Minute

reference 112/CS. Correspondence sent to and replies received from the Police Crime Commissioner and Bedfordshire Police had been circulated to the Sub-Committee as well as to all councillors for information and that discussion had taken place at the Council meeting held 10 October 2022 regarding policing.

In terms of vandalism and anti-social behaviour by young people, an update was given regarding Operation Pentagon, which had resulted in seven young people being referred for a youth caution. A question was asked about the Youth Offending Team and it was suggested a representative be invited to a future meeting to talk about their work in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. It was felt that “breaking the cycle” and providing a deterrent to future offending was key. Potential for the town council to take civil action was discussed and would require a formal request for Bedfordshire Police to release the appropriate information.

The question was asked as to whether the Police were receiving adequate support from other agencies and the Sub-Committee was advised this was very much a multi-agency approach and that partnership working was essential.

Concerns were expressed about the new police facility at Bossard House being misconceived by the public, who wanted a manned desk in the town. A suggestion was made about engaging volunteers, for example from the Watch schemes, to help provide a customer facing presence.

RESOLVED to express thanks to Bedfordshire Police for their work on Operation Pentagon and to express thanks to Inspector Twyford as this would be his last meeting before retirement.

121/CS OPERATION DODFORD

The Sub-Committee received a report on Operation Dodford activity, reported crimes and antisocial behaviour during the period June - September 2022.

It was noted that there had been an increase in some types of incident but reductions in others. A number of queries were asked in respect of the statistics and it was suggested that a specific targeted analysis of the area was needed. Specific measures to address issues such as drugs related incidents, graffiti and nuisance motorbikes were discussed.

RESOLVED to note the report.

122/CS CCTV & DEPLOYABLE CAMERAS

The Sub-Committee received reports of recorded CCTV incidents in Leighton Buzzard for June - August 2022. These reports were publicly available and published monthly on the Central Bedfordshire Council website but were based only on the information available to the local authority and not what might have subsequently happened in relation to captured incidents. It was noted there had been several breaches of Criminal Behaviour Orders. Action being taken in respect of shoplifting was discussed and it was noted

that the current digital case file system used by the police was complex to use and was not compatible with the system used by the Crown Prosecution Service.

It was noted that the digital CCTV upgrade was complete and a visit to the new control room was awaited. In respect of the Linslade Community Garden, an audit had taken place with recommendations to be considered.

RESOLVED to note the CCTV reports

123/CS “WATCH” SCHEMES UPDATE

Street Watch patrols continued to take place on Tuesdays and Saturdays, with Speed Watch patrols taking place at least monthly. The Shop Watch group was being revived at present.

124/CS POLICE RESPONSE

The Sub-Committee received a report from Councillor S Owen regarding police response to reported incidents. This was based on information gathered informally via social media from residents. Whilst feedback indicated a level of satisfaction with 999 response times, there was a negative view of the 101 control room phone line. This related to the speed of answering calls as well as the response received in relation to the report.

It was noted that a report to the Police and Crime Panel on 11 October 2022 had identified this issue, noting a shortfall in the number of control room operators and actions proposed to improve the situation. However, the call waiting times referenced in the report did not appear to match the anecdotal feedback from residents, with one example of 75 minutes waiting time cited.

Inspector Twyford advised the Sub-Committee that the volume of calls received had increased enormously in recent years along with the type of queries and times of calls (now 24/7). Calls were being received which should be addressed to other services in the first instance. It was agreed there needed to be greater public awareness of relevant emergency numbers and more publicity was needed to communicate this message.

It was noted that this was a county-wide issue.

RESOLVED to note the report.

125/CS EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Not applicable.

126/CS OPERATIONAL POLICING (if applicable)

Not applicable.

The meeting closed at 2108 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2022.

Chair

16 JANUARY 2023

DRAFT