

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF MEETING OF SAFER NEW FOREST STRATEGY & DELIVERY GROUP – 4 SEPTEMBER 2017

1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Representatives from Town and Parish Councils and the local community had been invited to attend the meeting to present their community safety concerns. This would assist the Strategy Group in assessing progress against actions in the current partnership plan, and help inform the 2017-18 plan.

1.1 Minstead Parish Council

(a) Concerns regarding Police Call Handling

Cllr Beck raised a concern on behalf of Minstead Parish Council regarding the reporting of crime to the Police. A particular incident was described when the response had not been satisfactory. Theft from vehicles in New Forest car parks was also a concern.

Ch Insp Mitchell advised that if a crime was taking place it should be reported to 999. However, both the 999 and 101 control rooms were under a lot of pressure over the summer months. He would report the concerns expressed to call management.

(b) Parking in Village Centre

Unregulated parking in the village centre was considered to be a safety risk to other road users. Ch Insp Mitchell clarified that if parking was dangerous it should be reported to the Police. However, if the road layout was a concern Hampshire County Council should be contacted.

Action: Police to respond to Cllr Bill Andrews, Chairman of Minstead Parish Council, regarding the concerns raised.

1.2 New Milton Town Council

(a) Gypsy, Romany & Traveller Communities - New Milton

Cllr Beck reported on a recent case of Travellers using a site in New Milton. They had very recently moved on. The Police had attended the site. They had followed, and would continue to follow, their procedure through "Operation Quebec" which set out a structured response to such incidents. Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 would be considered if appropriate. The powers under Section 62 of the Act could not be used as there were no designated sites in New Forest District.

(b) North Milton Estate Play area

Concerns had been raised about a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour at the new North Milton Estate play area. A reduction in visible policing in the New Milton and Lymington areas was also of concern.

It was reported that the District Council was aware of only one complainant and Brian Byrne and the Housing Service Manager were attending the site the following week. "Street Pastors" were planning to start a youth club at the Nedderman Centre in October 2017, where they would be available until 10pm on Friday evenings. Ch Insp Mitchell acknowledged that Police numbers were low but he reported that a replacement PC was due to start work in the area in September. The Police co-ordinated a monthly meeting of various agencies to discuss areas of concern, offenders and victims to endeavour to

address issues and to target resources where the need was greatest. Ch Insp Mitchell would discuss the concerns raised with Sergeant Paul Beale at New Milton.

(c) Charlotte Court

Reports had been received regarding young people causing ASB issues in the vicinity of Charlotte Court. Sgt Beale had been approached and a meeting between Town Councillors, Pastors and New Milton Town Council's Youth Officer had been arranged for 11 September to address some of the issues. Brian Byrne would attend the meeting.

(d) PCSOs

Cllr Beck referred to Hythe & Dibden Parish Council funding their own PCSO through the Police and wondered if this would be appropriate for New Milton. Cllr Beck was advised to contact Ch Inspector Mitchell or Insp Willoughby to discuss the matter further.

1.3 Lymington & Pennington Town Council

Woodside & St Thomas Park

Ongoing ASB issues were reported in the Woodside and St Thomas Park areas with reports of young people drinking and using drugs, and vandalising equipment. The possible use of a dispersal order was discussed. It was reported that the Town Council had installed their own internal stand-alone CCTV. Ch Insp Mitchell agreed to discuss the concerns with Insp Parsons. It was also mentioned that the Police had a Drugs Related Harm Team in Southampton which had previously worked in areas of the Forest and it might be possible to engage them in the area. Brian Byrne would contact the Town Council to look at the wider issues of ASB to ensure appropriate reporting and awareness.

Action: Brian Byrne to contact Lymington & Pennington Town Council regarding the wider issues of ASB.

1.4 Fawley Parish Council

Anti-social Behaviour

Steve Postlethwaite reported that there had been a rise in anti-social behaviour, involving large groups of girls and boys aged between 14-18yrs, appearing like a gang culture, along the Waterside, including Fawley. There were concerns regarding drugs, criminal damage, shoplifting and setting fires. There had been two recent fires in Heather Road and Lime Kiln Lane which might be linked to the group. Ch Insp Mitchell acknowledged the concerns but reported that a recent fire had been due to an abandoned vehicle. He considered it unlikely that this was linked to the group. The Police had responded to concerns expressed by the Handy Trust. PC Woodhead was aware of the issues. Reports of ASB had decreased in the area, as had violent crime and arson. A suggestion was made that a more joined-up approach between the Police and the Handy Trust would be of benefit. Steve Postlethwaite suggested that the use of Neighbourhood Management System (NMS) on SafetyNet would help. This was being arranged. As part of the Arson Forum, Steve Postlethwaite suggested that he provide a link between the Forum and NFALC.

Shaun Lawrence reported that the Fire & Rescue Service had recorded 96 arson-related incidents this year. It was hard to pick up trends but reports of incidents were valuable in trying to analyse the position.

1.5 National Farmers' Union

(a) Animal Welfare

Mrs Hill expressed the view that there was a need for greater awareness of the contact details for reporting distressed/unwell animals within the New Forest. It was suggested that appropriate telephone numbers be displayed on the gates of car parks or enclosures so concerned members of the public would have easy access to the correct contact numbers, rather than reporting them to the Police as often occurred at present. It was noted that safety cards were available at various outlets and that information in this regard was provided when residents purchased parking clocks. Ch Insp Mitchell advised that, as the Police control room was based in Netley, call handlers might lack local knowledge and he therefore supported the idea of notices on gates.

Action: Alison Barnes to discuss with Cllr Heron and the Animal Accident Group; Chairman to write to the National Park Authority and the Forestry Commission regarding displaying the verderers' numbers in the car parks.

(b) Phone Scams

Phone scams and courier fraud were discussed. Ch Insp Mitchell advised these were widespread issues. Action Fraud would investigate any issues initially and if there were any vulnerabilities the Police would assist. Advice regarding fraud and scams was available on the Safer New Forest website. The link could be added to the NFU's website. Hampshire Alerts were also suggested.

Action: Rob Mitchell to discuss with the Media Officer within the Police.

(c) Travellers

Travellers had recently been seen in the Sopley area apparently looking for sites to stop. It would be helpful if local communities could be alerted to this sort of situation. The difficulties of tracking Travellers' movements were discussed. It was important that landowners understood the importance of, wherever possible, securing vacant land to prevent unauthorised access.

The Parish Councils & the NFU were thanked for their contributions. Consideration would be given to the views expressed when the Strategic Assessment was undertaken and the next Partnership Plan was considered.