



Ipswich Central Public Meeting

A public meeting was held at St Margaret's Primary School on Tuesday 20 June at 1900 hrs.

PRESENT:

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

Tim Passmore (Police & Crime Commissioner), Anna Parkinson (PA to PCC) and Ellie Anthony (Business Administration Apprentice)

Suffolk Constabulary

Kerry Cutler (Superintendent, South), Inspector Stuart Weaver (Ipswich Central Inspector).

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER OVERVIEW

The PCC welcomed 28 members of the public to the meeting and made introductions. The PCC spoke briefly about the key elements of his role and current priorities. A copy of his handout will be attached to these notes for the record.

POLICING UPDATE

Inspector Stuart Weaver introduced himself having recently taken over responsibility for the area and spoke about policing in the locality (a copy of his hand-out is available).

QUESTIONS ASKED AND SUBJECTS DISCUSSED

- **PCSO Shift Hours / Visibility:** A resident expressed a concern that Police Community Support Officers no longer work in the evenings, meaning that there was no police presence to deal with the apparently increasing anti-social behaviour. Tim Passmore noted this concern has been raised a number of times and that the issue is under consideration. Superintendent Kerry Cutler acknowledged that she was aware of the concerns but had to prioritise resources, within the constraints she is under. She went on to mention the latest operation - Op Parkland - which will be taking place over the summer. It will involve officers being on duty during the evenings and targeting identified "hot spot" areas.
- **Jubilee Park:** Serious concerns were raised about the drug taking and anti-social behaviour taking place in Jubilee Park, including the problem of empty properties attracting further problems as young people are gathering in them and leaving behind drug paraphernalia, knives etc. Tim Passmore and Supt Cutler urged residents to report any incidents they witness to the police immediately. Supt Cutler added that the police have been in touch with the owners of the empty properties in an attempt to address the issues. Tim Passmore emphasised the need for a multi-agency approach to the problem

and mentioned the Crime and Disorder grant. This grant is there to offer support to young people and the money goes towards groups such as Inspire Suffolk and Catch 22.

- Drug Issues in Ipswich: A member of the public praised Operation Woven – an ongoing operation with the aim to deter and disrupt crime and ASB that is connected to groups of individuals known to each other, much of which is drug related. Tim Passmore thanked the gentleman and went on to say he is very pleased with how the operation is going and that this is due to the hard working officers and also assistance from the public in reporting their concerns. Tim added that the focus on drugs came partly from the concern raised at Public Meetings last year and is a priority for the police.
- Drug taking in Christchurch Park – A resident voiced her concern, having previously emailed the OPCC, about the amount of young people taking drugs openly in the park and leaving syringes and broken glass behind. She was concerned that this was happening freely and asked if police could patrol during the week as a patrol car at weekends was not enough. Supt Cutler responded that she was very aware of concerns about drug taking in parks and Christchurch Park is not the only one to be affected. Therefore she has to consider the wider picture and allocate resource appropriately. However, she also reassured the meeting that there are plain clothes officers visiting the parks so their presence may not be obvious. In addition, Supt Cutler has been in touch with Ipswich Borough Council about the need to work together and increase the number of park wardens. The Council is keen to increase the number of wardens but are currently experiencing problems in recruitment. Supt Cutler said their conversations were ongoing and she would pass the resident's original email to the Council. She added that it was important for residents to report any discarded needles they see in parks to the Borough Council.
- Excluding pupils from schools – A local school governor raised the fact that the police asking schools not to exclude pupils due to bad behaviour (in order to keep them off the streets) was creating further difficulties. Disruptive pupils or those found to be dealing drugs generally need to be excluded in order not to affect the education and well-being of other pupils at the school. Inspector Weaver reassured the meeting that schools were being asked to consider exclusion as a last resort and to consider other options first. Supt Cutler emphasised the need for a multi-agency approach around the safeguarding of vulnerable children and that a collective approach was being worked on. The initiative involves schools identifying those they consider vulnerable and this will then be fed back to a multi-agency "hub" and each case can then be addressed.
- Street Lighting: Concerns were raised about street lights being turned off, creating fear among residents and opportunities for criminals to target these areas. A member of the public mentioned they had been in touch with the council about their concern and that nothing had been done about it and asked how the police could help. Tim said any evidence of concerns should

be sent to the constabulary and he/the police could assist with talking to the council to address the problem.

- Begging: One member of the public voiced his concern about the amount of street beggars in Ipswich and asked what is being done about this. Inspector Stuart Weaver explained that recently two of his PCSOs had won an award for the hard work they had put into a recent project called 'Help the Homeless', working in partnership with other agencies.

The PCC thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20:30 hrs.