

ORIGINATOR: HEAD OF COMMISSIONING

DECISION NO: 27 - 2021

REASON FOR SUBMISSION: FOR DECISION

SUBMITTED TO: POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

**SUBJECT: AWARD OF CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION GRANT –
TOWN PASTORS**

SUMMARY:

1. In accordance with the provisions in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 the Police and Crime Commissioner can commission services that:
 - a) secure, or contribute to securing, crime and disorder reduction in Suffolk;
 - b) are intended to help victims or witnesses of, or other persons affected by, offences and anti-social behaviour.
2. This report seeks approval to award a Crime and Disorder Reduction Grant to Town Pastors to a maximum amount of £30,000 for delivery of their activities in the night time economy across Suffolk for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
3. The funding will enable crime and disorder reduction activity and support the Police and Crime Plan (2017-2021) objectives by 'caring about victims, communities, the local economy' and 'protecting the most vulnerable people and communities by preventing, reducing and solving crime'.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. It is recommended that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) awards grant funding of £30,000 to Town Pastors for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

APPROVAL BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The recommendation set out is agreed.



Signature:

Date: 2 September 2021

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A key part of the Police and Crime Commissioner's role is to commission services that help reduce demand on the Constabulary and support victims of crime.
- 1.2 The PCC's commissioning budget in 2021/22 is £1.95m for both crime and disorder reduction grants and grants for victim services.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval from the PCC to award a grant of £30,000 to support the Town Pastors work in the night time economy across Suffolk for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

2 TOWN PASTORS

- 2.1 The Suffolk Town Pastor scheme began in June 2006 in Ipswich, expanding thereafter to a number of other towns in Suffolk including Beccles, Bury St Edmunds, Felixstowe, Haverhill, Ipswich, Leiston, Newmarket, Sudbury, and Woodbridge.
- 2.2 The Town Pastors (central body) has been a registered charity since 2019. Town Pastors administers the distribution of the PCC grant and maintains the quality of the schemes across the county.
- 2.3 Town Pastors are Christian volunteers from local churches who are out in town centres on Friday and/or Saturday nights, being a positive influence on the streets and providing help and support to vulnerable people. Street Patrols are supported by a Prayer Team at a local base or home.
- 2.4 Trained volunteers:
 - Support people in need, giving dehydrated people some water to drink, helping people to get a taxi or waiting with vulnerable people.
 - Provide a presence of friendliness and care so people can enjoy their night out.
 - Defuse potentially aggressive situations.
 - Are available to people as listeners.
 - Encourage safe behaviour for all and provide advice.
 - Work as a team alongside the police, taxi drivers, door staff, CCTV staff and others who are involved in managing the night time economy.
- 2.5 Town Pastors continue to play a significant role not just in crime reduction and prevention, but also in preventing paramedic/ambulance calls and A & E admissions (as well as saving police time in looking after vulnerable intoxicated individuals).
- 2.6 The Town Pastors have received funding from the PCC since 2014/15 to deliver the service, and regular data and information has been provided to monitor the delivery and the impact of the grant.
- 2.7 In 2019/20 eleven schemes were in operation (Lowestoft closed in February 2020) and noted 20,927 actions of which 15,981 involve directly helping a person or group of people (stats categories 1-10 inclusive). These figures are slightly lower than previous years due to Town Pastor patrols being suspended in March 2020.
 - Town Pastors contributed to the personal safety/wellbeing of 708 people, ensuring vulnerable people got safely to their transport, were walked home, or were reunited with friends. The presence of Town Pastors in these situations thus reduces the risk of assault, theft and sexual assault.

- Town Pastors alerted CCTV and/or police to 153 incidents/potential incidents or persons of note.
- On 145 occasions Town Pastors were able to prevent/reduce crime often by diffusing fights or calming potentially aggressive situations. This reduced personal injury, the need for police intervention and the need for police to make arrests.
- Town Pastors reduce the risk of injury by removing 3,594 dangerous items from the streets of Suffolk towns during the year; the majority of these were bottles and glasses.

3 POLICE AND CRIME PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Town Pastor activity contributes to the following objectives and themes within the Police and Crime Plan (2017-21): 'Caring about victims, communities, the local economy' and 'Protecting the most vulnerable people and communities by preventing, reducing and solving crime'.
- 3.2 Following the re-election of the PCC in May 2021 a new Police and Crime Plan is being developed. The PCC has indicated he wishes to use crime and disorder reduction funding to focus on initiatives which reduce the demand the police in particular policing the night-time economy, ASB and reducing crime and disorder in our towns.

4 SERVICE DELIVERY DURING 2020/21

- 4.1 At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, Town Pastors stopped patrolling due to 'lockdown'. A summary of the activities undertaken by local schemes during the year is attached at Appendix A.
- 4.2 Paid co-ordinators in Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds were furloughed, schemes reduced their costs and expenses were kept to a minimum. As the situation changed schemes assessed risks and some were able to patrol with appropriate PPE.
- 4.3 Inevitably, because of the Covid-19 restrictions in place during lockdowns and the impact on the hospitality industry, few patrols took place during the year. Many volunteers left the scheme due to health issues and changing personal circumstances. Recruitment and training new volunteers was not possible.
- 4.4 The PCC agreed to continue to support unavoidable Town Pastor costs so that schemes would survive and resume patrolling in 2021/22. The total funding from the PCC in 2020/21 was £15,500.

5 SERVICE NEED IN 2021/22 TO SUPPORT A CONTINUATION OF FUNDING

- 5.1 Two schemes, Lowestoft and Stowmarket, have closed in the last year. There are currently nine Town Pastor schemes in Suffolk: Beccles; Bury St Edmunds; Felixstowe, Haverhill, Newmarket, Ipswich; Leiston; Sudbury and Woodbridge.
- 5.2 A number of patrols resumed in summer 2021 following risk assessments and safety precautions and adapting to local need.
- 5.3 A summary of the current situation (August 2021) for each scheme is attached at Appendix B. Recruitment and training of new Town Pastors is a priority as most schemes have lost volunteers over the past 18 months.

- 5.4 Additionally Town Pastors provided a reduced number of volunteers for day patrols at the 2021 Latitude Festival. Fewer serious incidents were reported than in previous years (but no night patrols were undertaken). 700 people were assisted on arrival and a further 100 other interventions undertaken where Town Pastors help people with a range of other issues. A report has been provided to the organisers with recommendations for future years outlining proposals which might help the safety and security of attendees as well as practical requests to help the Town Pastors carry out their duties.
- 5.5 Town Pastors have requested PCC funding of £30,000 in 2021/22 to support those schemes still in operation in 2021/22. This is a reduced amount of funding to previous years reflecting the number of schemes now operating and a general reduction in patrols.
- 5.6 Given the current, reduced service, it is proposed that Town Pastors regular update the PCC on:
- Which schemes are patrolling, timescales and actions to restart;
 - Progress with recruiting volunteers;
 - Confirmation that the local schemes are keeping their local police contacts informed of patrol schedules/changes.

6 MONITORING AND OUTCOMES

- 6.1 Monitoring will be undertaken at six months and year end through written reports setting out activity and progress towards outcomes, along with financial expenditure. These reports will be supplemented by regular meetings between the OPCC and service provider to discuss patrols and recruitment in particular as the schemes return to full capacity. A final report will be submitted to the PCC by 30 April 2022.
- 6.2 Monitoring will indicate the extent of Town Pastors activities by scheme area and provide high level information against the budget breakdown submitted to the PCC. Town Pastors will continue to evidence satisfaction with the service in a qualitative manner. The financial breakdown of how the grant is to be used and the data outputs and outcomes will be continually monitored throughout the period of the grant award.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Town Pastors have supplied an indicative budget for 2021/22 proposing that PCC funding is used to support seven of the nine schemes (currently neither Felixstowe or Leiston require PCC funding) and a contribution to Latitude patrols.
- 7.2 Grant funding from the PCC's commissioning budget of up to a maximum of £30,000 is recommended for 2021/22. This is a reduction in the proposed grant compared to previous years reflecting the reduced number of schemes operating and requiring PCC support and reduction in time during 2021/22 spent on patrol.
- 7.3 Town Pastors secure other funding through public, church and commercial donations.
- 7.4 The PCC's grant funding is specifically towards staffing (paid coordinators in BSE and Ipswich), radio/telephone costs, rent, training, Insurance and equipment (including PPE).
- 7.5 There should be service and financial benefits in terms of reduced costs and resource implications on the Constabulary as a direct result of the work of Town Pastors in preventing public disorder and providing welfare support to vulnerable people.

8 OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 8.1 An assessment of risk in delivery of the service has been undertaken. This assessment has considered the value of the grant sought, the duration of delivery and the grant recipient's history of delivery and ability to deliver. The monitoring arrangements outlined in the conditions of award reflect the fact that Town Pastors have successfully delivered the service and regularly report on activity and outcomes.
- 8.2 The OPCC recognises that it is unlikely that key performance indicators will be delivered in the same order as previous years because of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 8.3 Should there be any risk to the service being delivered, Town Pastors are required to notify the PCC.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that the PCC awards grant funding of £30,000 to Town Pastors for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	YES
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	YES
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	YES
Have human resource implications been considered?	YES
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	YES
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	YES
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	YES
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	YES
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	YES

APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO THE DECISION-MAKER

Chief Executive

I am satisfied that relevant advice has been taken into account in the preparation of the report and that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner.



Signature:

Date: 2 September 2021

Appendix A

Summary of Town Pastor activity during year April 2020-March 2021

In March 2020 all TP schemes temporarily stopped patrolling due to the first Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

Felixstowe TPs responded to local community needs (as a scheme), delivering groceries, medicine, posting items and supporting people who were lonely and isolated. Many TPs and Prayer Team members in all schemes were individually involved in volunteering in their local community during the first lockdown.

TP schemes worked hard to reduce costs wherever possible but were all very aware that some ongoing costs would need to be covered whether patrolling or not. Bury and Ipswich Co-ordinators were furloughed.

During the summer various TP schemes had out-of-uniform walks around town to assess the need for TPs. In September the Bury Co-ordinator returned to work. Bury Town Pastors led the way for assessing risks and putting things in place for TPs to be able to safely resume patrolling. This included:

- Assessing risks and putting measures in place to mitigate risks.
- Arranging a training session on Zoom with MJ Training (First Aid trainer) for all Town Pastors on how to safely relate to people, how to administer care and/or first aid in a safe way, use of appropriate PPE etc.
- Writing guidelines for Town Pastors and those who pray at the base re measures now in place for keeping safe at the base and on patrol.
- Delivering in-house Zoom training session for Town Pastors and those who pray at the base re measures now in place for keeping safe at the base and on patrol.
- Purchasing appropriate PPE for TPs.

Bury St Edmunds - Pilot patrols were undertaken in October by trustees in order to test out new procedures. Patrol times amended to 8.00pm – midnight, in line with restricted opening for pubs/bars etc. Regular patrols were due to recommence in Bury St Edmunds on Saturday evenings in November but were prevented by the second lockdown in November 2020. Bury TP Co-ordinator onto Flexi-Furlough, doing minimal hours when necessary. Regular patrols resumed on Saturday evenings in December 2020 but had to be suspended again after only two weeks, due to soaring Coronavirus cases within West Suffolk. Patrols were not able to resume in January 2021 due to the third lockdown. The Co-ordinator remains on Flexi-Furlough, doing minimal hours when necessary. TPs were very much appreciated by those who were out in the town on the two pilot shifts and the patrols in December.

Beccles Town Pastors attended training (on Zoom) in preparation for resuming patrols. Plans to restart patrolling were prevented by November 2020 lockdown and then prevented again in January 2021.

Leiston Town Pastors attended training (on Zoom). Plans to restart patrolling were prevented by November 2020 lockdown.

Other TP schemes were still in the process of preparing to resume patrolling but were prevented by the January 2021 lockdown.

Town Pastors Central

- Continued to offer support and advice for TP schemes during this difficult period of inactivity. It is very challenging when keen volunteers are unable to fulfil their volunteering role. It has therefore been especially important to encourage TP schemes to actively keep in communication with their volunteers in order to maintain motivation and commitment.
- Held Chair and Co-ordinator's meetings on Zoom.

- Provided all TP schemes with a checklist of the things that need to be in place before TP patrols resume, in order to minimise risks for volunteers and those they meet on the streets.
- Example risk assessments, guidelines etc were made available to all schemes as a starting point for assessing and mitigating their risks and for preparing their own documents.
- Communication with organisers of Latitude Festival, in preparation for TPs patrolling at Latitude if the event is able to go ahead.

This has proved to be a very challenging year for TP schemes. At year-end 31.3.2021, all TP patrols were suspended due to the third lockdown.

All TP schemes have suffered an inevitable loss of volunteers during the year due to health issues, death, changes in personal circumstances etc. This natural turnover is usually balanced by recruiting and training new volunteers. Unfortunately due to the pandemic, TP schemes have been able to do little or no recruiting or training during the year, therefore most TP schemes ended the year with a reduced number of volunteers. Recruitment and training will be a priority when restrictions are lifted.

All TP schemes are extremely grateful to the Police and Crime Commissioner and other funding sources for continued financial and/or grant support during this difficult year. This support has enabled most TP schemes to survive this year and to be in a position to resume patrolling when it is safe and viable to do so.

Appendix B

Current situation re patrolling - Suffolk Town Pastor schemes (16 August 2021)

After a long and difficult seventeen months during the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns, Town Pastors are finally able to begin to return to patrolling the streets of Suffolk towns or to prepare to do so. Due to reduced volunteer numbers, recruitment and training are a high priority in all schemes. The safety of volunteers and the safety of people the Town Pastors meet on the streets remains of paramount importance. TP Central have made Covid-19 Information and resources available to all schemes including example risk assessments, additional guidelines and additional procedures for mitigating risks.

The current situation within each Suffolk TP scheme is as follows:

Beccles Resumed patrols on Friday 18th June. Currently they are patrolling on alternate Friday mornings from 10am to 12 noon. They are following protocol with regard to COVID, following the guidelines provided by TP Central. They are arranging for refresher First Aid course

Bury Resumed regular Saturday night patrols on Saturday 22nd May 2021. Patrolling on Saturday nights from 10.00pm – 4.00am, with one pair of TPs and one person in the base. Not sure when patrols will resume on Friday nights. Saturday nights are usually significantly busier than Friday nights, therefore priority will initially be given to strengthening team to two pairs of TPs patrolling on Saturday nights. Covid-Secure measures (including use of appropriate PPE) remain in place at present. Trustees to review again in August.

Felixstowe Not resumed patrolling but recruiting and planning to restart late August.

Haverhill Resumed patrols in June 2021. Patrolling 9pm until midnight on Friday nights, fortnightly at the moment due to volunteer numbers. All procedures are in place regards Covid-19 and personal safety.

Newmarket Patrolled on Saturday 19th June from 10.00pm – midnight to gauge what was going on in the town centre, and one Saturday in July. TPs are patrolling at Newmarket Music Nights at Newmarket Racecourse on Friday nights from 6.30pm – midnight, fortnightly when volunteer availability allows. Taking measures to mitigate risks and are adhering to the safety protocol of the Jockey Club. Hoping to be able to resume Saturday night patrols from 10.00pm – 2.00am in Newmarket town centre in September. 16.8.2021 The TP scheme has purchased face masks, visors, hand sanitiser, Clinell wipes and retractable bottles of sanitiser for each person patrolling.

Ipswich TPs resumed patrolling on Saturday 29th May, however, due to the rapid increase in infections both nationally and locally a decision was taken by the Ipswich TP Management Team in mid-July to temporarily suspend our activities. When TPs were patrolling they had restricted operating hours to between 10.00pm and 3.00am, patrolling 1 night a week, mainly Saturdays due to availability issues. All TPs were issued with extra safety precautions (eg face coverings and visors) and additional cleaning of equipment took place as necessary. Currently there is no firm date to review the situation regarding returning to duty but it is likely to be mid/late August. Ipswich TP Management Team will take into account the current number of infections, vaccination rates and the policies adopted by individual premises when making decisions.

Leiston Started with a pilot patrol on 7th May and have only managed, for various reasons, to do two each shifts each month since with two more planned for August. Patrols are on Friday nights but have started a little earlier than before, meeting at 8.30pm for a 9pm start and finishing around 11.30pm to midnight. New risk assessments in place. Volunteers adhere to the new Covid guidelines recommended by TP Central and also to recommendations given during additional first aid training with Michele Judd.

Sudbury Sudbury TPs haven't resumed patrolling yet. Still trying to pull together volunteers and seek out opportunities in the town. Management Committee is planning to meet again in September. In the meantime they are individually taking time to go out into the town at different times to see what's going on and how they might shape what they do to meet the needs of the town. This includes market day on a Thursday and not only Saturday nights. When the areas of need are identified, decisions will be made with regard to recruiting, training and resuming TP patrols.

Stowmarket Sadly in April 2021 the management committee of Stowmarket TPs made the very hard decision to close the TP scheme. This was mainly due to a lack of Co-ordinator, lack of committee members and a lack of volunteers.

Woodbridge TPs have not resumed patrolling in Woodbridge yet. Currently assessing who is still willing to be involved as trustees and/or volunteers, before making decisions with regard to resuming patrols. They are hoping to have a clearer idea of the way forward by September.