



Making Suffolk a safer place to live, work, travel and invest

ORIGINATOR: HEAD OF COMMISSIONING

DECISION NUMBER: 29 - 2022

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 for £20,000 to contribute to delivery of their activities in the night time economy across Suffolk for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
3. The funding will enable crime and disorder reduction activity and support Objective 2 in the Police and Crime Plan by investing in an initiative which reduces demand on the police in the night-time economy and reduces crime and disorder in Suffolk's towns.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. It is recommended that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) awards grant funding of £20,000 to Town Pastors for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

APPROVAL BY: PCC

The recommendation set out above is agreed.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Parmore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Date: 11 November 2022

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) 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.

This is in accordance with the provisions in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. In applying this provision, the PCC will ensure that the services commissioned are also consistent with the Suffolk Police and Crime Plan.

- 1.2 This report seeks approval from the PCC to award a grant of £20,000 to continue the support to Town Pastors enabling their work in the night time economy across Suffolk for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

2. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 In February 2022, a new Police and Crime Plan for the period 2022-2025 was published. Objective 2 sets out the intention to provide services which support victims of crime and invest in initiatives which reduce crime.

- 2.2 The proposed grant to Town Pastors will contribute to the following activity within Objective 2:
- Support problem solving in local communities by investing in solutions which reduce reoffending, prevent crime and disorder and improve community safety.
 - Consider with the Constabulary areas where investment might reduce non-crime demand on the police.
 - Understand the impact of substance misuse on crime and disorder.
 - Initiatives which reduce the demand on the police in particular policing the night-time economy (NTE), anti-social behaviour (ASB) and reducing crime and disorder in our towns.

3. TOWN PASTORS

- 3.1 The Suffolk Town Pastor scheme began in June 2006 in Ipswich, expanding thereafter to a number of other towns in Suffolk. 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.

- 3.2 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.

- 3.3 Trained volunteers support people in need, helping people to get a taxi or waiting with vulnerable people, defuse potentially aggressive situations, provide advice and encourage safe behaviour for all. They work as a team alongside the police, taxi drivers, door staff, CCTV staff and others who are involved in managing the night time economy.

- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 In 2019/20 eleven schemes were in operation and this reduced to eight active schemes in 2021/22 due to suspension of active patrols during the Covid-19 Pandemic and challenges thereafter.
- 3.6 Recorded activity in 2021/22 was around 25% of pre-pandemic levels, with most schemes only having recommenced some activity in September 2021. Overall there were 4,631 actions of which 3,653 involved directly helping a person or group of people. A positive impact was made, contributing to the personal safety and wellbeing of 239 people, by ensuring they safely accessed transport home or were reunited with friends and therefore reducing the risk of being a victim of crime.
- 3.7 In 2022/23 the Town Pastors are patrolling in eight areas of Suffolk¹. They recognise that there are significant challenges for their work post pandemic due to the reduction in the number of schemes and extent of activity, reduction in volunteers and changes in local need. One scheme is dormant and two other smaller schemes are reviewing the need for their services.
- 3.8 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). In 2021/22 Town Pastors:
- contributed to the personal safety/wellbeing of 239 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.
 - alerted CCTV and/or police to 45 incidents/potential incidents or persons of note.
 - were able to prevent/reduce crime on 46 occasions 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.
 - reduced the risk of injury by removing 751 dangerous items from the streets of Suffolk towns during the year; the majority of these were bottles and glasses.
- 3.9 At Latitude in July 2022, 15 Town Pastors patrolled across 4 days, contributing 350 hours of volunteering. They supported individuals with personal safety and well being in 335 situations and 19 cases of pastoral care and mental health needs. Town Pastors alerted security on two occasions including police and site welfare regarding a victim of crime.
- 3.10 Town Pastors have requested PCC funding to support the Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich Town Pastors and the activity at Latitude in 2022. They report that the town centres are back to pre-pandemic levels of night-time activity in Bury and Ipswich on Saturday nights.

4. MONITORING AND OUTCOMES

- 4.1 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 Town Pastors to discuss patrols and recruitment. A final report will be submitted to the PCC by 28 April 2023.

¹ Beccles, Bury St Edmunds, Felixstowe, Haverhill, Ipswich, Leiston, Newmarket, Sudbury and Woodbridge (dormant).

- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 Given the current, reduced service, it is proposed that Town Pastors also regularly update the PCC on:
- Progress with recruiting volunteers;
 - Confirmation that the local schemes are keeping their local police contacts informed of patrol schedules/changes;
 - An assessment of night time economy activity and the need for the service in each area;
 - Work with the Ipswich Safer Streets project team.
- 4.4 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.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Town Pastors have supplied an indicative budget for 2022/23 proposing that PCC funding is used to support the largest schemes (Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich) and a contribution to Latitude patrols.
- 5.2 Grant funding from the PCC's commissioning budget of up to a maximum of £20,000 is recommended for 2022/23. This is a reduced amount on previous years and reflects the reduction in activity post pandemic and challenges set out in section 3.
- 5.3 The recommended funding amount of £20,000 is sufficient in Town Pastors view to deliver their anticipated level of service.
- 5.4 Town Pastors secure other funding through charitable giving and commercial donations.
- 5.5 The PCC's grant funding is specifically towards staffing (paid coordinators in Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich), radio/telephone costs, rent, training, Insurance and equipment (including PPE).
- 5.6 Evidence indicates 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

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 6.1 An assessment of risk in delivery of the service has been undertaken and delivery challenges are set out in section 3 of this decision paper. 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 continue to deliver the service and regularly report on activity and outcomes.
- 6.2 Should there be any risk to the service being delivered in any of the towns covered, Town Pastors are required to notify the PCC.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) awards grant funding of £20,000 to Town Pastors for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	NO
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	NO
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
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	YES

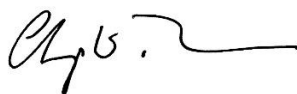
In relation to the above, please ensure that all relevant issues have been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission.

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 PCC.

Signature:



Date: 6 November 2022

Appendix A

Summary of Town Pastor activity during year April 2021-March 2022

Covid-19 Pandemic recovery

Town Pastors began the year in the frustrating position of being unable to patrol, due to the third lockdown and continued Coronavirus pandemic restrictions.

The trustees of individual Town Pastor schemes continued to have measures in place to safeguard their scheme during this difficult period, so that they were being able to continue providing a service when the restrictions were lifted again. These measures included:

- Trustees/Management Committees meeting on Zoom.
- The paid co-ordinators in Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich continuing to be on Flexi-Furlough and claiming financial assistance under the HM Revenue & Customs Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The co-ordinators remained on Flexi-Furlough until the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) ended on 30th September 2021.
- Keeping in regular contact with volunteers.
- Maintaining essential administration such as insurance cover and websites etc.

Town Pastors Central continued to support and encourage Chairs and Co-ordinators from all Town Pastors schemes, as they navigated the pandemic. Restrictions began to be eased in April 2021, with pubs and bars reopening in May 2021.

Bury Town Pastors continued to lead the way for Town Pastor schemes in Suffolk, assessing risks and updating additional measures (in line with government guidelines) for Town Pastors to be able to patrol in a safe Covid-secure way, minimising risks for the Town Pastor team and the people that the Town Pastors meet on streets.

In May 2021 Bury Town Pastors undertook two pilot patrols and regular patrols resumed in June 2021, and continued throughout the year. Each Town Pastor scheme has assessed risks, putting measures in place to mitigate risks, and resuming Town Pastor patrols when they felt they were able to do so safely.

Town Pastor schemes across the county faced many challenges affecting their ability to patrol during the year. These include:

- Volunteers being apprehensive and cautious, not being able/willing to return to active duty due to the risk of catching Covid-19.
- Volunteers (or a family member) having to shield
- Volunteers having to self-isolate due to having Covid-19 or being in contact with someone who had the virus.
- High rates of Covid-19 infections in their area
- Changes in the local need

Delivery

When Town Pastors have been able to patrol, they have successfully continued their work across the county eight locations during the year April 2021 – March 2022. Based on figures that have been submitted from five Town Pastor schemes, Town Pastors have noted 4,631 actions. Of these actions, 3,653 involve directly helping a person or group of people (stats categories 1-10 inclusive). It should be noted that these figures are lower than previous years; this is to be expected considering that:

- The stats figures relate to eight Town Pastor schemes, rather than the ten or eleven schemes detailed in the stats figures submitted in previous years
- Town Pastors were only able to patrol for a maximum of ten and a half months.

- In all schemes, Town Pastors have patrolled on one evening/night each weekend.
- Several Town Pastor schemes have been unable to patrol every weekend. Some schemes have patrolled fortnightly and Felixstowe Town Pastors have prioritised patrolling on payday weekend at the end of each month.
- In some Town Pastor schemes, it has been necessary to limit patrols to one pair of Town Pastors for part of the year.
- Many towns have been less busy, although the night time economy has slowly recovered during the year.

These figures show that, despite the challenges of the pandemic, Town Pastors have made a significant difference as they have patrolled during the year.

Many situations involve Town Pastors caring for those involved in or affected by drunkenness and anti-social behaviour. Town Pastors continue to value and appreciate each person, treating them with dignity and respect whatever their background and circumstances.

This work is in line with the work that Town Pastors have been doing over the past years and maintains the close partnership that has developed between the Town Pastors, Police, Night Time Economy businesses and local authorities.

When able to patrol, Town Pastors have fulfilled the aims and objectives to:

- Look out for and support vulnerable people, providing assistance where appropriate.
- Provide a presence of friendliness and care so people can enjoy their night out.
- Defuse potentially aggressive situations.
- Be available to people as listeners.
- Encourage safe behaviour for all.
- Foster good relationships between the public, the police, taxi drivers, door staff, other voluntary agencies and local authorities involved in managing the night time economy

Statistics for 2021-2022 reflect that Town Pastors made a valuable contribution to the reduction of crime and disorder in Suffolk towns throughout the year:

- Town Pastors contributed to the personal safety/wellbeing of 239 people. This included making sure vulnerable people got safely to their transport, were walked home, or were reunited with friends. The presence of Town Pastors in these situations thus reduced the risk of theft and physical or sexual assault.
- Town Pastors alerted CCTV and/or police to 45 incidents/potential incidents or persons of note
- On 46 occasions Town Pastors were able to prevent/reduce crime by diffusing fights or calming potentially aggressive situations, thus reducing personal injury, the need for police intervention and the need for police to make arrests.
- Town Pastors reduce the risk of injury by removing bottles and glasses (potential weapons) from the streets. During the year, Town Pastors removed 751 dangerous items from the streets of Suffolk towns during the year; the majority of these were bottles and glasses.

Fear of crime is a serious issue and Town Pastors have an important role in making people feel safe. Town Pastors are a 'friendly presence' alongside the door-staff, CCTV, police, and emergency services as part of the team working to make Suffolk towns safer on a Friday or Saturday evening/night. Town Pastors regularly receive thanks and appreciation from those enjoying an evening or night out. This may be thanks for help on some specific occasion or thanks because people feel safer when Town Pastors are patrolling the streets.

Town Pastor schemes have endeavoured to maintain or re-established contact with local police, keeping them updated regarding Town Pastor patrols throughout the year.

In towns across Suffolk, Town Pastors play a significant role in:

- Crime reduction and prevention
- Reducing paramedic/ambulance calls (and A & E admissions)
- The care and support for vulnerable people, including saving police time by looking after vulnerable intoxicated individuals
- Improving the atmosphere by being a friendly presence on the streets

All Town Pastor services throughout the county are supported by prayer. Every hour that Town Pastors are on patrol is covered by prayer from individual volunteer's homes and each Town Pastor scheme has a prayer facility at their base so that their patrolling Town Pastors are especially supported in this practical way. In addition, each Town Pastor has two personal prayer partners to support them.

Here are some examples from Town Pastors on duty in Suffolk towns.

A Town Pastor writes:

We came across a very drunk young girl who had been separated from her group of friends in the night club, and had ended up in the town centre. We were concerned about the very close attention she was receiving from a much older man who seemed to be with her. When he went off to find her coat in the night club we were able to talk to her and establish a few things. She was only eighteen, it was her first night in the club and, most significantly, she didn't know the man who was with her and was feeling uncomfortable and vulnerable. We were able to quickly arrange a taxi to take her home to safety and away from, what we felt, was a dangerous situation

Another Town Pastor writes:

A young man was highly intoxicated and had been ejected from the nightclub. While angry and arguing with the doorstaff, he bumped into a young lady. Her boyfriend became extremely angry, antagonistic and aggressive. We were able to talk to the young man and encourage him to move away from the nightclub door. The situation was very tense and we had to keep calming the young man, to avoid a fight breaking out with the girl's boyfriend. Police came and spoke to the girl's boyfriend, enabling us to walk the young man to the taxi rank and away from the situation. We waited with him until he got into a taxi to go home. If we hadn't been there, it is very likely that there would have been a fight, possibly resulting in injuries and/or arrests.

A Co-ordinator writes:

The number of females asking us to walk with them to taxi ranks/meet up with friends has increased. There have been at least two occasions when females were receiving unwanted male attention and we were able to intervene before walking the women to where they wanted to go without them being hassled.

Another Co-ordinator writes:

Town Pastors have been well received during this period when able to go out and are often thanked and told how much we are appreciated by the regular clientele of the local pubs. We have had many good conversations with people, offering reassurance and a listening ear during the difficult times of COVID. We were able to help a particularly vulnerable young female adult during one of our patrols and at another time ensured a vulnerable mature male, who would otherwise likely have spent the night in the park, made it home safely.

During the year, Town Pastors have offered help, care and support in a non-judgmental and non-confrontational way:

- Town Pastors have given pastoral care and a listening ear in 106 situations where a person wanted to discuss problems they are facing in their lives ie marriage or relationship issues, drug issues etc. or where Town Pastors have dealt with a person who

has/or is suspected of having mental health issues, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (often military/ex-military personnel), depression, feeling suicidal etc.

- Town Pastors cared for 93 people who were excessively drunk and incapable of looking after themselves. The necessity for ambulance call-outs for highly intoxicated individuals is greatly reduced when Town Pastors are on duty and able to care for these people. Each person was kept safe from theft of personal belongings while drunk and incapable. In addition, they were also protected from becoming the victim of a physical and/or sexual assault. In some of these situations Town Pastors will have called an ambulance if necessary.
- 2,894 people were provided with water/refreshment. Water improves hydration and general attitude therefore reducing the risk of intolerant or aggressive behaviour. Providing chocolate raises blood sugar levels, which are frequently significantly lowered by excessive alcohol consumption. This also improves general attitude therefore reducing the risk of intolerant or aggressive behaviour.
- There are 88 recorded encounters with people who are homeless or presenting as homeless during the year. These encounters often contribute towards the safety and wellbeing of these particularly vulnerable people.
- There are 6 recorded situations of domestic tension or violence. These include any incident between a couple that could become or has become violent where Town Pastor intervention takes place, or the situation is referred to Police or CCTV.
- These figures show continued good progress in providing the service during the year, despite the challenges and limitations caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.