



# Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner

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

**ORIGINATOR: HEAD OF COMMISSIONING**

**DECISION NUMBER: 26 - 2024**

**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 £24,000 to contribute to delivery of their activities in the night time economy across Suffolk for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
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 £24,000 to Town Pastors for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

**APPROVAL BY: PCC**

The recommendation set out above is agreed.

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

**Signature:**

**Date: 14 October 2024**

## **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 £24,000 to continue the support to Town Pastors enabling their work in the night-time economy across Suffolk for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

### **2. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 Objective 2 in the Police and Crime Plan 2022-2025 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 in the Police and Crime Plan:

- 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 Fear of crime is a serious issue and Town Pastors have an important role in making people feel safe and improving the atmosphere by being a friendly presence on the streets. As trained volunteers they: support people in need, help people to get a taxi or wait 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 presence of Town Pastors as a 'capable guardian' is considered to prevent a number of crimes and anti-social behaviour in Suffolk's towns at night.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 In 2023/24 PCC funding supported Ipswich and Bury Town Pastors, the two biggest schemes in the county to operate as well as Leiston and Felixstowe. The funding also supported the work of Town Pastors at Latitude Festival. The Newmarket scheme suspended patrols in November 2023 due to a lack of volunteers.
- 3.7 Despite the reduction in locations supported by Town Pastors, recorded activity was similar to the previous year with 7,654 actions undertaken across schemes in 2023/24 compared to 7,925 actions in 2022/23 of which 5,890 actions involved directly helping a person or group of people (6,235). A positive impact was made, contributing to the personal safety and wellbeing of 245 people (242), by ensuring safe access to transport home or that individuals were reunited with friends, therefore reducing the risk of being a victim of crime.
- 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). 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.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 In 2023/24 Town Pastors:
- contributed to the personal safety/wellbeing of 245 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 reduces the risk of assault, theft and sexual assault.
  - alerted CCTV and/or police to 86 incidents/potential incidents or persons of note.
  - were able to prevent/reduce crime on 53 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 bottles and glasses (potential weapons) from the streets. During the year, Town Pastors removed 1,395 dangerous items from the streets of Suffolk towns during the year; the majority of these were bottles and glasses.
- 3.11 Town Pastors have requested PCC funding to support the Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Leiston and Felixstowe Town Pastors with their work in 2024/25 and the activity at Latitude in 2024.
- Bury St Edmunds: Town Pastors patrol from 10pm- 4am on Saturday nights.
  - Felixstowe: Town pastors patrol on the last Saturday of the month (payday weekend) 7.30pm – 12.30am. Positive recruitment activity has been undertaken and the scheme will look to increase frequency of patrols and review timing.
  - Ipswich: Patrols undertaken on Saturday nights from 10pm – 3am.
  - Leiston: Patrols on three Friday nights each month 10pm – 12.30am
  - Festival Pastors: working at the Latitude Festival, these volunteers provide a visible, non-judgemental and friendly presence as capable guardians who help to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and support vulnerable people when required.

Further detail of activities and outcomes is provided in Appendix A.

- 3.12 It is recommended that the PCC supports the continued activity of Town Pastors in these locations considering levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, areas of deprivation and demand from the night time economy activity.

#### **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, case studies and financial expenditure. These reports will be supplemented by an annual meeting between the Town Pastors and the PCC to discuss progress against the grant. A final report will be submitted to the PCC by 31 May 2025.
- 4.2 Monitoring will indicate the extent of Town Pastors activities by all scheme areas and provide an overview of spend against the budget submitted to the PCC. Town Pastors will continue to evidence satisfaction with the service in a qualitative manner and should indicate where the service has contributed to the following outcomes:
- Improved Confidence, Resilience and Feelings of Safety
  - Reduced Offending, Violence & Exploitation
  - Improved Mental Health, Reduced Addiction and Homelessness
- 4.3 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 Available grant funding from the PCC's commissioning budget to Town Pastors is a maximum of £24,000 in 2024/25.
- 5.2 Town Pastors have supplied a budget to fully utilise the funding to support schemes in Bury St Edmunds (£10k) and Ipswich (£5k), Leiston (£3k), Felixstowe (£2k) and a make contribution to Latitude patrols (£4k).
- 5.3 Town Pastors are considering other funding sources to top up funding, particularly for the schemes in Leiston and Felixstowe. Alternative funding has previously been secured from grants (including through Suffolk Community Foundation) donations from local churches and individuals, councillor locality budgets and from local businesses.
- 5.4 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).
- 5.5 Whilst the PCC funding supports two paid coordinators, most Town Pastors and support team are volunteers bringing value for money to the service.
- 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 considering 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. RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) awards grant funding of £24,000 to Town Pastors for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

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

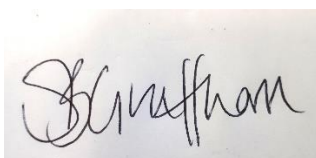
In relation to the above, please ensure that all relevant issues have been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission.

**APPROVAL TO SUBMIT TO THE DECISION-MAKER**

**Acting 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: 11 October 2024**

## Appendix A

### Summary of Town Pastor activity during year April 2023-March 2024

Town Pastors have successfully continued their work across the county in five towns from April - October 2023, and in four towns from November 2023 – March 2024.

Based on figures that have been submitted from the five schemes, Town Pastors have noted 7,654 actions. Of these actions, 5,890 involve directly helping a person or group of people. These figures are similar to the previous year despite the observation that, in Ipswich at least, the number of premises open and people out in the town at the weekends has decreased.

The figures for 2023-2024 reflect that Town Pastors made a valuable contribution to the reduction of crime and disorder in the eight Suffolk towns:

- Town Pastors contributed to the personal safety/wellbeing of 245 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 reduces the risk of assault, theft and sexual assault.
- Town Pastors alerted CCTV and/or police to 86 incidents/potential incidents or persons of note.
- On 53 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 bottles and glasses (potential weapons) from the streets. During the year, Town Pastors removed 1,395 dangerous items from the streets of Suffolk towns during the year; the majority of these were bottles and glasses.
- Festival Pastors recorded 2,237 situations over 4 days in July 2023 involving personal safety/wellbeing, including child wristband distribution and 20 interactions related to pastoral care and/or mental health needs. Festival Pastors alerted security on 2 occasions, were able to prevent/reduce crime on 2 occasions, and they also engaged with 2 incidents/situations involving domestic tension or violence.

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 i.e. 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 91 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.
- 5,102 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 were 185 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 were 5 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.
- There were 2 recorded situations of racial tension which were incidents of violence, abuse or threatening behaviour (verbal or physical) on the basis of an individual's race or ethnic background where Town Pastors witness, intervene or report.