

Minutes

PETITION HEARING - CABINET MEMBER FOR IMPROVEMENT, PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

7 October 2010

Meeting held at Committee Room 4a - Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillor Douglas Mills</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Ed Shaylor, Mick Dunckley and Nikki Stubbs</p> <p>Also Present: Councillors Bruce Baker (5), Lindsay Bliss (3), John Major (3) and Andrew Retter (4) Laura Dyett – Transport for London (TfL) (3) Will Miller – Transport for London (TfL) (3) Sergeant Bennett (3)</p> <p><i>* Numbers in brackets are the agenda item numbers that these individuals were present for</i></p>	
1.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN PUBLIC (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That all items be considered in public.</p>	Action by
2.	<p>CARLYON ROAD, YEADING - PETITION REQUESTING THE INSTALLATION OF CCTV AT THE PEDESTRIAN SUBWAY IN CARLYON ROAD (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>Councillors Lindsay Bliss and John Major attended the meeting and spoke as Ward Councillors in support of the petition. Although they were unable to attend, it was noted that Councillors Allam and Duncan, who were Ward Councillors for Yeading, also supported the petition.</p> <p><i>Concerns and suggestions raised at the meeting included the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Residents believed that the fear of crime was widespread amongst those people that used the pedestrian subway as there had been periodic serious crimes committed there (three sexual assaults and a violent robbery) as well as a number of robberies. In one incident, the victim was unconscious for a number of months and had since lost all confidence;</i><i>Parents dropping their children off at the local school were walking a significantly longer route to avoid using the subway;</i><i>Residents felt that they had been let down as TfL had produced a report in January 2009 but only some of the recommendations had since been implemented. The vegetation around the entrance to the subway had been cleared some months ago but had since grown back – consideration needed to be given to</i>	Action by

keeping this area cleared on a regular basis;

- *Concern was expressed that negotiations were still ongoing between the Council and TfL with regard to how the CCTV would be operated and managed once it was installed;*
- *Residents requested that CCTV cameras be installed as a matter of urgency. John McDonnell MP, school staff and parents and the Safer Neighbourhood Team all supported the proposal to install CCTV at the subway; and*
- *Criminals had used the subway as an escape route.*

Councillor Douglas Mills listened to the concerns of the petitioners and responded to the points raised. It was noted that the Council had been working in partnership with TfL on improving security at the subway and had resulted in improved lighting being installed and dome mirrors being erected. There had not been any lack of effort made to find a solution in the area but hard-wired CCTV cameras at the site had proved to be too expensive. TfL had met with residents on site in July 2010. Since then, an alternative more cost effective wireless solution had been agreed between the Council and TfL which would see the installation of two wireless CCTV cameras at the subway by the end of December 2010.

With regard to the clearance of the vegetation around the subway, it was noted that investigations were underway to reduce the height of the embankments. This work was being undertaken separately to the installation of the CCTV cameras in order that no delay was caused and would include surveying the carriageway structure so as not to undermine it.

Although the wireless CCTV cameras were already on order, an agreement still needed to be drawn up between the Council and TfL with regard to the ownership and maintenance. As well as a built in hard drive in the CCTV cameras which would record footage, the police and the Council would be able to dial into the wireless system to get real time images. Residents were also reassured that the images recorded by the cameras were of good quality, even at night.

It was noted that the CCTV cameras would be in place for at least four years. Councillor Mills advised that, whilst he was Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety, he would ensure that the cameras remained in situ but that he was unable to predict decisions made in the future by his successors. Furthermore, Councillor Mills urged officers to speed the process up as much as possible and suggested that Council officers write to the TfL Director responsible for signing off the funding to ask him to expedite the matter.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety considered the petitioners' request, discussed with them in detail their concerns regarding the subway in Carlyon Road, Yeading, and advised petitioners that:

- 1. Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for the site as it**

	<p>falls within the environs of the A312 Parkway (Hayes By-Pass);</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. the Council shares residents views that this is a priority location for safety and will continue to work with TfL to make sure that improvements are made; 3. TfL have agreed to install CCTV cameras at the entrances to the subway with a target date for installation of the cameras, which are new equipment, by the end of December 2010 (or earlier if possible); 4. other improvements to the area have been made due to liaison between Hillingdon's Community Safety Team and TfL's Community Safety Manager since the attack on a woman at the subway in November 2008. These improvements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up-graded street-lighting giving a much brighter light; • vegetation on the banks cut back; and • mirrors installed and paint applied above the subway entrances; 5. a lighting audit has been carried out and the lighting levels in the subway itself are above the levels required by the Department for Transport; and 6. residents are requested to continue to notify all incidents to the Police on 0300 123 1212 (non-emergencies) or the Community Safety Team via 0800 694 0240 (for non-crimes) in order to continue to identify this area as a priority for action. <p>Reasons for recommendation</p> <p>To address the concerns of the residents.</p> <p>Alternative options considered</p> <p>None at this stage – it is felt that if the measures above are implemented then it will not be necessary to consider alternatives.</p>	
3.	<p>PETITION REQUESTING CCTV IN BRIARWOOD DRIVE, FERNDOWN AND OAKDALE AVENUE, NORTHWOOD HILLS <i>(Agenda Item 4)</i></p> <p>Councillor Andrew Retter attended the meeting as the petition organiser as those residents that had signed the petition were fearful of reprisals from those individuals that were displaying anti-social behaviour.</p> <p><i>Concerns and suggestions raised at the meeting included the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When Zurich moved out of its offices, the car park had been left</i> 	Action by

empty and open. Young people had since been spending a lot of time in the car park and were displaying anti-social behaviour. Residents had made a number of complaints about the behaviour to the Safer Neighbourhood Team;

- A number of years ago, there had been a dispersal zone in operation in the area but this was no longer in place;*
- Councillor Retter had been in the area a while ago with a couple of residents and a police officer when they witnessed some young people playing football. These young people then set fire to a pile of rubbish;*
- Two mosquitoes had been installed in the Waukesha Building car park which were disturbing the young people and moving them on. However, it was noted that one of the mosquitoes had been moved to face the ground which reduced its effectiveness;*
- Two burly local residents had taken to going out in the evening to move the young people on and there were worries that this might progress to groups of vigilantes patrolling the streets; and*
- The Council had fined a local pub for noise and anti-social behaviour incidents.*

Councillor Douglas Mills listened to the concerns of the petitioners and responded to the points raised. It was noted that there were a limited number of temporary CCTV cameras available – four that would fit onto large lampposts and two that would fit the smaller ones. The need for CCTV in this area was not as great as in other areas where the problems were worse. As such, Councillor Mills advised that a temporary CCTV camera could be installed but that no definite timescales could be applied as to when this was likely to be.

In addition, consideration was being given to the erection of fencing around the Zurich car park and the gate being locked as an added deterrent to stop the young people from congregating there.

Councillor Mills advised that the Council would be reliant on the Safer Neighbourhood Team to identify anyone displaying anti-social behaviour. Although the police were currently stopping these young people when they were caught, they were not being referred to Early Intervention Panels so that they could be given Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member noted the views of the petitioners, and advised that:

- 1. the LBH Community Safety Team will continue dialogue with the managing agents to encourage improvements to the car park area in Ferndown;**
- 2. the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT) has been requested to patrol the area in the evenings and, from time to time, after 11pm;**
- 3. the Police will advise youths not to play football in the car park area, and take a robust stance to stop the playing of football in this area as it annoys residents;**

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. a mosquito unit has been supplied to Waukesha Bearings and has been installed in the covered car park area to deter young people from going there; 5. the Police SNT has identified of some of the youths causing anti-social behaviour warning letters have been sent to the youth's parents; 6. if evidence is available against any individual offenders, full consideration will be given to prosecution, fixed penalty notices, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders or other suitable enforcement or preventative measures; 7. a temporary wireless CCTV installation fixed to a lamp post for a period of 3 months can be considered; and 8. residents should continue to report incidents to the Police on 0300 123 1212 or the Community Safety Team via 0800 694 0240 (for non-crimes) to build up a picture of whether incidents are increasing or decreasing. <p>Reasons for recommendation</p> <p>To address the concerns of the residents.</p> <p>Alternative options considered</p> <p>The possibility of fixed permanent CCTV has been considered but discounted. The costs are considerable and, when installing cameras, we have to consider necessity, proportionality and the likelihood of intrusion into the privacy of people not connected with the disorderly behaviour. This is an obstacle in this instance. The deployment of temporary CCTV would enable an assessment to be made as to whether the problem is a temporary one, capable of resolution, which would avoid some of the problems associated with a permanent installation.</p>	
4.	<p>THE SIGERS - PETITION REQUESTING THE INSTALLATION OF CCTV CAMERAS - FOLLOW UP MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Bruce Baker attended the meeting and spoke as a Ward Councillor in support of the request for the retention of the CCTV camera in The Sigers. The petition had originally been considered by Councillor Mills on 18 March 2010 and it had been resolved to install a temporary wireless CCTV camera in the road and then report back to the Cabinet Member after three months for further consideration. This period had now expired and the matter was due for reconsideration.</p> <p><i>Concerns and suggestions raised at the meeting included the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Before the temporary CCTV camera had been installed, there had been a significant number of incidents such as graffiti, vandalism and a wall being knocked down that had mostly taken</i> 	Action by

place after dark. Since the camera's installation, these incidents had reduced and residents were concerned that taking it away now that the nights were drawing in would result in things going back to the way they were;

- Residents requested that the CCTV camera be left in situ for a further trial period as the anti-social behaviour came in peaks and troughs;*
- One of the residents who had lived in the road for eight years had had her car vandalised more than a dozen times and had twice found graffiti on her wall. Following the latest vandalism incident, this resident had been advised that the CCTV footage had been obscured by a tree so the culprit could not be identified. However, it appeared that this advice may have been inaccurate;*
- Residents claimed that, with regard to another instance of anti-social behaviour, the police had advised that the CCTV footage was not of sufficient quality to identify the perpetrators. Residents also advised that, although these young people were CCTV aware and wore baseball caps and hoodies to hide their identities, since the installation of the camera, they were toning down their behaviour;*
- Not all of the residents had been told that the camera was being installed and concern was expressed that there were no signs up to warn that CCTV was in operation. It was believed that signs would have acted as an increased deterrent;*
- The alleyway that ran from The Sigers to Highgrove Pool had caused problems for the police in that there were about six exits from the alleyway which made it difficult for the police to pursue suspects;*
- It was noted that the footpath in the alleyway was due to be refurbished with new lighting and residents requested that CCTV be installed at eye level (perhaps in a house brick) at the end of the alleyway at the same time; and*
- It was suggested that, if the temporary camera came down, a dummy camera be put up by the Council in its place and a sign be erected advising that CCTV was in operation.*

Councillor Douglas Mills listened to the concerns of the petitioners and responded to the points raised. It was noted that the Council had six temporary cameras at its disposal, only two of which were suitable for the smaller lampposts found in residential streets such as The Sigers. One of these cameras had been located in The Sigers since June 2010. There was a high demand for these cameras and a greater need elsewhere.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 had tightened the restrictions on CCTV cameras so that the Council would have to apply to the Magistrates Court for permission to erect permanent CCTV cameras. Although the Act restricted the Council's ability to undertake surveillance, it did not affect residents' ability to erect their own cameras. The Council had to prove proportionality and necessity for the permanent installation of covert/overt cameras but the camera had been in place for three months and there had only been three incidents during this period.

With regard to the young person that was caught on CCTV doing graffiti on the wall, it was noted that the image was perfect but that the police had not yet been able to identify the offender. The image would be held on file until he was caught. With regard to the incident mentioned by the resident where the camera's sightline had been obscured by a tree, officers advised that they would clarify the situation with the resident outside of the meeting.

Councillor Mills advised that he would not consent to the CCTV camera remaining but that, if the level of crime increased after it had been taken down, consideration would be given to putting the camera back up. In the meantime, residents were urged to report any incidents of criminal activity to the police so that this could be used as supporting evidence for any future request to reinstate the camera. If residents wished to erect a dummy camera on the lamppost when the CCTV camera came down, they would need to request permission from the Council.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety discussed with petitioners in detail their concerns, and advised as follows:

- 1. The Council has encouraged the local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team to patrol The Sigers more frequently on Friday and Saturday evenings after 23:00, as this tends to be the peak times of the incidents after the pubs close. The police agreed to this and have done so;**
- 2. A portable wireless CCTV camera was purchased by the Council following the Petition Hearing on 18 March 2010 and was installed in The Sigers in June 2010;**
- 3. The number of incidents in The Sigers which have been reported by residents or detected by the camera has not been high during the period since the camera was installed. It is therefore proposed to move the camera to a higher priority location;**
- 4. Permanent CCTV in The Sigers is not a practical solution to the problem, as it would not be proportionate to the problem and would not satisfy the requirement of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA); and**
- 5. Residents are advised to continue to report incidents when they occur so that the level of problem in the area can be re-assessed in future.**

Reasons for recommendation

To address the concerns of the residents and update them on progress since the Petition Hearing on 18 March 2010.

	<p>Alternative options considered</p> <p>Dummy CCTV cameras could be secured to a lamp post. The Council discourages the use of dummy cameras as they give an impression of safety without the ability to provide any evidence if an incident were to occur.</p> <p>Fencing the whole strip of footpath on The Sigers side would be unlawful, even though access can be gained from another entrance. The footpath is also too narrow to permit fencing and it is not possible to widen it as the road is too narrow.</p>	
<p>The meeting, which commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 8.05 pm.</p>		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nikki Stubbs on 01895 250472 . Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.