

## PETITION REQUESTING A LIGHT AND CCTV IN THE CAR PARK AT ST MARY'S CHURCH, HAYES

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Douglas Mills
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Community, Commerce and Regeneration
<b>Officer Contact</b>	Ed Shaylor, Residents Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Nil

### HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Purpose of report</b>	<p>This report seeks to respond to a petition received by the Council to request a light and a camera in the car park adjacent to St Mary the Virgin Church, Church Road, Hayes, Middlesex.</p> <p>The petition was received by Democratic Services on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013.</p>
<b>Financial Cost</b>	Nil
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Residents' and Environmental Services
<b>Ward affected</b>	Townfield

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member:

- a) Notes the views of the petitioners.
- b) Notes the work which the Council has undertaken to improve the area.
- c) Discusses with petitioners whether they perceive the area to have been improved.
- d) Considers whether the installation of lighting and temporary CCTV from time to time is still necessary to detect or deter crime or anti-social behaviour, given the improvements which have so far been made.

### INFORMATION

#### Background information

A number of the petitioners informed the investigating Council officer that they have been victims of crime as a result of parking in the car park, and say that consequently they no longer use it. They also stated that they would feel safer and start using the car park again if lighting was improved.

The extent of the overgrowth surrounding the car-park and lack of lighting made it quite isolated and vulnerable to crime and anti-social behaviour.

This photo shows the car park at the time the petition was received:



The car park is the responsibility of the Council's Green Spaces Service, which has arranged for the area to be cut back and exposed. This was given priority and was carried out within a few weeks of the petition being received. The height barrier had been tampered with, so Green Spaces undertook to provide adequate locking measures and also removed some building rubble which had been dumped there.

This photo shows the improvements made since March 2013.



It is recommended that these improvements to natural light and surveillance have significantly improved the safety of the car park.

### **Reasons for recommendation**

The Council will maintain the reduction of vegetation and foliage around the car park to improve natural light and sight lines. This should provide sufficient security and reassurance to residents and there have been no reports made to police since March 2013.

## **Alternative options considered**

The car-park currently has no lighting, and a quotation has been obtained to install two light columns which would be sufficient given the size of area to be covered.

A temporary portable CCTV camera could be used in the area if needed, wirelessly accessed and recording onto its own hard drive for the purposes of retrospective detection and the providing a deterrent.

However, there would be no real time CCTV monitoring and for recording after dark there would need to be lights installed at the same time.

The Council could install permanent monitored CCTV in the area, but this would increase cost and is not considered to be necessary at this time.

The combined cost of lights and CCTV is not felt to be justified at this time, at least until an assessment has been made of the long term benefits of the improvements so far made. Installation of lights and CCTV can be reconsidered at any time if the need should become apparent.

## **Financial Implications**

The estimated cost of lighting would be two 6 metre columns with LED lanterns at £4,250. The cost of a single wireless CCTV camera including installation is £6,000 plus £350 annual running costs. If the Cabinet Member were minded to proceed with these items there are funds available for 2013/14 within the Cabinet Member's Community Safety Fund.

## **Corporate Finance comments**

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial implications set out above.

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

The measures taken so far should improve the perception of safety and residents should feel more safe and resume use of the car park.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

Consultation has been carried out, with the lead petitioner, the Church Warden and the police crime prevention officer to explore solutions to the issue.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legal**

The Council, as owner of the car park, has the general power to carry out improvement works to the area of land in question by removing vegetation. These works would fall within the Council's general power of competence contained within Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, which gives the Council the power to do anything which an individual may do.

The Council could also use this power to install additional lighting, subject to obtaining the necessary planning consents. However, should CCTV be considered, officers are advised to seek the further advice of legal services to ensure that any such measures are only implemented in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil