

**_Draft Minutes of Meeting
Community Safety Working Group
Tuesday 14 May 2024 3.30pm – 5pm**

Present: Cllr Kay Wesley (Chair), Cllr Susan Mead (via zoom), Cllr Shaun Radcliffe, Cllr Robert Brittain, Linda Webber (Street Pastors) Sergeant James Bell, Jackie MacArthur, Rachel McCarthy.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Robert Moreton, Cllr Richard Walton and Julia Pestell- Hassell (CEC)
2. **Draft Agenda approved**
3. **Notes of the meeting** of 13 February 2024 were accepted as correct
4. **Action Log** - extra updates
 - a) Rachel to share the email re spiking with the new sergeant
 - b) Organising a joint design out crime event with the police
 - c) Find more of the perpetrator posters re spiking
5. **Police update on Crime (Sgt James Bell)**

The group were pleased to meet and welcome the new Neighbourhood Beat Sergeant, James Bell, who replaced John Roberts in March. The Chair explained about the group and its aspirations. James reported that overall the amount of reported crime in Congleton had increased in the past in the three months February – end of April when compared to the same period last year. 2023 figure 482. 2024 figure 622.

Suggested that the increase reflected more people, more reporting and more incidents.

Noted Congleton Neighbourhood Beat Team is currently under-staffed due to sickness and vacancies. Currently just one PCSO and one PC working in Congleton. The Sergeant is hoping this will change soon.

Action: Jackie to prepare a letter to the new Police and Crime Commissioner seeking urgent action to increase numbers in the Congleton Neighbourhood policing unit. Also to make sure the new PCC is aware of the size of the Congleton wards and the need for more policing in Congleton. Group believe this is in line with CTC policies.

5a Shoplifting has increased in town. Working Group members are concerned about the amount of reports it receives about shop lifting. The shops are concerned about the lack of police support, the fact that shop CCTV is not collected and general lack of action. Police are concerned that many shops do not share evidence with them.

ACTION – agreed a joint letter from the Police and Town Council and a Design Out Crime day should be organised for early in June. The letter will reference and give instructions for a system

that the police use where shops can directly load CCTV footage onto the system. A training session/sessions will be organised.

5b Drug and Alcohol - the group shared intelligence with the police about local hot spots. In the 3 months Feb – April 12 reported incidents of drug crime were reported. 50% low level procession. Concern about under-reporting raised.

5c Antisocial Behaviour – 58 reported cases Feb – April 24 compared with 48 last year. Lots of ASB isn't 'crimed'. Reported incidents at the back of Belgrave, Congleton Market, Astbury Mere, Bromley Community area.

5d Domestic Violence - 122 incidents in the 3 months compared with 107 in 2023. Last year 5 people charged. This year 10 people charged. Police have plans in place for dealing with 12 Serial Domestic Abuse Perpetrators.

5e Sexual Offences has seen a spike from 23 to 51. 16 of these cases are historic abuse reported following the arrest of a wanted sexual abuser who returned to the UK after decades out of the country.

5f Hate Crime – another spike from 8 to 24. Once a reported case is more than 31 days ago it is classed as historic. Majority are online and inappropriate.

5g Speeding – Concern raised about the racing meets on the Link Road. Reassured that the police are well aware of the recent meets and have tactics to discourage.

Operation Park Safe - asked for CTC help in promoting this more. Parking around schools always a problem and really need to educate parents. Parents behave when police attend, but not police measures to help regularly.

6. **Police Priorities** – this is around getting more police on the beat team
7. **CEC ASB Team** – not able to attend
8. **CCTV Updates** - No updates from CEC. Jackie needs to organise site visits.
9. **Community Safety Charter** – regular checks and updates on the website
10. **ShopWatch** – Rachel covered with Shoplifting in the first section
11. **AOB:** - Caravan on Dale Crescent. Not a matter for the Police. Appears no-one has powers to do anything. **Jackie to write to Cheshire East departments and Plus Dane to see if we can get a plan to help resolve.** One caravan is not an encampment so traveller laws do not apply.

Add Street Pastors as an agenda item to the next meeting

12. **Date of Next Meeting Thursday 11th July 3.30 – 5pm (TBC)**

Finished 5.27pm