

ON-STREET PARKING ENFORCEMENT AND THE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

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1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To consider the implementation and exploration of initiatives to address on-street parking enforcement issues in East Cambridgeshire.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) Note the findings of options explored seeking to address matters relating to car parking enforcement in the District;
- (ii) Instruct Officers to engage with the Chief Constable and, if agreed by him, implement car parking enforcement under S38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017, and;
- (iii) Approve the implementation of CSAS in East Cambridgeshire and provide support to the Police as outlined at 4.6, subject to agreement by the Chief Constable, under S38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017, for ECDC to implement car parking enforcement.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 A motion was passed at Full Council on 22nd October 2020 to instruct the Director, Operations to engage with the Cambridgeshire Constabulary Chief Constable to discuss the provision of a dedicated car parking enforcement resource for the District and/or the effective implementation of CSAS (Community Safety Accreditation Scheme). The motion requested that an update is reported to Finance and Assets Committee in January 2021 detailing any legal and financial implications for consideration and decision on how to progress the matter.

3.2 Following engagement with the Chief Constable, it was determined that a financial contribution from the Council to the Police to enhance resources aimed at providing additional car parking enforcement was not feasible at the current time.

3.3 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in past times who were employed in much greater numbers would have been instrumental in tackling parking issues. It should be noted that Cambridgeshire Constabulary are in the midst of further cost cuts which will be reflected in staff redundancies. It has been publicly announced that their total PCSO numbers are being reduced from 80 to 40. In East Cambs there have been 4 PCSO posts, it is not inconceivable that by the end of the current process that East Cambs will be left with just two PCSOs for the district.

The two warranted Police Officers who also form part of the district Neighbourhood policing team are directed towards dealing with more serious criminal matters.

- 3.4 It must be noted that 94% of local and District Councils in England have decriminalised parking, using Civil Parking Enforcement, and made it their own responsibility for enforcement. This Council is committed to retaining free car parking in its city and town centre car parks; Civil Parking Enforcement has significant financial implications and has therefore been ruled out as an option by this Council.
- 3.5 The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) is a scheme administered by the Police that provides the opportunity for the Constabulary Chief Constable to bestow some Police powers (issuing parking tickets is not one of these powers) on accredited employees of partner organisations who are working in partnership with the police. It provides the opportunity for an enhanced working relationship between both sides. Organisations decide and manage their employees' priorities and workloads. CSAS accredited employees are not intended to be 'police officers'.
- 3.6 In other areas the scheme has effectively enhanced working relationships between the police and other organisations and has proved effective in addressing a range of issues.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/OPTIONS

- 4.1 CSAS could be used to improve car parking enforcement. However, CSAS on its own does not allow non-Police staff to actually issue car parking tickets, and limits the power of non-Police staff to the collection of evidence which is passed over to the Police. CSAS could be used to enhance efforts in tackling parking enforcement issues, which could be achieved using the Police's 'Four E's' approach - Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce. This approach complements the Council's commitment to providing free parking while encouraging restrictions to be followed.
- 4.2 The list below outlines how CSAS provides an opportunity to address a variety of matters impacting local communities:
- Intelligence, data and information can be readily shared between accredited organisations due to the enhanced security vetting of accredited staff working with existing information sharing agreements.
 - A credible, accredited person is relaying information and intelligence back to the police and other organisations
 - Accredited police forces have access to the services of the National Problem Solving Group that is made up of hundreds of police officers representing 43 forces available to respond to specific questions, the obvious benefit of not having to 're-invent the wheel'.
 - CSAS aligns with existing local initiatives such as East Cambs Community Safety Partnership Eyes and Ears project which has the catch phrase of 'it's everybody's business'
 - Staff safety may be improved as it is an offence to obstruct or attack an accredited officer and the police crest will be present on ID badges which could reduce the risk of confrontation
 - A CSAS accreditation adds value to the personal CVs of individuals who participate
 - Accredited individuals are trained in a number of areas including human rights, diversity, confrontation, communication, prevent (terrorism), ASB and crime Acts, this is benefit to the existing employer

- Often there are multiple organisations addressing common issues, therefore CSAS enables accredited organisations to work together to address matters by sharing resources and developing multi-agency solutions. In East Cambs, this is currently carried out via the Community Safety Partnership's (CSP's) Problem Solving Group. CSAS is expected to enhance existing work practice and information sharing.
 - In other areas, CSAS has seen successes when dealing with individuals as some accredited roles may be seen as less obtrusive as a police officer. This is because CSAS staff are not in police uniform and not overtly in an authoritative position where some people will not engage. This is more likely to build trust and credibility between CSAS staff and the individual being engaged with.
 - Local problem solving is enhanced due to multiple agencies working collaboratively to address shared issues; successes in Essex include tackling street drinking, robbery and begging through the establishment of preventative measures such as the implementation of Public Space Protection Orders, campaigns, joint patrols, issuing of on-the-spot magistrates orders and Fixed Penalty Notices and the erection of signage
 - The CSAS logo can be used on promotional materials and letter headed paper
 - The scheme could enhance respect and credibility of accredited people carrying out enforcement roles
 - There may be future opportunities for the creation of partnership hubs and desk sharing
 - Quarterly CSAS regional meetings take place that the police can attend to discuss matters relating to the scheme.
- 4.3 As well as car parking issues, other prevalent local issues impacting East Cambs communities include youth nuisance, low level criminality, noise, truancy and anti-social driving, and more recently matters relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and Government restrictions. The Constabulary neighbourhood team form a small part of a much larger multi-agency neighbourhood team. It is therefore envisaged that CSAS could be an effective initiative to enhance the way that organisations work together in partnership to address common goals.
- 4.4 The Police and Crime Act 2017, (Section 38), permits Cambridgeshire Constabulary to bestow powers to volunteers acting on their behalf, including the power to directly issue car parking enforcement Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). Volunteers can include Council employed staff. Volunteers could consist of vetted, trained and CSAS accredited staff operating within the district to act on behalf of the police and who would be able to directly issue FPNs. Administration and processing of any FPN will be a Constabulary responsibility after receiving the paperwork from the issuing officer. To provide consistency with the CSAS approach, volunteers could also use the police's 4 E's approach to enforcement (as outlined at 4.2). Implementing this initiative makes use of existing resources while adding value to the benefits of the implementation of CSAS, as volunteers would have access to official police stationary and administrative resources. This opportunity has negligible cost implications for ECDC other than staff time.
- 4.5 Whilst CSAS is a recognised scheme currently in use around the country, specifically using CSAS to address parking issues was not its primary intended purpose. Section 38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017 is not currently used by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, but discussion with the Constabulary has been positive and the recommendation is therefore to pursue the implementation of CSAS subject to

agreement with the Chief Constable for the bestowal of S38 powers to the Council to enable it to simultaneously implement car parking enforcement.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The implementation of CSAS in conjunction with bestowed police powers under Section 38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017 could provide an effective approach of tackling issues relating to car parking enforcement and other matters affecting local communities.

5.2 Members are requested to instruct officers to engage with the Chief Constable requesting that he bestow powers under Section 38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017 to implement car parking enforcement, approve the implementation of CSAS in East Cambridgeshire and provide support to the Police as outlined at 4.6, subject to agreement by the Chief Constable, under S38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017, for EDCDC to implement car parking enforcement.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Training of each CSAS accredited person costs approximately £100. Additional costs include the production of CSAS ID cards and patches displaying the CSAS logo. Additional clothing displaying the CSAS uniform may be considered at a later date.

6.2 If bestowed powers under Section 38 of the Police and Crime Act 2017 were implemented then official uniform would be required to be purchased and administrative costs would be incurred.

7.0 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – EIA

7.3 Appendix 2 – CIA

Background Documents

Location

Room , The
Grange

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