

FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT ENGAGEMENT FORUM held in The Guildhall, Faversham on Tuesday 10 October 2017

1. WELCOME

The Mayor, Cllr Campbell, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs John Peto, Charlotte Relf and Geoff Wade, PC Emma Willson.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING from 11 July 2017

The Minutes were agreed.

4. UPDATE FROM KENT POLICE

Arson 'Empire' Preston Street:

At the previous LEF an update was requested regarding the fire at Empire Clothes Shop in Preston Street. A crime report of arson with intent was created however it was not possible to confirm that arson occurred as on the balance of probabilities this was not deliberately started. No electrical fault has been identified but the security around the seat of the fire was intact and there is no evidence of anyone gaining access.

Speed Checks- Park Road, Faversham:

PC WILLSON received a phone call from Cllr Hook in relation to speeding in the area of Park Road. Cllr HOOK had received complaints from local residents. PC WILLSON has discussed this with Special Constable Colleagues who have agreed to conduct speed / road checks in the near future. Passing attention will also be made to the area by local community officers.

Theft From Motor Vehicles:

Theft From Motor Vehicle Offences continue to be occurring with a majority being insecure vehicles. The same message still applies, please continue to lock your vehicle and remove any valuables. Recent arrests have been made and court cases are due in December.

Faversham Sexual Assaults (OP GEM):

A 27year old Bulgarian male was arrested by Major Crime Officers in relation to Sexual Assault Offences in Faversham. Following the custody process, the male was charged with 6 offences (2x sexual assaults and 4 x indecent exposure) His bail was refused by Police.

Speed Check- Courtenay Road, Dunkirk:

PCSO FILL and PCSO HARRIOTT have conducted speed checks in Courtenay Road after complaints from local residents were made. On this occasion it did not appear to be fruitful with only one vehicle speeding at 33mph. PCSO'S have agreed to return at a different time and will continue to pay attention to the area.

Off road motorcycles and fireworks - Boughton Under Blean:

E-Mail received from local resident regarding a couple of individuals on off road motorcycles that are going round the village, no lights, on the road and pavement. They are very loud and come out just before dusk. There are also two bigger bikes which are also extremely loud that have taken to racing up and down Horselees road/colonels lane. In addition to this a group of youths set off fireworks in the playpark by Horselees. This information has been passed to the local PCSO'S who have made contact with the local resident and attention will be paid to these areas. PCSO'S believe they may have identified one of the riders and enquiries are ongoing.

Hare Coursing – Doddington/Throwley/Stalisfield (and surrounding areas):

Reports of Hare Coursing are continuing to come in. This is a countywide problem. Local Officers are working alongside dedicated Rural Officers to regularly patrol the vulnerable areas. Local residents are asked to make note of registrations of vehicles they deem to be out of place and suspicious. These vehicles will usually be parked in laybys or gateways to fields and will be 4x4 type vehicles. Residents are encouraged to call in with any reports suspicious activity.

Concerns were raised regarding quad bikes through the town, particularly with noisy engines and questions were raised as to whether they were road legal. Motorbikes through Bosenden Woods had been reported.

5. COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT

Jack Packman introduced himself as Community Warden and explained his role with young people. He has no power with under 18s, but now has a role with those behaving in an anti-social manner. Jack supports parents and organisations and encourages the use of services which are available, particularly youth clubs which provide a safe environment to young people. He has engaged with young people on the Rec and has invited other people to walk with him, one of these being the Mayor of Faversham. He felt stories were worse than the reality and that young people were bored and not deliberately causing problems. The Princes Trust offers a twelve week programme in key life skills, English and Maths. Jack said there had

been three successful stories in Faversham. Optivo also hold events for young people.

Jack thought there was a need for a multi-agency response. What can kids do on the Rec, Abbey School charge for pitches and it's not the centre of town, WFCC was not in the right location for others.

It was agreed that young people had a place in the community but needed to know how to behave. It was considered whether there should be a young peoples' survey.

6. SWALE YOUNG PEOPLE

Patrick Cantellow is the Lead Director of Swale Young People. He uses social media, such as WhatsApp and Instagram to interact with young people. He works with KCC to increase employability opportunities for young people and recently took a group of young people to Facebook and Twitter offices. Patrick thought it would be a good idea to set up a youth council some young people could be engaged and listened to. He thought free food would help get people along! Other thoughts were to try and get those being anti-social to engage, Patrick didn't think there was much for young people to do in Faversham. He also felt it took so long to get anything; it had gone out of fashion by the time it arrived.

7. PCSO

PCSO Ian Henderson supported the previous comments made. Ian had become Young Engagement Officer for Swale in September and will be taking an interest in what happens locally and work with identified young people.

Complaints of bad behaviour in the Rec were mentioned, however Ian pointed out that there had only been six calls to 101 regarding the Rec since 6th May. He thought the comments showed the problem was bigger than the system suggested. He urged people to report incidences online, so the reporting reflected the incidents.

The lack of lighting around the skate park was discussed, together with its poor location under the trees. However, this was down to residents at the time it was installed not wanting it to be near their properties.

It was felt that having an authorised presence in the Rec would be helpful in the interim whilst the bigger problems were being dealt with.

When young people are excluded from school, it often means that they are only receiving two hours a day supervision, when they are generally the ones that need the most help.

A park constable was suggested for the Rec.

8. NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE PARISHES

Cllr Jeff Tutt informed the meeting of the public inquiry regarding 77 houses in Dunkirk, which took four days. The joint NHP with Boughton had very little weight as there was a lack of officer support. He also stated there had been little help from SBC Cllrs Lewin and Bowles. Jeff also felt that planning enforcement was just not happening.

Graveney received no support from SBC and raised £35k to fight a development, even though the borough council had voted against it. They now face an application for the biggest solar panel farm in Europe, but felt there was no point fighting it.

Graveney had problems with overseas fruit pickers allegedly killing swans, and there also seemed to be a problem with the killing of pheasants too.

Doddington offered their expertise on Speedwatch and invited other parish councils to come along and watch or if they required other assistance.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Gas canisters were noted at the Mount, it was recommended that a call to 101 with their location be made.

The Community Warden noted that he had access to a sharps bin and could also clean graffiti.

Concerns were raised over the alleged sewage in the Creek, although it would appear that only a bye-law can outlaw house boats from releasing waste.