

PETITIONS & REPRESENTATIONS BOARD
Wednesday 21st February 2018
At 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Rowlands (Chair), Councillors J. Taylor (Vice Chair), Petts, Riaz, Simmons, Skepelhorn and D. Taylor

OFFICERS

PRESENT: Christine Davy Network and Safety Manager
 Bert Siong Democracy & Scrutiny Officer

Ward Councillor Councillor Farooq

Others in attendance Mr S. Chaudri (Lead))
 Mr C. Tailor) Erin Close Residents
 Mr K. Patel)

APOLOGIES:

		ACTION:
1	Minutes (Ref: 2.1)	
	Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 th November 2017 be agreed as a true record and the chair be authorised to sign them.	
2	Residents Parking on Erin Close, Luton (Ref: 5.1)	
	<p>The Chair invited the Lead Petitioner, Mr Chaudri and his fellow residents of Erin Close, Mr Tailor and Mr Patel to speak.</p> <p>Members were informed of the parking problems as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People parking on both sides of Erin Close, restricting access; • The garage business owners also parking damaged vans and trucks on the road; • The area being used by drug users and sex workers; • Erin Close used to be desirable area back in 1999, when the lead petitioner first moved there, but it was claimed it was now not safe for unaccompanied women; • Cars broken into was a daily occurrence; 	

		ACTION:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bins enclosure in Erin being used by people dumping/ fly-tipping their rubbish; • The bin enclosure doors were left open, attracting rats. The doors should be spring-loaded to close automatically after use. <p>The Chair invited Christine Davy, the Network and Safety Manager to respond. She made the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The petition had been signed by 20 residents of Erin Close, a cul-de-sac; • Luton Council received a number of similar requests, which were assessed and added to the list waiting for action; • With limited resources and a fully committed budget, requests were prioritised, with the list reviewed annually; • Erin Close was on the list to be dealt with in 2019/20, unless there was a change when the programme went through its annual review; • Erin Close first went on the list in 2014; • Housing had done some work in relation to the bins, putting the enclosure around it, but they could be requested to look at it again, particularly in respect of fitting spring-loaded doors; • The CCTV cameras in the area could not be linked to the monitored Council system, but footage was kept for 4 weeks and could be viewed for evidence to support prosecution, if an issue was reported. <p>The Network and Safety Manager requested that Board approved the recommendations in her report (Ref: 6.1), which would mean that the residents parking scheme for Erin Close would remain in the 2019/20 work programme.</p> <p>Following Members' comments, questions and discussions, a number of key points made and noted, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure petition letters/ narratives were provided as part of the agenda pack for future meetings; • Erin Close went on the priority list in 2014 after request from the former Area Board; • As Ward Councillor, Cllr Riaz was aware of the difficulties first hand and commented 2019/20 was too far off and requested it be done earlier; • Whether the CCTV system could be connected to the Town Centre system by repeaters was not a matter within the knowledge of the officer; • Could there be money available through the Central Area New Homes for Luton Fund? Democratic Services to enquire; 	<p>BS</p> <p>BS</p>

		ACTION:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of the parking scheme was not known exactly, but thought to be in the region of £5K - £10K, if that was what residents wanted; • Even if funding made available, there was still an issue with staffing , as a member of staff had left the Council and not yet replaced; • It was not legally allowable to just erect a ‘Residents Only Parking’ sign, as it could not be enforce without the appropriate traffic regulations; • Although there was no time criteria for bringing a request up the list, Erin close had been prioritised to 2019/20 as a result of the petition; • There were 300-400 requests to look at, as more were put on than came off; • The mobile Neighbourhood Enforcement Team to be requested to pay attention to the fly-tipping issue in Erin Close; • In relation to the drug users, sex workers and car crime, the Police to be requested to step up patrols in the area; • Residents also advised to call Police on the 101 number to report any incidents occurring at the time of witnessing them; • There was a need to find out if any funding was available before deciding on any actions; • There could not be any guarantee of fixing Erin Close for action in 2019/20, as depended on what new priorities came in, when review undertaken; • Areas where safety was an issue, e.g. due to frequent accidents, would go top of the list. Erin Close was not such an area; • Emergency services would have difficulty accessing the close; • Double yellow lines could be an answer and would take less time to implement. Bollards would not then be required. There was however a danger of displacing the problem; • Businesses in the area had evolved over decades and firmly established. They could park anywhere with no restrictions; <p>After comments and discussions the Board reached a number of resolutions as set out below.</p> <p>Resolved: (i) That the Democracy and Scrutiny Officer be requested to enquire into the availability of any money from the Central Area New Homes for Luton Fund to pay or contribute to the Erin Close residents parking scheme, and if so, to then bring back a report to the next Board meeting for a decision on any recommendation(s) on the petition;</p>	<p>BS</p> <p>BS</p>

		ACTION:
	<p>(ii) That the Network and Safety Manager be requested to progress the provision of double yellow lines for the relevant sections of Erin Close to relieve congestion from parked vehicles and report back progress at the next or future meeting of the Board, as appropriate;</p> <p>(iii) That the Operations Service Manager, Public Protection be requested to arrange for the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team to conduct visits to Erin Close and investigate any fly-tipping offences, with a view to prosecuting offenders;</p> <p>(iv) That the Area Housing Manager be requested to arrange the provision of spring-loaded doors to the bin enclosure in Erin Close to ensure they remain closed, when not in use.</p> <p>(v) That the Operations Service Manager, Public Protection be requested to arrange with Bedfordshire Police for patrols to be conducted periodically in Erin Close to deter drug users and sex workers from using the Close, prevent car crime and provide reassurance to residents.</p>	

(Note: The meeting ended at 6.35 pm)