

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD
Council Chamber - Town Hall
24 May 2016 (7.00 - 7.45 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	John Crowder, Robby Misir, Viddy Persaud, Carol Smith, Michael White and +Frederick Thompson
Residents' Group	Ray Morgon, Nic Dodin and Barbara Matthews
East Havering Residents' Group'	Gillian Ford (Chairman) and Linda Hawthorn
UKIP Group	Ian de Wulverton and Lawrence Webb (Vice-Chair)
Independent Residents' Group	Graham Williamson
Labour	Keith Darvill

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dilip Patel.

+Substitute members: Councillor Frederick Thompson (for Dilip Patel).

Councillor Melvin Wallace was also in attendance.

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

**1 REQUISITION OF EXECUTIVE DECISION 16/48 - PREVENTING
DAMAGE AND INJURY IN PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

Councillors Ray Morgon and Keith Darvill addressed the Board and gave the reasons for the call-in of the Executive Decision.

Prior to the meeting a response from the Head of Cultural and Leisure Services to the questions raised by the call-in had been provided within the agenda pack.

During the debate Members sought and received clarification on several points.

Amongst those points were the following:

Officers advised that it was counter-productive to define an exact area when determining what the immediate area outside of the park was. Parks Protection Officers (PPOs) could chase someone in the immediate area outside of the park but could not chase the person outside of the park. Different officers would have different views as to what they determined outside.

Members noted that there had been extensive communications with police officers and the Cabinet Member on how the boundaries around parks would affect arrests. The Borough Commander was very supportive of the new powers and the police were relaxed about extending the powers. Officers needed to comply within an operating procedure Attestation gave PPOs the same powers as the police but they also needed to follow the Council's procedures. Cameras were provided to all officers monitoring their actions and footage was reviewed if a complaint was made. All enforcement action was documented complete with video footage if necessary.

In response to a question relating to radio contact with police officers advised that discussions were on-going and that now PPOs were attested the police were now working closer with officers. The technology was there but there were just some protocols to overcome.

Members were advised that there had been several incidents since February, when PPOs were attested some of which had gone to court and which involved police assistance. There had been one incident of robbery in Raphael's Park and instance of someone going equipped in Dagnam Park where the prosecuting authority was the police.

In response to a question relating to likely cost savings officers replied that there had been a noticeable impact so far but officers would wait for six months then report to scrutiny with a full report in a year's time. The report Members were considering dealt with people entering the parks and vandalism costs could run into thousands. Although there were no figures at present officers could look at data over three years and look at this year and extrapolate savings. Officers confirmed that there were no extra costs as the officers were already employed. If cost effective then the scheme could be expanded.

Officers confirmed that they made judgements on who shouldn't be entering the parks using both visual means and by using their experience. People entering the parks in transit vans often were there to fly tip and some individuals were already known to PPOs.

Members noted that officers were hoping to strengthen partnership working with the police.

It was suggested that the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee invite someone along to aid the partnership. The Ward Panel in

Gooshays was very well run and perhaps needed to be rolled out to other areas in the borough. The Parks Protection Manager attended the meetings of the Community Safety Partnerships it was suggested that the Chairman of the panels invite Steve Rawlings to their meetings.

Officers confirmed that the PPOs were part of the Council's emergency contingency plans.

At this point the Cabinet Member for Culture and Community Engagement left the room whilst the Board voted on the decision as to uphold or dismiss the call-in of the Executive Decision 16/48 dated 16 April 2016.

The vote for the decision as to whether to uphold or dismiss the call-in was carried unanimously.

It was **RESOLVED** that the call-in of the Executive Decision 16/48 dated 16 April 2016 be dismissed.

Chairman