

## PFCC Decision Report

**Please ensure all sections below are completed**

<b>Report reference number:</b> 116/20
<b>Classification</b> Not protectively marked
<b>Title of report:</b> Epping Forest – High Beech highway gates
<b>Area of county / stakeholders affected:</b> Epping Forest
<b>Report by:</b> Kirsty Smith
<b>Date of report:</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020
<b>Enquiries to:</b> <a href="mailto:Kirsty.smith@essex.police.uk">Kirsty.smith@essex.police.uk</a>

**1. Purpose of the report**

To seek approval for the allocation of up to £9,910 in the form of a crime and disorder reduction grant from the 2020-21 Community Safety Development Fund. Funding will be provided to Epping Forest District Council for the purchase and installation of highway gates at Manor Road, High Beech.

**2. Recommendations**

Approve £9,910 from the Community Safety Development Fund to Epping Forest Council.

**3. Benefits of the proposal**

The installation of highway gates will:

- Deter and disrupt the prolific anti-social behaviour (ASB) and associated crime in the High Beech location.
- Provide a long-term, sustainable crime prevention solution, reducing the volume of anti-social behaviour in the area and as a result reducing the ongoing demand on Essex Police and partners to monitor the area.

**4. Background and proposal**

This area of High Beech has experienced long term anti-social behaviour and criminal activity over the last 15 years. The activity has including:

- Prolific and endemic drug taking and dealing
- Voluminous use of nitrous capsules and balloons
- Noise disturbance from car horns late into the night
- Loud and dangerous handbrake turns and spinning of vehicles
- Drinking of alcohol and smashing of bottles across the carriageway
- Setting off fireworks at unsociable times

Epping Forest District Council officers, Essex Police, North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) and the City of London Forest keepers/constables have been working together to tackle the problem. Activity undertaken so far includes;

- The Community Policing Team and Special Constabulary running joint operations with the Forest Keepers to actively monitor and deter unwelcomed behaviours
- Epping Forest District Council Community Resilience Team have installed a re-deployable camera overlooking the area

This collaborative approach has seen a reduction in anti-social behaviour however the problem has not been eradicated and the resource required to prevent and respond is not sustainable.

Anti-social behaviour has significantly increased during COVID-19 and the area has also seen a 450% increase in visitors. This has resulted in a urgent need to find establish a long-term sustainable solution.

Epping Forest District Council consulted partners (listed below) to identify possible long-term solutions to tackle the problem:

- Local residents through the *Make High Beech Safe Campaign*
- The Epping Forest Forum via a petition with 7760 signatories
- Epping Forest District Councillors
- Essex County Councillors
- Epping Forest District Council - Community Resilience Service
- Epping Forest District Council - Community Safety Partnership
- Essex Police
- Head of the highways panel and the highways panel
- North Essex Parking Partnership
- Essex County Council highways officers
- PFCC
- City of London Forest keepers/constables for Epping Forest

As a result of this consultation it was agreed by partners to install highway gates at Manor Road, High Beech. The gates present a simple and cost-effective solution.

The City of London Forest Keepers/constables will be responsible of the opening and closing of the gates daily (7:30 am to sunset)

## **5. Alternative options considered and rejected**

The PFCC has committed to utilise the Community Safety Development Fund to support community organisations to deliver community safety projects. Epping Forest District Council have reviewed, in consultation with community partners, other options to tackle ASB. It was concluded that the installation of highway gates offers a simple and cost-effective solution.

**6. Police and Crime Plan**

The funds allocated to Epping Forest District Council will be used to install highway gates to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour which is in line with the Police and Crime Plan priority 'Crack down on anti-social behaviour'.

**7. Police operational implications**

The Community Policing Team (CPT) and Special Constabulary have spent a considerable amount of their time policing the High Beech area (particularly late at night) which has detracted from "normal" community policing work and public engagement. The installation of highway gates will greatly assist in reducing anti-social behaviour and free up resources for other policing duties.

**8. Financial implications**

The PFCC will provide a one-off grant of up to £9,910 from the 2020-21 Community Safety Development Fund to Epping Forest District Council.

In addition to the PFCC contribution:

- Epping Forest District Council Community Safety Partnership have committed £2,500
- City of London Forest keepers/constables are providing resource in kind to provide the daily management of the gates.

**9. Legal implications**

The award of the grant is subject to the PFCC's standard funding agreement.

Epping Forest will be responsible to ensure that any regulations/requirements that are required for the installation of the gates are secured and adhered to.

City of London Forest keepers/constables will be responsible for the daily management of the gates.

**10. Staffing implications**

There are no PFCC staffing implications

**11. Equality and Diversity implications**

In line with the PFCC Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. The installation of the highway gates will not disproportionality impact any group including those with a protected characteristic. The installation will prevent criminal activity and anti-social behaviour improving community safety.

**12. Risks**

Allocating funding to an external organisation has inherent risk, but this is mitigated by recognising Epping Forest District Council's experience in managing Community Safety projects.

**13. Governance Boards**

This decision has not been presented to any governance boards.

**Report Approval**

The report will be signed off by the OPFCC Chief Executive and Treasurer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Deputy M.O.

Sign:



Print: Darren Horsman

Date: 19 November 2020

Chief Finance Officer / Treasurer

Sign:



Print: Elizabeth Helm

Date: 24 November 2020

**Publication**

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

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If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

**Redaction**

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet?

YES

2. Of Appendix?

YES

NO

NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

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Date redaction carried out: .....

**Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only**

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

**Sign:** .....

**Print:** .....

**Chief Executive/Treasurer**

**Decision and Final Sign Off**

I agree the recommendations to this report:

**Sign:** 

**Print:** Roger Hirst

**PFCC**

**Date signed:** 27 November 2020

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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.....  
.....

**Sign:** .....

**Print:** .....

**PFCC/Deputy PFCC**

**Date signed:** .....