



GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Town Centre Crime Reduction Advisory Committee held on 25th June 2024 at 7pm	
Councillors Present	I Donfrancesco, P Manning (Chair), M Oakden
Apologies	Susannah Hart (County Councillor), Abigail Gibbs, Martin Hicks (Curtain Pole), Cllr Lokabandhu, Kim Von Coles
Absent	Nick Cottle (County Councillor), Chloe Forfitt, Rev. Kieron Rowley
In Attendance	Insp. Matthew Reed, J Sparkes (Labyrinth Books), K Armstrong (Assistant Town Clerk) and S Hallam (Committee Clerk)
Public Participation	N/A

1. Elect a Chair

Cllr Manning was proposed by Cllr Donfrancesco and seconded by Jim Sparkes. There being no other nominations, was duly elected Chair of the TCCR Advisory Committee.

2. Elect a Deputy Chair

Cllr Oakden was proposed by Cllr Donfrancesco and seconded by Jim Sparkes. There being no other nominations, was duly elected Deputy Chair of the TCCR Advisory Committee

3. Apologies. Susannah Hart (work commitments), Abigail Gibbs (school camp), Martin Hicks (family commitments), Cllr Lokabandhu (at Festival) and Kim Von Coles (At Festival).

Cllr Nick Cottle (County Councillor) and Chloe Forfitt, were both absent without reason.

4. Declaration of Interest.

Jim Sparkes – now a member of the Parochial Church Council and Trustee at St Johns Church.
Cllr Donfrancesco – Member of Town Deal Board & Chair of Red Brick Building.
Cllr Manning – Member of Town Deal Board & Director of Beckery Island Regeneration Trust.

5. To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2024

The minutes of the meeting on 2nd May 2024 were signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

6. Police Report.

Insp Matthew Reed talked through his Report.

Zig Zag Public Enquiry – Police Contribution

As previously discussed in this forum, in April '24, I attended and gave evidence at the Public Enquiry relating to planning matters at the Zig Zag building. I have always recognised the sensitivity of the subject and I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have regarding my submission.

Higher rates of crime and antisocial behaviour in Glastonbury generally (Harm Data)

Glastonbury is a relatively small town with a population of approximately 9000 people. However, its crime rate is reported as being significantly higher per head of population than the average for the Southwest region and higher than the national average. The rate of reported antisocial behaviour incidents is similarly high. The professional experience of my team is that they spend a disproportionate amount of time dealing with safeguarding and crime incidents linked to the c. 200 temporary accommodations located around the town, including the Zig Zag site. Such is our concern over crime, disorder and safety of the community at the location, my team patrol the area surrounding the Zig Zag building, on every shift (save for the odd occasion where a serious incident elsewhere prevents this.)

Harm Data Definition - Every crime type has a harm score. Crime like murder score highest, whilst crimes such as low value criminal damage and shoplifting score amongst the lowest. Adding up the harmfulness of a crime is often a better measure of the threat, harm and risk and complexity of the offences than merely counting how many offences took place.

Per 1000 - Calculating the volume or harmfulness of crime per 1000 is a way to measure the impact of crime upon the population. I.e. If 100 crimes were committed against a resident population of 1000, a person living there would be 10 times more likely to be a victim of crime than if the resident population were 10,000.

Percentile scores - The data in each category is presented as a percentile. The value of 50 would represent the median (midpoint.) The number value indicates the relative level of harm.

Summary Data - Glastonbury has the highest harm score of any town or village in East Somerset, being on the 84th percentile. For local comparison, Frome, Wells, Shepton Mallet and Street have scores of just 48, 43, 40 and 28 respectively.

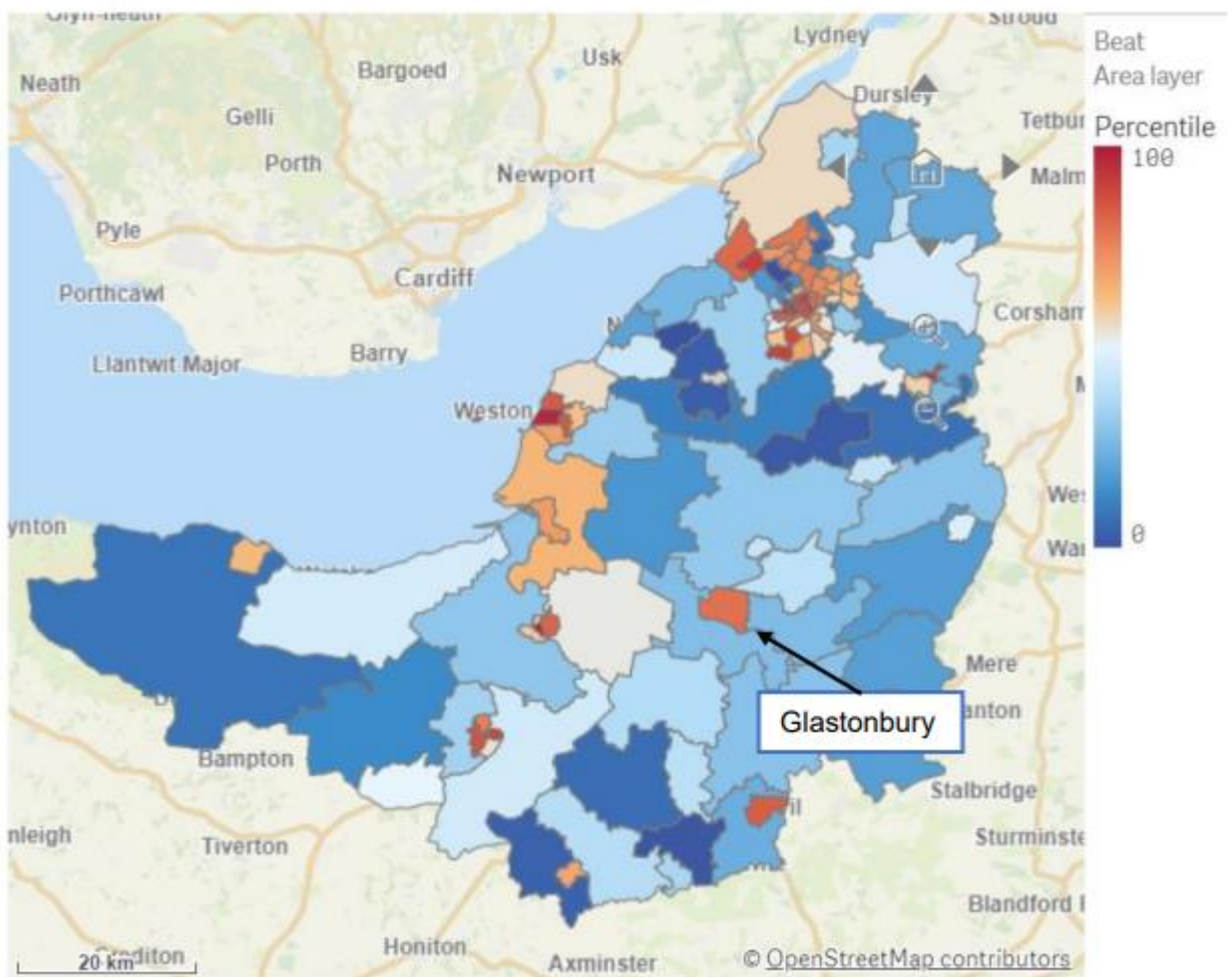
Comparing Glastonbury with the Avon and Somerset Police force area as more widely, it still scores as having the 19th highest harm score. For context, larger towns and cities are broken down into smaller 'beat areas' so Glastonbury is not being compared with the whole of Bristol, but rather small sections of it.

Glastonbury has the highest harm score of any town categorised as a 'rural town' than any other in the force.

My own professional experience of the town correlates with this data. When I took over the management of Neighbourhood Policing in town, the level of street crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly in the town centre, was almost out of control, with a corresponding level of public concern.

I developed and instigated a Problem-Solving-Plan, which over the subsequent 18 months reduced crime and disorder in the town centre by 25%. Despite this, the rates remain high.

Beat Map Showing Strategic Locations of Concern (ranked in percentiles)



The Police's concerns regarding the risk to and safeguarding of vulnerable people on the site and in the wider community.

My team have spent many, many hours supporting residents of the Zig Zag and people occupying temporary accommodations in the immediate vicinity. It is our collective view that a disproportionate number of people occupying these temporary accommodations suffered with mental health and/ or addiction issues.

Part of the difficulty is that the Zig Zag is mostly a closed site making it a challenge for statutory and non-statutory organisations to access vulnerable people and offer services. An anti-establishment sentiment is generally apparent, and agencies are viewed with suspicion. This was evident during our involvement with the safeguarding of the baby mentioned above. Our intentions were made clear – we Glastonbury Police Report – Glastonbury Town Centre Crime Reduction Advisory Committee June 2024 were there for the welfare of the baby, but this was resisted by those present even though its health hung in the balance.

Most people have the capacity to choose to live in a way that the Zig Zag site affords. However, my concern is with those who do not have capacity, as has been the case on numerous occasions. They cannot protect themselves and the shelter provided by Mr Black is often insufficient for their needs, keeps them hidden from services, and in some cases exacerbates the seriousness of a situation.

In my opinion Mr Black believes he is supporting people who find themselves in difficult circumstances and he does so with good intentions. Sadly however, he has neither the expertise nor facilities to offer such support. He takes information on face value and has neither the will nor knowledge to conduct due diligence regarding the people he tries to help. Only when circumstances inevitably deteriorate to a critical state, are support services, including the police, called.

If left unchecked, I fear that further, serious safeguarding incidents will occur at the site. The risk to and the impediment of safeguarding activities for children and vulnerable people at the site forms my main objection for the site continuing in its current form.

Cllr Donfrancesco asked that if Glastonbury has a similar demographic to Chard, is it similar types of crime too? Insp Reed advised that he could look into that and report back.

Action: Insp Reed

Jim Sparkes commented that the Co-Op has a huge chilled alcohol section and there are people drinking all day long and buy a separate bottle every time they go in (so not buying in bulk). The Co-op is the route cause of the drinking problem on the High Street.

A general discussion took place regarding this issue and it was suggested that we might want to invite the Co-Op to our next meeting to start the conversation about asking them to trial maybe only selling alcohol after 4pm?

Insp Reed advised that he would speak to Nicky King the Police Licensing Officer about what the Committee can do.

Action: Insp Reed to speak with Nicky / Committee Clerk to invite Co-Op

Public Space Protection Order

The PSPO introduced by Mendip District Council in 2021, relating to, dogs being kept on leads, dog fouling and public space drinking, will expire on 5th July 2024. Avon and Somerset Police made representation to Somerset Council that the order should be continued. I understand the Somerset Council may consider the introduction of county wide PSPO's to

ensure consistency across the area. Locally, in Glastonbury, my team used it to some effect to mitigate alcohol related anti-social behaviour. Its existence was well known by some parts of the community. After 5th July we will have to revert to dealing with alcohol related criminal offences only, i.e. Drunk and Disorderly. Criminal offences have a higher threshold than the PSPO which fell under civil law.

A general discussion took place regarding the expiry of the PSPO and the Committee's concerns. Cllr Manning proposed, seconded by Cllr Donfrancesco to recommend that Glastonbury Town Council make a representation to Somerset Council that the PSPO's should continue.

Local Policing – Staffing and challenges

The three Constable Beat Manager posts in Glastonbury are filled. PC James Higgins is long established, and PC Stacey Bennett joined the team in May. PC Katie Moyse is restricted from operation duties through injury and has been seconded to desk-based duties elsewhere. We are unable to fill that post with an operational officer.

We have entered our 'summer demand' period. During the summer months, demand for the policing services increases by as much as 50%. The force has a plan to mitigate this demand, ensuring that emergency incidents are responded to quickly. As part of this, Neighbourhood Beat Constables are seconded to the Response Policing Directorate for approximately 50% of their shifts. They remain as local as possible to their home beats, although this is not always Police Report – Glastonbury Town Centre Crime Reduction Advisory Committee June 2024 possible. During these committed shifts, PC's Higgins and Bennett start and end at Street Police station and still focus on Glastonbury as much as possible. Responding to 999 calls is an important part of community policing.

A decision was made earlier in the year that PCSO recruitment would be paused until at least spring 2025. Any current PCSO leaving will therefore not be replaced. Three PCSO have, or are about to leave the Neighbourhood team in Mendip West (Street, Glastonbury, Wells) leaving 8 in post; two in Wells, and three each in Street and Glastonbury. However, PCSO Amy Higgs is leaving the team in September, which will leave two PCSO's in Glastonbury. I have already had to release one PCSO to backfill a neighbouring area as it had a higher percentage of vacancies.

Cllr Donfrancesco asked a couple of questions:-

- 1) the Glastonbury Festival pay to have Police there – where does that money go? Inspection Reed did not know the answer to that.
- 2) When you call 999, is it always a Police person that answers the phone? Insp Reed advised that they have experienced officers at HQ to triage the calls that come in. Once a call has been triaged, it will get sent to the Police on call.

Problem Solving Plan - Glastonbury Town Centre

Given the history of increased ASB in the Town Centre in the summer months, Sergeant Simon Lancey has instigated a problem-solving-plan, building on experience from previous years. This will allow us to focus on high-harm perpetrators and is a platform on which we can bid for force-level resources to increase the policing presence in the town (Operational Support and horses as in previous years.)

Glastonbury is also one of only a small number of locations in the force to have benefitted from additional government funding to tackle ASB. Under 'Operation Hold' officer working additional overtime shifts will patrol this and other identified areas. The operation also benefits from additional intelligence analysis.

ASB Team

The remodelling of our ASB team is more or less complete. The two teams from East and West Somerset have merged and this has provided a more consistent approach across the area. More staff have been provided to the team. Locally, we have noticed an improvement in the service the team provides. It is responsible for delivering intervention under ASB legislation.

At the end of the Police Report, Inspector Reed advised that he was leaving and moving on to another role as of next week. It is a temporary secondment and he awaits a permanent posting afterwards.

Inspector Rose Green will be taking up his post on Monday. Sergeant Simon Lancey may well take her on a tour and make some introductions!

Jim Sparkes gave his heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Insp Reed for his (and his teams) dedication and hard work in the town and for all his help and involvement with the Town Centre Crime Reduction Advisory Committee. The Group wishes Insp Reed good luck in his new post.

7. Buskers Code.

The Committee Clerk showed the Committee the final look of the Buskers Code. The Committee were very happy with the pictures and font etc. The Committee clerk will obtain a quotation for the printing and once agreed by Full Council will arrange for this to be printed and distributed.

Action: Committee Clerk

8. Town Ambassadors.

Cllr Donfrancesco advised that the Town Ambassador proposal was discussed at the full council meeting and they were all happy to take this forward.

CLlr Donfrancesco advised that a Steering Group made up of Partners (Police, businesses, Church, Glastonbury Health Network, etc) would be established.

CLlr Donfrancesco advised that they need to look at funding ideas.

CLlr Donfrancesco advised that the next step is for the Partners to have their first meeting and then she report back to this Advisory Committee after that meeting.

9. Agenda Items and Date of Next Meeting.

- Welcome to Inspector Rose Green.
- Town Ambassadors/Navigators – update from Indra Donfrancesco/Jim Sparkes.
- Invite Co-op to next meeting.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 8th August 2024 at 7pm.

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