

18 December 2014

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Executive Director of Place

**Ward(s) affected:**

Whoberley

**Title:**

Further progress report on action taken to improve security to open land at the rear of 2-66 Brookside Avenue

---

**Is this a key decision?**

No

---

**Executive Summary:**

A petition containing 11 signatures, from 6 households, was submitted to the Council on 25 March 2014 by Councillor B Singh.

Reports in response to the petition were presented to Cabinet Member on 3 July and 2<sup>d</sup> October 2014. These reports detailed actions taken by Officers in response to residents' concerns about environmental and nuisance behaviour on the open space at the rear of properties 2-66 Brookside Avenue, Whoberley Ward Coventry. The open space is owned by the Council and managed by the Parks Service of the Place Directorate.

This report provides an update on progress against further recommendations made by Cabinet Member at his meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 and proposes actions to improve site security.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member is requested to:-

1. Endorse the additional action taken by Officers and to support a proportionate response to the anti-social behavioural issues identified by residents', with the provision of fencing as detailed in this report, subject to a successful funding bid to the Community Grant Fund.
2. Request officers to liaise with the Police to ensure they continue to patrol the area and to respond to any issues raised or identified and, if appropriate to exercise their powers to obtain identities of and disperse groups of individuals that are likely to cause nuisance or offending behaviour

3. Endorse the continued efforts of the Community Development Service to work with the community in tackling local issues including litter and environmental issues.
4. Request Officers to continue to monitor incidents of crime and nuisance together with the effectiveness of their action and to respond appropriately to any such issues.

**List of Appendices included:**

*None*

**Background papers:**

- i. Report to Cabinet Member (Policing & Equalities) dated 3 July 2014 entitled:  
"Response to petition calling for the installation of security fencing to open land at the rear of numbers 2-66, Brookside Avenue"
- ii. Report to Cabinet Member (Policing & Equalities) dated 2 Oct 2014 entitled:  
"Progress report on action taken to improve security to open land at the rear of 2-66 Brookside Avenue"

**Other useful documents**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## **Report title:**

Further progress report on action taken to improve security to open land at the rear of 2-66 Brookside Avenue

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 A report in response to a petition containing 11 signatures was presented to your Cabinet Member meeting on 3 July 2014 and a further progress report on the 2 October 2014. The reports outlined initial and subsequent action taken in response to residents' concerns about the security of the open space as outlined in the petition
- 1.2 The open space at the rear of properties concerned is maintained by the City Council and services provided include grass cutting, litter picking, and the emptying of a waste bin.
- 1.3 Cabinet Member recommendations from the meeting on the 2 Oct 2014 were:-
  1. *Endorses the additional action taken by officers.*
  2. *Directs officers to request the Police, by letter to be drafted by the Head of Community Safety to be sent to the Chief Inspector, to continue to patrol the area, responding to any issues raised or identified and to exercise their powers to obtain identities and disperse groups of individuals that are likely to cause nuisance or offending behaviour.*
  3. *Requests Community Development Officers to continue to work with the community in tackling local issues including litter and environmental issues and to assist residents in seeking funding that they could use on private land to improve the security of their properties.*
  4. *Requests officers to continue to monitor incidents of crime and nuisance together with the effectiveness of their action and to respond appropriately to any such issues.*
  5. *Directs officers to submit a further progress report to the Cabinet Member meeting scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014.*
- 1.4 Since the last Cabinet Member meeting in October 2014 neither the Police nor the City Council have had reports of nuisance/anti-social behaviour associated with the open space to the rear of the homes in Brookside Avenue, given this, this report is focused on what physical measures could be implemented to improve site security.

### **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 A site meeting took place on the 17 November 2014 between Park Services officers and the Lead petitioner to discuss the anti-social behaviour issues and possible fencing solutions. It became apparent that the construction of a fence along the school access footpath was not viable as this would restrict access to the open space and was unlikely to improve the security of the area.
- 2.2 An alternative possibility would be to erect fencing to enclose the drainage pipe which crosses the brook and associated chambers. Although this would require Environment Agency approval, it would take away a seating/congregating area and help to make this a less attractive area for young people to congregate. In addition, the removal of the scrub material and some lower tree branches will provide better casual surveillance into this

currently secluded area. The cost of this fencing is estimated at £4,500. Tree works undertaken will be funded from the parks revenue budget. Photographs of the open space area and proposed positioning of fencing will be available to view at the Cabinet Member meeting.

- 2.3 Furthermore it may be possible to provide a 1.8m high fence along the open space boundary with Allesley Old Road: this action could either be completed in addition to that indicated in para 2.2 above or separately to help improve matters and reduce the possibility of anti-social behaviour in this area. The additional cost of this 63m long fence is estimated at £4,800 and would be subject to further consideration at the appropriate time.
- 2.4 To ensure funds are targeted for maximum benefit and are proportionate to address the identified issue, it is advised that consideration is given to providing the fencing to enclose the drainage pipe as a "first step" and that its' effectiveness is monitored prior to considering whether the 1.8m high boundary fencing is required.
- 2.5 To assist with the cost of providing fencing the Guphill Residents Association has submitted a grant for fencing for £5,000 from the Community Grant Fund. The next round of Community Grant Fund bids are to be considered by Cabinet Member at his meeting on 26 February 2015. The grant bidding process is currently open and closes on 31 December 2014. The Community Grant Fund has a criteria for award which covers:
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Community Safety
  - Community Cohesion
  - Environment
  - Confidence raising or raising aspiration
- 2.6 The Community Grant Fund is regularly over subscribed and grant awards may not be for the full amount requested taking into account the totality of applications received and relative merits against the above criteria.
- 2.7 Fencing to the rear of the properties from 2 to 16 Brookside Avenue was also discussed at the site meeting in the 17 November 2014: however, whilst this did not restrict access to the open space, it may restrict garage access to these properties and is unlikely to be an effective security measure or deterrent to unauthorised access to this rear garden area.
- 2.8 The Park Rangers and Park Development Officer are continuing to monitor the area of open space for evidence of vandalism, drug use, or other Anti-Social Behaviour and any information will be shared with the Police and appropriate Council colleagues.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 Police and Council Officers have engaged with the residents and are in regular contact with them via the Guphill Residents` Association to understand the issues and to work with local people to address them.
- 3.2 Residents are encouraged to report incidences, as they occur, to the relevant organisation. Contact details have been issued in order to encourage regular reporting of incidents for monitoring and response purposes.

#### **4 Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Officers will continue to work with local residents to support them in implementing the measures outlined in this report and the Local Safer Neighbourhood Group will continue to monitor incidents of crime and nuisance in the area at each monthly meeting.

#### **5 Comments from Executive Director of Resources**

##### **5.1 Financial implications**

The expenditure for the fencing works identified in paragraph 2.2 above is subject to a bid to the Community Grant Fund being approved. Any minor works will be funded from existing resources.

##### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

#### **6 Other implications**

None

##### **6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan?**

###### **Crime and Disorder**

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership working is central to the delivery of the Community Safety Plan and Strategic Assessment 2014/15.

Supporting local people to do more for themselves and their local community is central to the City Council's principles and the Council Plan.

##### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

1. The Community Safety Officer continues to monitor crime and disorder levels in the area.
2. Police and Council Officers continue to incorporate the area in their patrol strategies and work schedules and will monitor behaviour of individuals.

##### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

None

##### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

N/A

##### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

N/A

##### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

N/A

**Report author(s):**

**Name and job title:**

Ces Edwards - Head of Parks & Open Spaces

**Directorate:**

Place

**Tel and email contact:**

02476 832420 ces.edwards@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Usha Patel	Governance Services Officer	Resources Directorate	19.11.2014	19.11.2014
Mandie Watson	Head of Community Safety	People Directorate	19.11.2014	21.11.2014
Andrew Walster	Assistant Director Streetscene and Greenspaces	Place Directorate	19.11.2014	21.11.2014
Pete Fahy	Assistant Director	People Directorate	19.11.2014	21.11.2014
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)</b>				
Finance: Phil Helm	Finance Manager	Place Directorate	19.11.2014	21.11.2014
Legal: Andrew Burton	Solicitor	Resources Directorate	19.11.2014	19.11.2014
Director: Martin Yardley	Director	Place Directorate		
<b>Members: Name</b>				
Councillor P Townshend	Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities		25.11.2014	25.11.2014

This report is published on the Council's website:

[www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)

**Appendices**

None