



REPORT TO:	Boston Town Area Committee
DATE:	Thursday 24 th March 2022
SUBJECT:	Central Park Security Measures Update
PURPOSE:	To provide an update on two new security measures recently set up for Central Park, which includes a comparison of Police Incidents before the measures commenced and then again afterwards.
KEY DECISION:	No
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Tracey Abbott
REPORT OF:	Ian Dunn
REPORT AUTHOR:	Ian Dunn
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	BTAC
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

This report is to provide members with an update on the two new security measures recently commenced for Central Park.

Security measure 1 is the locking of Central Park during the hours of darkness (timings agreed by members at the August meeting this year) and of which commenced on the 6th September 2021.

Security measure 2 is the additional CCTV operator to monitor BTAC assets including Central Park, other green open spaces and assets within the market place.

The report provides an overview of statistics, incidents and impacts of both security measures, in relation to security measure 1 police and anti-social behaviour incidents two months before the commencement date compared to the four months since the commenced date and in relation to security measure 2 a report from the council's CCTV Manager highlighting logged incidents by CCTV operators in Central Park and the work of the BTAC funded CCTV Operator.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That members review, comment, and challenge the information presented within the report and its appendices.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable members to review, comment, and challenge the information presented.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. As of 6th September 2021 it was agreed by members that it would fund the closure of Central Park during the periods of darkness for an initial 1 year period.
- 1.2. During the period of this report Central Park has been locked between 2000hours and 0530hours each day.
- 1.3. Central Park was to remain locked overnight in a bid to reduce crime, nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.4. Locking timings are to change over the course of the year with the changing of seasons:

Autumn – 0530hours to 2000hours – 6th September 2021 to 20th December 2021
Winter – 0530hours to 1800hours – 21st December 2021 to 20th March 2022
Spring – 0530hours to 2000hours – 21st March 2022 to 21st June 2022
Summer – 0530hours to 2200hours – 22nd June 2022 to 5th September 2022
- 1.5. During the first 14 days of locking Central Park the private security company employed to conduct this service was supported by the Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT).
- 1.6. NPT supported the security team to aid with educating locals and clearing the park before locking.
- 1.7. On the first evening, NPT and the security staff were also supported by Boston Borough Council's Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Officer, who was based in CCTV.
- 1.8. On the second evening of the new locking of Central Park contract, Boston Borough Council's ASB Officer and Inspector Harrod of NPT worked together to support the security team in clearing the park before it was locked.
- 1.9. It was noted on this evening how helpful and respectful members of the public were when asked to leave the park and that the park was clear and locked within 15/20 minutes of arrival.

1.10. There were no reported issues during the first 2 weeks of the new locking of the park procedure.

2. STATISTICS

2.1. 6th July 2021 – 6th September 2021.

Total calls to Police - **33**

'Daytime' calls (05:30 – 20:00 hours) – **27**

Within future closure hours (20:00 – 05:30 hours) – **6**

2.2. Of the 6 incidents after 8pm:

1 x ASB, noise nuisance.

1 x call by Fire for deliberate ignition, crimed as Arson (to a container)

1 x criminal damage to doctor's surgery (called in by Fire dealing with above). Male threw stone and smashed window.

1 x male extremely drunk believed lost in the area.

2 x common assaults, both by youths on other youths, both offenders well known to Police, both crimed. One victim refused to make any allegations, one was dealt for breach of civil injunction.

2.3. 6th September 2021 to 3rd November 2021.

Total calls to Police – **11**

'Daytime' calls (05:30 20:00 hours) – **9**

Within closure hours (20:00 – 05:30 hours) – **2**

2.4. Of those 2 incidents within the locked times:

21/9/21 @ 21:52hrs - caller (member of the public) rang FCR (Force Control Room) stating that there were 3 youths climbing the fence. CCTV were made aware to monitor the area, nothing seen.

23/9/21 @ 20:28hrs - Male in park refusing to leave (called in by security). Police attended and the male was arrested for theft, which had taken place in a retail premises earlier.

2.5. 4th November 2021 – 3rd January 2022

Total calls to Police – **7**

‘Daytime’ calls (05:30 20:00 hours) – **7**

Within closure hours (20:00 Until 20th December – 05:30 hours) – **0**

Within closure hours (18:00 From 21st December – 05:30 hours) – **0**

BTAC Area & BTAC CCTV Operator Data Report can to be found at Appendix A of this report.

3. View of ASB Officer and Inspector Harrod

3.1. ASB Officer – Ian Dunn “The number of incidents have continued to decrease since the park was initially locked in September. It is pleasing to see this downward trend in calls to the Police and even more so in the most recent 2 month period there have been no calls during locked hours, this stat all the more impressive given the 6pm locking time from 21st December 2021.

These stats are proving that locking the park during the evening is having a positive impact for the residents, general members of the public and the local Police teams who are able to use their resources in other areas where before September, Central Park occupied a significant amount of their time.”

3.2. Inspector Harrod – Boston Police “It is pleasing to see that in the latest reported figures, not one single instance of crime or anti-social behaviour has occurred in the park during hours of closure, which I’m sure comes as a huge relief for those previously impacted by behaviours that lead to the request to relock the gates in the evening.

In addition, Police have not needed to draw the emergency key in response to any incident, but have on occasion done so to proactively patrol the park in the hours of darkness and ensure all was well, in addition to combatting anti-social behaviour and damage around Centenary Church.

Whilst one would not necessarily expect many people to be in the park at this time of year had it remained open 24/7, experience shows us that bad weather was previously no barrier to the nuisance residents were experiencing, so having no reported incidents at all is hugely positive for everyone.”

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. In summary, we have seen a continued decrease in calls to the Police since the locking of Central Park. And in this period we have had no calls during locked times which in itself is further improvement on the last period when there were 2.

4.2. It would appear that so far the locking of Central Park in the evenings, has helped in decreasing the number of issues previously experienced in the park and certainly the number of calls to service.

4.3. This will be continually monitored and reported to BTAC again in May.

4.4. Winter closure times have not impacted the number of incidents in any way as they have continued to decrease with no incidents called in after locking since September 2021.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

Central Park continues to be a place members of the public can go to enjoy and residents in the area feel safe in the knowledge they won't be disturbed during the evenings.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP

None

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

None

STAFFING

None

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

DATA PROTECTION

None

FINANCIAL

BTAC are funding the locking of the park and the CCTV Operator for the 12 month period.

RISK MANAGEMENT

None

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

BTAC Members

Lincolnshire Police

REPUTATION

Too early to say at this stage, but looking positive if incidents continue to remain low

CONTRACTS

CRIME AND DISORDER

It is hoped the number of incidents, which have gone down so far, continue to go down or remain equally as low. Police then get less calls for incidents in the park.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

None

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ACRONYMS

ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour Officer

NPT – Neighbourhood Police Team

APPENDICES

(If none then insert the word 'None' and delete the below text/boxes).

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	BTAC Area & BTAC CCTV Operator Data Report
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

(If none then insert the working 'No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.' Also delete the below text/boxes.)

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report	

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

(If none then insert the wording 'A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body'. Also delete the below text/boxes.)

Name of body	Date
N/A	

REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	Ian Dunn – ian.dunn@boston.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Name and full contact details
Approved for publication:	Name of Councillor (if required)

FINANCE PROFORMA

PROFORMA FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELEASE OF RESOURCES

(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)

FROM:

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED

REPORT:

REPORT DATE:

OPTION 1	£ Year 1 2020/21	£ Year 2 2021/22	£ Year 3 2022/23	£ Year 4 2023/24	£ Year 5 2024/25
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Revenue

Total Revenue Cost

Funding required:

Total capital cost

£

Revenue cost

£

Considered by:

Enter committee here

Enter Council or
Cabinet/Executive here

Date:

Financial Services Comments

Risk

Procurement

Value for Money Efficiency

This FP is valid for 3 months from FP date	If this FP is no longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.

Boston Borough Council CCTV

BTAC Area & BTAC CCTV Operator Data

After receiving funding from BTAC, CCTV has endeavoured to employ the services of an extra CCTV operator with the specific purpose of monitoring areas of BTAC concern.

The data within this section of the report refers to the period between the 1st of November 2021, and the 1st January 2022. All CCTV related data is obtained via VTAS; our database software for logging CCTV activities.

In the November – December period, CCTV operators worked **123** hours for the purpose of monitoring BTAC areas in CCTV.

The BTAC CCTV Operator position was vacant during this time, so regular CCTV operators were utilised when they were available for extra work. Of the **39** BTAC shifts available for the period of this report, **17** were covered, and **22** could not be covered.

Due to this our data is limited, due to the difficulty in separating it from the rest of the CCTV data.

During the November – December period our CCTV operators also logged 5 incidents using cameras covering BTAC concerns. Brief summary of these is provided below.

VTAS Number	Category	Details
32004	Anti-social Behaviour	Youths playing with fire in Central Park
32185	Anti-social Behaviour	Youths throwing stolen xmas baubles
32016	Drugs	Investigating a report of drug smoking in Central Park
32203	Shoplifting	Search for shoplifter in Central Park area
31950	Theft from Person	Search for suspected purse snatch.

Recruitment

In the last report we highlighted issues with CCTV operator recruitment. As before the BTAC specific role is currently vacant, along with 3 other CCTV vacancies. We are recruiting again, due to the withdrawal of people that had previously received job offers from us. We continue to progress through the recruitment process in the hope of having the control room fully staffed, however it is likely that devoting resources to BTAC specific monitoring will be limited until we have appropriate staffing levels.

