

The Executive **On 21 March 2006**

Report Title: Response to Scrutiny Neighbourhood Wardens

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable):

Report of: **Director of Environmental Services**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Non Key Decision**

1. Purpose

1.1 To respond to the scrutiny review of Neighbourhood Wardens.

2. Introduction by Executive Member

2.1 I welcome this review of the Neighbourhood Wardens Service. It proves that this service is highly popular with our residents, and is crucial for achieving cleaner, greener and safer neighbourhoods in Haringey. We all know that if the streets are left messy, and street offences are not enforced, crime escalates. Crime and grime are the top priorities for our residents. The wardens are deployed in response to crime reduction priorities, closely working with all partner agencies, including the police and ASBAT. The service adds great value in supporting the principles of the Better Haringey programme, which is a key priority in the borough. The Neighbourhood Wardens and Street Enforcement Services operate in areas that are crime hotspots, usually deprived, and which require further attention from the council.

2.2 I am very pleased that we have taken on board the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review and have already begun to implement several aspects of the recommendations.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Executive accept in general the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of the Neighbourhood Wardens service.

3.2 That the Executive agrees the detailed responses to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of the Neighbourhood Warden Service set out in Appendix A.

3.3 That the Executive endorses the bid to the Better Places Partnership for continuance of funding to support enforcement capability of Street Wardens.

4. Report Authorised by:  **Anne Fisher, Director of Environmental Services**

5. Contact Officer: **Robin Payne, Assistant Director of Enforcement**

6. Executive Summary

6.1 The Scrutiny Report of Neighbourhood Wardens strongly supports the increased use of wardens in enforcement work which has been operating in pilot form since September 2005. The review also supports the continued work of street wardens within existing scheme areas and makes recommendations for improving their local area management and work with other agencies. However, it also supports strategies for redirecting services to other areas and the finite deployment of wardens in response to crime and environmental crime. Such redeployments are to be influenced by information arising from the crime and drugs audit and data analyst group operating within the Haringey Community Safety Partnership

7. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

7.1 The review raises recommendations that will develop the enforcement capacity of wardens and new criteria for the redeployment of resources.

8. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

8.1 Scrutiny Review of Neighbourhood Wardens, December 2005 .

9. Background

9.1 The scrutiny review looked in detail at the options prepared by the Environment Service and, in particular, addressed the following questions:

- Is further investment in the service likely to represent value for money for the Council?
- What strategic role would be the most appropriate for the service?
- How will wardens work most effectively with the Police Safer Neighbourhood teams?
- What contribution can wardens make to fulfill the Council's environmental obligations?

9.2 The terms of reference were as follows:

"To consider and comment on possible future options, as developed by the

Environment Service, for the Borough's neighbourhood warden schemes following the expiry of current funding arrangements and to make recommendations thereon to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee"

- 9.3 The review panel was chaired by Cllr Dawson, and included Cllr *Quinay Prescott* ~~Herbie Brown~~ and Cllr ~~Floyd~~. The panel took evidence from Cllr Canver, Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety, relevant senior officers and street wardens.
Ron Aitken.

10. Service Development

- 10.1 The Enforcement service took over management of the 5 Warden Schemes in April 2004. Despite loss of funding for 2 of these schemes in March 2005, the Enforcement service continued to provide all 5 schemes whilst consolidating their management through teams based in Seven Sisters NDC, Noel Park and West Green.
- 10.2 In September 2005, Members awarded £50k to the service to support a development of the enforcement capacity of wardens. At this time the service was also developing short term deployments in response to local crime issues outside of their scheme areas.
- 10.3 The review noted that the current work of wardens reflects the following roles: -
- Combating the fear of crime through providing a reassuring and visible presence
 - Playing a key role in enforcement and addressing issues such as litter, fly posting and graffiti
 - Providing intelligence to the Police
 - Undertaking diversionary work with young people
- 10.4 The review reported that they have developed an in-depth knowledge of their neighbourhoods and are trusted and respected. Although there is a lack of quantitative evidence to back up their effectiveness, this is due to a great extent to much of their work being qualitative or preventative in nature.

11. Funding Issues

- 11.1 In March 2006 all external funding apart from NDC funding will end. Members have already approved replacement funding of £310k to cover the loss of ODPM funding for the West Green scheme and the Better Places Partnership have approved a continuation bid of £150k against the loss of SRB funding in the Noel Park area.

12. Key Findings and Recommendations

- 12.1 The Panel reached a number of key findings and recommendations on the service and its development. These are provided in Appendix A together with a

breakdown of the issues raised and a response.

12.2 In summary the review overwhelming supported the case for maintaining funding levels for the service and that there have been tangible improvements to the neighbourhoods in which the wardens had been operating. Wardens are seen as having a broad perspective on services and do not only consider their immediate responsibilities and are also very good at bringing services and people together. Wardens are seen as having a key role in joining up services and other services should be encouraged to liaise closely with the warden service and to think proactively through adopting a “wardens mentality”

12.3 A wider appreciation of their positive role through greater publicity and higher visibility is required.

13. Comments of the Director of Finance

13.1 Resources have been approved for 2006/07 to fund the Wardens Service at it's existing levels including an allocation of £310k from Council investment to off-set the loss of ODPM grant funding for the west Green Area. Other funding is being provided by the NDC and NRF programmes, £147k and £150k respectively.

14. Comments of the Head of Legal Services

14.1 The introduction of the Neighbourhood Wardens scheme arose from the Government's Social Inclusion Unit Policy Action 6 report which examined what models of such schemes were cost effective and how they could be financed. As a result, the Neighbourhood Wardens Unit was established within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (2001) however only short term funding was made available to establish the warden schemes. The schemes aim was to promote community safety, improve the quality of life for local people and contribute to a reduction in crime and the fear of crime whilst providing a semi-official presence and act as professional witnesses in anti-social behaviour (ASB) proceedings. The aim is that the service would complement, not replace, local authority services.

14.2 The Human Rights Act 1998 makes it unlawful for the Council to act in a manner incompatible with Convention Rights. Convention rights include the right to and respect for private and family life, including the home, and the right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

14.3 The Committee should consider each report bearing in mind Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which imposes a duty on each local authority when

exercising any of its functions to have due regard to the effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. The Neighbourhood Warden Scheme fits well within this duty.

15. Equalities Implications

- 15.1 The street wardens service is key service in support of vulnerable groups. Existing deployments reflect areas of greatest need. Any changes in deployment will affect service provision to vulnerable groups unless there is increased funding.

16. Appendices

- 16.1 Appendix A – Table showing responses per recommendation

Proposed Responses to Scrutiny Review of Wardens Service

Recommendation	Decision Agreed/ Not Agreed	Response	Timescale
<p>1. That current action to secure appropriate funding to sustain the Neighbourhood Warden Service at present levels of provision, through the use of mainstream resources and bids for available grant funds, be strongly supported.</p>	Agreed	<p>£310k funding has been mainstreamed, replacing the ODPM funding that ends in March 2006. A continuation bid for NRF from the Better Places Partnership has been also been approved as a continuation bid of £150k.</p> <p>NDC funding has been confirmed for the next financial year 06/07.</p> <p>Future funding under the safer, stronger communities fund will be explored. Also under the new Government Respect Agenda there maybe an opportunity to bid for Warden Schemes in areas of the Borough that have not had a scheme in place before.</p> <p>A new bid has been made to the Better Places Partnership for funding of payments to maintain payments to Street Wardens undertaking enforcement duties.</p> <p>A DVD has been produced and launched at an event on 22 February. Together with supporting material this will be used to further publicise the work of wardens and their working.</p> <p>A communications plan for service will be developed.</p>	<p>Already in place.</p> <p>Already in place</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>March 2006</p>
<p>2. That appropriate measures be taken to publicise their role and responsibilities in order to raise public awareness of the service.</p>	Agreed	<p>A DVD has been produced and launched at an event on 22 February. Together with supporting material this will be used to further publicise the work of wardens and their working.</p> <p>A communications plan for service will be developed.</p>	<p>Already in Place</p> <p>May 2006</p>
<p>3. That Neighbourhood Wardens be supplied with appropriate high visibility clothing to</p>	Agreed subject to	<p>In conjunction with the communications plan the Warden Service will seek to raise its profile and visibility. The service will also investigate alternative clothing options and pilot these. The</p>	June 2006

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<p>ensure that they are visible to local residents.</p>	<p>budgets</p>	<p>purchase of clothing will be subject to funding constraints.</p>	
<p>4. That the positive lessons learnt from the experience of the Warden Service be incorporated into staff development and training for all front line staff and, in particular the development of a holistic approach to service provision and effective liaison with other services.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The service communication plan will include arrangements for providing information to other services on the work and role of the warden service.</p> <p>Officers will investigate the potential for internal induction and training programmes to reflect the work of wardens.</p> <p>Officers are already operating joint patrols with, client monitoring officers, police, and enforcement officers.</p> <p>Pilot working is being developed within Northumberland Park with Neighbourhood Management, Highways and Housing staff to model area based working. This is intended to develop holistic problem solving and local tasking models.</p>	<p>June 2006</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>Already in place</p> <p>Already started</p>
<p>5. That, looking forward, the strategic priorities of the Neighbourhood Warden Service should be promoting community safety, enforcement and community engagement.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Wardens already feature within the action plans of the Acquisitive Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Partnership Boards of the Haringey Safer Communities Strategic Partnership. Officer will seek to develop their contribution to the other boards in the partnership.</p> <p>Wardens are already an important enforcement service. Some wardens are already undertaking enforcement interventions, all wardens are used to gather enforcement intelligence.</p> <p>It is a primary function of wardens to engage with their communities. They are already working with local schools, businesses, vulnerable groups and resident groups.</p>	<p>Already in place</p>

Proposed Responses to Scrutiny Review of Wardens Service

Appendix A

<p>6. That all Neighbourhood Wardens be provided with suitable training and developmental opportunities to enable them to be delegated appropriate enforcement powers, subject to the identification of appropriate funding and demonstration of competence.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Job descriptions have been revised to reflect environmental crime duties and enforcement duties. Wardens are receiving ongoing training to develop their enforcement skills. Some wardens have now achieved accredited qualification in criminal investigation to NVQ level 4.</p> <p>A new bid has been made to the Better Places Partnership for funding of payments to maintain payments to Street Wardens undertaking enforcement duties.</p>	<p>Already in place and ongoing</p> <p>March 2006</p>
<p>7. That Council considers the extension of the wardens' service to cover all areas of the Borough as a long-term objective.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Officers are deploying wardens outside of their original scheme areas. These finite deployments are on a task and finish basis but are in principle allowing for deployment in locations across the borough. These deployments are based primarily on an assessment of crime trends and cleanliness.</p> <p>Wardens are an effective and flexible resource but their deployments need to be linked to a clear understanding of need.</p>	<p>September 2006</p>
<p>8. That, in the absence of sufficient additional resources to provide a service for all areas of the Borough, the mainstreamed service should continue to concentrate their work where currently based. However the service should be flexible to allow for deployment in other parts of</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>It is agreed that indices of social deprivation, environmental concerns, and the priorities of the safer communities' strategy should direct future deployment of wardens.</p> <p>Current indicators show that schemes are currently deployed in the locations where the service is most needed. Officers will continue to monitor these trends and will seek Executive approval for any relocation of resources to alternative locations where these indicators.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>

Appendix A

Proposed Responses to Scrutiny Review of Wardens Service

<p>the Borough in accordance with strategic priorities. Decisions on the areas where wardens are deployed must be based on specific and transparent criteria including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indices of social deprivation• Specific environmental and cleanliness concerns.• Priorities within the safer communities' strategy	<p>Officers are deploying wardens outside of their original scheme areas. These finite deployments are on a task and finish basis but are in principle allowing for deployment in locations across the borough. These deployments are based primarily on an assessment of crime trends and cleanliness. These deployments will need to formally reflect the recommended indices for deployment.</p>	
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