

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Your Ref:
Our Ref: HD1605/kca
Date: 14 February 2006
Please Ask For: Helen Dudson
Direct Line: (01922) 653618

Dear Member

Special Regeneration, Environment, Housing and Community Safety
Scrutiny and Performance Panel
Call-in of Community Wardens Service
Post April 2006 cabinet decision 8 February 2006

A call-in by council members regarding the decision of cabinet taken on 8 February 2006 in relation to the report detailed above has been received and accepted by the chair of this panel. A special meeting of the panel to consider this issue has been requested and arranged for Monday 20 February 2006 and will be held at the council house commencing at 6.00 pm.

Please find enclosed the agenda and relevant papers. It is recognised that this date may prove difficult for some members in terms of other commitments but this is considered to be the best fit option available.

Yours faithfully

Helen Dudson
Service Development Manager and Interim Scrutiny Manager

Cabinet – 8 February 2006

Community wardens service post April 2006

Portfolio: Councillor Melvin Pitt, Housing and community safety

Service Area: Community Safety

Wards: All

Forward Plan: No

Summary of report

This report explains the current position of the community wardens scheme in Walsall and the arrangements being proposed to continue and strengthen the service.

There are a variety of different wardens schemes operating in Walsall. All of these are managed by Walsall Housing Regeneration Agency and all of them depend on government funding which comes to an end in March 2006. Nevertheless the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership (SWBP) is keen to ensure that the key role which the wardens play in providing community reassurance, is maintained. As the council is one of the key partners in the SWBP, cabinet is being asked to approve the plans for a revised wardens service, and the submission of a funding proposal as part of the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

The report also sets out other measures being taken by the council, the police, and other partner organisations which will complement the wardens service and which, together, will offer a more effective approach to community reassurance and help deliver the community safety targets in the LAA.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the cabinet:

1. approve the proposed new approach to community reassurance
2. agree that a submission for funding be made to the Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership for continuation of the Warden's Service in 2006\07 and beyond.

Resource and legal considerations

The current Community Warden Service is provided by Walsall Housing Regeneration Agency (WHRA) through various funds as follows:

Type of wardens	Resource level	Funding
Community Wardens	1 Operations Manager, 2 Co-ordinators, 3 Senior Wardens, 16 Wardens and 7 Management/Administration	NRF £550,000
Street Crime Wardens	1 Co-ordinator, 2 Senior Wardens, and 8 Wardens who cover targeted areas in Alumwell, Rough Hay and Pleck.	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister £214,000
New Deal Neighbourhood wardens	1 Co-ordinator, 1 Senior Warden, 6 Wardens and 1 Administrator.	NDC £194,000

The funding for these programmes will all cease at the end of March 2006.

The proposal for the future is that the resource available for community reassurance work would include:

Type of resource	Resource level	Funding
Community Wardens	18 Community Wardens across the 9 LNP areas, plus 6 Borough-wide Mobile deployable Wardens, 2 Senior Wardens, 2 Admin Officers and 1 Operations Manager	Proposed funding from NRF of £707,000
Police community support officers (PCSOs)	Up to 40 by 2008	WM Police
Community safety marshals	Up to 50 "Street Champions" during 2006/7	Existing resources
Neighbourhood policing	police dedicated to individual neighbourhoods	WM Police
Council enforcement staff	"Joining up" wide range of council staff involved in enforcement matters (parks, public protection, streetpride etc)	Existing resources

Community safety

The Wardens project seeks to provide greater community reassurance by continuing to carry out high visible patrol in all areas, reduce incidents of crime, anti social behaviour, fear of crime, improve public perceptions, foster greater community cohesion, and enhancement of neighbourhood watch co-ordinators. The proposals would strengthen the resources available in local communities and make more cost-effective use of grant funding.

The additional police community support officers will provide a big increase in the uniformed police presence in local neighbourhoods, thereby strengthening community reassurance. The introduction of street marshals will be a way of formalising the important role that residents can have in strengthening their neighbourhoods, building on the similar experience of "Neighbourhood Watch".

Environmental impact

The programme will help the Council to achieve a cleaner, greener and safer borough with the involvement of wardens working with all the partners through the Community Safety Intervention Group. They will be the eyes and ears, reporting all aspects of environmental related crime and contraventions which various agencies then need to respond to. They will also be involved with estate clean up and graffiti removal.

Performance and risk management issues

The key areas of performance which wardens, police community support officers and street champions will address are the targets concerning reduction of crime and the fear of crime as set out in our Local Area Agreement.

The risks to the success of these proposals include: inability to secure funding, lack of public support and inability to work effectively in partnership with other organisations. These risks are being closely managed by the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership.

Equality implications

The project is borough wide and as such is available and accessible to all residents. This scheme will seek to recruit and appoint members of the communities especially within the Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) communities to become more involved in their area to become champions for their estates on a voluntary basis and work with the Wardens, police, and other members of the community in encouraging, reporting and getting involved with the local activities, such as estate clean up and removal of graffiti etc.

Consultation

Consultation on these proposals has taken place with WHRA, Police, Street Pride, Park Rangers, Fire Service, New Deal for Community, Environmental Health, LNP and other service providers within the Partnership.

Vision 2008

The project sits well within the Council's vision for 2008 impacting upon several of the key priorities and primarily ensures that all people are safe and secure in the place they work, live and visit.

Contact officer

Nozmul Hussain
Director
Safer Walsall Borough Partnership
01922 709189



Signed:

Jamie Morris
Executive Director

Date: 26 January 2006



Signed:

Councillor Melvin Pitt
Portfolio Holder

Date: 26 January 2006

Community Wardens Service post March 2006

1 Current Situation

There are different types of wardens operating in different areas of the borough and this is largely dependent on the Government criteria and funding that was available at the time for setting up the programme. The Community Warden Service is provided by Walsall Housing Regeneration Agency (WHRA) through various funds as follows:

- Neighbourhood Renewal Funded Community Wardens (£550,000). These wardens are split into two teams; Deployable community wardens, tasked via BRAG, covering the whole borough and fixed location Community Wardens. The scheme consist of, 1 Operations Manager, 2 Co-ordinators, 3 Senior Wardens, 16 Wardens and 7 Management/Administration
- Street Crime Wardens: Funded by Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (£214,000). The scheme consists of 1 Co-ordinator, 2 Senior Wardens, and 8 Wardens who cover targeted areas in Alumwell, Rough Hay and Pleck.
- New Deal for Community funded Wardens (£194,000). The New Deal Neighbourhood Warden Scheme became fully operational in January 2003. This scheme is funded entirely by NDC. This scheme consists of 1 Co-ordinator, 1 Senior Warden, 6 Wardens and 1 Administrator.

The funding for these programmes will all cease at the end of March 2006. The ODPM after providing funding for Wardens for a number of years will no longer provide this fund. The NDC are reviewing their existing funding and warden service in their area.

The Warden Service plays a pivotal role in the community reassurance agenda and Wardens have been commonplace in concentrated pockets throughout the borough since 2004. Wardens are undoubtedly well received by the communities and have a role to play in the Borough's approach to community cohesion as well as their role in tackling crime and grime. Whilst there is little empirical evidence to support the impact of Wardens, there is a great deal of anecdotal feedback that Wardens have helped to develop sustainable communities through community engagement.

Future Provision

Clearly it will not be possible to continue the existing level of service beyond this date. However, the Warden's service is crucial in carrying out and promoting the community reassurance agenda and thus needs to continue in some capacity. A number of options have been considered to determine the most appropriate arrangements for future management and deployment of community wardens, with the emphasis being on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

It is important to note when the Government first introduced the idea and funding opportunity for Community Wardens, there were only a limited number of other good practice interventions. Since the introduction of Community Wardens, a number of other schemes have been established or are in the process of now being developed, in particular:

- **Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).** We currently have 8 PCSOs (4 for each Police OCU), West Midlands Police are seeking to increase this and have up to 40 PCSOs across the Borough by 2008. PCSO's have greater powers than Wardens, but lesser powers than Police Officers. Their role is being reviewed with a view to further increasing powers of PCSOs .
- **Community Safety Marshals (Street Champions).** The Street Champion scheme has been running in a number of boroughs for some time. Walsall is in the process of establishing a similar scheme which will provide local residents who are interested in joining, a greater opportunity to get involved in addressing key community safety issues and enviro-crime in their area, such as graffiti removal, reporting abandoned vehicles, community events, etc. We intend to recruit and train around 100 local residents to the scheme by the end of next financial year.
- **Neighbourhood Policing.** The Neighbourhood Policing model will be implemented across the borough. There will be dedicated Police officers assigned to each neighbourhood area to work more closely with the local community in problem solving and tackling crime.

The Community Wardens clearly needs to be seen in light of these developments and operate within the borough seamlessly along with these services, and not as an isolated project. The type of role and duty for community wardens has also changed. Initially the role was mainly being the 'eyes and ears' of the Council. The demands are now significantly different.

The Role of Community Wardens

There is undoubtedly still a role for community wardens. Discussions have taken place with all stakeholders across the partnership to explore the most viable and suitable option for Walsall. The proposed role of future Community Wardens are as follows:

- Taking on enforcement related activities (certain enviro-crime) although the wardens will not be issuing fix penalties to vehicle related crime, e. g. untaxed and abandoned vehicles. However, the wardens would provide referrals/reports to relevant organisations e. g DVLA, Street Pride, Police etc.
- Eyes and Ears reporting for Fly-tipping, Fly-posting, Littering, Dog Fouling and other environmental contraventions to Public Protection Unit.
- Provide Rapid Response Service as and when required to deal with Low Level Nuisance, Anti Social Behaviour and other criminal related activities.
- Recruiting/appointing Community Safety Marshals, providing resources, training and other needs to facilitate the initiative.
- Setting up community safety forums and working under Local Neighbourhood Partnership Officer and Neighbourhood safety co-ordinators.
- Investigating low level nuisance and anti social behaviour activities by reporting to relevant organisations.
- Involvement in estate clean up and graffiti removal.

- Undertaking community programmes and activities.
- Undertaking area based work tasked by the Community Safety Intervention Group
- Closer working with other service providers, e.g. Park Rangers, Street Pride, Public Protection Unit and other organisations within Walsall Council.
- Closer working with CCTV Unit, ASB Unit, Police Community Support Officers, Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

Cabinet was advised at its last meeting on the work being progressed in Neighbourhood Services to deliver on the new powers and responsibilities, in particular the environmental enforcement powers, set out within the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The Community Wardens service will support this work in the new role in reporting littering and other environmental contraventions as well as getting involved in the multi-agency environmental enforcement exercises in targeted parts of the borough.

Resourcing

The current combined funding provides 49 staff within the Wardens Programme, However the number of Wardens on the street is actually only 36, the remainder are all support or administrative staff. Following discussions with key partners including WHRA, officers have explored a number of options for alternative warden structures and propose the following:

Warden service Breakdown	Total annual cost
18 Community Safety Wardens across the 9 LNP areas	£707,000.00
6 Borough-wide Mobile Team	
2 Senior Wardens	
2 Admin Officers	
1 Operations Manager	
Operational on-costs	

Although there will be 10 fewer Community Wardens operating in the borough, this will be made up for by the increase of 32 additional PCSOs and around 50 new Community Safety Marshalls (Street Champions).

The Safer Walsall Borough Partnership has aligned itself in working towards the delivery of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) from April 2006. A number of broad outcomes and targets have already been agreed for the safer and stronger pillar. The Wardens programme will contribute towards the delivery of these outcomes and targets, and as such it is proposed that a submission be made to the Commissioning Executive to consider commissioning the Wardens programme under the new LAA arrangement for 2006\07.

Continuation of the Wardens programme beyond 2006\07 will be dependent upon a number of factors, including the:

- Implementation and delivery of PCSO's- When the PCSO programme is fully implemented we will need to assess whether the wardens programme is complementary or similar to the PCSOs and decide accordingly.
- Community Safety Marshals (Street Champions). When the scheme is fully implemented, evaluation of the scheme should be undertaken to assess its impact in the community.
- Availability of alternative funds- discussions are underway to explore funding options with RSLs and businesses as alternative funding source for wardens

Conclusion

Overall the proposals will strengthen the work being done by wardens to offer community reassurance. With the substantial planned increase in PCSOs and the new initiative to recruit volunteer residents as Street Marshalls there will be a significant increase in our resources to provide the necessary community reassurance as well as enforcement role.

PROTOCOL FOR PRACTICAL OPERATION OF CALL-IN PROCEDURE

Section 5 – Constitution of the Council

7 - Protocol for the practical operation of call-in procedure

1. When a decision is made by the Executive (Cabinet), a Committee of the Executive or a key decision is made by an officer with delegated authority, that decision will be published within 2 days by the Cabinet Office.
2. It will be the responsibility of an officer taking a key decision to notify the Cabinet Office accordingly.
3. All Members will receive decisions electronically via e-mail and copies will also be placed in each Group Room.
4. The decision notice will bear the date on which it is published and the date on which the decision(s) may be implemented on the expiry of 5 working days after publication unless the decision is called-in.
5. The Chairman or any five Members of the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel may request the Chief Executive, in writing or by fax, using the attached form S&PP 1 through the Cabinet Office, requesting him/her to call-in a decision for scrutiny within 5 working days referred to in paragraph 4 above.
6. Five Members of the Council (not all being Members of the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel) may within 4 working days of the period, give notice to the Chief Executive, in writing or by fax, using the attached form S & PP2 through the Cabinet Office, requesting him/her to invite the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel to exercise the powers of call-in set out in the Constitution.
7. If the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel Chairman or Vice-Chairman cannot be contacted in person, or by telephone, by the end of the working day in which the request for call-in was received, communication shall be made by e-mail.
8. If the relevant Chairman of a Scrutiny and Performance Panel declines the request of the Chief Executive, the Chairman shall give reasons for that decision to the Members who made the request. In the absence of the Chairman, the Chief Executive shall consult the Vice-Chairman.

Amended September 2003

Section 5 – Constitution of the Council

9. If the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel Chairman exercises his/her power of call-in, the Chief Executive shall notify the relevant decision taker(s) of the call-in and after consultation with the Chairman shall call a meeting within 5 working days of the decision to call-in, such meeting to be held within 7 working days of it being called.

(Note: The call-in procedure set out above will not apply where the decision taken by the

Executive is deemed urgent and in need of immediate implementation. A decision will be deemed urgent only if it can be demonstrated to the Mayor, or in his absence the Deputy Mayor, that any delay would seriously prejudice the interests of the Council or the public generally.)

Guidance to Scrutiny and Performance Panels “Call In” Meetings

The following is guidance to Scrutiny and Performance Panels with regard to the conduct of meetings where a decision of the Cabinet has been subject to call-in:

1. The agenda and papers for the meeting will be sent out in accordance with the statutory provisions i.e. 5 clear days before the meeting.
2. Any written representations received by the Council with regard to the decision called-in should be sent out to members of the panel with the agenda or as soon as they are received if the agenda has already been despatched.
3. At the outset of a call-in meeting the Chairman of a Scrutiny and Performance Panel should give a short presentation for the benefit of any interested parties in attendance outlining, in general terms, the role of the Panel in considering a call-in.
4. A period of time (*) should be allowed for any interested individual or organisation to make representations in the matter to the panel and for members of the panel to ask questions. Formal invitations to attend the meeting should be sent out to all known interested parties by Constitutional Services. All persons who wish to speak to the panel on the matter should be enabled to do so.
5. A period of time (*) should be allocated also to hear representations from the members who signed the call-in requested and for members of the Panel to ask questions. Formal invitations to attend the meeting should be sent to those members by Constitutional Services.
6. The Cabinet portfolio holder with responsibility for the matter called-in should then give a presentation to the panel and others present at the meeting on the considerations of the Cabinet in reaching its decision on the matter. He/she will also respond to the issues of questions raised by interested individuals or organisations at the start of the meeting. Members of the Panel should have the opportunity to question the portfolio holder.
7. The Panel should consider, debate and/or review the information presented to it and reach a conclusion on the matter, recording this on the pro-forma S & PP 3. The pro-forma should be completed by the Chairman. This is the formal response to Cabinet on the findings of the scrutiny process.
8. Cabinet receive this at a meeting to be held within a further 10 working days, at which they may consider any recommendations or conclusions unless the panel are in agreement with the Cabinet's decision in which case the response will be reported to the next available meeting of Cabinet.

** Note: The time periods are to be determined by the Chairman at the meeting.*

September 2003

FORM S & PP 2

	<p>WALSALL MBC NOTICE TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION BY COUNCIL MEMBERS</p>	<p>DATE 11/02/06</p>
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We, the undersigned members, under the provisions of paragraph 17(c)(ii) of the Scrutiny and Performance Panel Rules, request the Chief Executive to invite the Chairman of the:

RELEVANT Scrutiny and Performance Panel to call in the following item considered by Cabinet:

Item number: 15

Report title: COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS SERVICE POST APRIL 2006

Date of Cabinet meeting: 8 FEBRUARY 2006

for consideration by the above named Scrutiny and Performance Panel for the following reasons:
CONCERN AT LACK OF EVALUATION & CONSULTATION WITH PUBLIC POLICE & WORKERS AT CONSEQUENCES OF PROVIDING A REDUCED SERVICE.

- 1 Name IAN ROBERTSON
Signature [Signature]
- 2 Name ROSE BURLEY
Signature [Signature]
- 3 Name DEWIS ANSON
Signature [Signature]
- 4 Name HARBANS SINGH SAROH
Signature [Signature]
- 5 Name PATRICIA ANN YOUNG
Signature [Signature]

Note 1: Paragraph 17(c)(ii) of the Scrutiny and Performance Panel Rules enables 5 Members of the Council (not being members of the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel) to give notice to the Chief Executive to invite the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny and Performance Panel to exercise the powers of call-in for the reasons set out in the request

Note 2: This form should be completed and returned to the Cabinet Office within 4 working days of the date of publication of the decision notice

Signed [Signature] Date received 13/2/06
 (Chief Executive)

