



**Report of Chief Officers for Regeneration and Health and Environmental Action Services**

**Inner West Area Committee**

**Date: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

**Subject: Restructure – Wardens to Local Community Environment Officers and Support Officers**

Electoral Wards Affected:	Specific Implications For:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Wards	Equality and Diversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Cohesion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Narrowing the Gap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for call in

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

**Executive Summary**

This report is provided to all the council's area committees for information. The decision has been made to end the existing neighbourhood warden staff structure and to create new Community Environment Officer (CEO) and Community Environment Support Officer (CESO) posts in Environmental Services. This paper details the initial allocation of these posts to the area committee. The allocation is based on a pro-rata reduction of the former warden establishment based on their deployment in neighbourhoods.

## **Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Members about the decisions concerning the restructure of the warden service, the new CEO/CESO posts and the initial deployment of the new posts.

## **Background**

2. This report follows on from the report made to Area Committees in June 2009. That report outlined the history of the warden service and the pressures facing the service that required the subsequent restructure.
3. Since June 2009 the restructure proposals have been adapted in the light of the consultation with the Trade Unions, Members, legal, HR and other staff. The decision on the restructure was made by the Director for Environment & Neighbourhoods under his delegated authority on the 30 November 2009.
4. The restructure involves 30 Neighbourhood Warden posts and 8 Technical Enforcement Officer (TEO) posts. The new structure creates 13 Community Environment Support Officer (CESO) posts that are broadly equivalent to the former warden positions and 10 Community Environment Officer (CEO) posts (C1/C3). The proposal also includes the conversion of 3 existing posts within the Health and Environmental Action Service (HEAS) to 3 deputy manager posts.
5. The restructure has been driven largely by the loss of NRF grant funding; however, it has also provided the opportunity to realign staff reporting and management arrangements to take account of service changes since the establishment of the warden service and brings greater coherence to frontline services in support of joined up delivery in localities.
6. The changes retain the key elements of both the former warden service and the Technical Enforcement Officers (TEOs) and complement other roles within the HEAS. The changes also position the service to make an effective contribution to cross service and partnership working and to successfully deliver on Area Committee priorities at the neighbourhood level. The new structure will provide a flexible staff resource that can be effectively deployed across priority neighbourhoods that experience the highest incidence of deprivation and the poorest environmental conditions.
7. Currently there are 7.5 posts which supplement the core warden service, funded on a time limited basis through Area Committees and ALMOs. These posts sit outside of the restructuring decision and Area Committees and ALMOs have the opportunity to maintain them as CESOs in addition to the revised structure. Current post holders will be included in the ring fenced recruitment process.

## **Locality focus**

8. The wardens have worked in specific localities and this has resulted in a number of benefits. Post-holders develop a knowledge and understanding of the local area and the network of relationships within communities and with service providers and elected members. This has enabled a positive contribution to be made to tasking

operations and neighbourhood management. The new structure maintains this locality focus, targeting the neighbourhoods that have the greatest incidence of environmental issues. The posts will provide a visible presence in the community, identifying and addressing priority issues and helping to deliver on environmental issues within local neighbourhood improvement plans.

9. The initial deployment of the new posts (to be clear – this does not mean the postholders) reflects the former deployment of the warden posts to the localities in which they have worked. The reduction in the number of posts is managed on a pro-rata basis. The number of posts for this Area Committee is specified below. The HEAS will, in due course, make recommendations to the committee about the deployment of the CEOs and CESOs based on the evidence of need, other management information and intelligence and will agree the deployment with the Area Committee.

### **The recruitment**

10. The proposed new service will have 10 CEO posts and 13 CESO posts. This will have the effect of reducing the total number of core staff to 23. All new appointments will be made to the city rather than to a single specific area. The proposed structure may be supplemented by Area Committees through the use of well-being funding.
11. Recruitment will be in accordance with council procedures and is expected to be completed in February 2010.

### **Recommended deployment of the new CEO/CESO posts for this Area Committee**

12. This Area Committee is allocated 1 CEO post based on a pro-rata reduction of the former neighbourhood warden service. Under the previous establishment of wardens they were deployed on the following basis:
  - a. Bramley and Stanningley - 1
13. It will be for the Area Committee to agree the final deployment of the new post with the HEAS. It is recommended that the deployment is reviewed by the Area Committee on an annual basis or if there are significant changes in circumstances. Ward member meetings will be held with the HEAS manager before the end of March 2010 to help determine the programme of deployment within each area committee area. Movement of the new posts between Area Committees is a matter for the Executive Member to determine should this be felt necessary.

### **Financial Implications**

14. The new structure positions the service so that reliance on external grant funding is significantly reduced and provides a flexible staffing resource to deliver an increasingly responsive programme of environmental services in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

15. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken during the restructure process in line with the Council guidance.

## **Recommendations**

16. Members of the area committee are asked to note the content of this report for their information.

## **Background Papers:**

- Inner West Area Committee –Neighbourhood Wardens – Restructure Proposals (June 2009)