
Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing

Neighbourhoods and Housing Scrutiny Committee

Date: 7th February 2007

Subject: Neighbourhood Wardens Update

Electoral Wards Affected:

All Area Committees except
North West Outer

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The report provides an update on the Neighbourhood Wardens Service.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Scrutiny Board received a report at its meeting in November which outlined the findings of a study on the impact of PCSOs and Neighbourhood Wardens across four wards in Leeds. The study found that PCSOs and Wardens are highly valued and have generally made a significant impact in Leeds but did highlight the ongoing debate regarding their roles and responsibilities, particularly in terms of environmental enforcement work.

2.2 The Neighbourhood Warden Service in Leeds was originally set up in December 2000 with initial funding from the Home Office and SRB. Additional funding from the then ODPM, NRF, SRB and the Council's Community Involvement Teams /Area Committees and ALMOs led to an increase in numbers of wardens to current levels.

2.3 Whilst temporary and external funding led to a growth in the service, it also brought a number of issues including:

- Morale and commitment of staff
- Uncertainty about continued service provision
- Variations in quality, service inflexibilities and supervision and deployment issues

2.4 Although the above issues arose, the service became established as a valued service which supports work taking place in a number of neighbourhoods to improve them and the services delivered in them. As a delegated Area Committee

function the opportunity was taken to establish a permanent structure for the service and better integrate it with area working. As part of a restructuring of the service in Spring 2006, it was transferred to the Regeneration Division with the wardens being line managed by Area Community Safety Co-ordinators who also transferred to the Regeneration Service.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

3.1 Overview of Wardens Service

3.2 The main aim of the Service is to provide a positive impact within priority neighbourhoods by improving public reassurance at a local level through:

- the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour
- improving the liveability aspect of communities – e.g. appearance of streets and public spaces

3.3 Neighbourhood wardens link in with other agencies and service providers including Neighbourhood Policing Teams in working on localised initiatives to tackle crime and grime such as Operations Banrock, Apollo, Arrow and Cava. These are aimed at improving the quality of life in neighbourhoods through targetted multi-agency actions.

3.4 Wardens provide support to other localised crime reduction and environmental improvement activity including reporting abandoned vehicles, untaxed vehicles, vehicles displaying valuables, working closely with the Anti Social Behaviour Unit on new and existing cases and monitoring breaches of Anti Social Behaviour Orders. The wardens report incidents of flytipping, littering, graffiti and vandalism to relevant agencies and monitor hotspot areas for these incidents.

3.5 The neighbourhood warden service works in partnership with statutory, voluntary and community groups, neighbourhood and local forums, street scene services and networks to provide:

- Local public reassurance and deterrence to communities within the target areas by providing a highly visible presence.
- Work with partners on specific crime reduction activity to reduce crime levels.
- Liaison with partners to ensure affirmative action is taken to improve the physical environment of the targeted neighbourhoods
- Support for local groups and projects to foster social inclusion and community cohesion

3.6 The Service operates flexibly within communities providing a wide range of services to residents as they become the 'eyes and ears' of the community across the areas they work.

3.7 They carry out regular patrols of their defined target areas, dealing with a wide range of issues including crime, anti social behaviour, abandoned vehicles, untaxed

vehicles, dumping of rubbish, graffiti and discarded needles and other environmental matters.

- 3.8 The wardens carry out initial enforcement action on waste in gardens on behalf of City Services enforcement teams. This involves issuing warning letters and gathering evidence.
- 3.9 The enforcement role with regards environmental crime is important as a contribution to improving the environment which in turn improves the quality of life for residents with a heightened sense of well being and less fear of crime.
- 3.10 Neighbourhood wardens operate as part of the area management teams, supervised and tasked through the area management structure in line with local area plans, based around priority needs for targeted neighbourhoods.
- 3.11 Neighbourhood wardens currently operate in the following neighbourhoods, set out by inner and outer committee area, alongside which are those super output areas (building blocks for census data) in red text (reference numbers only) featured in the most deprived 3% in the country and those featured in the worst 5% in the country in blue text (reference numbers only), and those in the worst 10% - 20% in green also covered by the same warden patches:-

East Inner:

Richmond Hill/East End Park E01011626
Osmondthorpe (part) E01011622
North Seacroft E01011662
South Seacroft E01011663, E01011667
Ebor Gardens E01011338, E01011348
Lincoln Green E01011675
Harehills E01011426
North Gipton E01011431, E01011339, E01011427
South Gipton E01011342, E01011346
Crossgates

East Outer:

Osmondthorpe (part) E01011622
North Whinmoor & Scholes (part) E01011720
Swarcliffe E01011723, E01011724
East Leeds Villages e.g, Kippax, Methley, Swillington, Micklefield etc.
Halton Moor E01011624
Halton & Colton

West Inner:

Broadleas & Ganners E01011324, E01011326, E01011332
New Wortley E01011363, E01011294
Fairfields E01011337

North East Inner:

Moor Allerton (part) E01011510
Meanwood E01011354, E01011355, E01011357
Chapelton E01011361, E01011357, E01011360

North East Outer:

Moor Allerton (part) E01011559, E01011560
 North Whinmoor & Scholes

North West Inner:

Burley E01011678, E01011681
 Hyde Park E01011448, E01011444, E01011672, E01011670
 Little London & Woodhouse E01011679, E01011671
 Hawksworth Wood E01011485, E01011487

South Inner:

Belle Isle & Hunslet E01011473
 Cottingley E01011318
 Beeston Hill E01011372, E01011375, E01011312, E01011364, E01011371,
 E01011373
 Far Beeston E01011321
 Holbeck E01011368
 Middleton E01011491, E01011492, E01011493, E01011494, E01011497

South Outer:

John O'Gaunts & Wood Lane E01011632

- 3.12 Whilst the vast majority of work is targetted in the worst 3% / 5% / 20% SOAs in Leeds, there is a small amount of work in other neighbourhoods. This reflects local priorities due to the nature of crime and environmental problems in those areas.
- 3.13 For 2007/08, to operate the full permanent structure and the additional temporary posts paid for with Area Committee/ALMO contributions the following amounts will be required:

Funder	Contribution Requested for 07/08
Leeds City Council Neighbourhoods and Housing Core Budget	£420k - to be confirmed as part of budget setting process in February
NRF	£762k – represents £582k received in 06/07 and additional £180k required to meet full budget shortfall anticipated
Area Committee, ALMO and Housing Association funded posts	£348k – all currently being confirmed for 07/08
Total	£1,530k

- 3.14 Once the budget position is confirmed for these various different funding sources the pattern of deployment and filling of vacancies for the start of the new financial year can be determined.

3.2 Recent Achievements of the Wardens Service

- 3.21 This section highlights recent achievements of the service and is based on monitoring information for Quarter 3 of 2006/07. Detailed information is compiled quarterly on the service and is required to draw down the external funding which the service relies on.

3.22 Between October and December 2006 the neighbourhood wardens:

- spent 132 days on multi agency crime and grime operations
- actioned 537 incidents of crime and anti social behaviour
- visited 963 vulnerable residents
- undertook a total of 1750 high visibility public reassurance patrols
- dealt with 1,718 incidents of fly tipping, arranged the removal of 404 incidents of graffiti and 42 instances of hazardous waste
- reported 507 issues to the Highways Service including faulty street lights, damaged railings, potholes and damaged footpaths
- reported 67 untaxed vehicles
- carried out 867 enforcement actions regarding untidy gardens and fly tipping
- undertook joint operations with the Police e.g. Smartwater property marking for vulnerable residents
- assisted with an audit of Houses in Multiple Occupation to support the work of Environmental Health colleagues

3.23 Over coming months, as part of the Authority's work as a Respect Action Area, it is anticipated that wardens will continue to be involved in a range of multi agency activities to tackle anti social behaviour and improve the environment of a range of priority neighbourhoods.

3.3 A Week in the Life of a Neighbourhood Warden

3.31 The Scrutiny Board has been looking at the Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck in recent months and this has highlighted a number of issues relevant to the Wardens Service. To complement this Scrutiny enquiry and to give a more local flavour of the work done by Neighbourhood Wardens, the appendix to this report gives an overview of the work done by a Neighbourhood Warden in the Beeston Hill area during a week in January 2007. This provides members with a snapshot of tasks done by the Wardens, the agencies they work with and their pivotal role in the neighbourhoods they serve in terms of identifying issues, gathering evidence, liaising with different service providers and providing information to residents.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the current position regarding the Neighbourhood Wardens Service.