

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY WARDEN SCHEME**

Date: 26 November 2009

Member Reporting: Councillor Rayner

Contact Officer(s): Brian Martin, Community Safety Manager
Tel: 01628 796337

Wards Affected: All

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel requested a review of the Community Safety Warden scheme, which it considered on 24th September 2008. The Panel subsequently asked for a survey to be undertaken on the scheme. This was incorporated into a revised report, and further considered by the panel on 30th September 2009 and also by the Crime and Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 30th July 2009.

1.2 This report covers the:

- history of the Community Warden scheme
- role of the Community Wardens
- key benefits of the scheme
- performance
- the way forward

2. RECOMMENDATION:

That the content of this report be noted.

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?
Residents will benefit from the fact the scheme has been reviewed and the opportunity taken to check whether the scheme is meeting resident's needs.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

3.1.1 The Community Warden Scheme was introduced in 2004. The scheme was wholly funded by the Council and was not supported by government grant, as were some warden schemes. The scheme was set up to be proactive rather than reactive i.e. Wardens were (and still are) deployed to areas that were experiencing the most crime and anti-social behaviour.

- 3.1.2 The team consisted of a Warden Coordinator (who did not patrol) reporting to the Community Safety Coordinator, and 4 Community Wardens. In 2006 the Warden Coordinator post was changed to a Senior Warden with patrolling and management responsibilities.
- 3.1.3 In 2005 the Home Office introduced the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) scheme. This was initially a small number of officers that now total 33 across the Borough.
- 3.1.4 The police have also introduced Neighbourhood Policing. This breaks the Borough into 13 Neighbourhoods. This exercise was completed at the end of March 2008 and replaces police beats. Warden patrols are currently co-terminus with police neighbourhoods with wardens patrolling in 8 out of 13 of the neighbourhoods. The wardens have two vehicles to assist patrolling and operational duties and between March 08 and March 09 covered 21,500 miles. A map of the warden patrol areas and names of the wardens patrolling those areas are provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.1.5 The current total budget for the scheme is £449K
- 3.1.6 The Council has committed to increase the number of community wardens to 14, providing greater town centre coverage to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

3.2 The role of Community Wardens

- 3.2.1 Appendix 2 details the Community Wardens' current role. The work of the Community Safety Team is divided into 3 categories:
- Prevention (e.g. having a physical presence in an area, and dealing with situational issues such as poor security);
 - Intervention (e.g. specific action focused on individuals to turn round behaviour such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts [ABCs] and Youth Offending Team [YOT] work);
 - Enforcement (e.g. Fixed Penalty Notices for littering).
- 3.2.2 A majority of wardens' work is categorised as prevention. Whilst all of the above categories provide reassurance to the public, the prevention that wardens do is seen as extremely important, as they are a physical presence that is part of the local community.

3.4 Key Benefits of the scheme

- Patrolling areas, including parks, and attending meetings in the community with the wardens playing an important reassurance role, ensuring young people are engaged in positive activity.
- The wardens are adopt a "can do" approach. They take ownership of crime and disorder issues in the community. They ensure relevant agencies are deployed and if necessary taking the lead when others are unprepared or unable to do so.
- The Wardens ensure other issues in the community are reported, ranging from broken manhole covers to suspicious activity to the police. They act as a link to other Council Departments

- Wardens are involved in planned operations in specific areas with partnership agencies i.e. Trading Standards, Housing Associations and Thames Valley Police.
- As key members of their designated NAGS, they help in addressing community concerns thereby enhancing trust and respect for the Council.
- The Wardens should not be seen as a substitute for local police or for other statutory services, but as complementary to them. Between March 2008 and March 2009 the wardens submitted 125 Section 72s (forms for submitting intelligence) to the Police. This has greatly assisted the work of the Police.

3.5 Performance of the Scheme

Partner feedback

- 3.5.1 The Wardens have strong links with local organisations, partner agencies and other council services and are thought of highly by partners. Feedback has been received from the Police and Housing Associations.
- 3.5.2 Chief Inspector Dave Gilbert said *“I believe that the Wardens are a valuable asset in the fight against crime, I would like to see them in High Visible jackets as a deterrent as well as making them more visible in the community. I think the tasking system is working better and believe there is more we can do re joint working within the schools etc. As you are aware the wardens have supplied us with good intelligence leading to arrests, the sharing of information is improving and they are a valuable asset re tasking to hotspot areas.”*
- 3.5.3 In August 2008 the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel asked the Community Safety Manager to work with the Lead Member and devise a survey to measure performance and resident feedback.
- 3.5.4 500 customer feedback forms were distributed asking for views on the warden scheme. The response rate was 19% and the feedback was very encouraging. The results of the survey are detailed in appendix 3. The results indicate the scheme has been well received. Areas where either awareness levels are low or performance can be improved will be addressed during the coming year.
- 3.5.5 Since April 2008 the wardens have received 55 compliments from members of the public and partner agencies.

3.6 The way forward

The following will be put in place over the coming months:

- Employment of more Community Wardens.
- Occurrence Log (daily account of the wardens movements).
- Key Individuals Network (each Warden to contact their KINs contacts monthly).
- Airwave Radios (for safety of wardens and more efficient response).
- Shift changes (to accommodate school times and help traffic issues).
- Multi-agency Environmental Visual Audits – to report issues at street level.

3.7 Recent Developments and Proposals

Appendix 4 shows the recent developments and proposals relating to the Community Wardens since the report was submitted to the July and September Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Options

The report is for information and consultation purposes only.

4.2 Risk assessment

4.2.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

5.1 A wide range of consultation was carried out to provide the feedback in section 3.5 and appendix 3.

6. COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6.1 The following are the minutes of the meeting of the Crime & Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 30th July 2009:

The Community Safety Manager explained to Members that this was the second time this scheme had been reviewed by the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The first review had been requested on the 5 August 2008 where the Panel had asked for a review of the current Community Safety Warden operation. It was noted that a report was submitted to the Panel for consideration on the 24 September 2008. The Community Safety Manager went onto explain that it had been suggested that there should be an enhancement in the way Wardens performance and achievements were measured and presented, including customer feedback and the opinions of partner organisations.

The Community Safety Manager explained that in the past the Community Wardens would have been able to report a reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour, however these days the Council could not claim all the credit due to Police involvement.

Members noted the following points:

- A ninth community warden was about to be recruited with an overall target of fourteen.
- 83% of respondents were aware of the scheme.
- 35% had found out about the scheme from 'Around the Royal Borough' newsletter, 6% via the website, 25% via word of mouth and 20% from seeing them on patrol.
- 41% felt that the warden, if unable to help, did not direct them to a person who could help with 39% answering the question as not applicable. The Community

Safety Manager explained that this was a real challenge for his team and that a further survey would take place when the Panel thought it advantageous.

- 97% of respondents felt that the Community Wardens made a positive difference to the Community.
- 74% of respondents were aware that the wardens patrolled regularly, whilst 75% were aware of the work they did with the Police. However only 36% were aware that the wardens organised diversionary sports activities for young people.
- 97% felt that wardens were a good idea and 69% felt they understood the difference between Wardens and PCSO's.
- 54% of respondents knew the name of their community warden, 85% liked the community warden uniform and 92% felt that the wardens were smart enough.
- Since April 2008 the wardens had received 55 compliments from members of the public and partner agencies, which were seen to be very positive.
- High absence figures for the warden team between April 2008 and March 2009 were felt to be largely due to two wardens having long-term absences as a result of injury. It was noted that the warden team was back to full capacity with no wardens currently absent.

The Community Safety Manager explained that following would be put into place over the coming months:

- The employment of one more Community Warden in 2009/10 and further wardens in subsequent years.
- An Occurrence Log to note warden movements.
- Key Individuals Network to note how many people the wardens had come into contact with.
- Airwave Radios to improve the safety of wardens and ensure a more efficient response. It was noted that radios would enable wardens to patrol singly not just in pairs as they had done in the past.
- Shift change to accommodate better coverage of school times and also help improve traffic issues.
- Multi-Agency Environmental Visual Audits to report issues at street level such as graffiti and fly tipping.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- Councillor Fido explained that he had reservations about this scheme when it was first introduced in 2004 but that he now felt that it was working well especially in areas such as Clewer North.

- Councillor Mrs Yong was pleased to hear that the wardens were to make a shift change to accommodate better coverage of school times.

The Community Safety Manager explained to Members that the number of Community Wardens had been increased from four to eight, soon to be nine and that these wardens had been kept out of the Town Centre due to Police presence. It was noted that the wardens covered predominantly residential areas and considered factors such as the number of incidents verses the number of residents along with the pain levels involved. The Community Safety Manager explained that his team would be looking into which areas would be covered now and in the future with the aim of covering the whole of the Royal Borough.

Councillor Mrs Yong explained that she wanted to feel comfortable that the money invested in the Police was achieving everything residents wanted. Superintendent De Meyer explained that the PCSO's focused on joint partnership priorities such as burglary and motor vehicle crime. He went onto explain that the Royal Borough residents were in his opinion paying for two separate services with regard to Community Wardens and PCSO's.

The Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager for his update and concluded by saying that he looked forward to delivering real value to residents of the Royal Borough.

6.2 The following are the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 30th September 2009:

A report reviewing the operation of the current Community Safety Warden scheme was submitted for consideration. The report provided information on the history of the scheme, outlined the role of the Community Safety Wardens, referred to the areas they patrolled and outlined the key benefits and cost of the scheme. The report also provided details of how the Wardens' performance and achievements were measured, which included the results of a recent survey undertaken to seek views from residents and stakeholders on the warden scheme.

The Community Safety Manager commented upon a number of further measures that had recently been introduced to evaluate the performance of the Warden Service. He commented upon the reasons why it had not been possible to introduce those measures earlier, which was primarily due to long-term staff sickness and other challenges facing the service. He advised that, although he had been satisfied that the Wardens were providing a good service prior to the introduction of the new performance measures; the new measures would provide a quantitative analysis of their work.

In response to a number of questions, the Community Safety Manager commented upon a number of concerns/questions. He commented upon the nature of the illnesses suffered by the team; explaining that they had all been assessed by the Occupational Health service, and commented upon the reasons for the high degree of staff turnover. In response to a concern raised that the Wardens did not attend the daily briefing meeting at the Police Station, Members were advised that Wardens did attend such meetings on a regular basis. A Member also pointed out that, although Community Wardens were supposed to liaise with Ward Councillors, he had not received any contact from a Warden. Members were advised that the new measure

that required Wardens to contact Key Individuals Network on a monthly basis would address that issue. He also commented upon how the role of Community Warden differed from that of PCSO's and how members of the public perceived them differently.

Arising from the discussion, the Majority of Members of the Panel were satisfied that there appeared to be a high degree of subjective and anecdotal evidence to suggest that the Wardens were providing a good service, were valued by the communities that they served and that they were being measured and were meeting the objectives of the service. However, it was proposed that Cabinet should give careful consideration to the evidence arising from the new performance measures before a decision was taken to the network of Wardens. However, Councillor Harris contested that, based on the information presented to the Panel, there appeared to be serious shortcomings in the performance of the Community Wardens already in evidence and that he was not convinced that the performance measures identified would adequately address those shortcomings.

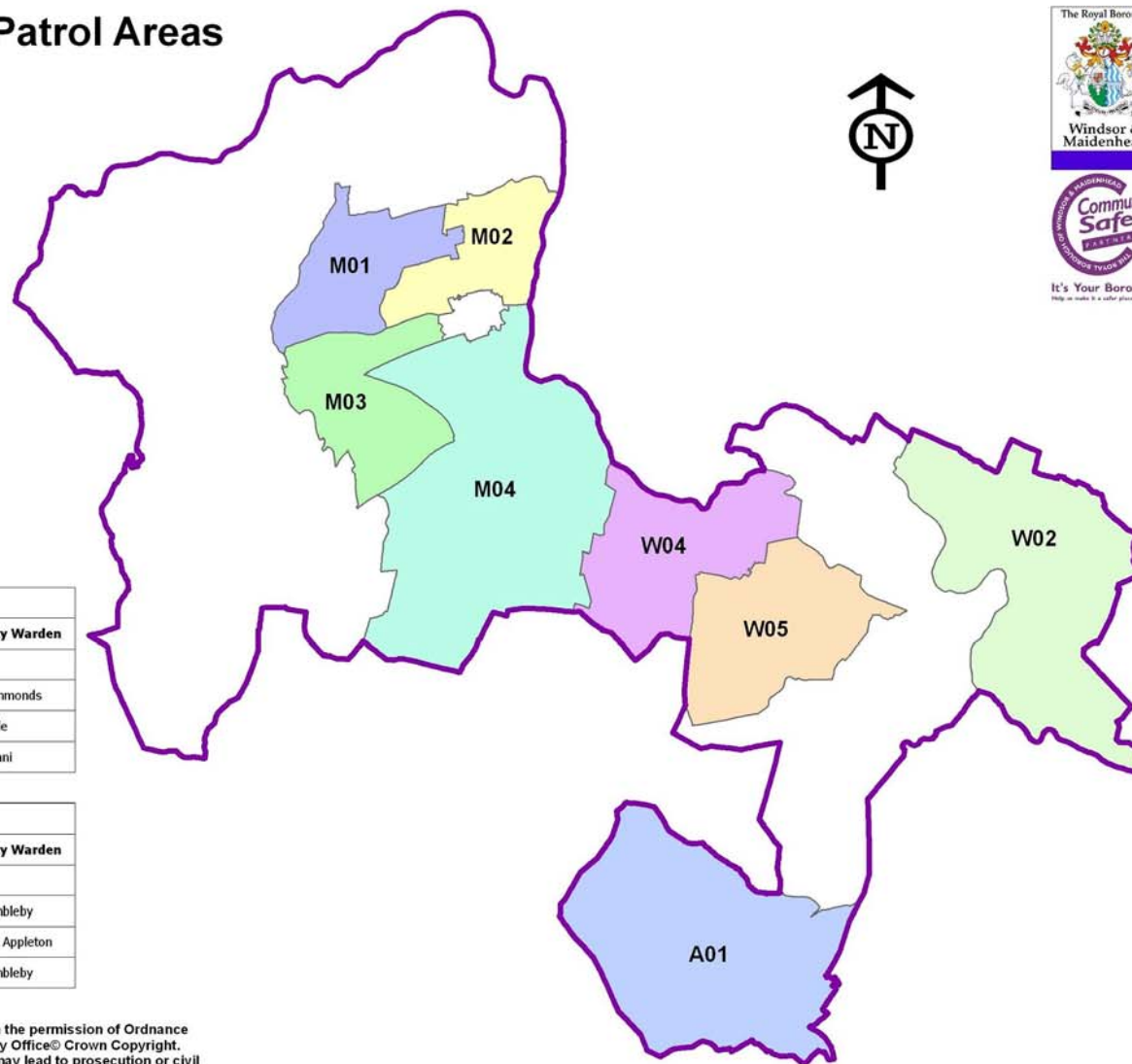
RESOLVED: That Cabinet be advised of the Panel's comments on the Community Warden Service as detailed above.

7. IMPLICATIONS

The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Community Warden Patrol Areas



MAIDENHEAD		
Map Ref	Police Neighbourhood	Community Warden
M01	Pinkneys Green and Furze Platt	Celeste Gill
M02	Maidenhead Riverside and Belmont	Michelle Simmonds
M03	Boyn Hill, Cox Green and Woodlands Park	Robert Noble
M04	Oldfield and Bray	Trish Canziani

WINDSOR and ASCOT		
Map Ref	Police Neighbourhood	Community Warden
A01	Ascot, Sunningdale and Sunninghill	Ben Page
W02	Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury	Duncan Dimbleby
W04	Clewer and Oakley Green	Christopher Appleton
W05	Clewer East and Park	Duncan Dimbleby

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The role of the Community Wardens

Appendix 2

Activity	Why we do it	Proportion of Wardens Time.
Foot Patrol	To reassure residents and other stakeholders by a visible presence, by stopping to discuss any issues that they may have and also by observations in the area regarding environmental issues such as fly tips/litter/damaged street furniture etc; and then reporting it to the relevant agency e.g. Police, Streetcare Housing association etc; for action.	Large
Cycle Patrol	As above – more frequent in the summer and more common in the Maidenhead areas and Datchet.	Small
Vehicle Patrol	Vehicles are used predominantly to travel to patrol areas, but if the number of staff available is low on a shift, vehicles are used to patrol hot spots to check them out and provide some reassurance. An example would be if three on duty two would walk around an area whilst the vehicle goes to another area to check on it.	Medium
Taking a lead in issues residents find difficult to progress	There have been numerous cases in the past where the wardens have helped vulnerable residents. Either this has resulted in a direct referral to Adult or Children's Services or in some instances helping coordinate a case conference about the vulnerable person with responsible agencies.	Small
Diversionary sports activity with young people	This aims to divert young people from negative behaviour and supports the inclusion agenda. This tactic is acknowledged by the police to have reduced criminal damage and ASB in Cox Green	Medium
Reassurance visits to school	To help us build a relationship with the children so that outside of school it helps us to reduce ASB because we know them. It also builds up relationships with local residents as they come to school and meet the wardens, they then can discuss any of their concerns. On a number of occasions we have been asked by Head Teacher to be around at end of school because a parent had some disagreement with another parent and by our presence it brought reassurance to other parents and staff of the school	Medium
Talks in school assemblies	Provide advice and information to young people so that they can make positive choices about crime and disorder issues and on the occasions when it is a road safety presentation this will hopefully reduce accidents and possibly even death occurring.	Small
Meetings with local & parish councillors	Update councillors on local issues and what is being done to resolve them	Small
Liaison with Police	To keep the lines of communication open and the flow of information and intelligence that regularly takes place between ourselves local beat officers, the area intelligence team and PCSO's.	Medium
Liaison with Fire Service	Liaising with the Community safety team, arson reduction and ASB officer and the watches that are on duty informing them of potential fire risks, abandoned vehicles, derelict buildings plus recommending residents that could use a home fire safety check.	Small
ASB Case Conferences	Held monthly involving other agencies to discuss cases and wardens can gain information (that will help them carry out their patrols) as well impart it, which can help build a case against an offender.	Medium
Visits to Youth Clubs / Cubs / Scouts / Brownies	Enables young people to get to know us and vice versa. We can provide information to them on a range of subjects such as crime prevention, drugs and alcohol, road safety and if required we can take in with us a professional drugs outreach worker for more in depth discussions.	Small
Visits to Day centres / Sheltered accommodation	Bring reassurance by speaking with them and listening to their concerns and passing them on to relevant agency for action if needed.	Medium
Visits to Community Centres / Halls with Pre School groups.	As these halls can often be a focal point in the community we will call in and visit the various groups that use the facilities so that we can meet as many different members of the community as we can and by doing so we can bring reassurance to these residents.	Small

Community Warden Scheme Survey

Appendix 3

Respondent Information

Gender

	No Male	No Female	% Male	% Female
Gender	38	56	40%	60%

Age range

Percent				
<=20	21-30	31-50	51-65	>65
0%	11%	39%	26%	24%

Whether respondents live or work in the borough

	Yes	No	% Yes	% No
Live or Work in the borough	86	5	95%	5%

Views of respondents

Awareness of the scheme

	Yes	No	% Yes	% No
Aware of Scheme	80	16	83	17

How they found out about the scheme

Percent					
Website	Around the Royal Borough	Word of mouth	Press	Other	Seeing them
6%	35%	25%	5%	9%	20%

Did the warden resolve issues you had?

	Yes	No	not applicable	% Yes	% No	% n/a
Resolve Issue	28	62	60	19%	41%	40%

If the warden was unable to help you directly, were you directed to a person who could?

	Yes	No	n/a	% Yes	% No	% n/a
Directed	18	61	59	12%	41%	39%

Do you think Community Wardens make a positive difference to the Community?

	Yes	No	% Yes	% No
Positive difference	83	3	97%	3%

How aware are you of what wardens do?

Warden Activity	% Awareness	Warden Activity	% Awareness
Patrol Regularly	74%	Organise diversionary sports activity for young people	36%
Rept Environmental issues	63%	Work with schools	50%
Progress residents issues	54%	Intelligence gathering	36%
Work with the police	75%	Making visits to Community Groups	61%

Do you think the wardens are a good idea?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
89	3	97%	3%

Do you understand the difference between Wardens and PCSO's?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
63	28	69%	31%

Do you feel safe in the Community knowing that wardens patrol most days?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
74	12	86%	14%

Do you think the wardens patrol at the right time of the day?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
52	13	80%	20%

Of those that said no, most would like to see early morning patrols to coincide with the school run

Do you know the name of your community warden?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
44	38	54%	46%

Do you like the community warden uniform?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
70	12	85%	15%

Do you think the wardens are smart enough?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
76	7	92%	8%

Do you think the uniform makes a difference?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
76	7	92%	8%

Do you think the Community Warden Scheme helps in combating litter, graffiti and ASB?

Yes	No	% Yes	% No
68	6	92%	8%

Since this report went to the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the 30th July 2009. The following changes have been implemented to the scheme as part of a continuous improvement and development programme and in response to the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

- 9 Community Wardens are in post and a tenth has been recruited.
- In addition to the 8 areas detailed in Appendix 1, Wardens are now patrolling in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres.
- The Warden scheme will be expanded further in 2010/11 to achieve the manifesto commitment of 14 Community Wardens.
- There are now regular patrols in Windsor and Maidenhead Town centres.
- A new flexible contract has been put in place for new employees that cover the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices for Littering, Graffiti, and Fly-tipping.
- Wardens have been trained in FPN issue.
- A new management information system has been introduced (See Appendix 5)
- An electronic Occurrence Log (daily account of the wardens movements) has been introduced which complements the logbooks used on patrol.
- Key Individuals Networks (each Warden to contact their KIN contacts monthly) are in place. A KIN is a key member of the local community that can include for example a Councillor, a shopkeeper or a Residents Association representative.
- Airwave Radios (for safety of wardens and more efficient response) have been introduced.
- Multi-agency Environmental Visual Audits – to report issues at street level have been introduced.
- Wardens are removing low-level graffiti and residents' awareness has been raised about this element of Community Warden work in Around the Royal Borough.
- Wardens are now more familiar with the services provided by the Council and hold key contact details to enable them to advise residents on other matters. This has been incorporated into their training and development programme.