

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (COMMUNITY SERVICES)

REPORT NO: DCS12

DATE: 10th January 2005

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| TITLE: | FUTURE FUNDING OF THE STREET WARDEN SERVICE |
| FORWARD PLAN ITEM: | NO |
| KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL: | N/A |

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| COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION: | CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL'S AIM TO REDUCE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR COUNCILLOR TERL BRYANT, COMMUNITY AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO |
| CORPORATE PRIORITY: | CATEGORY A |
| CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS: | YES |
| FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS: | YES |
| BACKGROUND PAPERS: | N/A |

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1.1 The Neighbourhood and Street Warden Programme was developed nationally and introduced during 2000.

1.2 A bid was submitted by South Kesteven District Council and approval was given by the Home Office in October 2001. The objective of the proposal was for two street wardens to be employed in the Earlesfield area. The Street Warden Programme was designed to provide a friendly face on local streets and stamp out the neighbourhood nuisance including graffiti, abandoned cars and litter that seriously reduces the quality of life of local people.

- 1.3 Funding was allocated by the Home Office with £54,000 being provided to the District Council over a three year period (1st April 2002 to 31st March 2005). The Council have provided the balance of funding from the General Fund. Cabinet endorsed the engagement of two street wardens for an initial period of two years. This decision was made on 11th March 2002.
- 1.4 The Street Wardens commenced their duties on September 2002. One of the Street Wardens has remained in post throughout whereas the other post has been vacant since 29th October 2004.
- 1.5 Since the current funding is due to end on 31st March 2005 a decision needs to be made about the future of the Street Warden Scheme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:-

- 2.1 Approval be given for the continuation of the Street Warden Service based on two full time posts.**
- 2.2 A request be made to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership for a financial contribution to the Street Warden Service from the Safer Stronger Communities Fund and the Basic Command Unit Fund.**
- 2.3 The Director of Finance and Strategic Resources be requested to consider recharging elements of the service to the Housing Revenue Account where it can be shown that the service is directly attributable to the Council's Landlord functions.**

3.0 DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 Since the appointment of Street Wardens on the Earlesfield the approach that has developed has been characterised by multi agency team work. The Team comprises two Street Wardens, Earlesfield Community Manager, Police Community Support Officer, Housing Officers, Social Services, Educational Welfare, Junior Health Inclusion Workers and Children's Fund. A Joint Action Group meets weekly which results in problem solving and tasking to address priority issues.
- 3.2 A list of projects instigated by the Team is attached as Appendix A. It highlights the diverse range of initiatives that have been introduced in this area. The approach has been to balance the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts with a programme of Community Engagement.
- 3.3 Whilst specific statistical evidence of reduced crime and anti-social behaviour is not available at the moment it is intended to produce appropriate performance data by the end of March 2005.
- 3.4 It is clear that both the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office who visited the Team in 2004 and the Divisional Commander (South Division) have a high regard for the work of this Team and for the improvements achieved in the Earlesfield area.

3.5 If members decide to support the continuation of this work in the Earlesfield then this will have the following financial implications.

3.6 The total cost of the Street Warden Service is as follows:-

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| | <u>2004/2005</u> |
| | £ |
| Total Cost Inc. On Costs | 52,770 |
| <u>Less</u> | |
| Home Office Grant | 17,500 |
| | ----- |
| Total Cost to General Fund | 35,270 |

3.7 The estimated cost of the Street Warden Service in 2005/2006 is £55,730. This means that a further £20,460 will be required to maintain the Street Warden Service based on two full time equivalent posts.

3.8 If it is decided to maintain one Street Warden deployed in the Earlesfield area then, the estimated full year cost in 2005/2006 will be £45,270 an additional £10,000 full year cost. This could be achieved without any direct impact on staff since one of the posts is currently vacant.

3.9 If it is decided to end the service then a saving of 37,500 (full year saving) would be achieved. A separate confidential appendix (Appendix B) is attached detailing any staff costs associated with ceasing this service.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDS

Current Funding

4.1 The original grant of £54,000 received from the Government’s (ODPM – Home Office) Street Warden Programme is separate from funding made to the Crime and Disorder Partnership (CDRP) therefore it may be possible to make a case to the CDRP for a contribution towards Street Wardens from the Safer Stronger Communities Fund and the Basic Command Unit Fund.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

4.2 Guidance from the Home Office indicates that the funding initiative – Safer Stronger Communities Fund will continue to be controlled by the Crime and Disorder Partnerships at District Level for 2005/2006. For the financial years 2006/2007 onwards there is still a lack of clarity about the funding arrangements when Local Area Agreements become established.

Basic Command Unit Fund

4.3 In addition the Basic Command Unit Fund managed by Police Divisional Commanders will have discretion to pool their allocations locally with CDRPs to support local and national outcomes.

- 4.4 As a consequence it may be possible to obtain some contributions towards the costs of employing the Street Wardens through the CDRP. However it will be necessary to link the work of the Street Wardens with the performance targets identified by the Home Office. The Home Office Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies 2005-2008 require a 17.7% reduction in Crime and Disorder by 2007/2008 from the 2003/2004 baseline. Clearly this means that if Street Wardens are to receive funding from the Stronger Safer Communities Fund or Basic Command Unit funding they will need to demonstrate a contribution to delivering these outcomes.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 4.5 The Street Warden Programme aims to provide a resource to promote community safety, assist with environmental improvements and housing management functions. As such it was envisaged by the Home Office that they would patrol estates provide "super caretaking" functions and contribute to effective neighbourhood management.
- 4.6 It is evident from the work undertaken by the post holders that they have made a significant contribution to estate management in conjunction with housing managers and, on this basis, could have some of their cost charged to the Housing Revenue Account in the future.

5.0 COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

The split of costs between the General Fund and HRA will require some analysis to determine which are attributable to the landlord function and whether they are covered within the definitions of cost in the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act. The element of General Fund charge is in relation to a strategic District function and therefore not attributable to Special Expense Areas.

6.0 COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE MANAGER DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER).

From the comments made by the CPA Inspectors when they inspected the Street Warden Service it was independently acknowledged the service was clearly a positive and tangible initiative of the Council in tackling Anti-Social Behaviour. The work undertaken by the Street Wardens has from the Council's Legal Services experience been most positive and beneficial in combating anti social behaviour. This has not only been as regards specific enforcement markers but also in relation to the more softer initiatives of publicity, education and working with the Local Community.

I would therefore recommend the continued financial support of the Street Warden Service.

7.0 COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR REGULATORY SERVICES.

The Street Warden Service currently provides an important complimentary service role to that provided by both the Housing Management and Estates

Management Service on the Earlesfield Estate being the 'eyes and ears' and a visible presence on site. This contributes to reducing the fear of crime and provides support to tackling anti-social behaviour on the estate.

If the funding for the two posts is maintained it is proposed to consider the extension of the service to providing support to the Harrowby Estate and any other hot spots identified in the future.

In addition, Consideration can be given to the extension of the existing role to provide further Housing Management and Estate Management support to tenants which could be part funded from the HRA.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The Street Warden Programme has been a real success and has been identified as an example of good practice by the Home Office and the Police.
- 8.2 The current post holder has been successful in delivering the outcomes identified as part of the original objectives set out by the Home Office and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- 8.3 The benefits of multi-agency working in a very disadvantaged area of the District have been demonstrated (see Appendix A). Presentation by P.C.S. Cummings at the meeting will show the benefits of these posts.
- 8.4 Following the success of the Street Warden Programme in the Earlesfield area and the benefits derived from multi-agency working the Police and other agencies are replicating the approach in the Harrowby Area. If it is decided to continue the Street Warden Service it is suggested that one of the two posts be allocated to the Harrowby Area and potentially other local hot spots.
- 8.5 It is suggested that alternative funding be sought from the agencies mentioned in this report in order to minimise the additional cost that will fall on the Council as a result of continuing the service.

9.0 CONTACT OFFICER

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23rd December 2004
