

Title of meeting: Full Cabinet

Date of meeting: 9th October 2018

Subject: Provision of additional Community Wardens

Report by: Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Building Services

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To propose the provision of additional community wardens

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 Approves the proposal to redesign the Community Warden Service on a trial basis until March 2020.

3. Background

- 3.1. The administration' priorities include a commitment to providing additional community wardens.
- 3.2. The council employs a team of 4 FTE **High Street Wardens** who have been in post since early 2018. This team costs approx. £150,000 per annum and is funded from Environment and Community Safety (ECS) reserves. As this is a revenue cost, this can only be funded in this way for 1 year.
- 3.3. The team work to 'help keep the City safe, clean and tidy and to provide support and advice when needed'.
- 3.4. The work of the team has been focussed on a variety of demands including providing support and advice to individuals who are rough sleeping or homeless. They also deal with other environmental enforcement issues.
- 3.5. In the first 6 months, the team have dealt with over 650 demands. The highest demands are for rough sleeping, drugs, ASB and begging and this makes up for more than 60% of this demand. Other issues are highways issues such as obstruction, fly tipping, and waste issues.

- 3.6. The team has a significant workload which is contributing to improving the High Street areas.
- 3.7. The team has provided support and advice (appendix a) to rough sleepers in the City which has led to improved uptake of support services.
- 3.8. The team has also carried out some enforcement in the High Street areas related to littering and waste issues.
- 3.9. **Local Authority Housing** also has a temporary arrangement with a security company to carry out patrols relating to anti-social behaviours in the blocks.
- 3.10. This has been in place for the past year and residents are supportive of this work as they feel reassured that they will get a response if they have an issue in their block.
- 3.11. This provision is 7 evenings per week from 7pm to 4am.
- 3.12. The security team are providing the service for which they were contracted, this work has highlighted other issues occurring out of hours and there are opportunities to co-ordinate a more cohesive out of hours response to these issues.
- 3.13. The patrol team have also reported 598 other demands outside of normal operating hours. These are largely for cleansing issues (560) along with bulk (34) and trolleys (4). A very large proportion of the cleansing issues are related to drug paraphernalia, and body spillages. The team currently report these to the Out of Hours team who prioritise health and safety issues. The security team do not carry any sharps equipment, or any cleaning equipment with them.

4. Proposal for additional community wardens

- 4.1. The proposal is to provide an additional community warden team (8ftes) to carry out this work - in the High Street areas by day and in the Local Authority Housing Areas by evening/night. This would be a remodelling of the existing High Street Warden team.
- 4.2. There would be 2 staff members on for each day and each evening shift covering 8am - 2am Monday to Friday and from 10am - 2am at the weekend. These hours would be flexible to meet the demands placed upon the service.
- 4.3. They would provide this service every day of the year (except Christmas day, New Years day)
- 4.4. The team would complement the work of the existing community wardens team who would cover the demands across the rest of the City between 10am-10pm Monday to Sunday. The teams would work together to tackle issues and deal with demands across the City.

5 Costs of implementation and future revenue cost

- 5.1 The cost of providing the redesigned community warden team would be £293,000 per annum.
- 5.2 This will be funded from the Housing Revenue Account, Environment and Community Safety portfolio reserves and Flexible Supported Homelessness Grant (FSHG) funding. The funds from the portfolio reserve and the FSHG grant are only provided until 31 March 2020 (appendix b). This would mean that for the full team to continue after April 2020, additional funding of £129,000 per annum would need to be secured.
- 5.3 Re-evaluation of the team would be undertaken with a further report on the future of the team will be brought back to cabinet in October 2019.

6. Reasons for recommendations

- 6.1. Both the High Street Warden team and services provided by the security firm have made progress to resolve and reduce issues impacting on the community, and businesses.
- 6.2. The High Street Warden team is funded until the end of 2018 and no other funding is available to replace this team.
- 6.3. The security patrols have highlighted additional demand that occurs out of hours which impact on residents.
- 6.4. This proposed team would be able to benefit from working across both of these geographical areas and provide support and advice to rough sleepers. Additionally they would be able to address anti-social behaviour, repairs and environmental issues.

7. Equality impact assessment

- 7.1. A preliminary EIA was carried out and there are no significant impacts or need to carry out a full EIA (Appendix c)

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. The report speaks for itself and there are limited legal implications beyond those that arise as between the Authority and the individual staff member within the employer/employee construct. There will be potential costs associated with staff if the Service is discontinued in the future (notice and potential redundancies etc).

9. Director of Finance's comments

9.1 As the report sets out the redesigned Community Wardens Service is to commence 1 January 2019 and run until the 31st March 2020 at a cost of £366,300.

9.2 Table 1 - Funding for Redesigned Community Wardens Service

	Redesigned Community Wardens Service			
	Source Of Funding			Total Cost
	HRA (56%)	GF (22%)	FHSG (22%)	
	£	£	£	£
January 2018 - March 2019	41,000	16,100	16,100	73,200
April 2019 - March 2020	164,100	64,500	64,500	293,100
Total	205,100	80,600	80,600	366,300

9.3 The table above sets out the funding model for the trial for the Redesigned Community Wardens service. As you will see the Housing Revenue account will fund just over half of the Service during this trial period.

9.4 A further 22% is funded from the Environment and Community Safety Portfolio reserve; this cannot be relied upon as an ongoing funding source due to calls on the reserve to meet other obligations.

9.5 The Council only has surety over the amount of Flexible Homeless Support Grant it will receive up to 31st March 2020, the grant is likely to continue but the Council will not know the amount until an announcement is made mid-way through 2019/20.

9.6 Given the above funding model the Council can only commit to this redesigned trial until the 31st March 2020, officers will need to ensure that when the Service is mobilised that it does not enter into commitments that would obligate it past 31st March 2020.

9.7 The report that will be brought back to Cabinet in October 2019 will need to identify where the additional £129,000 will be funded from if the trial is a success and the Council wishes it to continue indefinitely.

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Signed by:

Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Appendices:

Appendix a - High St. Wardens - support and advice provided

Appendix b - Funding streams

Appendix c - preliminary Equality Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/rejected by

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Signed by:

Leader of the Council