



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 14th December 2006

Report from the Director of Policy and Regeneration

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Warden and Reassurance Services in Brent

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines details of the provision of warden and reassurance services within Brent.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the report

3.0 Background

- 3.1 At the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members requested a report on the current provision of warden services within Brent outlining their role and the benefits that they provide to local communities. A full list of Warden Services and their funding streams is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.2 Warden and reassurance services are an important part of the Council's community safety initiatives and contribute to achieving the targets set out in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. Namely, reducing fear of crime by providing a reassuring visible presence to the public.
- 3.3 Therefore, there are a number of similarities in the aims and objectives of each service. Each initiative is targeting crime and the fear of crime and seeking to re-assure the public. Each service is also seeking to improve (either directly or through working with other agencies) the physical appearance of the local areas and local quality of life. Lastly, each service aims to develop strong links with the local community.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 The warden and reassurance services within the borough can be divided into four main areas;

4.2 Town Centre Wardens

- 4.3 The town centre warden's patrol in four main locations within Brent, these being Wembley, Willesden, Harlesden and Neasden. The wardens operate out of three locations: Wembley Police Station, Quality House, Willesden and Challenge House, Harlesden. The service operates between 8am-8pm seven days a week.
- 4.4 The scheme started in 2003 in Wembley and Willesden with funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) up until, initially, March 2005.
- 4.5 Due to certain criteria being achieved by the scheme this funding was then extended for an extra year until March 2006. In 2004 Neighbourhood Renewal Team (NRT) funding was obtained and used to extend the scheme in to Harlesden and at the same time mainstream funds were obtained to operate in Neasden.
- 4.6 The town centre wardens role includes reporting on environmental issues and antisocial behaviour, exchanging intelligence with local community groups, and providing crime prevention advice to local community groups.
- 4.7 As a result of the ODPM funding coming to an end in 2006 the section was reorganised and the number of overall posts was reduced from 22 to 17.

4.8 Parks Wardens

- 4.9 In 2004, the council made funding available via the general fund to provide a parks wardens service, this was built on the existing arrangements for managing parks. There are 20 full time posts which include one supervisor and three team leaders who operate as four mobile teams.
- 4.10 Parks wardens provide information to the public, act as a uniformed presence within the park as well as picking up litter and helping to keep the park tidy.
- 4.11 Working hours correspond to Parks working arrangements of working all daylight hours including weekends. Staff work 7 hours per day.
- 4.12 Parks fully covered by the service include Roundwood, Gladstone, Preston, St Raphaels, Roe Green, Barham and Gibbon Recreation Grounds. Other unsupervised sites are visited daily and several such parks locked up at night including Streatly Road and Mapesbury Dell.

4.13 Brent Housing Partnership Wardens

- 4.14 Brent Housing Partnerships (BHP) have twelve Security wardens supported by two supervisors and one contract manager with administrative support provided by the BHP central team. The warden service is supported by a hotline, radio communication and deal with most aspects of anti-social behaviour, report environmental problems and provide other services including professional witnessing and similar work

4.15 There are 4 security wardens during each shift, (including the Supervisor), and work from 3.00pm until 3.00am. The wardens are monitored by the BHP warden service and are recruited via an agency. Management and administrative support is provided by BHP staff.

4.16 Additional funding has been made available from NRF to enhance the warden service in the St Raphael's estate so that it is able to serve leaseholders as well as tenants.

4.17 **Safer Neighbourhoods Teams**

4.18 The Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative (SNI) is managed by the Metropolitan Police Service. It provides a dedicated team of police who operate at ward level in London. Each Safer Neighbourhood Team has been charged with working with the local authority to reduce crime and disorder and deal with local issues that have most impact on people's quality of life.

4.19 The overall aim of the service is to enhance public satisfaction and improve neighbourhood safety, leading to a reduction in crime. All wards in Brent now have a Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

4.20 **Other common aims and objectives of the Warden Services and Safer Neighbourhood Teams in Brent**

- reduce 'envirocrime' by educating, reporting and investigating incidents
- Deterring anti-social behaviour by engaging with the local community and those involved and problem solving the reasons and causes.
- reduce crime by analysing 'hotspots', intelligence gathering and working closely with Safer Neighbourhoods Teams, CCTV and the local community.
- Town Centre wardens give presentations regarding environmental issues, community safety and anti-social behaviour in community based groups including schools, social groups .
- attend meetings with all community, residents, traders etc groups within Brent
- participate with our partners in addressing issues of concern through local consultation.
- encourage social inclusion amongst 'hard to reach' and vulnerable groups by arranging meetings etc and gaining an understanding of their issues
- report 'envirocrime' including; fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, graffiti, fly posting, litter, street cleaning and dog fouling. Parks wardens also carry out litter clearance and provide first aid.
- Giving crime prevention advice at meetings, partnership events etc.
- Town Centre wardens help to improve the street environment by highlighting opportunities to reduce unnecessary furniture, posts and highlighting safety concerns.
- Parks wardens also carry out site supervision and inspections.

5.0 **Current Issues for Brent in providing these services**

5.1 The provision of the Council's warden services is under regular review, this is to ensure that the service is meeting the needs of the local community and to address the resource issues raised when funding comes to an end as well as maximise additional funding when it becomes available.

- 5.2 A key issue for the council is ensuring that the service is sufficiently integrated. Each of the Council warden services are managed separately. The Parks and Town Centre Wardens are managed by Environmental services department, Brent Housing Partnership wardens are managed internally.
- 5.3 The council has sought to address this by issuing the same uniform to warden services, using joint promotional material, and the ensuring the services share information and intelligence. Partnership working has also been strengthened by the development of a central control room for the warden services.
- 5.4 The Safer Neighbourhood Teams are managed by the Metropolitan Police and are completely separate, both managerially and financially from the council's services.
- 5.5 However arrangements are in place for the Council and police to share information on crime hot spots and to collaborate in tasking the various teams. To do this officers from Environment and Culture attend the police tasking meetings held fortnightly, where the information is shared.

6.0 Additional Police Officers

- 6.1 Funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and New Deal for Communities has enabled the council to purchase additional police officers (see appendix A) They are now in place in South Kilburn but the officers for Harlesden and Stonebridge are yet to be appointed. The South Kilburn officers are managed by the sergeant of the Kilburn Safer Neighbourhood Team.
- 6.2 The negotiations to set up these two deals took a considerable amount of time as there are particular issues to be aware of in relation to allocating funding for which the Council is responsible, to the purchase of additional police officers or police community support officers.
- 6.3 For example a balance would have to be struck between the Council and the Borough Commander in relation to how much the Council can specify what the officers should do. There are also issues around whether it is possible to identify police officers who have been funded by Council resources (e.g by badging them). This would have to be addressed by the Service Level Agreement.
- 6.4 **Next Steps**
- 6.5 The MPS has recently approached all London Councils with an offer to provide additional PCSOs for a cost of £20,000 per PCSO per annum for the next two years. Senior officers are currently in discussion on these issues with the MPS and with members of the Executive.

Contact Officers

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