

Report of the Director of Environment and Sport to the meeting of Bradford South Area Committee to be held on 28 November 2013.

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Subject:

Council Wardens – Bradford South.

Summary statement:

This report outlines work undertaken by Council Wardens in Bradford South in the period 1 April – 30 September 2013.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate



City of Bradford
Metropolitan District Council



1. SUMMARY

This report outlines work undertaken by Council Wardens in Bradford South in the period 1 April – 30 September 2013.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The new Council Warden Service enables a responsive and flexible service to be provided encompassing as it does the roles previously undertaken by Neighbourhood Wardens, Civil Enforcement Officers and Park Rangers. The structure was developed after very careful consideration. Council Wardens across the District normally sign in at 9.00 a.m. and in the case of Bradford South this is at City Hall. Council Wardens work flexibly and do start earlier to address specific parking and dog fouling issues. As Council Wardens now have such a wide range of responsibilities they are all briefed each morning on the current issues and priorities. These briefings are essential in ensuring that we are able to effectively and efficiently deploy the appropriate resource to address issues within individual Wards.
- 2.2 Direct communication with local residents, etc is essential in the work of Council Wardens, and will of course continue to develop. Issues raised with Council Wardens are then tasked by the Council Warden Manager to ensure the most appropriate and effective response, which may not necessarily be a Council Warden on foot.
- 2.3 In addition to Council Wardens on foot, the new structure provides for motorcycle Council Wardens within Bradford South. This has ensured a rapid response when required. Motorcycle Council Wardens, from 1 March to the 30 November, work in shifts so that we have a service available from 9.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. This is in addition to the City Centre based Council Wardens who also work shifts, from 7.30 a.m. until 9.00 p.m., and are often deployed in Bradford South to address specific issues.
- 2.4 Issues which need to be addressed outside the normal working hours of area-based Council Wardens who work 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. and patrol on foot are accommodated by prior arrangement with the Warden Manager.
- 2.5 With a wider range of responsibilities and resources, it is essential that the service is not only accessible, but there is clear and complete accountability. Therefore Council Wardens are managed by the Warden Manager tasks identified by the Ward Officer. This ensures that in Bradford South the single point of contact, which is the Ward Officer, remains in place.
- 2.6 The Council Warden Service structure in Bradford South is a Warden Manager, Team Leader, 2 Council Wardens on motorcycles and 10 on foot patrol. The deployment, when fully staffed, is intended to be on a 2 Ward basis of Great Horton & Queensbury; Royds & Wibsey; and Tong & Wyke with 3 Council Wardens on foot. Motorcycle Council Wardens work on a shift basis covering the whole of Bradford South and providing a quick response where necessary. Motorcycle Wardens not only enforce Parking Restrictions, but also ensure that Parks, Woodlands and Recreation Grounds are patrolled enabling Council Wardens patrolling on foot to address more local issues.

- 2.7 A recent recruitment process has ensured that Bradford South from 23 September 2013 is fully staffed. This will enable a more managed deployment of Council Wardens to ensure we have named Council Wardens in specific Wards. In addition support from the City Centre Council Wardens provides a further mobile response for both parking and environmental issues.
- 2.8 At the beginning of the year a paper-based system was developed to capture more of the work of Council Wardens with the intention to test the system prior to use of Smart Phones which are scheduled to be introduced shortly. The information collected provides an indication of how work undertaken by Council Wardens is identified and the range of issues addressed (Appendix 1). It is noted that work identified through Ward Officers/ Ward Plan and Warden Manager is low, but in reality that is more of a recording issue which will be rectified on the introduction of Smart Phones.
- 2.9 Council Wardens are often described as the "eyes and ears" of the Council which is confirmed in Appendix 1 which show that the majority of issues are identified whilst on patrol.
- 2.10 Outlined below are examples of the wide range of activities undertaken by Council Wardens during this period.
- 2.11 Patrolling. Council Wardens are a highly visible presence in each Ward providing a patrolling and reporting service. Whilst patrolling they engage with local residents. In this work they assist people in reporting bulky waste items, support them to clear untidy gardens and report incidents of fly tipping etc. They regularly monitor 'hot spots' and have acted as a deterrent, recording registration numbers of suspected fly tippers and reporting them to the relevant department.
- 2.12 Welfare. Council Wardens attend meetings at sheltered housing complexes, visit coffee mornings and luncheon clubs to gather views and issues from older people. This involves a significant amount of reassurance and advice work which is greatly appreciated by residents. Council Wardens pass on information on bogus callers or sneaking burglaries, etc, run quizzes on Environmental issues, hold Question & Answer sessions and have even helped with serving the food. They also, with the Highways Enforcement, work with groups of visually impaired people regarding issues of "A" Boards and road signs.
- 2.13 Parking. Regular patrols are made across areas where parking restrictions exist and patrolling plans have been revised to meet demand. Most parking restrictions require an observation period, but Instant PCNs are issued with regard to dropped curbs and disabled parking bays. As well as just issuing PCNs, Council Wardens work with businesses to help identify how by changing routines they can avoid contravening parking regulations, i.e. changing delivery times.
- 2.14 Dog Fouling. Council Wardens have been pro-active in working to reduce dog fouling in Bradford South and have targeted persistent offenders. The wardens tend to focus on education rather than enforcement but when appropriate use the enforcement powers now available to them. Regular patrols are undertaken in Parks, Cemeteries and Grounds, advising dog walkers regarding the new dog control orders that have come into place, and to check whether they're carrying dog bags. Work has included Days of Action in Queensbury and Wyke and, jointly with Bradford East, in the area of

Emsley Recreation Ground. Actions have included siting temporary “No Dog Fouling” signs and leafleting houses in the area where this is an issue. It has also included working with the Police to staff stalls with dog fouling leaflets & bags to give to dog owners.

- 2.15 Days of Action. Using a partnership approach to address environmental issues of general physical neglect, local people are encouraged and supported to become involved in maintaining and improving their local environment. Council Wardens direct the work of Community Payback and Cleansing following an extensive audit of the area. Other agencies including the Police, Social Housing Landlords, Fire Service and Community Partnerships coming together to address issues in a specific area. This has included working with the Police and the Youth Service to address issues of low level anti social behaviour and crime. The work involves delivering leaflets and conducting reassurance visits. Residents find the approach helpful and reassuring seeing Council Wardens and Police working together. Council Wardens have also worked with Incommunities and local residents to address issues of flytipping with land to the rear of Scholemoor Road being a good example. Following on from Junior Warden Schemes, Council Wardens undertake litter picks with school children which helps make them more aware of their local environment. Working with ASDA, PCSOs, the Clean Team and the community, held a community litter pick on Cemetery Road and Glendare Road. The Clean team dyked Cemetery Road / Birks fold and mechanical sweeper swept pavements. In a similar way, working with Incommunities, the Youth Service and Community Organisations, land in the Landsdale Court area of Holme Wood was cleared. Council Wardens to talk to local people about general environmental issues such as recycling, dog fouling, fly tipping and littering.
- 2.16 PACT events are held on a monthly basis with Council Wardens and PCSOs targeting identified streets, knocking on residents doors to ask if they’ have any problems or issues they’d like to raise to the Council or Police. This generates issues for both the Council and Police whilst at the same time providing reassurance to local residents.
- 2.17 Partnership Working. Council Wardens in all areas work in partnership, on a daily basis, with PCSOs and Clean Teams as well as attending and contributing to the effectiveness of PACT meetings. In every Ward Council Wardens, the Clean Team and PCSOs meet informally on a regular basis to share information. They often undertake joint patrolling with PCSOs and jointly use the Police Contact Points. This has ensured that an excellent working relationship has developed between the different teams with individuals being able to pass on queries, quickly and efficiently within their local area. Council Wardens, with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams, have undertaken house to house visits to support crime reduction initiatives and address local environment issues. On one occasion this enabled the identification of a person suspected, later convicted, of conning money from an elderly lady.
- 2.18 Visual Audits, such as the one in the Butterhaw estate on 24 July with Incommunities identify issues including fly tipping, horses, overgrown vegetation, bulky waste in gardens and small levels of anti-social behaviour. These are followed by working with the Clean Team to pick any bulky items like fridges, mattress, and contaminated recycle bins that have been fly tipped on Council Land. Council Wardens across Bradford South have also supported work to address the issue of horses grazing on public land through a weekly audit.

- 2.19 Council Wardens work with schools to address a number of issues. Parking in the vicinity of schools is an ongoing issue. Over the summer at both St. John's RC Primary School and Shibden Head Primary School work resulted in improvements in traffic speeds and parking restrictions to improve safety for children. This emanated from a joint operation with Police and Schools to patrol schools, with the PCSOs, at school start and finish times. The purpose to educate and enforce (if needed) parents parking illegally when dropping and picking their children. This joint operation is ongoing across Bradford South. Council Wardens also work with schools in other ways which have included providing support at summer camps and engaging with children through their activities.
- 2.20 Community Development. Council Wardens attend Galas and Fun Days where they staff stalls with leaflets and information of council services, talk to members of the public and take up issues raised. Over the summer these events have included the Queensbury Scarecrow Festival, Fun Days at Brackenhill Primary School, Wibsey Park and Wyke Park, Harold Park Gala and the official opening of the new Great Horton Library.
- 2.21 Businesses. Council Wardens support the Business Watches in Wyke, Low Moor and the Euroway Estate. They offer advice and support and take up issues raised by the local business community. These include fly tipping, anti-social behaviour and dealing with trade waste collections. Council Wardens work with individual businesses to ensure that they have trade waste bins. There are also specific examples of how by working with PCSOs they have addressed issues of antisocial behaviour outside shops in Woodside. They also worked with a Bakery in Great Horton regarding dog fouling on regular basis outside the shop. As well as leaflet drop in the vicinity of the business, the Council Warden engaged with residents and put "No Dog Fouling" stickers on street lighting columns. They have advised other businesses on the use of signs and banners, also "A" boards so that they don't obstruct pavements.
- 2.22 Responsiveness. Council Wardens are often called upon to respond at short notice to support agencies, and individuals, when urgent measures are required. For example, a Housing Officer required support visiting a tenant who had issues regarding pet waste outside his flat. The Council Warden was able to provide support and give specific advice to the tenant which resulted in the issue being resolved almost immediately. On another occasion a Council Warden came across an Akita loose in Buttershaw. Some residents identified the owner, so the owner was contacted, came straight out and put the dog onto a lead. In Lidget Green a Council Warden saw a live wire from a street light which had been broken by a delivery vehicle. He not only contacted Street Lighting to arrange for the repair to be done, but also while waiting, knocked on doors and made residents aware of the danger and guarded the scene until Street Lighting engineers arrived. They also report loose horses or horses tied to land near to play areas. On another occasion they had to help as resident get home as he was having difficulty through alcohol.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There are no "Other Considerations".

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 Financial

The budget for Council Wardens in Bradford South is provided from within the existing resources of the Neighbourhood Service.

4.2 Staffing

The staffing structure is being provided from within the existing resources of the Neighbourhoods and Customer Service.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are no significant risks arising out of the proposed recommendations in this report.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

This work relates directly to the Local Government Act 2000 and to the Duty of Well-being placed upon the Council to promote and improve the well-being of the District.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The work undertaken by Council Wardens will promote fairness and inclusion while supporting Bradford South Area Committee's commitment to equal opportunities for all.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Sustainability considerations are an element in actions taken to address priorities within the Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan 2011-14 supported by the work of Council Wardens.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Actions to assist in identifying the greenhouse gas impacts of actions will be undertaken. These will include a consideration of for example energy efficiency opportunities in purchasing new equipment, etc.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.4.1 Community Safety issues are acknowledged as a key contributor to the quality of life in neighbourhoods. Community safety priorities have therefore been identified for inclusion in the Bradford South Area Committee Action Plan 2011-14. Council Wardens contribute to work to address these priorities.

7.4.2 A key aspect of this work relates to supporting the Safer Communities Strategy, the Council's obligations under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Act 1998 and the work of the Safer Communities Partnership.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

8.5.1 No direct implications arising from the Human Rights Act.

7.6 TRADE UNION

7.6.1 No direct Trade Union implications arise from this report. .

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

7.7.1 The work of Council Wardens will help to address issues in the Great Horton, Queensbury, Royds, Tong, Wibsey and Wyke Wards.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

8.8.1 The priorities within the Bradford South Area Committee's Action Plan 2011-14 help to inform the work of Council Wardens.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 That Bradford South Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report.

9.2 That Bradford South Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report, with amendments.

9.3 That Bradford South Area Committee decides not to accept the recommendations outlined in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the Bradford South Area Committee notes the wide range of activities undertaken by Council Wardens in the period 1 April to 30 September 2013.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Type and Method of Identifying Issue (April – September 2013)

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

“Neighbourhood Service Re-structure 2011/12 (Document E), Report to Bradford South Area Committee, 28 June 2012.

“Devolution to Area Committee – Council Warden Service” (Document AF), Report to Bradford South Area Committee, 22 November 2012.

“Development of Council Wardens – Bradford South” (Document BJ), Report to Bradford South Area Committee, 28 March 2013.

Type and Method of Identifying Issue (April – September 2013)

