

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

4 September 2018

Future Funding for the Community Warden Service

1. Contacts

Report Author:

Pam Bushby, Divisional Manager Communities,
Tel: 01243 534801 E-mail: pbushby@chichester.gov.uk

Cabinet Member:

Eileen Lintill, Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing,
Tel: 01798 342948 E-mail: elintill@chichester.gov.uk

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet agrees to continue to fund 50% of the Community Warden Service for three years (as set out in para 5 of the agenda report), subject to match funding being secured from partners.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet agrees to continue to fund 100% of the Senior Community Warden post for three years (as set out in para 5 of the agenda report), subject to a review should more than one warden patrol fail to be funded.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Chichester District Community Warden Service has been in operation since 2005 and currently consists of seven Community Wardens and one Senior Community Warden. They are based and operate in the wards of Chichester East, West, South (part); Selsey North and South; Tangmere and Oving; plus East and West Wittering.
- 3.2 The wardens are involved in the development of communities and offer support to voluntary groups in their areas, such as the Oving tea party, which supports both the elderly and isolated in their area and also a number of Community Watch schemes.
- 3.3 The service operates on a partnership basis funded by various local partners. Chichester District Council (CDC) hosts the Service and contributes 50% of the service costs and 100% of the supervisor costs. A Steering Group of all partners provides strategic direction and oversight.
- 3.2 At their meeting of 3rd November 2015 Cabinet resolved to fund 50% of each existing warden patrol for 3 years subject to partner match funding being secured and 100% of the Senior Community Warden post for 3 years subject to review should more than one warden patrol fail to be funded.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 4.1 That Cabinet agree three years funding for the Community Warden Service so that partner funding can be sought and agreed to ensure the future delivery of the service and its contribution to the corporate priority to “support our communities.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the CDC commitment to the Community Warden Service by approving, 50% of the service funding at £126,113 per annum together with 100% of the Senior Community Warden post at £41,434 per annum for a period of 3 years. Both figures include a 2% increase to offset pay awards and general inflation. Partners have also agreed to consider an annual 2% uplift of their contributions through the Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Appendix 3) which was revised in April 2018.

6 Alternatives Considered

- 6.1 There is an option to have a reduced or no Community Warden Service, however the funding review in 2012/13 explored a range of options and identified savings which were achieved. Results from the recent partner survey (Appendix 2) showed 100% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Community Wardens were a valuable service and provided value for money and 78.1 % of the public surveyed felt they had a positive impact on their communities. Any significant reduction in the service would have a negative impact on those communities and partners.

7 Resource and Legal Implications

- 7.1 The projected total annual cost (excluding the Senior Community Warden salary) is £252,226. This is based on a cost per Community Warden of £36,032 which on a 50/50 basis requires a partner contribution of £18,016 per post. Therefore a total partner contribution of £126,113 is required. At the steering group held in April 2018 there was broad in principle commitment from partners that this would be agreed subject to CDC agreeing their 3 year commitment. CDC's proportion of the Community Warden expenditure is already included within the base revenue budget.
- 7.2 Management overheads of the service are absorbed in an existing management role which ensures that CDC has oversight of the service and benefits from the positive outcomes achieved by the Service.
- 7.3 An MOU has been signed by partners and was reviewed in April 2018 to ensure on-going commitment and refresh mutual expectations.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 Online surveys (Appendices 1&2) were undertaken via CDC's website during July and August 2018 for both the public and partners to seek their views on the Community Warden Service. The public survey had an excellent response rate of 182 which was 119 responses higher than the previous survey in 2015. Partner responses were down at only 7 which was 26 less than before. It may be that partners decided to do a collective response in which case 7 would represent the majority of partners, however there is no way of knowing this from the survey.

- 8.2 Over 75% of the public rated the effectiveness of the Community Wardens at 7/10 or above and over 72% felt the Community Wardens made their areas safer. Of the public respondents 95% felt the Community Wardens were very easy to contact suggesting the service is very accessible to the public. Over 80% of the partner responses rated the Community Wardens 9/10 and above in all areas including effectiveness, positive impact on the environment and overall.
- 8.3 The public survey includes a comment stating “the wardens are a good alternative to the Police when reporting petty crimes.....and they connect the community, reduce anti-social behaviour and their presence makes the area feel safer.” The Community warden database shows a 13% increase since 2015 in reports to Community Wardens for crime and anti-social behaviour suggesting the public trust them to deal with low level issues and supports the previous comment from the survey. Wardens still regularly engage with Police and pass on vital intelligence to support the local Police Prevention team.
- 8.4 Both the public and partners felt strongly that Community Wardens should have enforcement powers namely those for littering and dog fouling. This is being explored further with Environmental Health and may be brought to a future Cabinet meeting.

9 Community Impact and Corporate Rsk

- 9.1 The corporate risk remains the partial or total withdrawal of funding by one or more partner(s) where no replacement funding can be found which makes one or more warden posts financially unviable. This risk is mitigated by partner agreements to fund for a specified period and to provide a significant notice of withdrawal of funding. The service also holds a reserve to cover salaries for the period of notice and redundancy costs.
- 9.2 Since 2005 Community Wardens have dealt with nearly 40,000 incidents, the majority of which 41% relate to crime and disorder, however in the last 3 years there has been a 5% increase in community development (14%) which reflects a shift towards more community based interventions.
- 9.3 Community Wardens provide a visible presence which offer reassurance to those communities. The Senior Community Warden has provided a highly visible presence in the City centre and has dealt with over 150 issues since January 2018 including cycling in the precinct, engaging with rough sleepers and dealing with ASB. They carry a chiBAC radio so are linked to the shops and can therefore offer a quick time response to incidents.
- 9.4 If funding for the Community Warden Service is not secured the areas in which they currently operate could be further exposed to crime and anti-social behaviour, vulnerable individuals may not be identified and opportunities to refer for support missed. Demand on other CDC services could increase resulting in additional financial cost to CDC.

10 Other Implications

	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder The Community Warden Service has a positive reduction influence of crime and disorder through patrol and prevention education	x	
Climate Change and Biodiversity		x
Human Rights and Equality Impact Positive impact in supporting vulnerable people.	x	
Safeguarding and Early Help Positive impact in identification and referral of issues	x	
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Community Wardens will collect and store personal data for the investigation, prevention and detection of crime. Retention is limited to the timescales related to evidential purposes and will be no longer than 12 months.	x	
Health and Wellbeing Community Wardens support community watch schemes that have a positive impact on vulnerable and elderly residents. They also support corporate projects like dementia friendly communities and social prescribing.	x	

11 Appendices

11.1 Public Consultation

11.2 Partner Consultation

11.3 Partner MOU

12 Background Papers

None