

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 9 JUNE 2003

REPORT ON: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE PROPOSALS ON WARDENS AND OTHER INITIATIVES TO TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE PLANNING

REPORT NO: 354-2003

1 PURPOSE

To advise members of a Scottish Executive Consultation Document on wardens and other community-based initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour; to recommend a response to the consultation document; and to give officers a remit to bring forward detailed proposals in due course.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members:

- 1 welcome the proposals set out in consultation document and agree the draft response to the specific questions for consultation as set out in paragraph 6.4.2.
- 2 remit the Director of Corporate Planning to bring forward a further report on the use of the proposed additional resources once detailed guidance is available from the Executive, and, in particular, to bring forward proposals for a community warden scheme which addresses the issues of crime prevention and improving the local environment and for additional measures which complement and strengthen the initiatives already under way in Dundee to tackle anti-social behaviour.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications of this report. A further report will be brought forward detailing proposals to use the resources being made available by the Scottish Executive.

4 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

None.

5 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

This report has an impact on the following key Local Agenda 21 themes:

- people live without fear of personal violence from crime
- health is protected by creating safe, clean, pleasant environments
- all sections of the community are empowered to participate in decision making

6 BACKGROUND

6.1 Scottish Executive Funding

6.1.1 In the 2002 spending review, the Scottish Executive committed £15M in each of the years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 to tackle anti-social behaviour and the poor quality of the environment, and to help local people build strong, safe communities. Of the total £30M, £20M has been allocated to extending community warden schemes more widely across Scotland and £10M has been earmarked for other initiatives to address anti-social behaviour.

6.1.2 The Executive has published a consultation document, setting out its proposals on how these funds should be used. Copies of the consultation document are available from Group Secretaries and in the Members' Lounge. The document invites comments on all aspects of the Executive's proposals but in particular on a number of specific issues as set out in paragraph 6.4.2 below. The Executive will also be discussing its proposals with COSLA, Police bodies and voluntary/community organisations.

6.2 Overview of Proposals and Funding Arrangements

6.2.1 The Scottish Executive wants to see a quicker and more effective response from local authorities, other landlords and the Police to residents' complaints about anti-social behaviour and local environmental problems, and to see the perpetrators of vandalism and anti-social behaviour dealt with more swiftly and effectively. They propose that the starting point in delivering these improvements at community level should be a **neighbourhood compact** between the local community planning partnership and the community, clearly stating the support and services that will be delivered by the relevant agencies and the standards of behaviour expected from local residents.

6.2.2 The intention is that funding will be made available both to prepare these neighbourhood compacts and to provide resources for a specific range of interventions that may be required to make these effective. This will include:

- extending **community warden schemes** more widely across Scotland to provide a visible and sustainable presence on the streets, to provide reassurance to residents and to work as the eyes and ears of local people and responsible agencies at a neighbourhood level
- establishing **specialised anti-social behaviour teams** at the community level to make sure that there is a co-ordinated effort to maximise effectiveness
- providing for **intensive supervision** of the most anti-social families and serious perpetrators of anti-social behaviour
- promoting the **use of mediation to resolve disputes** between neighbours at an early stage
- **supporting victims, witnesses and complainants** to make sure that local residents have the confidence and ability to make their concerns known
- making use of techniques such as **acceptable behaviour contracts** to ensure that perpetrators of anti-social behaviour are clear about the changes they need to make to their behaviour

Further details on all these initiatives are set out in the consultation document.

- 6.2.3 The Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill places a new duty on Police and local authorities to jointly prepare and publish an anti-social behaviour strategy. Further guidance on this will be issued in due course, including details as to when the duty will commence. In the meantime, it will be a condition of receiving funding for the initiatives outlined above that a clear framework is in place for tackling anti-social behaviour and ensuring effective co-ordination between agencies.
- 6.2.4 The Executive proposes to offer funding to all 32 local authority areas, with banded allocations which take account of factors such as deprivation, population, population density and crime rates. The highest allocation (£1,550,000) is proposed for Glasgow. Dundee would be in the second highest allocation band receiving £1,050,000 in each of the two financial years, equal to Edinburgh and North Lanarkshire. Other allocations range from £850,000 down to £115,000. Dundee's allocation of £1,050,000 is broken down into £650,000 for community wardens and £400,000 for other initiatives.
- 6.2.5 On behalf of their Community Planning Partnerships, local authorities will be expected to come forward with "outcome - focused" proposals for how they will use these allocations. It is proposed that there will be a small number of mandatory performance indicators used to evaluate the success of all the initiatives. The proposed mandatory indicators are:
- crime (both recorded and survey based)
 - percentage of residents surveyed who feel fairly safe or very safe during the day and after dark outside in the local area (survey based)
 - percentage of residents surveyed who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (survey based)

It will be for local authorities, partners and local communities to determine whether they wish to establish additional indicators appropriate to specific local circumstances.

6.3 Community Wardens and Other Community Based Initiatives

- 6.3.1 The key proposal in the consultation document is to extend the use of community wardens, which are currently being piloted in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Renfrewshire with positive results. The generally accepted definition of a community warden is "a uniformed, semi-official presence in a residential area with the aim of improving quality of life". The Executive expects warden schemes to contribute to one or more of the following broad outcomes:
- reducing crime (including youth crime) or the fear of crime
 - reducing anti-social behaviour
 - improving environmental quality

The detailed tasks carried out by wardens will depend on the particular problems and priorities of local residents, but are likely to include elements of crime prevention (aligned to the work of the Police) and improving the local environment. Key principles to be followed include:

- wardens are not a substitute for the Police
- schemes must involve and have the support of local residents
- protocols should be established, especially on the engagement of the Police with warden schemes
- wardens must be properly recruited, trained and managed

There is an expectation that crime prevention schemes will be managed by the local authority or the Police, although other landlords and voluntary/community organisations may have a role to play in running environmental schemes. The Executive is also inviting views on whether wardens should be used in "reparation" schemes as a part of the criminal justice system.

6.3.2 The Executive believes that the benefits of community wardens can be enhanced by other measures at a local level to tackle anti-social behaviour, which build and go beyond what is already in place. A number of the initiatives set out in paragraph 6.2.2 above are already in place in Dundee e.g. a dedicated anti-social behaviour team, proactive use of anti-social behaviour orders, Dundee Families Project and the Dundee Community Mediation Service. The Executive also expects local authorities and their Community Planning Partners to co-ordinate the use of these resources for wardens and other anti-social behaviour measures with other initiatives relating to community safety, youth work and quality of life. It will therefore be necessary to review existing services and consider any ways in which these can be strengthened or complemented by new approaches.

6.4 Proposed Response from Dundee City Council

6.4.1 It is recommended that the Council should welcome the proposals set out in the consultation document, in particular the availability of additional resources to tackle the problem of anti-social behaviour.

6.4.2 The Scottish Executive has particularly invited comments on a number of specific questions. These are set out below with the recommended response from the Council highlighted in bold text beneath each of the questions.

- 1 Are the mandatory indicators proposed for measuring the impact of warden schemes and other initiatives the right ones?

The Council acknowledges the importance of performance measures and does not have any fundamental difficulties with the proposed indicators. However, the following should be taken into account:

- **the indicators are heavily weighted towards survey based perception measures. While perception is vitally important, experience tells us that considerable effort and resources can be devoted to an area without necessarily changing public perceptions in the short term. It will be important to balance perception measures with more objective statistics such as actual crime figures, and also to ensure that questionnaire surveys are carefully constructed and analysed**

- the types of crimes to be measured need to be more specifically defined and measured separately. In particular, it would be useful to monitor crimes such as vandalism, graffiti, under-age drinking and gang-related incidents, which have a major impact on quality of life and the perception of safety in an area.
- both the actual levels of crime and the perception of the public can be affected by factors outwith the control of warden schemes or other initiatives, and the impact of any such factors should be taken into account in the evaluation process

2 Are the proposals for the allocation of these resources appropriate?

The Council welcomes the fact that the proposed allocation for Dundee is in one of the highest bands, which fairly reflects the needs of the city. However, it is difficult to assess at this stage whether the total resources available will be sufficient to ensure effective coverage of warden schemes and other initiatives. In particular, warden schemes will be costly in salary terms due to the need for evening, weekend and holiday working and the need for staff to double up in some areas for safety reasons. The Council also has concerns that the funding is only committed at this stage for two years and would welcome a longer term commitment to maintaining the necessary level of resources. The Council also has a concern about the lack of capacity within the proposed initiatives to effectively offer youth diversion activities. There is a need for substantial additional resources in this area.

3 Is it appropriate and feasible to use community warden schemes as part of community disposals and restorative justice approaches?

The Council has no objection to the Executive allowing funds to be used for reparation schemes. In particular, supervision of people on community service orders by community wardens seems feasible. However, the priority in Dundee would be crime prevention and environmental schemes, and the Council has some concerns that expecting the same wardens to run reparation schemes may impose too big a burden and may detract from their high visibility in the community.

4 What are your views on the range and appropriateness of possible management agents?

The Council agrees that management by the local authority or the Police is the most suitable arrangement for crime prevention schemes. Voluntary organisations can provide specialist input (e.g. mediation) but it would not be appropriate for them to have a co-ordinating role. It has been agreed with Tayside Police that Dundee City Council will take the lead role as employer, although close liaison and support with the Police, and joint tasking at operational level, will be crucial. Since the same wardens are likely to take on the environmental role, it is also envisaged that the Council will manage this aspect of the warden service.

6.5 Developing Detailed Proposals

6.5.1 Once responses to the consultation document have been considered, the Scottish Executive will issue guidance on use of the resources in June 2003. Outline proposals will then be required by August/September and full proposals by November. Ministers are expected to approve proposals by the end of January 2004 and the initiatives will begin from April 2004.

6.5.2 It is recommended that the Director of Corporate Planning is remitted to develop proposals, following consultation with relevant departments, the Police and local groups concerned with community safety. In particular, it is recommended that proposals be brought forward for a community warden scheme which addresses the issues of crime prevention and improving the local environment, and for a range of other initiatives which complement and strengthen the work already under way in the city to tackle anti-social behaviour.

7 **CONSULTATION**

7.1 All Chief Officers have been consulted on this report, along with the Chief Constable of Tayside Police.

7.2 Comments have also been received from Dundee Federation of Tenants Association, and a copy of their letter is available from Group Secretaries and in the Members' Lounge. The main thrust of DFTA's comments is that the role of wardens should focus on crime prevention and anti-social behaviour, with a particular emphasis on wardens acting as professional witnesses in relation to noise complaints in the evenings and at weekends. DFTA have made a number of detailed comments on the role of wardens which will be taken into account in developing proposals for the warden scheme and other initiatives as recommended in this report.

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Date

Background Papers:

"Building Strong, Safe and Attractive Communities: A Consultation Document on Wardens and Other Community Based Initiative to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour"
Scottish Executive - March 2003

"Neighbourhood Wardens in Dundee and Submission to Scottish Executive"
Letter from Dundee Federation of Tenants' Association - 13 May 2003