

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 NOVEMBER 2016

EXECUTIVE – 29 NOVEMBER 2016

Title:

JOINT ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVE

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kevin Deanus & Cllr Jim Edwards]
[Wards Affected: All]

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update members on the development of proposals for a Joint Enforcement Initiative with Surrey Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The proposals will contribute to the delivery of the Council's vision, 'To make Waverley a Better Place to Live and Work', and the Corporate Priorities, 'Customer Service', 'Community Wellbeing', 'Environment' and 'Value for Money' through tackling environmental crime and anti-social behaviour in a coordinated approach with other agencies. This will provide community reassurance and promote community well being, will help protect and enhance the local environment and provide more responsive, efficient, effective and value for money for the community.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

Intervention in anti-social behaviour and environmental crime will help promote harmony and equality within the community.

Resource/Value for Money implications:

Subject to the success of the bid, additional resources to establish the joint enforcement partnership will be provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Existing council resources will be refocussed to deliver the initiatives alongside our partner agencies.

Legal Implications:

The initiative will be subject to a funding agreement between Surrey Police and Waverley Borough Council.

Background

1. In 2013 the Police and Crime Commissioner proposed to Surrey Police and the local authorities in Surrey that they could enhance their joint working and rationalise resources to take a zero tolerance approach to address low level crime, antisocial behaviour, on street parking management and environmental crime.
2. A pilot, agreed by the Community Safety Board, sought to test the integrated model employed in the London Borough of Newham (LBN) in Surrey, a two-tier local authority setting with a very different range of socio-economic, crime and anti-social

issues. The Newham Model functioned on the premise that by bringing all enforcement activity under a single partnership project there would be clear ownership of problems, intelligence and a robust response to anti-social behaviour.

3. Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC) and Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) both agreed to act as pilot sites and have developed different approaches, variations on a theme, to delivering the project. A detailed review has been carried out and has identified the lessons learned from those pilots.
4. The Police and Crime Commissioner has now invited Waverley Borough Council to submit a proposal for joint working in the Borough. The joint approach is intended to develop an enhanced synergy between Council Officers who have an enforcement role and Surrey Police enabling more targeted and directed enforcement activities with the limited resources available.

Key project objectives, benefits and deliverables of the Joint Enforcement Initiative:

1. Objectives:

- a. To improve information sharing leading to better identification of problems and the more efficient use of resources;
- b. To reduce environmental offending (fly tipping, litter, graffiti etc.) in the Borough;
- c. To develop the capacity to better enforce penalties for breaches of legislation;
- d. To provide a more pro-active and re-active service to our communities;
- e. To engage with partner agencies, particularly Surrey Police, more pro-actively;
- f. To provide a more responsive service to the public;
- g. To utilise the combined and coordinated action of all relevant enforcing authorities in tackling persistent or complex problems
- h. To provide community reassurance, reduce fear of crime and improve sense of safety;
- i. To improve public confidence in the Police and local authority working together.

2. Benefits:

- a. Greater multi-skilling of Council Officers to enforce a wider range of environmental and anti-social behaviour legislation thus developing a more resilient workforce better able to respond to complaints from the community;
- b. Enhancing working relationships with the police through joint working, more effective targeting of priority areas of enforcement through better shared intelligence, focusing limited resources on key areas of concern and reducing offending.

3. Deliverables:

- a. Reduction in incidents of fly tipping and the cost of dealing with it;

- b. More pro-active response to enforcement, particularly around littering, fly tipping and dog fouling;
- c. More effective and coordinated responses to incidents of anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance.

Waverley Borough Council's Proposals:

- 4. Waverley Borough Council is committed to improving its role in environmental and anti-social behaviour enforcement. Officers across the local authority have enforcement roles to varying degrees and the Joint Enforcement Team approach provides the opportunity to enable these different staff to work more closely together with the Police and other agencies, gain mutual support, develop their knowledge and skills and confidence in taking enforcement action. This should be achieved without the need to relocate or co-locate staff and agencies further than they are already co-located.
- 5. Surrey Police are also committed to more effective joint working with Surrey's Borough and District Councils to bring all partners together with a common goal to reduce environmental crime and anti-social behaviour and to provide a comprehensive and responsive service to improve the quality of life of our communities.
- 6. Waverley Borough Council has introduced a new post of Environmental Enforcement Officer and realigned staff within the Environmental Services Team to create the hub of a joint enforcement team. The Environmental Enforcement Officer will devote 75% of their time to enforcement and 25% to Monitoring the performance of front line services including contractors working on Waverley's behalf. The three officers within the team will devote 40% of their time to enforcement and 60% to monitoring front line services. This will result in 1.95 full time equivalent officers devoted to environmental enforcement.
- 7. Officers in the Environmental Protection Team within the Environmental Health Service who routinely deal with noise complaints and pollution and nuisance issues which often cause neighbour disputes will also feed into the Enforcement Hub. The team also deal with a range of broader environmental issues such as air quality, contaminated land and pest control, but a significant element of the work of the 6.5 officers' time is dedicated to enforcement.
- 8. The six Tenancy and Estates Officers in the Housing Team work on an area basis and deal with day to day estate management issues as they arise and are supported by two intervention officers who will deal with more complex cases on neighbour disputes or anti-social behaviour. They will also be supported by the Environmental Protection Team in cases of noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour where it is appropriate for them to lead.
- 9. Planning Enforcement Officers can sometimes assist in situations where conditions of properties or land are considered to be 'detrimental to the amenity of the neighbourhood' and often work alongside Environmental Health and Housing Officers.
- 10. The Rangers in the Parks team also have a limited enforcement role in relation to fly tipping, nuisance and anti-social behaviour on park land.

11. An Enforcement Officers Group has been established within the Council with officers from Environmental Services, Environmental Health, Housing Estates Managers, Building Control Officers, Planning Enforcement Officers and Licensing Officers. This group will provide a forum for sharing good practice and joint working to identify enforcement approaches best suited to each situation and the most appropriate officer to take the lead in any particular instance.
12. This group will also identify enforcement training needs to equip officers for their enhanced enforcement role and coordinate that training and develop a team skilled in best practice.
13. The existing Community Safety Team will feed into this group and provide information, knowledge and expertise on enforcement issues. As the Enforcement Officers Group evolves it is envisaged that the Police and other agencies would be represented and able to contribute and benefit from this group.
14. It is essential that any additional resources are targeted at front line services and do not lead to additional overheads and back office costs. Key to the approach therefore will be to utilise existing arrangements and structures.
15. There is an existing Waverley Joint Action Group (JAG) working under the supervision of the Safer Waverley Partnership, which is attended by council officers, the Police and other agencies. This group maintains an overview of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and licensed premises. It also serves as the forum for raising and discussing operational issues and individual problem cases.
16. The JAG's role in coordinating a multi-agency response to complex issues will be enhanced. It will be developed further to ensure all services and agencies attend and bring issues requiring a multi-agency resolution to the table.
17. The Police will work with other partners in the JAG to identify joint initiatives to target issues of concern such as:
 - a. Waste / scrap carriers and fly tipping;
 - b. Licensing, taxis and alcohol;
 - c. Domestic burglary;
 - d. Anti-social / inconsiderate parking (around schools in particular);
 - e. Litter & Dog Fouling;
 - f. ASB Fireworks / Halloween
18. The Police and the Council will also further develop the use of the joint patrols such as the Street a Week initiative and the Environmental Visual Audits. As well as identifying issues and agreeing actions to deal with them these will also raise the visibility of the Police and the Council in the community further adding to community reassurance.
19. There is also a Community Incident Action Group which focuses on cases involving individuals, potentially requiring a multi-agency, partnership approach are brought for discussion.

20. The Police and the Council will also work to develop a Memorandum of understanding and Service Level agreement for the joint enforcement of environmental crime and dog control offences.
21. As the JET develops, it is anticipated that Council officers will undertake training and become accredited to use police powers to deal with Anti-social behaviour, disorder, various firework offences and alcohol offences.
22. Mobility and Visibility are key to raising the profile of Waverley's enforcement role and the proposal will include the provision of liveried vehicles for the core team which will be highly visible and demonstrate Waverley's presence in the community as well as increase mobility.
23. High visibility of officers in the community is also key and the Council is currently reviewing its branding on protective clothing and uniforms, with the intention of increasing visibility to again demonstrate Waverley's presence within the community and our partnership role with the Police in addressing environmental crime and anti-social behaviour.
24. Initial set up costs for the project will include the following:
 - a. Training and accreditation of key officers;
 - b. Branded protective clothing and uniforms for some officers;
 - c. Liveried vehicles for local authority staff;
 - d. Radios with GPS tracking;
 - e. Body mounted cameras;
 - f. Secure laptops Stationery and miscellaneous costs;
 - g. Marketing material.
25. Details of these costs are being refined for the submission of a bid to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Safety fund. It is expected that the bid for between £50,000 and £80,000 will be submitted by the end of November and, subject to approval of the funding, preparations for a launch from the 1 April 2017 will begin in December. This will include staff learning and development, purchase of uniforms and vehicles and the development and agreement of working procedures and practices.

Risk Assessment

26. There are a number of risks associated with this project which could affect its success.
 - a. Failure to engage existing staff and achieve the change of approach and 'culture' – existing staff will need encouragement and understand and accept the benefits of the new way of working. Any new staff will be recruited specifically to undertake the role;
 - b. We will not be able to control everything – There is a clear need to manage expectations and not commit to things that are beyond the resources available to the JET partnership;

- c. Learning from experience and mistakes – as experience elsewhere has shown it is not possible to get everything right from the start, it might be necessary to make changes as the project proceeds;
- d. Lack of resources after first year - This is a pilot project with one-off funding from the PCC to set it up for the first year. Both the Police and the Council will need to be committed to ensuring that resources are earmarked to continue with the initiative if it proves successful.

Financial Implications

27. The successful bid will secure between £50,000 and £80,000 to fund the set up costs of the initiative including the purchase of uniforms, vehicles and other equipment for use by existing staff. There will be ongoing revenue costs for insuring and operating the vehicles of approximately £2,000 per vehicle. Depending upon the level of funding received we anticipate purchasing two or three vehicles. Other ongoing costs for replacing uniforms and equipment will be met from existing budgets.

Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report at its meeting on 14 November and any comments will follow.

Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be given for the authority to enter into a joint enforcement initiative with partner agencies.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Richard Homewood

Telephone: 01483 523411

E-mail: richard.homewood@waverley.gov.uk