



Community Wardens

A review by the Overview Scrutiny Committee

March 2004

CONTENTS:

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Introduction**
- 1.2 Terms of reference**
- 1.3 Content of review**
- 1.4 Evidence gathering**
- 1.5 Recommendations**

2. Background

- 2.1 Community Wardens**
- 2.2 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's)**
- 2.3 Current position in Gravesham**
- 2.4 Overview of position within Kent**

3. Review

- 3.1 Community Wardens**
- 3.2 Wallis Park Warden Scheme**
- 3.3 Police**
- 3.4 Rural Wardens**
- 3.5 Town Centre Wardens**
- 3.6 Community Safety Accreditation Schemes (CSAS)**
- 3.7 Community Safety Street Team - Medway**

Appendix 1

Purpose / Job description of each Community Warden role currently employed within Gravesham

Appendix 2

Timetable of evidence gathering sessions

Appendix 3

Notes from evidence gathering meetings.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Members of the Overview Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of the various Community Wardens operating within communities.
- 1.2 The terms of reference of the Review were:

Identify the different types of community warden and their respective powers available to be, or currently, deployed within Kent;

Identify all funding sources for community wardens;

Identify, through consultation with the police and other representative community bodies, priority areas within Gravesham that could benefit from the deployment of community wardens / increased policing;

Examine the effectiveness of the rural warden operating in Higham;

Examine any specific advantages offered by the recently announced Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's).

- 1.3 The context in which the review was undertaken was to investigate the increasing number of various types of warden that have come into being in response to an increase in anti-social behaviour and to consider how community wardens might be best funded and deployed in Gravesham to assist the Police in dealing with low level crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.4 A number of evidence gathering meetings were held from September to November 2003. A total of 12 witnesses were interviewed representing Gravesham Borough Council, Kent County Council, Dartford Borough Council, Kent County Constabulary and the Perry Street Community Association (notes of these evidence gathering meetings, which have been agreed with the parties concerned, are attached at Appendix 3). Written evidence was taken from Medway Council regarding the Community Safety Street Team scheme.
- 1.5 The recommendations to the Cabinet are:-

General Recommendations

- 1.5.1 That in conjunction with the Police and KCC, a standardisation of warden training is developed to include core topics needed by all community wardens serving within our communities.
- 1.5.2 The Cabinet considers the introduction of a by-law banning the consumption of alcohol in public areas due to the correlation between the consumption of alcohol in the street and the occurrence of anti social behaviour.
- 1.5.3 Kent Police and the Home Office be advised that there is a strong public desire for uniformed police to patrol rural and urban areas,

particularly at night and Community Wardens should not be seen as a substitute for the police.

- 1.5.4 The Overview Scrutiny Committee would welcome an assurance for the provision of long term funding for community warden schemes that currently have short term financial backing thus giving the schemes greater credibility and raising public confidence.

Wallis Park Warden Scheme

- 1.5.5 The Housing Department at Gravesham Borough Council considers the provision of an office for the Wallis Park Wardens, providing both a local operational base and the ability to conduct confidential resident interviews.
- 1.5.6 That the Police are approached with a view to implementing regular meetings between the Supervisor Warden and senior police officers to discuss issues which have arisen from the wardens' duties that may benefit from police assistance/intervention, and to share information. Consideration should also be given to whether the regular meetings should be attended by representatives of other community wardens within Gravesham so as to share common experiences and good practice.
- 1.5.7 Further discussions be held between the Police and the Housing Department management so that more effective/efficient communication equipment can be provided to the wardens to facilitate the summoning of urgent assistance through telephone or radio contact.
- 1.5.8 The Overview Scrutiny Committee supports the extension of what appears (at this early stage) to be a successful concept to other blocks of Council flats subject to a formal review of the pilot scheme at its six month stage. A business plan should be drawn together which identifies the cost of such extension and funding sources.
- 1.5.9 The Overview Scrutiny Committee supports Superintendent Martin Hewitt's (Area Commander North Kent Police) view that there should be co-ordination between the police and all types of Community warden within Gravesham, potentially through the creation of activity co-ordination groups which could be linked into the community safety agenda.

Police

- 1.6.0 The Overview Scrutiny Committee supports the view of the Area Commander that the introduction of PCSO's in selected urban areas within Gravesham would be of assistance in combating anti social behaviour and provide a visible reassurance and act as the eyes and ears of the local communities that they would serve. The Committee is pleased to learn that during the course of its review both the Community Safety Panel and the Cabinet are minded to pursue the introduction of PCSO's.
- 1.6.1 Discussions should be held between members, officers and the Police to identify the most appropriate areas for the deployment of PCSO's. The Committee supports the general view which emerged from the review that the deployment of PCSO's in areas surrounding Perry Street, Kings Farm/Sun Lane, and Northcourt should be a priority.

However, it became clear during the course of the review that each ward has its own particular problems and a review will need to be undertaken in order to place the PCSO's effectively.

Rural Wardens

- 1.6.2 Kent County Council is asked to review /clarify the instructions it gives to Rural Wardens as to whether they should operate in the evenings where there is a clear indication from the local communities they serve that this would be beneficial.
- 1.6.3 Kent County Council considers extending their Rural Warden scheme to the semi-rural communities of Chalk & Istead Rise.
- 1.6.4 Kent County Council be requested to consider whether their programme of Rural Wardens could be extended to include deployment of such within urban areas such as those in Gravesham suffering from anti social behaviour.

Town Centre Wardens

- 1.6.5 Consideration be given to changing the job title of the Town Centre Wardens to a title which more appropriately reflects their role as town centre ambassadors/information points, thus avoiding confusion with the enforcement role of the police town centre beat officers.
- 1.6.6 Discussions should be held between the Police, G Safe and Gravesham Borough Council to clarify the respective roles of Town Centre Wardens, police personnel employed within the town centre and determine whether the possible introduction of PCSO's would be helpful or have the potential for creating a confusing overlap of responsibilities.

Community Safety Accreditation Schemes (CSAS)

- 1.6.7 An appraisal of the CSAS should be the subject of a follow-up review once the substantive report has received approval by Cabinet/Council.

Community Safety Street Team – Medway

- 1.6.8 When considering further the introduction of PCSO's, the police officers responsible and the responsible Cabinet member examine the Community Safety Street Team at Medway to see if any aspects would confer advantages to Gravesham.

2 . Background

2.1 Community Wardens

The emergence of community wardens into our communities has occurred in response to rising levels of anti-social behaviour, low level crime, people's fear / perception of crime, and a general lack of police on the beat. The introduction of community wardens has occurred in a fragmented fashion resulting in varying types of warden patrolling the streets. These wardens have all received different types and amounts of training as well as having varying powers (some have no powers).

2.2 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's)

PCSO's are a very recent addition to the police force. In the early part of 2003, 18 were recruited by Kent Police and deployed into joint projects in each of the nine police areas to work with families of persistent offenders and newly released prisoners.

The Home Office originally awarded Kent police funding for 45 new PCSO's (the Home Office pays 50 per cent of the cost towards each PCSO) with match funding being provided by a variety of sources including KCC, Medway Unitary Authority, district councils, parishes, schools, town centre partnerships and the private sector. The PCSO's are then deployed in an area from where the partnership funding has been provided. The PCSO's funded by Kent County Council have been deployed in various boroughs / districts throughout Kent.

Of the new PCSO's, 35 will work in urban areas across Kent and 10 will join the Rural Safety Partnership. They will perform a variety of tasks including patrolling problem areas, working with schools, and tackling low-level and anti-social behaviour. The aim of PCSO's is to improve the quality of life for Kent residents and increase their confidence in the safety of their local communities.

The Borough of Gravesham currently does not have any PCSO's working within its boundaries as none of the PCSO's funded by Kent County Council have been placed in the Gravesham area. Prior to this Gravesham Borough Council originally decided not to fund any PCSO's but has instead adopted the warden scheme being run in the Wallis Park area. However the current position in respect of deploying PCSO's within the borough has changed.

2.3 Current position in Gravesham

Currently within the borough there are three types of community warden, these are:

- Wallis Park Warden Scheme
- Town Centre Wardens
- Rural Wardens

Type of warden:	Number of Wardens:	Based:	Hours of work:	Funded by:
Wallis Park Warden Scheme	5 (of which one is a senior warden)	In the Wallis Park area	4 nights on / 4 nights off 4pm – 2am (40 hours)	URBAN funding until July 2004 and from the Housing Revenue Account from Gravesham Borough Council. The Police are providing free training.
Town Centre Warden	2	Town Centre	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 7.30 am – 6 pm Wed & Sat 9 am – 5 pm Further details shown under title Town Centre Wardens	1 funded by GBC, this funding is ongoing. 1 funded by SRB 4, this was available until Dec 2003. GBC will fund the role until April 2004 and this may continue after this date.
Rural Wardens	2	1 in Higham 1 in Meopham	37 hours per week – shifts are decided according to activities occurring in the area they serve.	Ongoing funding by KCC

Appendix 1 to the report shows the purpose / job description of each of the above wardens.

2.4 Overview of position within Kent in Sep 2003

- 1) This is information received from each individual Council at one point in time and they may not now include all the wardens and PCSO's that they have in their area.
- 2) The purpose of the job roles of the KCC wardens and PCSO's are explained in within Appendix 1 to the report.

Name of Council	Type of wardens in post	Where they are based	How they are funded	Main Responsibilities / powers
Canterbury City Council	1)They have a rural warden scheme that is separate to the KCC scheme. 2)They also have in place KCC Rural Wardens but unsure of how many.	In the Parishes	1)£45,000 from Home Office £45,000 from HRA £20,000 from parish precepts 2) KCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Safety; ➤ information source police, council & community; ➤ Responding to minor antisocial behaviour; ➤ Visiting victims of crime & vulnerable residents
Dartford BC	1) 1 Town centre warden 2) 1 KCC Rural Warden 3) 7 PCSO's	1) 1in the town centre area 2) 1 that covers 2 parishes 3) 5 are being placed in rural areas and 2 will be in the town centre	1) Dartford BC and ODPM 2) KCC 3) 50 per cent from the Home Office for each PCSO. 4 of The PCSO's are being part funded by KCC and 3 are part fund by Dartford Borough Council.	The town centre warden does not have any powers PCSO powers shown in section 3.3 to the review
Medway	Will soon have 9 Community Safety Street Team Officers in post	Medway has been divided into 3 areas and 3 officers work in each area.	6 are funded through mainstream council community safety funding, the other 3 come from Building Safer Communities Funding, a local housing provider and from regeneration monies targeted towards the regeneration of Chatham town centre. These funding sources	No legal powers at present, this may change following the PCSO pilot.

			cover the salary and equipment costs for a post and is for a period of three years.	
Sevenoaks DC	1) Community Warden 2) KCC Rural Warden	1) Edenbridge inc housing estates, high street and park areas. 2) West Kingsdown area	1) Sevenoaks DC, housing associations and gov't funding. 2) KCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Patrolling area ➤ Removing graffiti ➤ Daily contact with police ➤ Arrange removal of flytipping ➤ Eyes and ears role
Shepway BC	1) interviewing for a PCSO and looking at the possibility of getting a second 2) KCC Rural Warden	1) main problem housing estate and partly in the town centre. 2) In the rural areas	1) They stated that they also receive funding from Kent police, although PCSO's are funded by the Home Office with match funding from elsewhere. 2) KCC	1) PCSO powers shown in section 3.3 to the review.
Tonbridge & Malling	1) 1 Parish Warden 2) 2 KCC Rural Wardens 3) 4 PCSO's	1) Hadlow 2) 1 covers Borough Green and 1 covers Burham Wouldham & Eccles 3) 2 in Snodland and 2 in Kings Hill	1) Parish Council 2) KCC 3) Parishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parish warden - eyes and ears role <p>PCSO powers shown in section 3.3 to the review</p>
Tunbridge Wells	1) 2 Civic Wardens 2) 2 KCC Rural Wardens 3) 4 PCSO's to be deployed	1) Borough wide 2) 1 Hawkhurst & 1 in Cranbrook	1) Environmental Services 2) KCC & the Community Safety Partnership 3) 2 x PCSO's match funding from TWBC and 2 x match funding from KCC.	1 & 2) No specific Powers 3) PCSO powers shown in section 3.3 to the review

3. Review

3.1 Community Wardens

Having taken evidence from a number of witnesses it became apparent that there was a large disparity in the type and amount of training given to the various Community Wardens operating within our communities. It is acknowledged that the Community Wardens working in the Wallis Park area have a different role and person specification to the Rural Warden operating in Higham for example, there are some key skills that are essential to all community warden roles and a standardisation of training would give greater clarity to their roles and enhance their effectiveness.

It was widely acknowledged that in both rural and urban areas a large proportion of anti-social behaviour was caused as a result of alcohol consumption. Some local off-licences have been selling alcohol to under aged youths as they are often intimidated by these groups. Under age youths also obtain alcohol from home or by asking people over the age of 18 to purchase the drinks on their behalf. It was felt that a by-law banning the consumption of alcohol in public places may go some way to alleviating the problems associated with this trend.

During interviews with witnesses that represented urban areas, it was clear that the public felt a highly visible uniformed presence would aid in allaying their fear of crime. This approach has been taken within the Borough of Dartford where it was hoped that the deployment of PCSO's would demonstrate the effectiveness of community based policing over the intelligence led policing which has prevailed over the last few years. However concerns were raised that the introduction of PCSO's would further decrease the current levels of police presence as they may be viewed as a substitute to the police.

Funding

Many of the Community Wardens currently in operation have finite funding. In most cases new funding would be sought or reapplied for but new funding grants were not guaranteed. In respect of PCSO's Home Office funding was available for three years although Supt Hewitt stated that there was a perception that funding for PCSO's would continue past this period.

Within Gravesham the Wallis Park Wardens have received funding from the Housing Revenue Account and Urban. Funding from Urban will go towards covering costs for one year (until July 2004). After this it has been proposed that funding is met wholly from the Housing Revenue Account.

One of the Town Centre Wardens was funded by SRB4 funding and this ended December 2003. Funding for the post has not been found and the Council has now agreed to fund the post from December 2003 until March 31 2004 and a budget allocation has been made from 1 April 2004 but the outcome of this is dependant on the budget process.

Recommendations:

- 1.5.1 **That in conjunction with the Police and KCC, a standardisation of warden training is developed to include core topics needed by all community wardens serving within our communities.**

- 1.5.2 The Cabinet considers the introduction of a by-law banning the consumption of alcohol in public areas due to the correlation between consumption of alcohol in the street and the occurrence of anti social behaviour.**
- 1.5.3 Kent Police and the Home Office be advised that there is a strong public desire for uniformed police to patrol rural and urban areas, particularly at night and Community Wardens should not be seen as a substitute for the police.**
- 1.5.4 The Overview Scrutiny Committee would welcome an assurance for the provision of long term funding for community warden schemes that currently have short term financial backing thus giving the schemes greater credibility and raising public confidence.**

3.2 Wallis Park Warden Scheme

At the point of taking evidence from The Head of Housing Services and the Supervisor Warden from the Wallis Park Community Warden Scheme the project had only been in operation for several weeks. However it appeared that the Wardens already had some impact on the estate's community and environment. On a general basis the warden's role is to deal with a range of tasks including daily litter sweeps, knocking on the doors of vulnerable people in order to make contact with them, reassure them and gain their trust and confidence. They also handout advice leaflets regarding all sorts of issues such as alcohol and drug abuse as well as dealing with anti-social behaviour.

The wardens make a point of talking to everyone on the estate. This not only builds trust between the wardens and residents but if a resident has some information to report to a warden, perhaps regarding other people on the estate, suspicions of other residents will not be raised. Due to the wardens having an information gathering and problem solving role, the wardens felt that it would be useful for one of the flats to be turned into an office so that residents can speak to the wardens in a confidential area, improving communications and enhancing their effectiveness.

The wardens at Wallis Park are considered part of the Extended Police Family and as such pass on and share information with the Police. It was suggested that regular meetings with the police at a senior level would be beneficial in order to keep the police abreast of the issues, problems and achievements on the estate. Further to this it was considered useful for the wardens, along with others, to be linked into the Community Safety Agenda. Supt Hewitt stated that this would help to rationalise resources so that the many wardens that were currently employed could be drawn together. Activity co-ordination groups could help to achieve this by bringing together wardens, other agencies and stakeholders who could bring issues and share common experiences and good practice with the group.

In respect of direct communications with the Police the wardens at Wallis Park were initially to be issued with police style radios. However due to issues relating to Data Protection this plan had to be abandoned. When urgent assistance is required the wardens now rely on mobile telephones to summon help and at times there had been problems with the level of support received from the police, although when the police were called to an incident they do respond on most occasions "quite quickly". It had been the case that when a response has been needed quickly other wardens and workers from the

Council have attended promptly; subsequently radios were being purchased for the wardens, although these would not be connected to the police radio system. There was a view that direct communications with the Police need to be improved in order to ensure that the wardens can achieve their aims and fulfil their role safely.

The success of the wardens' scheme will be evaluated by the Housing Department and it will be on this evaluation that a decision will be made whether to continue to fund and support the scheme. Funds have been set aside for two more wardens who will be fully funded by the Council and would also have use of a van. The two new wardens which have not yet been employed will be part of Supervisor Warden's team and cover the whole of the borough.

Recommendations:

- 1.5.5 The Housing Department at Gravesham Borough Council the provision of an office for the Wallis Park Wardens, providing both a local operational base and the ability to conduct confidential resident interviews.**
- 1.5.6 That the Police are approached with a view to implementing regular meetings between the Supervisor Warden and senior police officers to discuss issues which have arisen from the warden's duties that may benefit from police assistance/intervention, and to share information. Consideration should also be given to whether the regular meetings should be attended by representatives of other community wardens within Gravesham so as to share common experiences and good practise.**
- 1.5.7 Further discussions be held between the Police and the Housing Department management so that more effective / efficient communication equipment can be provided to the wardens to facilitate the summoning of urgent assistance through telephone or radio contact.**
- 1.5.8 The Overview Scrutiny Committee supports the extension of what appears (at this early stage) to be a successful concept to other blocks of Council flats subject to a formal review of the pilot scheme at its six month stage. A business plan should be drawn together which identifies the cost of such extension and funding sources.**
- 1.5.9 The Overview Scrutiny Committee supports Superintendent Martin Hewitt's (Area Commander North Kent Police) view that there should be co-ordination between the police and all types of Community warden within Gravesham, potentially through the creation of activity co-ordination groups which could be linked into the community safety agenda.**

3.3 Police

It is proposed that PCSO's will have extended powers over other wardens due to being employed directly by the police, although it was noted that

PCSO's have a very specific role and their powers would not be extended to that of a police officer.

PCSO's would be instrumental in tackling antisocial behaviour and provide a highly visible presence which would help in allaying people's fear of crime. Within Dartford it was hoped that the PCSO's deployed within the town centre would be able to look for the root of trouble as it begins in the early part of the evening for example, and enable them to provide the police with information on potential problems. Additionally PCSO's would be dedicated to a geographical area allowing them to integrate within the community creating familiarity.

Currently there were no PCSO's deployed within the Borough of Gravesham. However at the Cabinet meeting held on 24 November 2003 a decision was taken to bid for funding of PCSO's to operate within Gravesham. Fifty per cent (approximately £15,000 per annum) of the funding for a PCSO comes from the Home Office and this funding is currently available for a three year period. The balance of the funding can come from a variety of sources such as local authorities, other agencies and businesses for example. The police pay for training, clothing and other essential equipment.

Details regarding the number of PCSO's Gravesham Borough Council will be bidding for and where they will be geographically based has not yet been confirmed. The budget will reflect the change in priorities to include the funding of PCSO's although other potential sources of match funding will be investigated.

The Superintendent stated that the ideal would be to extend the dedicated beat officer scheme that is in operation in Kings Farm however, the amount of resources available to the Police limits this and therefore supports the introduction of PCSO's into the borough. It was agreed that the urban areas that may benefit from the introduction of PCSO's are Perry Street, Northcourt and the Sun Lane / Kings Farm areas, due to gaps in dedicated policing. It was suggested that PCSO's maybe more effective in an area with higher rates of low-level crime and anti-social behaviour than a warden, due to PCSO's having the powers listed below and direct radio communication with the Police.

Powers given to PCSO's

1. Issue of Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling, littering and riding on footpaths.
2. Power to request the name and address of a person acting in an anti-social manner.
3. Power to request a person to stop drinking in a designated public area and to surrender open containers of alcohol.
4. Power to confiscate alcohol – young persons.
5. Power to confiscate cigarettes and tobacco products from young people.
6. Power of entry to save life or limb, or to prevent serious damage to property.
7. Power to seize vehicles used to cause alarm and distress.

8. Power to require removal of abandoned vehicles.
9. Power to stop vehicles for the purpose of a road check (Section 4 PACE road check authorised by Superintendent – serious arrestable offence.
10. Power to maintain and enforce a cordoned area established under Terrorism Act.
11. Power to stop and search vehicles and thing carried by driver/passengers under Terrorism Action and things carried by pedestrians.

Recommendations:

1.6.0 The Overview Scrutiny Committee supports the view of the Area Commander that the introduction of PCSO's in selected urban areas within Gravesham would be of assistance in combating anti social behaviour and provide a visible reassurance and act as the eyes and ears of the local communities that they would serve. The Committee is pleased to learn that during the course of its review both the Community Safety Panel and the Cabinet are minded to pursue the introduction of PCSO's.

1.6.1 Discussions should be held between members, officers and the Police to identify the most appropriate areas for the deployment of PCSO's. The Committee supports the general view which emerged from the review that the deployment of PCSO's in areas surrounding Perry Street, Kings Farm/Sun Lane, and Northcourt should be a priority. Albeit acknowledging that during the course of the review that each ward has its own particular problems and a review will need to be undertaken in order to place the PCSO's effectively.

3.4 Rural Wardens

Rural communities had noticed a decline in visible policing from their areas and felt as though they had been forgotten. Despite crime figures coming down by as much as 50 per cent for car crime and burglary, people still had a fear of crime. The Rural Warden Scheme was introduced by KCC in order to fill this gap and to try and combat anti-social behaviour, graffiti and crimes that affected residents' quality of life. The rural wardens formed part of a rural partnership with each warden being partnered with a police officer who would respond quickly when called to an incident that warranted a police presence.

The evidence gathering sessions reflected the popularity of the rural warden scheme generally. However, the issue of the wardens working hours was raised. The Rural Wardens are contracted to work 37 hours per week, and it was clear that they primarily worked between the hours of 9am to 5pm. The wardens did state that these 37 hours were flexible and they did change their shifts when specific events warranted it so that they would be on duty at that time. Residents did feel that most anti-social behaviour occurred in the evenings when the wardens were generally off duty. In order for the Rural Wardens to work most effectively it may be necessary to review the wardens' contracts particularly in respect of their working hours to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

The Kent Rural Warden Scheme was piloted eighteen months ago and began with twelve wardens. This was expected to increase to one hundred rural wardens at the end of the four year period. Instead Rise and Chalk were raised as areas which may qualify for rural wardens and both areas do suffer from some anti-social behaviour problems. It was suggested that the deployment of a rural warden may help to alleviate some of the problems that occur in these areas and Kent County Council was currently looking into this issue.

The Committee also considered whether in the light of the high incidence of anti social behaviour in some of Gravesend's urban areas that the success of the Kent County Council Warden Scheme could be transferred to such areas.

Recommendations:

1.6.2 Kent County Council is asked to review /clarify the instructions it gives to Rural Wardens as to whether they should operate in the evenings where there is a clear indication from the local communities they serve that this would be beneficial.

1.6.3 Kent County Council considers extending their Rural Warden scheme to the semi-rural communities of Chalk & Istead Rise.

1.6.4 Kent County Council be requested to consider whether their programme of Rural Wardens could be extended to include deployment of such within urban areas such as those in Gravesham suffering from anti social behaviour.

3.5 Town Centre Wardens

The two town centre wardens were highlighted by Supt Hewitt as a good example of how wardens can be placed in an area where a visible presence is needed and furthermore they had a clearly defined role. These wardens were employed as the eyes and ears of the town centre and are seen as the public face / ambassador of the Council by both the public and businesses. However the wardens had on many occasions found themselves going beyond their remit and taking on a policing type role due to the general lack of policing within the town centre area. It was suggested that a job title containing the word warden could be considered as an enforcement / policing type role by the public, businesses and other agencies alike and that it maybe appropriate to change their job title to better reflect their role within the community.

The common feature that arose throughout the evidence gathering sessions relating to problems of communication was also raised whilst interviewing witnesses involved with town centre security. Many positives have been gained from the Town Centre Wardens as they provide local knowledge to the police and are seen as local problem solvers. A co-ordination of efforts was needed between the police, G-safe and Gravesham Borough Council to understand the different roles they each play in making the town centre a safer environment and to realise any gaps or possible overlapping of responsibilities.

Recommendations:

1.6.5 Consideration be given to changing the job title of the Town Centre Wardens to a title which more appropriately reflects their role as town centre ambassadors/information points, thus

avoiding confusion with the enforcement role of the police town centre beat officers.

1.6.6 Discussions should be held between the Police, G Safe and Gravesham Borough Council to clarify the respective roles of Town Centre Wardens, police personnel employed within the town centre and whether the possible introduction of PCSO's would be helpful or have the potential for creating a confusing overlap of responsibilities.

3.6 Community Safety Accreditation Schemes (CSAS)

The Police Reform Act enables Chief Officers to accredit and quality assure other members of the extended police family who are not directly employed by the police.

Towards the end of this review it has become known that this is being considered by the Kent Police Authority which could potentially allow the accreditation of local authority warden schemes and a host of other non local authority schemes such as those operated by housing associations.

Such accreditation would give rise to a number of issues including the allocation of powers not currently enjoyed or seen as necessary or helpful by some local authority wardens and thus the Committee view is that the appraisal of this issue should be the subject of a follow-up review once the substantive report has received approval by Cabinet/Council.

Recommendation:

1.6.7 An appraisal of the CSAS should be the subject of a follow-up review once the substantive report has received approval by Cabinet/Council.

3.7 Community Safety Street Team.

This scheme is particular to the Medway Unitary Authority, which has identified the need for a highly visible uniformed presence to tackle low level anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime. There are 9 street team officers, of which 6 are council funded and 3 from other sources.

The team brief is very akin to that of the Wallis Park Wardens except that they operate over a wider area. They report to control by means of hand held computers. The working week runs from Tuesday to Saturday inclusive, starting at 2.30 pm. and finishing at 10.30 pm. Evening patrols are conducted in pairs. Thus, they cover the anticipated period of maximum anti-social behaviour. The Medway Council are seeking accreditation for this scheme.

Recommendation:

1.6.8 When considering further the introduction of PCSO's, the police officers responsible and the responsible Cabinet member examine the Community Safety Street Team at Medway to see if any aspects would confer any advantages to Gravesham.

Appendix 1

Community Wardens – Wallis Park Area

Purpose of role:

To establish a level of trust and understanding with local residents;

To give the community a sense of belonging and encourage the residents to become involved via the Tenants' group so they have a constructive input into the decisions that will affect them.

To reduce crime level and the fear of crime and generally improve the quality of life for the residents on the estate, which has been designated an area of social deprivation.

To increase female participation in employment.

To increase the number of 16/17 year olds accessing education.

To reduce the number of school exclusions on the estate.

To reduce the number of racial incidents that take place and to be in a position that the council can positively re-house people from the black and ethnic minority community.

To improve the sustainability of the estate generally.

To achieve a settled and supported community on the estate.

Town Centre Wardens

Shift Pattern

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Warden 1	7.30 – 3.30	7.30 – 3.30	9.00 – 5.00	7.30 – 3.30	7.30 – 3.30	
Warden 2	10.00 – 6.00	10.00 – 6.00		10.00 – 6.00	10.00 – 6.00	9.00 – 5.00

Purpose of Role:

To ensure that the day to day cleansing and maintenance of the fabric and functioning of the town centre is carried out.

In conjunction with others, promote the Council's town centre activities to visitors and businesses.

To act as the eyes and ears of the Council's Town Centre Team as the day to day link with a variety of agencies and users of the town centre.

Job summary

To provide advice, including directions, help with the elderly, parent and child, providing a friendly fact for visitors.

To participate in the practical management of the cleansing regime in the town centre area so as to ensure that items of cleansing requiring attention are dealt with promptly by liaising with appropriate staff whilst maintaining a log of incidents dealt with.

To participate in the practical management of maintenance and repairs in the town centre area so as to ensure that maintenance items requiring attention are reported to the responsible sections, with progress being monitored and to assist with establishing enhanced maintenance schemes. Maintain a log of incidents dealt with.

To liaise with other town centre stewards, including Gatekeepers and Car Park Inspectors in order to provide a co-ordinated approach to the Council's town centre activities.

To keep an eye on improvements and take advice to protect the considerable investment being made.

To assist with the town centre administration, such as chasing the health check, delivering TCI Times, footfall surveys and seeking funding contributions for specific projects.

To assist with events and promotions being held in the Town Centre.

To assist in busy periods other town centre stewards to ensure the smooth operation of the town centre functions.

To assist with the administration and operation of Shopmobility.

To assist in the exercise of control over trading on the public highway.

To assist in the administering of advertising controls.

To provide advice and guidance to the community regarding all aspects of the town centre especially the pedestrianisation scheme and the Traffic Order that prohibits vehicles from entering the core areas at certain times.

To initiate action regarding contraventions of Town Centre Regulations police/traffic warden service accordingly.

A commitment and contribution to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is an essential requirement of the post.

The post holder will carry out all duties and activities having regard to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in accordance with any instructions from senior members of staff under that Act or any Council or Departmental Codes of Practice or Procedures.

Rural Wardens

Purpose of Role:

Engage and establish a robust relationship with the local rural community, organise and lead regular surgeries, listening to the concerns of local residents with regard to local crime and anti-social behaviour and other issues, providing advice and agreeing a course of action in order to provide a preventative problem-solving approach to the reduction of community crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues.

To become actively engaged in providing local resources for the community e.g. Mini-bus driving, linking with local schools, developing services for the vulnerable. Establishing firm service delivery links with Kent County Council local business units and other local agencies.

Provide information on the range of services provided by Kent County Council in order to enable rural residents to fully access Kent County Council services (e.g. Social Services, Youth and Community, Education, Arts and Libraries, Trading Standards and dealing with abandoned vehicles) as well as contact numbers for district councils and other local agencies.

Establish community links through liaison with local community forums, agencies and organisation (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch, Victim Support, local housing office, police, health workers etc); attend local Parish Council meetings and the Local Responsible Authority for Crime Reduction in order to encourage social inclusion.

Respond to reported incidents of anti-social behaviour and provide a rapid response to residents in times of crisis, mediating where possible, making referrals to the Police and other appropriate agencies and acting as Professional Witness for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders when required, to ensure that problems are dealt with in a speedy manner in order to prevent further disruption.

Establish a visible presence within the rural community location, in conjunction with Rural Constables to provide a high level of public reassurance. Maintain an awareness of problems and issues within the local community relating to community safety and access to services. (E.g. burned-out vehicles, vandalism, graffiti, abandoned buildings etc).

Support victims of crime, elderly and vulnerable members of the Community, through home visits, providing simple crime prevention advice and liaising with CrimeStoppers, Victim Support & the Handyvan Scheme to ensure that they are aware of the services available to them and to reduce their fears and perceptions of crime.

Assist in the delivery and monitoring of crime reduction initiatives within the rural community in liaison with Rural Constables to ensure that a consistent approach to crime prevention takes place and that the Rural Partnership Initiative objectives are fulfilled.

Complete regular reports, in conjunction with Rural Constables, concerning levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, e.g. vandalism, graffiti, vulnerable properties etc, which will be made available to local residents and partner agencies, in order to provide valid information on which future decisions concerning crime reduction strategies can be based.

Appendix 2

Date and time	Venue	Who we interviewed
4 September - 6.30 pm	Civic Centre	Mr A Chequers, Head of Housing Services Mr D Lacey, Supervisor Warden, Wallis Park
30 September – 7 pm	Civic Centre	Supt Martin Hewitt (Area Commander, North Kent Police)
13 October – 4 pm	Civic Centre	Mr Mike Hill, Lead Member for Community Safety at KCC followed by Mr Kevin Murison Chairman of Perry St Community Association
28 October – 2 pm	Higham Memorial Hall, Higham. Map enclosed	Higham PC, Meopham PC, Steve Enwright Rural Warden for Higham, Steve Poile, Rural Warden for Meopham
4 November – 5.15 pm	Towncentric, near St Georges Church	Mr T Moore, Town Centre Warden, Andrew Tulley from G Safe, Paul Harrison Community Safety Officer
19 November – 6 pm	Civic Centre	Cllr Kite, Dartford Borough Council – responsible for police liaison and anti-social behaviour Cllr Allen, Dartford Borough Council – responsible for Community Safety Services, well being and Social Inclusion.

Written evidence was also taken from Medway Unitary Authority.

Appendix 3

Overview Scrutiny

<u>Review:</u>	Community Wardens
<u>Venue:</u>	Civic Centre, Gravesend - 4 September 2003 6:30pm
<u>Present:</u>	Councillor M V Snelling (Chair) Councillors: R Bowman K Jones C Jupp C Meredith R Parker
<u>In Attendance:</u>	Mrs S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services Mr D Finch, Corporate Policy Officer Miss L Dell, Democratic Services
<u>Interviewees:</u>	Mr A Chequers, Head of Housing Services Mr D Lacey, Supervisor Warden, Wallis Park Area

Summary of evidence

Introduction

Members were given an introduction by the Head of Housing Services regarding the community warden scheme in the Wallis Park area. The new initiative which included four wardens and one supervisor warden had been funded by Gravesend Borough Council's Housing Revenue Account and match funding from Urban which was available for one year from when the wardens began their role. Further to this funds had been set aside for two more wardens who would be fully funded by the Council and would also have use of a van. These two new wardens which have not yet been employed would be part of Mr Lacey's, (Warden Supervisor) team and would be able to cover the whole of the borough.

The success of the wardens scheme would be evaluated by the Housing Department and it would be on this evaluation that a decision will be made whether to continue to fund and support the scheme.

Mr D Lacey, Supervisor Warden, Wallis Park Area

Mr Lacey's previous experience had consisted of eight years in the British Army. He had also worked for the diplomatic service and prior to taking on the role as Supervisor Warden was a security manager at Bluewater. It was noted that the wardens also working in the Wallis Park area all had previous customer service experience.

Work and achievements by wardens at Wallis Park

The wardens deal with a range of tasks including daily litter sweeps, knocking on the doors of vulnerable people and speaking to them, giving out advice leaflets regarding all sorts of issues such as alcohol abuse and drug abuse as well as dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour.

The wardens had started up a football team to which many of the children on the estate attend. One success of the football team has been the participation of children from one family that had been suffering racial abuse. The family were originally referred to the wardens by the Racial Equality Council and the participation of the family's children in the team was enabling them to integrate into the community.

The wardens also rallied the support of nine volunteers to clear the garages as well as involving children on litter sweeps of the estate.

The wardens had also identified an intimidating group of men known within the estate as the balcony boys. This group, aged between 20 and 45, regularly occupied the balconies of Wallis Park consuming alcohol then discarding empty cans over the balconies and onto the ground. Many residents within the estate found this group intimidating, however the wardens challenged this group and following this progress has been made. The balcony boys now attend the regular task force meetings that are held for residents, as well as assist the wardens on the litter sweeps.

The wardens make a point of talking to everyone on the estate. This not only builds on trust between the wardens and residents but if someone has something they wish to tell a warden, perhaps regarding other people on the estate suspicions of other residents will not be raised.

The physical appearance of the estate had also improved due to initiatives such as the daily litter sweep but also due to anti-graffiti paint which has been used within Wallis Park. In areas where graffiti has been found the wardens have been photographing the graffiti and are creating a data base of tags.

The Hive

The Off Licence based within the shopping area of The Hive has tended to draw residents within the areas to drink in that vicinity. It is widely acknowledged that a high proportion of anti-social behaviour is as a result of alcohol consumption. As a result the wardens have been encouraging the shopkeeper to ask those drinking to move on.

Difficulties Wardens have encountered

Mr Lacey suggested that there were problems with the level of support received from the police, although when the police were called to an incident they responded quite quickly. Further to this Mr Lacey expressed disappointment that the original plan to have a police -style or issue radios was ditched at last moment because of fears over Data Protection.

Mr Lacey was asked to compile a wish list which would enable him and his team to work more effectively:-

- That one of the flats be turned into an office so that residents can come down and speak to the wardens in a confidential area and thus improving communications;

- To have certain extra equipment supplied by the police such as police incident note pads;
- Regular meetings with the police at Superintendent Martin Hewitt's level, for example.

Questions:

Are you encouraging the balcony boys to seek employment?

Two of the balcony boys were previously tyre fitters and a relative of one of the wardens works at SMC Ford in Northfleet, which has a tyre fitting facility, and both will be having interviews for work placements there.

How do you deal with having no powers?

In times when a response is needed quickly other wardens and workers from the Council have attended an incident promptly and subsequently radios were now being purchased for the wardens, although these would not be connected to the police radio system.

What training did you receive?

The Wardens were trained by Kent police, this included 2 days first aid training, 2 days shadowing Rural Wardens, training on conflict management and how to take calls.

How have you found responses from the police, KCC, social services and other agencies?

The wardens have the mobile phone number of the polices' patrol leader and once the police have been contacted they respond by coming straight away.

Would it help to have powers of arrest?

Yes it probably would help but Mr Lacey doubted that it would make a huge difference as any person powers still allowed the wardens to make a citizens arrest.

Have the wardens had any contact with the rural wardens?

Yes, during the training period they shadowed Higham's rural warden. It was felt that the rural wardens received a better response from the police as they work alone.

Were the problems experienced in the Wallis Park area now being exported to other areas?

No, it was felt the problems were not being exported but things were improving within the Wallis Park area as people were taking more pride in the area in which they live.

Overview Scrutiny

<u>Review:</u>	Community Wardens
<u>Venue:</u>	Civic Centre, Gravesend - 30 September 2003 - 7pm
<u>Present:</u>	Councillor M V Snelling (Chair) Councillors: R Bowman K Jones G Lambton R Parker D Robinson
<u>In Attendance:</u>	Mrs S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services Miss L Dell, Democratic Services
<u>Interviewees:</u>	Superintendent M Hewitt (Area Commander)

Summary of evidence

Members were given a presentation by Superintendent Hewitt regarding Community Wardens. The presentation covered the following issues:-

The extended police family

Superintendent Hewitt described wardens as the extended police family and outlined the current position regarding wardens within Gravesham. It was stated that the wardens in Wallis Park for example could engage the community at a level which was less confrontational than the police themselves as they were locally based and had become known within the community.

The two town centre wardens were highlighted as a good example of how wardens can be placed in an area where visible presence is needed and furthermore they had a clearly defined role. Additionally, within the borough there were two more wardens who were geographically based within Higham and Meopham. In the wider picture there were other enforcement staff such as park rangers and parking attendants that contributed to problem solving.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's)

PCSO's received 50 per cent funding from the Home Office with a further 50 per cent funding coming from another source (50 per cent was approximately £14,500 per annum) with the police paying for training, clothing and other essential equipment. Currently PCSO's had funding for 3 years, however there was a perception that funding for PCSO's would continue past this period. Currently Gravesham did not have any (PCSO's).

PCSO's have extended powers over other wardens due to them being employed directly by the police, although it was noted that PCSO's should have a very specific role and their powers would not be extended to that of a police officer. PCSO's would be instrumental in providing a high degree of visibility which would go towards allaying peoples fear of crime. These officers would be dedicated to a geographical area allowing them to integrate within the community creating familiarity.

Key issues for wardens

The various types of wardens currently in existence came into being in a very fragmented fashion and greater benefit could be achieved from community wardens as a whole than currently received at present. In order to achieve this, greater clarity of the purpose/role of wardens was required for wardens not employed by the police. Adequate supervision and support was needed as currently there were gaps in both these areas and lack of communication was highlighted as one of the major obstacles that needed to be overcome.

Many positives could be gained from wardens as they could provide lots of local knowledge to the police and they should be seen as local problem solvers. Co-ordination of efforts was needed between the police and wardens and it was suggested that these individuals should be linked into the community safety agenda.

The future

There was a need to rationalise resources so that the many wardens that were currently employed could be drawn together. It was suggested that activity co-ordination groups could help to achieve this by bringing together multi-agency parties, including stakeholders who could bring issues to the group. It could jointly be decided how problems are resolved and how these could best be resourced. The Superintendent stated that he would like more wardens and the introduction of PCSO's in the borough. Areas could be identified where they could be placed and how they could be supported.

Furthermore, North Kent has the most active special constabulary and 16,000 working hours were received from the special constabulary in the past year providing an extraordinary service and some of this service could be localised providing a multi-discipline team. New Ash Green was given as an example of this where this worked well with a dedicated constable as well as parish special officers and PCSO's.

In respect of the new Chief Constable for Kent it was believed that issues of local accountability for the police were going to come into the fore. Funding for the Crime and Disorder Partnership would go directly to Superintendent Hewitt and he would be accountable to the Government Office of the South East (GOSE).

Questions:

Having interviewed the supervisor warden from Wallis Park the wardens there felt they did not receive the amount of support from the police that they expected. How was this going to be resolved?

Staff in the police have been tasked to improve those links although there was not a current resident police officer in that area.

Currently we have a disjointed way of fighting crime. How do you plan on joining them up?

We need to develop how we co-ordinate all the different types of wardens with the police. Increased communication is one way of dealing with this.

PCSO's would provide a non-confrontational role, however sometime confrontation was needed. Would a PCSO be able to handle this?

A PCSO would probably call for police help but they would be able to act as eyes and ears and could gather evidence whilst the police were on their way to deal with a situation.

Areas such as Istead Rise have fallen between the stalls as they do not have a rural warden and although there is no major crime within the area residents are often faced with some anti-social behaviour. How could such an area such as Istead Rise be supported?

Currently there is a team for the rural area and this team should be able to deal with the type of disorder that is occurring in this area, although again a PCSO/warden could be very successful particularly if they were teamed up with an individual police officer. It was also suggested that a parish special constable could be good for this type of area.

Would communications be better if we had PCSO's within Gravesham?

Yes, they would have police radios. Wardens have not been issued with police radios due to security issues, although this is an issue that may be revisited. It is acknowledged that many wardens are working in isolation and this needed to be dealt with through greater co-ordination.

It seems as though if the police do not control the wardens then they will not receive the support a warden working for the police would receive. Is this the case?

No, this is not the case, but some rationalisation between all the different types of wardens and the police was needed, although there were difficulties because the wardens were separate employees and relationships between these wardens and the police needed to be improved.

It appears that there are many dedicated police officers within rural areas working alongside wardens where crime is relatively low. Would it not be better to have beat officers dedicated to areas with higher rates of crime and disorder?

There was a historical element to the placement of officers. If a placement officer is based within a certain area it would be difficult to take them away. It was acknowledged that the level of crime within urban and rural areas was different but as each beat officer had a great amount of investment they are able to deal with problems on the ground and this can work very well when there is a dedicated beat officer alongside a warden. It is hoped that more special constables could be developed to work in specific geographical areas. It was highlighted that the vast majority of effort is concentrated in those areas where there are the worst problems. Given the opportunity to extend a dedicated beat officer scheme such as is operated in Kings Farm this would happen. However, the amount of resources available limits this.

Information shown on slides from Supt Hewitt's presentation

<p>Slide 1</p> <p>“The extended police family” Superintendent Martin Hewitt North Kent Police</p>	<p>Slide 2</p> <p>Current position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supervisor + 3 at Wallis Park• Towncentric – 2• Meopham South – 1• Higham – 1• Other enforcement staff?
<p>Slide 3</p> <p>Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jointly funded• Extended Powers• High visibility• Geographically based• Employed, trained and managed by police• Community safety impact	<p>Slide 4</p> <p>Key issues for wardens and PCSO's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarity of purpose/role requirement• Sufficient training• Adequate supervision and support• Meaningful tasking• Co-ordination of effort• Performance management
<p>Slide 5</p> <p>The future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rationalisation of resources• Activity Co-ordination Group• Link to community safety plan/CDRP• Extension of coverage?• Multi-discipline “teams”	

Overview Scrutiny

<u>Review:</u>	Community Wardens
<u>Venue:</u>	Civic Centre, Gravesend – 13 October 2003 - 4pm
<u>Present:</u>	Councillor M V Snelling (Chair) Councillors: R Bowman K Jones C Jupp G Lambton A Pritchard
<u>In Attendance:</u>	Mrs S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services Miss L Dell, Democratic Services Mr D Finch, Corporate Policy Officer
<u>Interviewees:</u>	Mr M Hill, Lead Member for Community Safety, Kent County Council Mr K Murison, Chairman of the Perry Street Community Association

Summary of evidence

Introduction

Members were advised of the rationale for introducing wardens to rural areas within Kent. Members at Kent County Council (KCC) had become aware, having spoken to residents within rural areas, that they were concerned about issues relating to community safety. Rural communities had noticed a withdrawal of police from their areas and felt as though they had been forgotten and despite crime figures coming down by as much as 50 per cent for car crime and burglary people still had a fear of crime.

The Rural Warden Scheme was introduced in order to fill the gap and to try and combat anti-social behaviour, graffiti and crimes that affected residents' quality of life. The rural wardens formed part of a rural partnership with the police with each warden being partnered with a police officer who would respond quickly when called to an incident that warranted a police presence.

The Rural Warden Scheme was piloted eighteen months ago and began with twelve wardens. This was expected to increase to one hundred rural wardens at the end of the four year period.

The role of the rural warden

The wardens themselves are very much involved with local youth services. They are able to make contact with disaffected youths and try to encourage them to participate in youth activities available within the area. Additionally, wardens have access to a wealth of information regarding services that are available to all sectors of the community. This is particularly useful for more vulnerable people.

It was vital that the right people were employed to take on the role of rural warden and it was stated that 11 out of the 12 original wardens were still within the rural warden service.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's)

Kent County Council had agreed to match fund ten PCSO's which were to be placed within rural areas in the county. It was decided that some areas may need a slightly stronger force than a rural warden who has no powers and the deployment of PCSO's may fill this need.

Although KCC had an agreement with the police as to where the PCSO's were to be placed as they were police employees, operational control would be a police responsibility.

Perry Street – An urban perspective

Mr Murison described the issues being faced within the Perry Street area. It appeared that the main issue was the gathering of up to thirty or forty youths (average age circa 15 years old) who were out on the street often until two or three in the morning and were often consuming alcohol. The consumption of alcohol by the youths was highlighted as a major issue as this often led to anti-social behaviour. It was recognised that alcohol played a large part in anti-social behaviour in both urban and rural areas.

Mr Murison expressed the view that a PCSO could work well within the Perry Street area and felt their link to the police would provide a credible reassurance to residents. Further to this he felt PCSO's would have better communication links with the police than another type of warden as they worked directly for the police. Mr Hill concurred with this view although a partner needed to be found to fund the PCSO for that area.

Questions:

Istead Rise is an area where there are no PCSO's or rural wardens. Was there a chance for this area to have a rural warden as the area does suffer with some anti-social behaviour problems?

Kent County Council was currently looking at areas which may benefit from a rural warden and it was stated that if Istead Rise felt that it had a case to receive a rural warden then this should be drawn together and submitted to KCC.

The rural warden within Higham has been seen as an asset, however he often works the hours 9 to 5 and most of the problems occur later. Could working hours not be more flexible?

The rural wardens work a 37 hour week and the hours they work are agreed with their manager. They do not work a strict 9 to 5 working day and if this is the case then this needs to be addressed with the manager.

What method of defence have wardens got if faced with confrontation?

The wardens are not placed in difficult areas and they are trained to not get into a confrontational situation. They have an eyes and ears role and in a situation where confrontation could occur police would be contacted to deal with the situation.

Underage drinking seems to be a common theme in causing anti-social behaviour. Within the Perry Street area how are the youths getting access to alcohol?

Some local off-licences have been selling alcohol to under aged youths as are often intimidated by these groups. They are also getting alcohol from home or asking people over the age of 18 to purchase the drinks for them.

OVERVIEW SCRUTINY

<u>Review:</u>	Community Wardens
<u>Venue:</u>	Higham Memorial Hall - 28 October 2003 - 2 pm
<u>Present:</u>	Councillor M V Snelling (Chair) Councillors: K Jones P Oakeshott R Parker (Vice-Chair) M Singh J Papadopoulos (Chair - Higham Parish Council) L Carnall (Clerk - Higham Parish Council) S Saunders B West - Higham Age Concern
<u>In Attendance:</u>	S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services D Finch, Corporate Policy Officer
<u>Interviewees:</u>	S Enwright, Rural Warden for Higham S Poile, Rural Warden for Meopham M Howell, Rural Partnership Manager, KCC

Summary of Evidence

Steve Enwright gave a brief account of his background and his role as a rural warden.

He had spent 12 years in HM forces. On leaving the army he was custody officer for young offenders, more recently he had been a manager for a local company. He had a people background and saw being a rural warden as an excellent job opportunity.

He saw his rural warden role as being the eyes and ears of the village, collecting and collating information from residents and passing it on to the rural beat officer.

His duties included dealing with anti-social behaviour, abandoned cars, etc. (A list is attached).

He had been in post for about 18 months and was still learning and establishing contacts within Gravesham.

Do you think that your role is doubling up on the role of the rural beat officer? What kind of relationship do you have with the police? Is there a problem with liaising with the police?

No, the rural warden role is not doubling up. Many of the activities of a warden are community related and would not normally be done by the police.

All the wardens' equipment comes from KCC.

Mr Enwright had no problem with his lack of powers. He felt confident enough to make a citizen's arrest if necessary. In fact he thought it helped him do his job. Youngsters have more trust in a warden than the police and as a result come forward

with information. However, some elements within the community had turned against him following their arrests.

He was currently looking for funding for an action plan involving neighbourhood watch to help the community deal with anti-social behaviour.

He had a direct telephone link with the force control centre at Maidstone which prioritised the call. The response time was 2 minutes.

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of activities. What is your biggest problem?

Criminal damage and graffiti.

Were you going to get a radio? Do you feel the poor relation for not having one?

Yes, originally we were going to get radios but data protection issues prevented it. No, a mobile phone is fine.

What are your hours of work?

A 37 hour week, 9 am - 5pm. However, this can fluctuate with evening meetings and can be adjusted to meet demand.

What hours does the rural beat officer work?

The beat officer works 10 hour days in shifts, so she is able to cover when the warden is not around.

Have you ever felt yourself to have been in a threatening situation?

Yes, once.

If you were able to change anything to make the job better what would it be?

More security for myself. More powers.

Mrs J Papadopulos, Chair of Higham Parish Council said that Mr Enwright does a very good job. He is based in Higham library and mixes in with the community very well. The Council had some concerns about his limited powers and any situations where he needed backup.

He is on the management committee of the youth club and his presence helps with troublemakers. He is a friend to all age groups in the community.

Higham is very spread out and he cannot be everywhere at the same time. He can use his own car if required.

Mrs West of Age Concern said that Mr Enwright regularly visits the elderly to update them about bogus callers and advises on personal safety. Many other residents will talk to him but not the police.

Mrs Papadopulos went on to say that having a warden had reduced vandalism but more of a presence was needed in the evenings. He had also been able to break up gangs of younger children who gathered after school.

His mobile phone number was published in the parish magazine.

No funding for the post came from the Parish Council.

Mr Steve Poile gave an account of his background and his role as Rural Warden in Meopham. He also had served for 14 years in the army, when he left the army he had been the manager of a parcel distribution firm. When the opportunity arose to become a rural warden, he relished the chance to do something in the community.

Meopham is even more spread out than Higham. In Meopham north there are less anti-social behaviour issues. In Meopham south with its higher density of population and with a higher number of young people, problems can arise. However, it is relatively easy to target the problem areas with a higher frequency of patrols.

Mr Poile works a 37 hour week, 9 am - 5 pm. However, these hours can be varied, for example on Halloween he will be working in the evening.

Recently there were a number of attacks on Arriva buses. Information from the younger children picking out the perpetrators enabled the troublemakers to be dealt with. It was unlikely that the youngsters would have come forward with information quite so readily to a police officer.

Mr Poile is trying to establish a youth club and identify what it is the young people want. Some 40 per cent of those attending schools live outside the area.

He is based in Meopham police station and as such has contact with special and parish constables. The rural beat officer patrols the area in a car, Steve patrols his area on foot.

Regarding communication Mr Poile said that he would like to carry a radio, it would be helpful as backup and would be quicker to use in certain circumstances.

He would like some extended powers. The ability to take on the spot action possibly issuing tickets, for example, to inconsiderate dog owners, might stop the same thing happening again.

Do you regularly liaise with the rural beat officer?

Yes, at Meopham, all officers meet once a month with as many wardens as possible.

How do you link with the parish council?

Through the parish clerk.

What about the drugs problem?

There are two particular places where drugs are being used. Mr Poile had undergone training with Kent Police in using swabs to sample areas for drug use. These swabs are then sent away for analysis. Mr Poile felt that there was a big misconception by the public to the extent of the drug problem.

Mrs M Howell said that the wardens were not there to replace the police but to work as the eyes and ears of the police and to work with the community in dealing with low level crime.

Wardens were not to put themselves at risk in any confrontational situation.

Any powers given to wardens would need very careful consideration to prevent a breakdown in relations between wardens and their communities. It may be necessary to review the wardens' contracts particularly in respect of their working hours to meet the needs of the community.

OVERVIEW SCRUTINY

- Review:** Community Wardens
- Venue:** Towncentric, Gravesend - 4 November 2003 - 5.15 pm
- Present:** Councillor M V Snelling (Chair)
- Councillors: R Bowman
K Jones
C Jupp
G Lambton
C Meredith
R Parker
- In Attendance:** Mrs S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services
Mr P Stevens, Head of Building & Town Services
Mr S Sangha, Town Centre Special Projects Manager
Mr P Harrison, Community Safety Manager
Mr D Finch, Corporate Policy Officer
Miss L Dell, Democratic Services
- Interviewees:** Mr A Tuley, Town Centre Crime Manager
Mr T Moore, Town Centre Warden

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Introduction

Members were given an introduction by the Town Centre Special Projects Manager regarding the context for having town centre wardens. It was stated that there were three main elements in making a town centre work well, these were:

1. the physical environment;
2. safety and security;
3. promotion and attraction of the town;

and it was felt that town centre wardens would be able to support these three elements.

Funding for the wardens came from 2 sources with one of the wardens being funded by Gravesham Borough Council and the other by SRB4 funding which was available until the end of this year however funding would get back on stream by then.

Mr T Moore, Town Centre Warden

Mr Moore's previous experience had been in the retail industry and in the motor trade, both of which focused on providing customer service, vital to his current role as town centre warden. Mr Moore advised members of his job specification and how he put his role into practice. The Town Centre Warden was seen as the public face / ambassador of the Council with both the public and businesses asking a variety of

questions relating to the Council from highways issues to refuse issues for example. The Wardens other daily duties included:

- making notes of occurrences whilst patrolling the town;
- dealing with street trading, making sure they have the correct licences;
- town events, such as the Grand Slam and French Market;
- dealing with emergencies;
- assisting people when children are lost;
- assisting the public generally as well as businesses.

Mr Moore suggested that both the public and businesses saw the Town Centre Wardens as having a policing type role and agreed that it was sometimes necessary for them to assist in matters that should be dealt with by the police however they would not become physically involved in a confrontational situation. Issues were raised regarding the lack of policing within the town centre and the lack of co-ordination between the Police, Towncentric and G Safe.

The town centre is covered by the town centre wardens from Monday to Saturday and on all of these days there is warden presence between 7.30 am and 6 pm with the exclusion of Wednesdays and Saturdays when these are covered from 9 am to 5 pm.

G Safe

Members were introduced to Mr A Tuley, the Town Centre Crime Manager who leads the G Safe initiative within Gravesend town centre. Part of the initiative is to gather together information from various sources including local businesses, the town centre wardens and the public regarding crime and anti social behaviour. The information is then entered into the Business Information Crime System (BIC) which is able to collate information including photographs of perpetrators. Specific information regarding town centre crime can then be extracted from the system. The intelligence led BIC system is a national initiative and has been widely taken up across Kent. It is hoped that useful information regarding crime will soon be shared between different areas that have the BIC system.

Further to this, Mr Tuley was aiming to increase the radio network that is currently running in the town centre between various stores, the town centre wardens and CCTV thus increasing security across the town centre. This will also raise funding to ensure that the scheme can continue to run following the three years of funding by Urban.

Questions:

If you see an A frame outside a shop that should not be there, is it difficult to get businesses to co-operate by removing them?

If a town centre warden sees an A frame that has not been seen before, the warden would inform Mr J Grant, the Town Services Officer, who will check to see if the A frame has a licence. The warden would also speak to the business and explain the rules on displaying an A frame on the public highway.

Would it be beneficial to have the Town Centre Wardens on duty from 6 pm until midnight?

It was thought that there would be no benefit to have the Town Centre Wardens patrolling after 6 o'clock as a uniformed individual could become a target for anti social behaviour. The job description for a warden patrolling after 6 pm would be different to that of the current Town Centre Wardens.

How do Gravesham Services respond when contacted by a Town Centre Warden?

Gravesham Services have always responded well to requests for assistance from Town Centre Wardens.

If there was a problem within a public house, for example, how would other public houses be informed?

A leisure group initiative is being set up to include pubs, taxis, restaurants, etc who would be linked with a radio system similar to that in operation within town centre shops currently. This would enable information to be passed from one establishment to another.

Have the Town Centre Wardens found under age drinking a problem?

Under age drinking has not been a particularly big problem during the day but this may not be the case in the evening.

Is there room for a different type of warden to patrol within the town centre?

The town centre could benefit from having two Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) to work both during the day and in the night. It was noted that a report for the possible introduction of PCSO's within Gravesham was being submitted to the following Cabinet meeting.

Overview Scrutiny

- Review:** Community Wardens
- Venue:** Civic Centre, Gravesend - 19 November 2003 - 6.30pm
- Present:** Councillor M V Snelling (Chair) - attended for part of the meeting
- Councillors: K Jones
C Jupp
C Meredith
R Parker
- In Attendance:** Mrs S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services
Mr D Finch, Corporate Policy Officer
Miss L Dell, Democratic Services
- Interviewees:** Councillor J Kite, Dartford Borough Council
Councillor Mrs A Allen, Dartford Borough Council - attended for part of the meeting.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Introduction

Members were given an introduction to the current situation regarding community wardens within the Borough of Dartford. It was stated that currently one town centre warden funded by Dartford Borough Council, operated within the town centre and three rural wardens funded by Kent County Council were in place with one operating in Darenth and two in the Wilmington area.

Additionally, the Borough of Dartford was to have seven police community support officers, half funded by the Home Office, placed within their Borough. Four of these were to be match funded by Kent County Council and would operate within rural areas and the other three were to be match funded by Dartford Borough Council. The three PCSO's part funded by Dartford Borough Council were expected to be in post by January 2004 with two being placed within the town centre and one also being placed in a rural area.

PCSO's

Councillor Kite explained that the introduction of PCSO's had been a necessity because there was little visible policing on the streets. It was hoped that PCSO's may demonstrate the effectiveness of community based policing over the intelligence led policing which has prevailed over the last few years. Councillor Kite conveyed that the visibility of PCSO's would have the effect of making people feel safe reducing people's fear of crime. This is particularly important as Dartford is about to engage in high level regeneration of its town centre and work needs to be done now to ensure people felt safe coming into the town centre.

Councillor Kite's main concern was that the introduction of PCSO's would further decrease the current levels of police presence due to the PCSO's being on duty patrolling the areas.

Rural Wardens

It was indicated that the rural wardens funded by KCC had made an impact within the communities they served. Within Darenth, although no reduction in crime had been recorded, it was felt that the rural warden had given the people in the area a greater sense of community. Within Swanscombe a deep clean of graffiti had been set up by the Council and many local residents had taken part in the exercise - supporting the work of the local PCSO. Following the deep clean, very little graffiti re-appeared as it was thought that many of the perpetrators may have been friends or relatives of those who spent time cleaning it off also creating a sense of loyalty and community.

Questions:

The PCSO's paid for by Dartford Borough Council will be controlled by the police. How can you be sure that these officers will remain located within the area you are paying to have them in?

The police have given assurances that only in extreme and understandable circumstances would PCSO's be pulled away from the areas in Dartford they have been funded to serve. An assessment of how often this occurs will need to be carried out after the PCSO's have been in post for a certain period of time.

What was the criteria for allocating the PCSO's to the different areas?

Within the town centre it was regarded that two PCSO's would not only allay people's fear of crime but also bring stability during the huge disruption that will be caused with the regeneration of the town centre. They would also be able to look for the root of trouble as it begins in the early part of the evening and enable them to communicate to the police the evidence they have gathered regarding potential ensuing problems.

It was decided that PCSO's would be effective within rural areas as they would have more of an effect on low level crime that occurs in these areas. It was hoped that PCSO's within rural areas would lean towards a village bobby approach helping to alleviate people's fear of crime in these areas.

Further Discussion

There was an extensive discussion on the relationship between communities and the police and the lack of response from police to incidents reported by the public. There was a general feeling that intelligence led policing did not work and that a return to community led policing would go some way to restoring residents and communities faith in the police. Members of the committee and Councillor Kite agreed that councils taking over police duties was a necessity in the current climate but not an ideal solution in the long term.

Overview Scrutiny

Written Evidence from Medway Unitary Authority

The Community Safety Street Team

Written by Louise Matthews – Head of Community Safety and Drugs

The Community Safety Street Team now has nine Street Team Officers covering the whole of Medway, 6 funded by the Council and 3 funded other sources such as Mhs Homes, Home Office and Chatham Vision.

The Street Team is highly visible uniformed team, whose prime purpose is to tackle low level anti social behaviour, in an attempt to reduce crime and the fear of crime. They are trained to act as professional witnesses, to take statements and gather evidence and information to inform remedial work ranging from joint Police/Council home visits, which they will be involved in, to assisting with prosecutions. They also undertake reassurance visits to identified vulnerable people.

In order to achieve this, they work predominantly out in our communities. Also as most anti social behaviour occurs during the evenings and at weekends, they work from 2.30pm to 10.30pm from Tuesday to Saturday, with rest days on Sunday and Monday.

To assist communication between the Council Street Team and the Police, the teams' geographical areas have been determined in line with the policing split. Currently the teams are divided into three areas West (Rochester area), East (Gillingham area) and Central (Chatham area). From January 2004 we will be changing to a West/East split to align more closely with the Police and the Council's Civic Wardens.

It is hoped that the Street Team will be seen by the public, the young and not so young, as friendly and approachable, which should encourage the public to raise issues and concerns directly with them whilst they are working out on the streets. It is thought that many of these issues could be dealt with directly on the spot.

The Street Team will attempt to build up a rapport with local community groups and groups of youths, they will also work closely with the Police. The report back on youth issues and local needs without raising unrealistic expectations. They will also remove evidence of drug abuse, used syringes etc. that they find throughout their shift.

The Street Team are equipped with handheld computers so that they can easily report back directly to the appropriate officer(s) via email before the end of their shift. This enables them to pass on information about new issues as they have been raised or spotted.

In order to maximise the amount of time that the team spend working in our communities, we also have a Community Safety Street Team Co-ordinator who works during traditional office hours, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. All service requests come through the Community Safety Street Team Coordinator who collates and prioritises all requests, then tasks the team accordingly. The Community Safety Street Team are tasked on the basis of volume and severity on a daily basis by taking into account all incoming information available.

Additional Powers

The Street Team currently do not have any additional legal powers, however, they are receiving extensive training which includes spending time being trained by the Council and its partner organisations. This is so that they fully understand their role, where they sit within the Council and who to refer issues to.

They should not be seen as either a pseudo police force or as a security company, more a friendly highly visible extension to existing Council services that operate out of normal hours.

Why Community Safety Street Team and Not Community Safety Wardens?

Firstly, it has been decided that the Team should be known to the public as the Community Safety Team. This is to avoid confusion with the different kinds of wardens that already exist within Medway Council. We have Medway Wardens, Parking Wardens and Sheltered Housing Wardens to mention a few, all have different responsibilities, but the public are not always clear on the differences between them. The name is also a logical choice as these wardens are part of the Community Safety Team.

The team need to be highly visible and the corporate design team are currently working on a distinctive logo for them that will be used on their uniforms and vehicles.

An example of a Typical Working Day

The Street Team Officers come into the office ready to start work at 2.30pm, at which time they will collect their individual taskings for that evening. They will download information and queries via their email to their handheld computers and make any necessary office hours telephone calls. They will then go out onto the streets in their designated areas to work on their own on foot. They will pair up with another member of the team part way through their shift and continue to work in twos for the rest of the evening. Prior to logging off, the team will upload and send responses to all queries, emails and observations from the CCTV Control Centre, so that all information is waiting on computers first thing in the morning when people arrive in their respective offices.

How this team will differ from others - Medway Wardens etc.

The Community Safety Street Team

- are a uniformed team
- have a corporate and separate identity from other Warden Services
- be highly visible to the public
- work from 2.30pm to 10.30pm with Sunday and Monday as rest days
- their aims are to reduce anti social behaviour and to reduce the fear of crime
- carry out reassurance visits to identified vulnerable people
- carry out joint home visits with the Police
- work closely with the Police and other partner agencies
- act as professional witnesses as and when called upon
- be trained by the Police to gather evidence
- act as a walking sign post to Council services
- be a problem solving team

Written by Portfolio Holder: Councillor Angela Prodger, Community Safety and Enforcement

Medway are looking for accreditation for the Community Safety Street Team initially with a possible option to accredit other Warden schemes at a later date if the Police and Council agree.

Medway are also planning to expand the Street Team but the scheme has to be part of the budget round and currently they do not know how much extra resource we will be given.

The Street Team are seen as enhancing the PCSO scheme in Medway, but the Street Team will remain employed and managed by the Council and not the Police but we will task them in partnership with the Police as we do at present.