



## Report to:

Northwards Housing Board

22 May 2008

## Item No:

# 8a

|   |  |                   |                 |
|---|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | Review of Neighbourhood Wardens Service  |                   |                 |
| <b>Date:</b>                                    | 9 May 2008   |                   |                 |
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| <b>Confidential:</b>                            | No   |                   |                 |
| <b>For:</b><br>(Please tick<br>action required) | <b>NOTING</b><br>√   | <b>DISCUSSION</b> | <b>APPROVAL</b> |

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Board on the review of the Neighbourhood Wardens Service.

### RECOMMENDATION

The Board are asked to note and comment on the update.

### IMPLICATIONS

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Equality &amp; Diversity:</b> | A number of activities undertaken by the Neighbourhood Wardens contribute to increasing community cohesion. Crime and the fear of crime generally have a disproportionate effect on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.                 |
| <b>Financial:</b>                | The review being undertaken will enable the Board to make a well-informed decision about the use of a significant resource.  |
| <b>Staffing:</b>                 | If funding is not agreed, staff currently employed in the Neighbourhood Warden Service will need to be redeployed by Northwards or the Council; or (in the case of staff on temporary contracts), will not have their contracts renewed. |
| <b>Decency Target:</b>           | None arising from this report.   |
| <b>Governance:</b>               | None arising from this report.   |
| <b>Risk Assessment:</b>          | Reviewing the service and making a considered decision as to future arrangements will have implications for our ability to meet customer expectations.   |

**Equality & Diversity Implications** (Please tick where relevant):

|            |                                     |                                  |                                     |
|------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| BME        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Gender     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Single Parents                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Age        | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Domestic Violence                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Disability | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Alcohol/Drug Mis-users           | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**Consultation/Consideration:**

|                          | <b>Yes, No or N/A:</b> | <b>Name:</b>                       | <b>Date:</b>  |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Sub-Committee:</b>    | Yes                    | Neighbourhood and Quality Services | Various: previous updates linked to Inspection Plan |
| <b>Area Panel:</b>       | Yes                    | All                                | TBC as part of review                               |
| <b>Task Groups:</b>      | No                     |                                    |   |
| <b>Ward Councillors:</b> | Yes                    | All                                | TBC as part of review                               |

**1. Background**

1.1 At its meeting on 11 March 2008, the Northwards Board asked the Director of Neighbourhood Services to commence a review of the Neighbourhood Wardens service with full consultation and report back through the Neighbourhood and Quality Services Sub-Committee.

**2. Progress to date**

2.1 A meeting of officers took place on 3 April 2008. This meeting started to scope out the terms of the review.

2.2 Consideration has been given to bringing in external assistance to help with the review. To this end we have commissioned the services of Sue King of Sue King Regeneration Limited. Sue King was Head of the Neighbourhood Warden Unit at the DCLG for six years until the programme ended in 2006. She now works freelance and has undertaken a number of similar reviews of Warden Schemes across the country.

2.3 Sue King has now commenced work on the review. A copy of the brief is attached as Appendix A.

2.4 An update on the review was provided to the Neighbourhood and Quality Services Sub-Committee at its meeting on 18 April 2008. A more detailed discussion is scheduled to take place at the Sub-Committee meeting on 23 May 2008.

- 2.5 Information about the review (including the brief) has been sent to all North Manchester Councillors; and also to key Council officers. Any comments received will be considered as part of the review.
- 2.6 The review will be complete by mid-June with a report going to Neighbourhood and Quality Services Sub Committee meeting on 27 June. The Sub-Committee will then make a recommendation to the July Board meeting.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 Sub-Committee are asked to note and comment on the update.

## **Appendix A**

### **Neighbourhood Wardens – Review Brief**

#### **Outline**

This brief sets out the scope of the Neighbourhood Wardens Review.

The review will be conducted because the current funding stream for the wardens will change later this year. In September 2008 funding from MCC will cease. Northwards Housing has identified funding beyond this point, subject to Board approval in July 2008. In order to secure this approval, we must provide to the Board a review report which will set out:

- a) An impact analysis/evaluation of the current service
- b) Options which will show how the scheme could be delivered to a wider geographical area

The review will draw on current best practice which could be mirrored in other areas across Northwards, with the emphasis being about value for money and how the wardens can complement neighbourhood management and tenancy enforcement.

We currently employ 23 wardens, 4 supervisors, 1 administrative officer, 1 youth strategy officer, 1 deputy manager and a scheme manager.

At present we patrol two areas across North and East Manchester and our remit is to patrol areas irrespective of tenure – approximately 20,000 properties in all, dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour, environmental issues and supporting vulnerable people within the community.

Since the funding stream will change we will need to look at how and to whom we deliver the service. Northwards Housing will pay for the wardens; and as a result the wardens will be deployed on Northwards' estates which are spread across a greater geographical area than the wardens currently cover.

The review will look at wardens' existing priorities and determine what the scheme could look like in the future, how it would operate and to whom it would be delivered.

The review will consider current working practices/priorities – what is important to residents, and what is less important. Examples of best practice will be identified which could be used to inform the new delivery plan.

The review will need to consider how any wardens could move away from traditional foot patrolling to identify issues, and offer a transition to a model where we have more of a focus on tasking and targeted foot working across a wider geographical area.

Then it should look at the service we currently provide to all residents cross tenure and how the new model would be applied with consideration to who provides a financial contribution to the scheme.

The review will determine how the scheme will be tasked – at present GMP oversees the majority of tasking with local priorities decided through Local Tasking Meetings and Neighbourhood Partnership Meetings (emphasis is placed on crime and disorder issues). Other tasking originates from members of the local housing team and other partner agencies. Other priorities are dictated through reactionary patrolling to address calls from local residents mainly complaining about youth nuisance/ASB related issues.

The new structure must have strong links with the community and local housing teams which are responsible for estate management. This will be a key feature of the review, focusing on how the wardens will complement general neighbourhood management and assist local staff in dealing with tenancy enforcement matters.

It is expected to become clear from the review that wardens will not have the capacity to deliver all aspects for the service in the way they do at present; we will need to decide what we want wardens to focus on and where. With a move towards directing the wardens to particular hotspots, which could be dispersed across the whole of the area, it will be vital to our success that we have a robust system for collecting information, processing it and getting wardens to hotspots. We will then need to be clear what measures or evaluation methods are used to check if wardens have an impact in dealing with hotspots and what criteria are used to direct the service and inform new priorities.

## **Elements of the Review**

- ✚ An outline of the existing service and its added value. This will establish a baseline against which to design, implement and measure the future service.
- ✚ It will include a review of wardens' existing priorities, hours of work and range of duties.
- ✚ There will be an examination of current warden tasking arrangements with recommendations for future tasking and oversight.
- ✚ The views of wardens will be sought in order to explore their ideas about an extended service geographically and priority elements to maximize future impact.
- ✚ Key Northwards staff will be interviewed to elicit their views about achievements within the current service and determine their views about an extended warden service and how that might build on the existing provision.
- ✚ Interviews will be scheduled with key partner agencies like Police, Youth Service, Fire Service, CDRP, ASB, Community Safety Co-ordinator etc in order to assess current outcomes and seek their ideas about developing the warden service further.
- ✚ A Focus group with residents who currently benefit from the existing warden service will be facilitated. This should provide qualitative data about impact.
- ✚ Police crime statistics and Northwards ALMO data on ASB and environmental impact will be appraised in order to assess current warden service outcomes. This may include some follow up telephone calls with key personnel.
- ✚ Current performance management and data collection will be reviewed so that recommendations can be made about building on this work for the design of the extended service. This will include suggestions about monitoring and evaluation indicators to measure the impact of the future service.
- ✚ There will be a desk review of Northwards strategic plans and policies that the warden service supports. This desk review will include strategies/delivery plans of partner agencies like Police, Fire Service and Youth Service, Manchester CC.
- ✚ The rationale for neighbourhood wardens will be considered in the context of the contribution they can make to an ALMO's function as a responsible landlord and the role they can play in the reduction of ASB, fostering of cohesion and community engagement and the management of place.
- ✚ The review will outline best practice in wardening nationally and suggest where innovative practices might add value to the proposed new Northwards warden service.
- ✚ Recommendations will be made about priorities for any extended warden service including suggestions about new structures, operating procedures and funding sources.

## **Key Contacts**

Northwards Housing :

Mike Stevens – Director of Neighbourhood Services  
Heads of Neighbourhood Services  
Warden Service Manager  
Local Services Team Managers and staff  
Board and Area Panel Members  
Tenants and Residents in the area currently served by the wardens and also  
in the wider Northwards area  
Neighbourhood Wardens

Manchester City Council:

Councillors  
Housing Services  
Environmental Services  
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership  
Community Safety Co-ordinators

GMP – Chief Inspectors/ Local Area Inspectors/PCSOs

Issues to be considered in the review include:

Area Profiles  
Current and future duties  
Shift/Rota Times  
Tasking – Who should feed into this – Local Tasking Meetings/Northwards  
Housing Teams/Managers/Street Environmental Managers/TA Groups/  
Residents  
Performance Indicators  
Environmental Enforcement – FPNs for litter, dumping and dog fouling  
Monitoring standards of eg grounds maintenance and street cleaning  
Reporting eg fly tipping, graffiti, vandalism  
Sharps removal  
Tenancy management eg void security checks, garden enforcement,  
professional witness, neighbour nuisance/ASB  
Garden Tool Loan Scheme  
ASBO Target Management  
Transport  
Youth Diversionary Projects  
CCTV installation and monitoring  
Activity to support and enhance community cohesion