

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO HOUSING AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE ON 24 JANUARY 2022

### REPORT

**SUBJECT: Littlehampton Community Wardens Project Update**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Dax O'Connor, Community Safety Officer

**DATE:** 11 November 2021

**EXTN:** 37834

**AREA:** Community Wellbeing

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report is an information paper to provide an update on the Littlehampton Community Warden project. It seeks to provide an overview of how the service has performed since its inception and sets out key performance data and outcomes.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

As an information report, it is recommended that the Housing and Wellbeing Committee note the content.

#### **1. BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1. The Littlehampton Community Warden initiative is an 18-month pilot project, with joint funding provided by Littlehampton Town Council, the Safer Arun Partnership, and Arun District Council.
- 1.2. The Warden team consists of 3 full-time officers: 1 x Senior Community Warden and 2 x Community Wardens. Employment commenced on 6 April 2021, with funding in place until October 2022.
- 1.3. Although the project is currently collaboratively funded, the management of the project sits within the Community Safety team at Arun District Council. It was decided that this would allow the Wardens to utilise the already established working links with partners and community groups and to work closely with the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Caseworkers, having access to information about local hotspot locations and being able to respond in a timely manner to reports of community concerns.
- 1.4. Officers from both the Town and District Councils regularly liaise to discuss priority areas of focus for the Wardens and receive a monthly activity report. Update reports are also provided quarterly to the Safer Arun Partnership.

## **2. Purpose:**

2.1. The purpose of the Littlehampton Community Warden service is to strengthen and increase the resilience of the local community and bring about a sense of confidence and safety to residents, businesses, and visitors. Engagement with communities and partner agencies is an important element of the Warden's role with an expectation that they deliver initiatives to address issues affecting communities and empower them to effect changes to improve their quality of life.

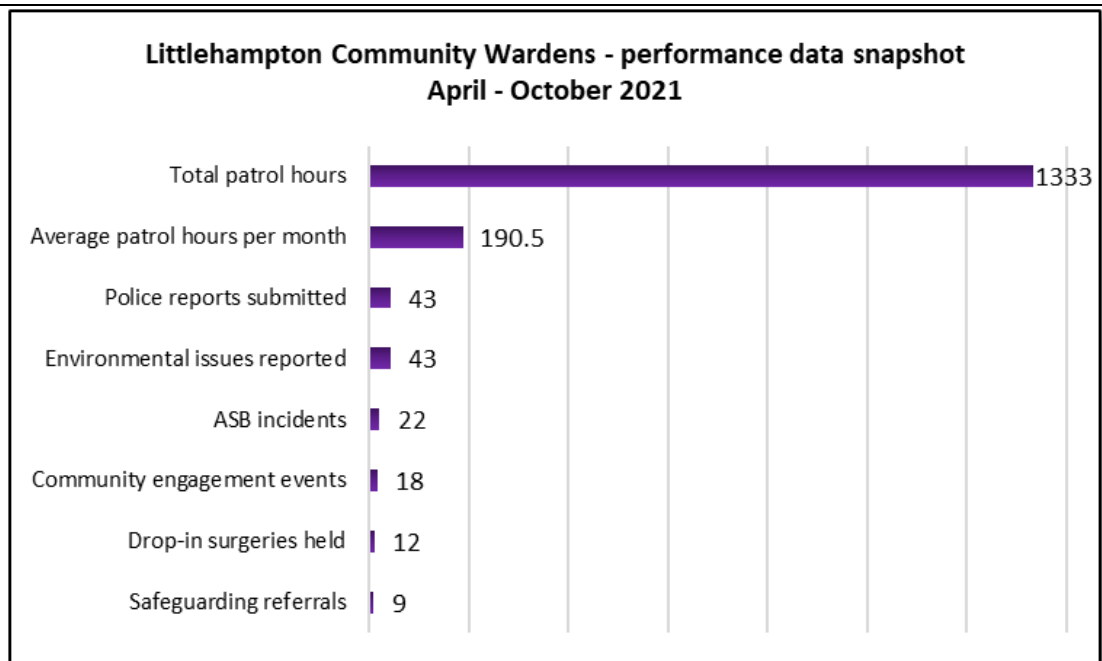
2.2. To achieve this, the Wardens:

- Provide a highly visible presence and regular foot patrols across all wards of the town.
- Form close working relationships with the neighbourhood policing team and community groups to identify and reduce anti-social and nuisance behaviour.
- Work to address the fear of crime.
- Share intelligence with relevant partner agencies, including the Police, and provide witness statements where necessary.
- Offer support to young people and establish suitable activities and signposting to youth groups/services.
- Identify at risk people, communities and groups and work closely with agencies to address concerns.
- Offer crime prevention and fire safety advice.
- Actively enforce the Public Spaces Protection Order.
- Develop and deliver community development activities and participate at local events.

2.3. The Wardens are not seen as a replacement for Business Wardens, who are funded by Sussex Police and the Co-Op. Nor do they replace Police resources. However, they do work in close partnership with both and provide support, including doubling-up for patrols, where it is appropriate.

## **3. Performance:**

3.1. A snapshot of some key performance data to date is illustrated in the table below. The commentary provides further insight into some of the key achievements of the team and highlights the benefits of their presence in Littlehampton.



Other highlights by way of commentary: -

- Foot patrols are a vital component of the Community Warden's role. The large number of additional 'feet on the ground' hours has helped to identify and deal with problematic behaviour at an early stage, but their physical presence also aims to provide reassurance to residents and businesses.
- The Wardens have dealt with numerous drug related incidents, doing so calmly and assuredly. On one occasion, quick thinking in administering the medication Naloxone undoubtedly saved a life and drew praise from the community and partners. Naloxone rapidly reverses the effects of an opioid overdose and is now carried by the Wardens as part of their everyday toolkit.
- Monthly drop-in sessions are hosted by the Wardens at various venues providing a forum for the public to discuss local concerns and where the Wardens can provide advice and signpost to other agencies where necessary.
- The Wardens have worked alongside the Council's Housing team to successfully deliver community engagement events in Wick. To date, these include a litter pick day, Halloween and Christmas get-togethers for young people and parents. These have been well received by the community and broken down some barriers between residents and the authority.
- Supporting Age UK and offering basic digital support to clients.
- Attendance at a range of local events, including the Town Show, Sea Road Skate Park opening, Screen on the Green, sandcastle competition to provide a visible presence and opportunity to further engage with the community.
- The Wardens have achieved Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) status via Sussex Police. This is in recognition of the role they play in addressing local issues and gives them delegated authority to undertake

a number of low-level enforcement actions. This accreditation also provides reassurance to the public that the Wardens have completed relevant professional training.

- A key task of the Warden role is to identify anti-social behaviour hotspots and to carry out targeted patrols and early intervention work with the perpetrators. The patrols provide a visible presence and allows the team to engage with residents to offer advice and reassurance that the matter is being dealt with. Information on the perpetrators is shared with the Council's ASB Caseworkers should further enforcement action be required.
- Each of the Wardens have been allocated a responsibility based on their individual strengths and experience: -  
Engagement with young people  
Enforcement action  
Community engagement activities  
The team feel that using their skills in this way enhances their output and impact in the community.
- Support and interaction with a variety of local groups allows the Wardens to reach a wide section of the community and to hear about the things that matter to local people. Relevant advice can be given, or issues may be reported directly on behalf of residents to avoid delay.

#### **4. Future:**

- 4.1. Having taken significant steps to integrate into the wider community, providing visibility and a sense of reassurance, the Wardens are now developing a range of initiatives that can be delivered to address local concerns and issues. These include providing safety talks in schools about anti-social behaviour, hosting bike security marking events, women's safety projects, and fire prevention advice in partnership with the local fire station.
- 4.2. The team is also developing a community safety survey to gather the views of residents, businesses, and visitors as to what issues affect them. This will be shared with partners to shape future local responses.
- 4.3. As outlined at 1.1. and 1.2. of this report, the Littlehampton Community Wardens project was initiated as an 18-month pilot project with funding in place until October 2022. A full review of the project will be undertaken by the funding partners in March 2022 to consider the original project brief, the outcomes achieved, the effect the project has had locally and assess feedback from partners and community groups.
- 4.4. A report on the review will consider the future of the project, paying attention to the relevance of the service, its impact, team structure, and confirmed sources of funding. The outcome of this review will be reported back to this Committee.

<b>2. PROPOSAL(S):</b> None		
<b>3. OPTIONS:</b> None		
<b>4. CONSULTATION:</b>		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Relevant Town/Parish Council	✓	
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify)		x
<b>5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial		x
Legal		x
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Other (please explain)		x
<b>6. IMPLICATIONS:</b> None		
<b>7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:</b> This is an information only paper and there is no decision required.		
<b>8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b> None		