

NEW DEAL : NEW HORIZONS

Minutes of a Crime & Community Safety meeting held at the Blakenall Village Centre on Wednesday 17th October 2007 at 6.30 p.m.

In attendance

Doug Gill	-	Patch Representative 21/Chair
Jean Moore	-	Patch Representative 1
Vicky Hodson	-	Patch Representative 2
John Jones	-	Patch Representative 3
Charlie Robertson	-	Patch Representative 14
Margaret Rowley	-	Patch Representative 20
Ray Walters	-	Patch Representative 22

Officers

Paul Rowlands	-	Chief Executive
Lisa Robson	-	Crime Manager
Mike Brice	-	Neighbourhood Manager
Tom Davies	-	Administration

Partners

Natalie Jones	-	WHRA
Abdul Meah	-	Safer Walsall Borough Partnership

Guests

Vickie Pargetter	-	MEL Research
Chris Allen	-	MEL Research
Robert Pocock	-	MEL Research

- Apologies**
Tom Perrett
Mick Taylor
Roy Jones
Ian Robertson
Stan Lyons
Sheri Rogers

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Agenda item		Action
	This meeting was arranged to discuss the Neighbourhood Wardens evaluation. The item had been removed from the agenda at the previous Theme meeting.	
1.	Introductions Introductions were made round the room.	
2.	<p>Neighbourhood Wardens Evaluation. A written report was presented to the group.</p> <p>VP and RP made a verbal presentation to the group. The presentation highlighted the findings and recommendations of the evaluation. The recommendations of the evaluation suggested the following options:</p> <p>Option A - Close the Warden scheme at the end of the current project; consider possible reallocation of future NDC funds to provide additional local PCSOs for the final period of the NDC.</p> <p>Option B – Re-shape the Wardens around a more strongly ‘enforcement related’ role; possibly transferring tasking to the framework of the NHP policing team. This would be similar to the approach taken in the Smethwick Wardens scheme, which is much more tightly tasked and performance managed than the present scheme, and in closer alignment with the policing model.</p> <p>Option C – Re-shape the Wardens scheme around a more clearly community and environmental action oriented role; centred on the ‘good neighbour’ principle and with the possible sub-option of giving Wardens a direct power to act in clearing up environmental damage, dumping etc. This is based more on the Bolton Wardens good practice model of ‘Neighbourhood Operatives’.</p>	

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	<p>CA stated that there was uncertainty regarding the roles of Wardens in the New Deal area and that clarification was required.</p> <p>CA informed the group that many communities were becoming increasingly dependent on professional services. CA reasoned that one of the major challenges facing Wardens was to decrease the dependency on professional services and enhance community spirit.</p> <p>DG explained that he had previously favoured the recommendations of Option B, but after having visited other successful schemes, he now found the recommendations of Option C more favourable.</p> <p>CR questioned if there were any sources of funding for the Wardens post 2011. DG reasoned that the chances of receiving funding would be greatly improved if the recommendations of Option C were adhered to.</p> <p>PR thanked the evaluators for the report and stated that the group should decide between the recommendations of Option B and the recommendations of Option C to take the Wardens project forward.</p> <p>PR re-affirmed the need to be prepared for 2011 and the phased decrease in resources between now and then.</p> <p>VH questioned if Wardens from WHRA would be used if it was decided to follow the recommendations of Option C. DG reasoned that a project would have to be written and would then be submitted to WHRA.</p> <p>NJ provided an example of an area where the approach of the Wardens was similar to the recommendations of Option B and stated that she felt this approach had been detrimental to community spirit in the area.</p>	
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	<p>LR explained that following the recommendations in Option C would not affect enforcement, as more PCSOs are to be introduced in the area.</p> <p>VH questioned why, as stated in the report , 27% of people in the area were unaware of the Wardens. RP explained that this figure could be due to a number of reasons; people being at work and not seeing the Wardens; people being new to the area and being unaware of the project; and people who have been visited not realising they have been visited by Wardens. DG stated that noticeboards in the area were to display information about the Wardens to increase awareness.</p> <p>LR stated that this was a good opportunity to produce an Action Plan for the Wardens. CA reasoned that any Action Plan should also clarify the roles of the different organisations and ensure they complement each other.</p> <p>JJ reasoned that New Deal could follow the example of Hull and eventually expand the project into neighbouring areas. He suggested expansion could sustain the Wardens post 2011.</p> <p>It was agreed by the group to follow the recommendations of Option C.</p>	
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