



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement Programme - Park Warden Pilot Update
<b>Date:</b>	15 November 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Pete Murray ASB Coordinator Ext: 3654.

### 1.0 Relevant Background Information

Members will recall the report to committee dated December 2010 which set out proposals to improve the Park Rangers Service.

As part of the Departmental Improvement Programme officers have been examining the role of Park Ranger. A pilot was initiated to develop working practices, provide an improved service and create safer green spaces.

The Park Warden Pilot set out to develop the existing Park Ranger service and create a team of Park Wardens which would:

1. Be mobile in order to respond quickly to reports of antisocial behaviour and respond to reports of antisocial behaviour across the whole city,
2. Be trained and authorised to enforce specific bye-laws in support of existing council wardens and PSNI resources,
3. Record incidents of damage or antisocial behaviour using new technology at the site where they are based and at smaller satellite locations,
4. Assess possible risks, report to their manager and if necessary request the assistance of the PSNI,
5. Be responsible for opening and closing the site where they are based and opening and closing smaller satellite locations and,
6. Be issued with new uniforms; engage in raising public awareness; deliver education and provide quality customer service.

### 2.0 Key Issues

The current position indicates that the Park Warden Pilot has achieved significant successes. The pilot objectives have been met (see appendix 1) and it has established more flexible working practices that will be enhanced

	<p>with further development of technology and ASB reporting systems. The outcomes are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There has been very encouraging results following deployment of the Park Warden resource to support events and respond to ASB across the city.</li> <li>2. The Park Warden resource has coordinated with Litter, Dog and Community Safety Wardens through a programme of job shadowing to share knowledge and develop practice. There have been approximately 30 such operations across the city since August 2012 and further operations have been scheduled. As a direct result of the joint operations approximately seven fixed penalty notices have been issued by Park Wardens since the implementation of the new Dog Control Order on Dog Fouling as of 1 October 2012.</li> <li>3. The Park Wardens have been recording ASB in park and leisure facilities using new systems and are contributing to the Safer City ASB database.</li> <li>4. Council officers met with senior PSNI officers and planned a series of joint working opportunities which has created an improved network between Park Wardens and PSNI Constables.</li> <li>5. The improved communication between PSNI constables and Council staff provides better intelligence and responses to Park, Leisure or Facility Managed sites that have had locks damaged or require locking.</li> <li>6. The Park Wardens have been issued with a distinct identifiable uniform and van livery, which indicates their presence and role to the public.</li> <li>7. The implementation of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act has provided staff with the opportunity to raise public awareness about dog control and litter and inform park users about their new enforcement powers.</li> </ol> <p>Given the success of the pilot it is proposed that the role of Park Warden becomes permanent. In order to achieve this the department will work with Trade Union groups and Park Wardens to ensure that a new job description is developed to meet the additional requirements.</p> <p>There is also an opportunity to amalgamate a broader spectrum of roles within the Park Warden resource. Members will be aware of the report to the Health &amp; Environmental Services committee dated 17 September, and the commitment to allocate eight Community Safety Wardens to the Parks and Leisure department. It has been agreed that the budget will be transferred for the eight Wardens. Further consultation within the department will be required to integrate this resource and explore how best to deploy the role of Park Warden. It is envisaged that this process will be finalised by the end of the 2012-2013 financial year.</p>
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<b>3.0</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>The value of the proposed new Park Warden role has been notionally set at</p>

	<p>Scale 5. Further work is required to assess the input on the Park Warden Team Leader role. It is envisaged that this role will be notionally set at Scale 6. The resulting cost implications will incur an increase of approximately £40,000 on operational staff costs which will be accommodated within the existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Work will be undertaken with management, staff and Trade Unions to develop a Job Description to meet operational needs and to engage with Employee Relations and Operational Development Unit.</p> <p><u>Assets</u> Work is required to assess the need for transport for the Warden Service. Findings will be reported to a future committee.</p>
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<b>4.0</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
	The department will ensure that there is regular consultation with staff and if necessary communities, to inform planning and professional working practices.

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Members are asked to approve the permanent provision for a Park Warden resource and note the decision of Health & Environmental Services to allocate eight Community Safety Wardens to the department.

<b>6.0</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	An update report will be taken back to committee in April 2013.

<b>7.0</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	ASB: Antisocial Behaviour BCC: Belfast City Council PSNI: Police Service for Northern Ireland

<b>8.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1: Park Warden Brief