



SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – THE DEVELOPING ROLE OF STREET WARDENS

The Review

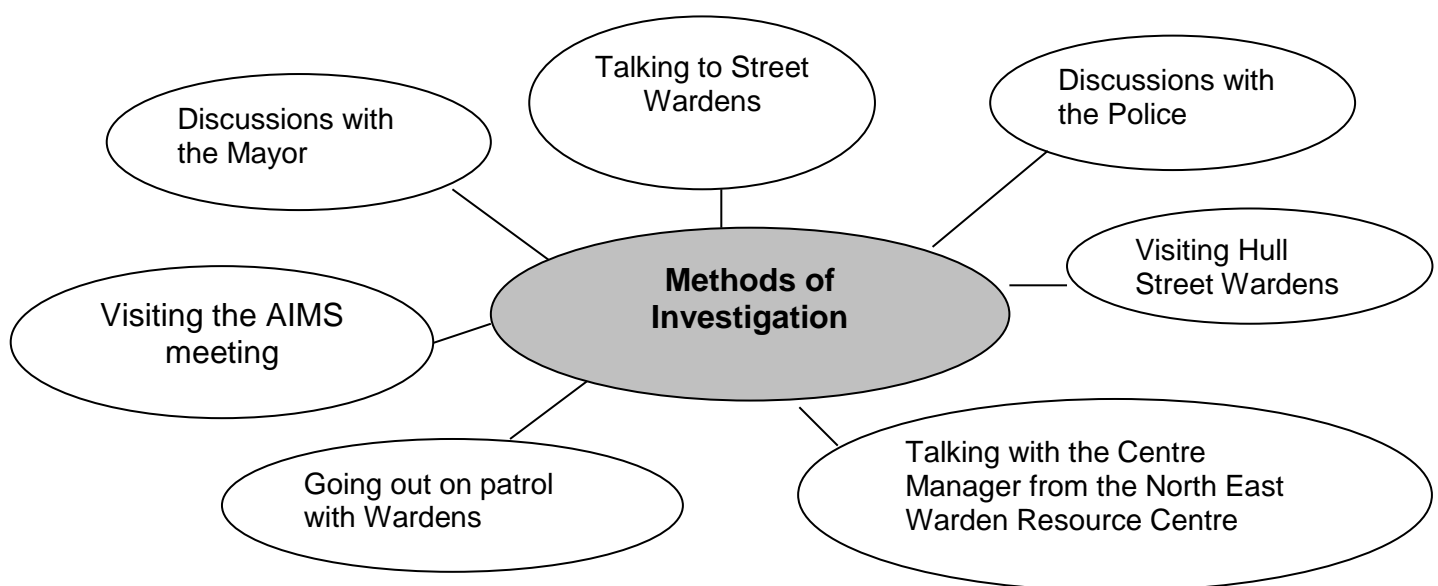
The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to undertake a review of the developing role of the street warden service following the recent change in management arrangements.

The panel was interested to find out how the role of the wardens had developed since the scheme was introduced. Members were concerned that there was a perception that the wardens' role had become too wide and therefore too onerous for the wardens to be able to deliver. The panel also took into consideration that there was an apparent public perception that the wardens were a 'back up' service to support the police.

Following the shift to a more community development focussed service the panel wanted to consider if this was an appropriate role for the wardens. If it was, the panel then wanted to establish if the wardens were equipped for the new role and consider whether there was the appropriate training and support available to wardens.

There are schemes across the country where wardens have some powers of enforcement, the panel wanted to consider if this was appropriate for wardens in Middlesbrough. When considering this issue the panel looked at the enforcement practices currently undertaken by the Council and discussed the implications with the wardens.

The panel undertook a number of methods of investigation for the review



Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

The panel felt that the review had given them a clearer understanding of the role of the street warden in Middlesbrough, but in order to assist wardens Members wanted the details of the new role to be re-launched in order to reinforce their role to the public.

The panel was supportive of the Social Care department's management of the scheme and their efforts to work with the police to ensure that wardens did not get called to inappropriate incidents and definitely not ones that were of a police nature. Although the panel considered that it was important that there was a consistency of approach in management styles and that the wardens' workload is balanced accordingly. The panel was not in favour of the introduction of single person patrols.

The panel concluded that it was not appropriate for wardens to be given enforcement powers because this would present a different image of the wardens than the role that they had developed. Wardens are now a catalyst for community development, they initiate preventative methods and work with the community to combat anti-social behaviour. The panel thought that it would be appropriate rather than issuing wardens with enforcement powers that wardens further develop the working relations with the Council's enforcement team in order to ensure that levels of enforcement activities are maximised.

The panel considered that the training for wardens was adequate but the consideration should be given to future training needs to ensure that they can be provided for.

Full details on the conclusions and recommendations can be found on page 22 of the report