

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY**

A meeting of the Executive Member for Community Safety was held on Wednesday 28 August 2024.

**PRESENT:** Councillors , J Thompson

**PRESENT BY INVITATION:** Councillors

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

**OFFICERS:** C Jones and M Walker

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors

2 **PROPOSALS TO WITHDRAW NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN POLICE ACCREDITATION POWERS**

The Head of Neighbourhoods submitted a report, the purpose of which was to seek approval of the withdrawal of Neighbourhood Warden Police Accreditation Powers.

The report considered the removal of the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme that was designated to Neighbourhood Safety Wardens by Cleveland Police in 2019 and approved at full council on 8th October 2019 as part of the wider Indigenous Growth Fund proposals.

The Police Reform Act 2002 enabled the Chief Officer of any police force to establish and maintain a scheme to be known as a Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. This created an opportunity for organisations with responsibility for tackling community safety to apply for accreditation.

On 8th October 2019 Executive approved proposals to develop a new community enforcement service as part of a wider approach to tackle town centre enforcement. This was funded as part of the Council's Indigenous Growth Fund via the Tees Valley Combined Authority which would end in March 2024. A range of measures to increase the Council's enforcement activities were approved, including the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order in TS1 and an enhanced approach to enforcement within the town centre, both of which will continue.

Delegated additional powers by the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police were also agreed, allowing Neighbourhood Wardens to carry out the following;

- Issue Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling.
- Issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering.
- Power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in respect of offences under Dog Control Orders.
- Issue Fixed Penalty Notices for graffiti and fly-posting.
- Require giving of name and address.
- Require name and address for antisocial behaviour.
- Require persons drinking in designated places to surrender alcohol.
- Require persons aged under 18 to surrender alcohol.
- Seize tobacco from a person aged under 16.

The Local Authority already had a wide range of legislative tools and powers via Anti Social Behaviour and Environmental legislation. Since the introduction of the amalgamated enforcement team, use of these powers had increased such as fixed penalty notices, community protection notices and the Public Spaces Protection Order. All of the powers could be utilised without Police Accreditation

The Executive Member sought clarification that consultation with Cleveland Police had taken

place and that the removal of the Accreditation Powers would not affect funding. The Head of Neighbourhoods confirmed that this was the case.

**ORDERED:**

**That the Executive Member for Community Safety approves the withdrawal of Neighbourhood Warden Police Accreditation Powers.**

**OPTIONS:**

There were no further options set out in the report.

**REASONS:**

In order to comply with Cleveland Police, having accreditation powers, required the Council's Neighbourhood Wardens to be vetted at a higher level (NPPV2). In the last 12 months, Cleveland Police had advised Middlesbrough Council that they no longer had the capacity to do this. The Council have therefore had to apply to another police force in Warwickshire to complete these requests as part of the recruitment process. This had caused significant delays, which has had a detrimental impact on the ability to backfill vacant posts. Some candidates had failed the vetting process, despite passing their enhanced DBS, which was still an essential criteria as part of the recruitment process. Each police vetting application also had a cost of £180 per request to the Local Authority. Removing the delegated powers would help the Council to achieve savings within the community safety budget. In addition, it would allow the backfill current vacancies a lot more quickly, which in turn would allow wardens to be deployed across other areas of the town without any significant loss of warden powers.

All decisions will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.