

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY PANEL B</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>30 JANUARY 2020</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW: COMMUNITY PROTECTION SERVICE</b>		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>		
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>		
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>NO</b>		

### **Purpose of Report**

This purpose of this report is to introduce the Scrutiny Review: Community Protection Service to Scrutiny Panel B. This report will set out details of how the service was originally established, and the current operational structures and methods used.

Scrutiny Panel B will be undertaking a review of the service with the following objectives in mind:

- Gain an understanding of the current Community Protection Service, and how it operates within the wider Community Safety section
- Establish the objectives and requirements of the service
- Examine outcomes and achievements
- Review procedures in place to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the service
- Understand public and stakeholders expectation of the service

### **Recommendation(s)**

Scrutiny Panel B Members are recommended to:

- a. Note the information contained in this report.
- b. Decide on further evidence and information required to progress the review.
- c. Approve review terms of reference including review rationale, objectives, indicators of success, methodology, and involvement.

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

The Council's Community Protection Service was added to the Scrutiny Workplan 2019/20 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2019.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

No alternative options have been considered at this stage of the review.

## **Detailed Information**

### **Ashfield District Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023**

Ashfield District Council's vision for a safer and stronger Ashfield by 2023 is set out within the new Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023. This includes ensuring the foundations for a good quality of life are in place and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

This will be achieved through prioritising both an effective response to issues but also working on prevention and behavioural change. To achieve this, the Council will continue working with our partners to ensure people feel safe and are safe by reducing levels of crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour.

### **Origins of the Community Protection Service in Ashfield**

The Council's current Community Protection Service originated as the Ashfield Neighbourhood Warden Service. The Ashfield Neighbourhood Warden Service began operation in December 2002, established with a mission statement to: "assist to improve the quality of life for residents, reduce crime, the fear of crime, and help businesses thrive in Ashfield".

Up until March 2009, the Neighbourhood Warden Service was coordinated by Ashfield Homes (the Council's former Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)). When funding from Nottinghamshire County Council and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund reduced, Ashfield Homes chose to cease operation of the service.

In anticipation of the contracted service coordinated by Ashfield Homes ceasing, in December 2008 Ashfield District Council unveiled a new scheme introducing £1.7 million of investment in community safety. The scheme, titled "Eyes for Ashfield", involved establishing a new team of 16 full-time Community Safety Wardens set to tackle anti-social behaviour in Ashfield.

### **What is a Community Protection Officer?**

#### **Community Safety Accreditation Scheme**

Community Safety Accreditation Schemes enable the Chief Constable of a police force in the United Kingdom to grant a limited range of police powers to employees of non-police organisations, with the aim of strengthening community safety. Community Safety Accreditation Schemes were introduced through the Police Reform Act 2002.

Some of the powers that can be granted include the power to:<sup>1</sup>

- Require the name and address of a person who has committed a criminal offence
- Require the name and address of a person acting in an anti-social manner
- Confiscate alcohol from young people
- Confiscate cigarettes and tobacco from young people
- Require the removal of abandoned vehicles

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<sup>1</sup> Home Office, *Community Safety Accreditation Scheme Powers*, February 2015.

- Require a person to stop drinking in a designated public place
- Issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling, littering, graffiti and fly posting
- Issue a penalty notice for disorder for:
  - The sale of alcohol to a person under 18
  - Buying or attempting to buy alcohol by a person under 18
  - Consumption of alcohol by a person under 18
  - Wasting police time or giving a false report
  - Behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress

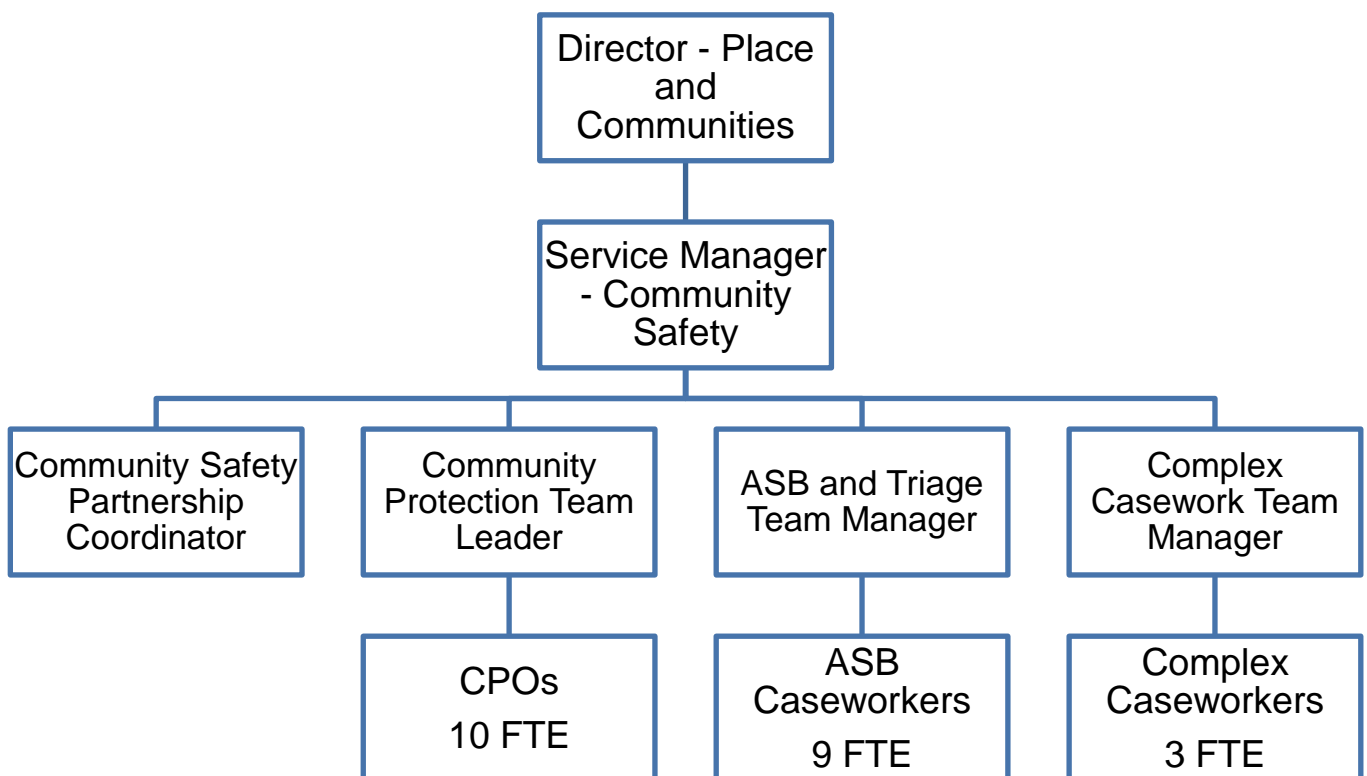
To be accredited through a Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, a person has to be assessed as suitable to exercise any powers granted. Accredited persons are trained and vetted to a national standard. The Police Reform Act 2002 also requires that any organisations employing accredited persons must be fit for purpose and have a satisfactory complaints procedure in place. Examples of accredited persons through Community Safety Accreditation Schemes include:

- Security guards
- Police Community Support Officers
- Community Protection Officers (CPOs)/Wardens
- Parking Attendants
- Environmental Health Officers

One of the main advantages of CPOs is their democratic accountability. Unlike the Police, whose priorities are set by Central Government, CPOs respond to and address priorities set by local communities and residents including anti-social behaviour, environmental crime, and fear of crime. These issues are important to local communities, but often cannot be the focus of police resources. An effective CPO service can prioritise these issues and provide engagement within communities.

### Ashfield District Council's CPO Service

#### Structure and Budget



Ashfield District Council currently has 10 FTE CPO Posts on the Establishment. In 2019/20, the Community Protection Service had a budget of approximately £443,000. For 2020/21, approximately £458,000 is the proposed budget for the service.

### Approach and Responsibilities

Ashfield District Council's CPOs undertake a problem solving approach to address on-street anti-social behaviour, environmental and nuisance related issues, which affect the quality of life for residents in Ashfield.

Community Protection Officers provide a uniformed patrol presence within Ashfield's town centres and communities, spending time in communities conducting high visibility patrols, engaging with residents, visitors, and businesses, and proactively challenging perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

Using both a proactive and reactive approach, CPOs follow patrol plans that include schools, parks, town centres and estates, focusing patrol time on areas that evidence the greatest levels of need at that time.

Key tasks and responsibilities of Community Protection Officers include:

- High visibility foot, bicycle or vehicle patrols across the District
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour complaints
- Supporting victims of anti-social behaviour
- Gathering evidence and preparing statements to proceed with legal action
- Problem solving approach to persistent anti-social behaviour
- Targeted approach to particular geographical areas and locations
- Recognising issues relating to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

### Collaborative Working

The Community Protection Service operates within the Council's Integrated Services Hub based at the Council Offices in Kirkby – in – Ashfield. The following agencies work within the Integrated Services Hub:

- Nottinghamshire Police
- Ashfield District Council Community Safety
- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue
- Women's Aid Integrated Service
- The Reducing Re-offending Partnership
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Nottinghamshire Victim Care
- Framework
- Change Grow Live

The Integrated Services Hub facilitates a collaborative approach to community safety. Agencies within the Hub work together towards:

- Delivery of priorities – reducing and deterring crime and anti-social behaviour
- Delivery of transformation
- Engagement
- Achieving value for money

- Commercialism
- Improving services
- Project delivery
- Understanding communities and customers

### Patrol Plans

Community Protection Officers undertake high visibility foot patrols in hotspot areas focusing on anti-social behaviour, and issues that present risk, threat, and harm. Patrols also focus on themes including town centres, schools (at drop off and pick up times), parks and open spaces, and housing estates.

The team are also expected to connect with the community and key individuals within it. This includes retailers, elected members, community voices, individuals requesting services, and vulnerable people. Officers should also provide immediate feedback on any high-risk issues identified; ensuring safeguarding referrals are made appropriately.

Community Protection Officers should maximise the impact that their high visibility can have within the District.

### Hotspots

The Council's Community Protection Officers have a thorough understanding of the geography and communities within Ashfield, including problematic locations in the district. Hotspots are identified based on this knowledge and experience.

The hotspots could relate to anti-social behaviour or environmental issues in town centres, estates, roads, parks, footpaths, and trails. Historically, CPOs have been assigned specific locations to manage. At present, CPOs are referred to as North or South Officers and do not take on a District-wide role.

The Community Protection Service maintains flexibility, ensuring a high level of responsiveness to any new or emerging issues generating a short-term hotspot are supported and addressed. CPOs attend the Partnership Operational Tasking meeting every three weeks, which incorporate victim, location and, offender briefings, as well as weekly team and geographical problem solving meetings. The Team Manager provides the police with updates and collaborates regarding the weekly briefings and patrol plans.

### Operational Tasking and CCTV

Community Protection Officers are linked to police radio airwaves and the CCTV control room. This ensures that, in addition to planned activity in hotspot areas, they can also be reactively tasked following either visual reports of an incident through the control room or through the police for low-level reported incidents.

Furthermore, all Community Protection Officers are also equipped with body cameras, allowing visual recordings to be used as evidence if required.

### Case Referrals

Community Protection Officers attend many kinds of issues and when appropriate, some of these issues will be referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour Caseworkers or Complex Case Team. Such

cases can often include dealing with vulnerable people with needs that will need a multi-agency approach.

## **Scrutiny Review Process and Terms of Reference**

Members should discuss and approve a review terms of reference, setting out the scope and limitations of the review.

### Review Rationale

The Council's Community Protection Service was added to the Scrutiny Workplan 2019/20 in July 2019 by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members wished to consider the objectives and remit of this discretionary service, and how it works with partners to achieve these objectives and to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and provides value for money.

### Review Objectives

The objectives of this review will be to:

- Gain an understanding of the current Community Protection Service, and how it operates within the wider Community Safety section
- Establish the objectives and requirements of the service
- Examine outcomes and achievements
- Review procedures in place to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the service
- Understand public and stakeholder expectation of the service

### Indicators of Success

- Establishing clear service objectives that are fit for purpose
- Identifying effective mechanisms to monitor performance and outcomes
- Clear evidence of effective collaborative working within the Integrated Services Hub
- Understanding public expectations and current perspectives of the service
- Ensuring the service provides value for money
- Ensuring adequate resources are in place for the service to operate efficiently

### Methodology

This review will be carried out through consideration of both qualitative and quantitative research.

- Interviewing Community Protection Officers, Police representatives and Council Officers
- Public consultation
- Statistical information regarding the service
- Consultation with partner agencies
- Best practice from other authorities, systems used, powers given etc.

### Review Involvement

It is important for a scrutiny review to be a collaborative process, inviting involvement from experts both within the Council and externally. Members could seek involvement from the following over the course of this review:

- Director – Place and Communities

- Service Manager – Community Safety
- Community Protection Team Leader
- Community Protection Officers
- Representatives from partner agencies and stakeholders

## Next Steps

Members should consider the information required to progress this review. This could include performance and tasking data, work patterns, measures of success, community perceptions and best practice.

In addition, Members are asked to consider which expert witnesses, in addition to those already involved, could add value to the review. This could include Community Protection Officers, partner agencies or local businesses/community members.

## Implications

### Corporate Plan:

Details of how the Scrutiny Review: Community Safety Officer Service aligns with Ashfield District Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 are included within the detailed information section of this report.

### Legal:

There are no direct legal implications resulting from this report. Any legal implications identified over the course of this review will be explored and addressed appropriately.

### Finance:

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report. Any financial implications identified over the course of this review will be explored and addressed appropriately.

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None at this stage.
General Fund – Capital Programme	None at this stage.
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None at this stage.
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None at this stage.

### Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
None at this stage.	None at this stage.

**Human Resources:**

There are no direct HR implications resulting from this report. Any HR implications identified over the course of this review will be explored and addressed appropriately.

**Equalities:**

There are no direct equality implications resulting from this report. Any equality implications identified over the course of this review will be explored and addressed appropriately.

**Other Implications:**

There are no other implications resulting from this report. Any other implications identified over the course of the review will be explored and addressed appropriately.

**Reason(s) for Urgency**

None.

**Reason(s) for Exemption**

None.

**Background Papers**

- Home Office, *Community Safety Accreditation Scheme Powers*, February 2015.

**Report Author and Contact Officer**

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