

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (SPELTHORNE)

DATE: 28 SEPTEMBER 2015



LEAD OFFICER: KEITH McGROARY, SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: JOINT ENFORCEMENT TEAM PILOT

DIVISION: ALL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Spelthorne Borough Council began a Joint Enforcement Team (JET) pilot scheme in December 2014 supported by the Police & Crime Commissioner Kevin Hurley. Spelthorne now has 4 officers who spend 50% of their time dedicated to enforcing low level offences such as fly tipping and mooring breaches. All officers wear a branded uniform, have passed a police vetting process, have also passed the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme and are due to be given powers by the Chief Constable of Surrey, similar to that of a PCSO. The officers will by the end of September 2015 be wearing body worn video cameras. This pilot is being run in conjunction with a similar scheme at Reigate & Banstead Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) **The Local Committee (Spelthorne) is asked to note the contents of this report for information.**

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Prior to the introduction of the JET Officers Spelthorne Council was unable to effectively and professionally respond to many of the low level incidents that were reported to the Council. Since the introduction of JET, the profile of the Team has been raised, and as can be seen from the performance data below, JET is having a visual and physical impact upon the Streetscene of the Borough.

This in turn is helping to give greater confidence to our residents that we take their complaints seriously, and through a process of education and enforcement are making a significant contribution to deterring further offences and making our Borough a better place to live, work and play.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 On 15th November 2012 elections for Police & Crime Commissioners (PCC) took place across the country; in Surrey an independent candidate Kevin Hurley was successful. He was elected on the back of a promise to:

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- 1.2 Take a zero tolerance policing approach; more visible street policing; put victims at the centre of the criminal justice system; give the public a greater say in how the streets are policed and protect local policing.
- 1.3 One of the mechanisms developed to help deliver some of these promises is linked to the Joint Enforcement Team (JET) pilot; there is an expectation that this type of model to be rolled out through most, if not all of Surrey.
- 1.4 Reigate officially launched their pilot in June 2014, whereas the launch in Spelthorne was in December 2014. Spelthorne now has 4 part-time JET officers (2 full time equivalents, because half their time is spent on Streetscene issues such as refuse collection, street cleansing, parks and recycling etcetera), and a Neighbourhood Manager with responsibility for the JET Team; this represents about 33% of this officers duties. All five officers have been vetted by the police, and have passed the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. At the time of writing this report JET are due to be accredited by the Surrey Chief Constable with additional powers similar to that of a Police Community Support Officer.
- 1.5 Spelthorne Council committed £100k from the 2014-15 budget and in the 2015-16 financial year the £100k was made available again. The Police & Crime Commissioner purchased 2 vehicles to support the scheme as well as uniforms and various pieces of equipment. SBC has also gone on to purchase a further 2 vehicles so that the 4 officers can carry out independent patrols, sometimes in the company of Police Officers or PCSO's.
- 1.6 We have already experienced positive feedback and reaction from the general public due to the greater uniformed presence; for instance whilst attending a local school in the marked vehicle, parents quickly moved their cars away from the school entrance before the JET officers even alight from their vehicle.
- 1.7 Productivity and enforcement: Since December 2014 to the end of July 2015, the JET have dealt with the following reports: - 194 fly-tips, 104 illegal estate agent boards, 108 abandoned vehicles, 36 illegal moorings, 45 dog fouling's, 183 fixed penalty tickets issued and 59 other interventions including reports of caravans illegally setting up onto SBC land. Whilst the figures capture some of the 'measurable' aspects of performance, it does not include factors such as public satisfaction and confidence. The above activities represent about 50% of the Teams duties and the other 50% are taken up with the Streetscene responsibilities mentioned above.
- 1.8 Many of these reports have originated from the residents of the Borough and the JET has proven to be an efficient, proactive and effective mechanism to deal with these complaints. This in turn helps to make our Borough a more attractive, cleaner and safer location to live, work and play.
- 1.9 The Surrey JET Board has commissioned a report to evaluate the 2 pilots delivered in Spelthorne and Reigate & Banstead, a draft copy has been completed, but this is not yet available for circulation until the final version has been approved. The document is very positive about the introduction of JET based upon qualitative and quantitative data. From a public perspective, there was a positive response to its implementation; one of the comments made read:
'I feel that I am getting good value for money from my council because I know it sounds trivial but the things that affect me I do get frustrated if I am walking through the car park and kicking tin cans all about the place...I don't really think about the fact that Spelthorne collect my rubbish on time every

week and there are no problems with it...you expect it, that's the norm what you are paying them for...this is just going that little bit further...I think there is a real opportunity there to say we are doing more and we are seeing there is a gap between the structure of the community and police and what we are doing...'. (Male, Resident, Spelthorne)

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 The objective was to work closely with the Police & Crime Commissioner, who has made a significant financial contribution to the project, to introduce a team of enforcement officers to work in Partnership with the PCSO's and police officers in a more joined-up and effective manner. This would on the one hand give a greater sense of visibility of an enforcement presence on our streets, which should lead to a greater sense of safety. Additionally, there would be a dedicated Council resource that would be equipped and trained to deal with many of the problems that police do not have the officers to respond to in a timely fashion.
- 2.2 This pilot also provided Spelthorne Council with its own capacity to deal with the very local quality of life issues, and also develop a close working relationship with Surrey Police on issues where there are mutual interests.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Option 1 would propose the continuation of the JET in its current format and that a growth bid is supported to make the JET a permanent service within Spelthorne Borough Council. This would retain the gains made in tackling some of the low level offences which in the past the Council has not been able to address. The volume of reoccurring issues that the JET have successfully dealt with and obtained prosecutions is something many other Local Authorities and their communities would dearly wish to have and indeed emulate. There has been a change of culture that has taken place which has allowed for superior communications and joined up activities, not just with Surrey Police but from within our own services, particularly those with enforcement powers. The risk of losing all these gains would be likely to lead to an increase of the offences that JET has successfully tackled, reduced and prosecuted. This was a pilot that began life with a degree of scepticism from many, and has developed into what could be argued one of the biggest success stories to have been delivered by Spelthorne Council.
- 3.2 Option 2 would bring an end to the pilot. This would result in the 2 existing converted Streetscene posts reverting to a role in which priorities tend to be operationally led by responding to issues associated with Streetscene services, with the enforcement role being much less of a priority. The other 2 JET post holders would be subject to redundancy. The level of offending would probably increase, residents would have difficulty in obtaining a satisfactory and timely response by Spelthorne Council, for some of the issues that negatively affect one way or another, the majority of our residents.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place in August 2015 with regards to the implementation of the body worn cameras; there were no concerns of note with regards to this. A policy has been developed for the use by officers of such equipment.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 A report has been submitted for Spelthorne Cabinet to consider future permanent funding for these posts. The growth bid will be in the region of £80k.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The JET pilot should serve to provide a better and more effective service for our more vulnerable residents to access, and so will enhance our capacity to deliver an even more responsive service for all our residents.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 All the communities in Spelthorne will benefit from this new service which will enable the Council to respond effectively to local complaints and issues where there is an enforcement role that is not already covered by our statutory services.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Set out below.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

- 8.1 Crime and Disorder implications
The JET pilot will enable Spelthorne Council to better support the Community Safety Partnership by providing a new service that can be directly tasked to deal with hot spot locations regarding reports of anti-social behaviour.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 This report is for noting for information.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 We would welcome the Local Committee's support for this pilot in Spelthorne. JET should thrive and grow even more effective and influential in shaping the appearance of the Borough as well as a resource to respond to community needs. This will also allow other Districts & Boroughs to share the lessons learnt from the pilot.
- 10.2 In collaboration with the Police & Crime Commissioner and in tandem with Reigate & Banstead Council, Spelthorne's JET team will potentially introduce a new and effective way to respond to our communities regarding complaints that previously may never have been dealt with.
- 10.3 A report will be submitted to the Spelthorne Council Cabinet to make a decision on whether to continue with the pilot or to end the pilot.

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Consulted:

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Annexes:

None.

Sources/background papers:

N/A.

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