

# **Report to Environmental and Planning Services Standing Panel**

**Date of meeting: 26 June 2006**

**Report by Cllr Mrs J. Whitehouse**

**Subject: Community/Neighbourhood Wardens**



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During the years I have been a district councillor for Epping I have received many complaints about litter, pavement parking and dog fouling. I have taken these up with the relevant officers and with the police but they reoccur.

When I heard that the parking contract would be coming up for review it seemed an opportunity to consider if the responsibilities of the parking wardens could be widened to include dealing with litter, pavement parking and dog fouling so transforming the parking wardens into community wardens. However, I was told that the parking wardens could deal only with parking. This led on to the need to consider other ways of dealing with the litter, pavement parking and dog fouling.

Since I first discussed my idea of community wardens the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 has come into effect. This provides for fixed penalty notices for a wide range of offences. These can be issued by authorised employees of various local authorities including parish councils and by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). The Government expects that local authorities will use these powers.

This panel needs to decide which powers should be enforced by the Council's existing officers and to discuss with the police which powers the PCSOs will enforce. The panel may decide that new officers, possibly called community wardens, should be employed to enforce all or some of the powers. If new officers are employed there will be budget implications.

Many local authorities have community/neighbourhood wardens. Research carried out in 2001-2003 on behalf of the ODPM's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit concluded that 'in successful schemes wardens can and are having an impact'. The research also showed that successful schemes have a number of common features. These included resident participation and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, active and representative steering group, high quality wardens with high visibility, and consistent scheme management.

The aim of this task for this scrutiny panel is to find a way to give the residents of Epping Forest a cleaner, safer, more attractive environment. This may be by the introduction of community wardens or through alternative methods. My request to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a scrutiny review is attached for information.