

Cabinet

14 October 2015



Title	Joint Enforcement Pilot (JET)		
Purpose of the report	To make a decision		
Report Author	Keith McGroary		
Cabinet Member	Councillor Tony Mitchell	Confidential	No
Corporate Priority	Delivering quality of life services		
Cabinet Values	Community		
Recommendations	Cabinet is asked: To commend the delivery and success of the JET pilot. To support continued funding to enable the JET pilot to become a permanent service within the Council.		

1. Key issues

- 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 :-
- 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. This occurred even though JET Officers do not have powers to deal with parking contraventions.
- 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. Although the scheme was not introduced to generate an income, a bye-product of effective enforcement does realise a degree of revenue which contributes in a small way towards the cost of running the JET. 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 have 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)
- 1.10 To complement the JET model and running alongside this pilot, SBC also introduced an out of hours call service in relation to statutory nuisance, particularly noise; this was implemented at the same time as the JET. The cost of this provision was £23,500. Since December 2014 to August 2015 there have been 92 reports of noise or environmental health related complaints (£192 per call); 58 calls were transferred to the call out service (£303 per call); 25 complainants were visited by the call out service (£705 each visit); 13 of the visits resulted in noise being heard (£1,356 each visit); there were zero incidents where a statutory nuisance was witnessed costing the provision for this service £23,500.

2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 The recommendation is that the Cabinet support a growth bid which would enable the JET to continue in its current format on a permanent basis. JET would then be able to build on the lessons learnt from the pilot, 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.
- 2.4 With regards to the out of hours call centre and call out service, this pilot has shown that there is a demand for this service, but it is extremely small. The figures indicate that as a Borough there is not sufficient demand to justify the overall cost of providing this service; at a time of austerity and reduced government grants, to continue with such a service would not be economically viable or financially defendable. This service would be a 'nice to have', but unaffordable when there are so many other competing demands from across the Council with far stronger business cases.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 Two of the existing JET Officers are already accounted for within the annual budget process, so this report relates to a growth of two officers who are currently on a temporary contract. The financial implication is an additional £80k, which is £20k less than we have set aside for the previous year. This £80k would not include the retention of the out of hours call out service; this would be an additional £24k.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1 Several local authorities have expressed an interest in the scheme and have visited the Borough to look at how it is working. If the scheme is made permanent, other local authorities are likely to visit the Borough to learn from our experience, potentially enhancing Spelthorne's reputation as a forward

thinking, innovative and effective organisation. Effective 'policing' by the JET of fly tipping, may also help to reduce the annual cost to the Council with regards to the removal of rubbish compared to the likely volume if JET were not in place.

- 4.2 The JET Team have been very visible and well publicised, including regular articles within our own Bulletin. Residents may have developed an expectation that they are able to pick up the phone and the Council will respond to their issues, to withdraw that service would leave the Council without capacity to effectively and physically respond to some of the high volume, low level issues, that all too frequently blight the life of our communities.

5. Timetable for implementation

- 5.1 Officers and equipment including four new vehicles, body worn cameras, radios and much more is already in place. The timetable for implementation would be completed upon approval of the Cabinet approving the budget growth to allow the permanent implementation of the Spelthorne Joint Enforcement Team.

Background papers:

None

Appendices:

None