



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE OFFICER REPORT

<b>NAME OF REPORT</b>	Community Officers
<b>BRIEF REPORT</b>	
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Over the past 20 years, Neighbourhood/Community Wardens have played a crucial role in enhancing community safety across the district. Initially funded by Central Government and local Town and parish Council, the role was established to address anti-social behaviour and collaborate with Neighbourhood Police Team and other agencies. Originally, the team comprised of twelve officers.</p> <p>Despite the cessation of external funding, Stroud District Council recognised the importance of this role and continued to support six officers.</p> <p><b>Changes in our Community</b></p> <p>Recent events, including the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the cost of living crisis, have significantly impacted the district. The development of the Community Hub network have supported the impact of these events but demands on the voluntary sector continues to increase. Consequently, a revised approach to community work has become necessary.</p> <p><b>Consultation and Engagement</b></p> <p>Over the past 12 month, a comprehensive review of the Community Warden role was conducted. This review involved engagement with the Community Safety Manager, Wardens, Senior Leadership, and managers across the council, as well as a workshop with members and consultations with Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p><b>Working Together to Support and Strengthen Communities Across the District.</b></p> <p>Four main themes emerged from the consultation and engagement process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Prevention:</b> Focus on area based working, attending community events, youth engagement, building community partnerships, community safety (ASB prevention and support), community based projects and sharing information.</li><li><b>2. Reactive:</b> Addressing ASB through evidence gathering on fly tipping, organising team and community clean-up days and engagement with property owners, Town and Parish Councils and community groups, adapting to the community needs based on data and local intelligence, conducting joint patrols with other agencies, and safeguarding.</li><li><b>3. One Council:</b> Acting as council champions, disseminating messages through community involvement, and relaying concerns to relevant council officers. Collaborating closely with all</li></ol>	

council services on joint ventures such as community safety awareness campaigns, planning notices. Supporting the new Careline model, signposting residents in need of help, promoting the service through regular clinics in Community Hubs, supporting elections in various roles and being part of the emergency support team.

**4. Competency Model**

Developing a competency model and training plan for existing and new officers, focusing on areas such as community building, ASB prevention, and safeguarding to ensure continuity and professionalism.

**Rebranding the Role**

To better reflect the evolving nature of the role and avoid confusion with enforcement officers, the title has been changed to “Community Officer”. This new designation encompasses a broader range of community work as highlighted by the four themes. Officers will also receive new branded uniform to support this change.

**Raising the profile**

A communication plan is being developed to highlight the work of the Community Officers and emphasise their community focus. This will include:

- Internal communications to all officers and members
- External communications with Town and Parish Councils/Police and other agencies
- Social media presence promoting projects and activities
- Website updates to reflect the new role
- Greater presence within the service specific plans to show case their work.

<b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b>	Ange Gillingham
<b>DATE</b>	26 February 2025