

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio – Proposed Field Officer Role Business Case</b>	
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>22 January 2018</b>	
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director Neighbourhoods, Communities and Housing</b>	
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>	

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report was presented to NICE Committee on the 27th November 2017. The report was discussed and deferred to the NICE Committee on 22 January 2018. The proposed implementation dates and timetables detailed in the report and recommendations 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 have been adjusted to reflect this deferral.
- 1.2 To address concerns raised by members the Risk Log in Appendix 1 page 21. Concerns raised included resourcing of the programme, loss of the Noise Patrol service, and the scale and management of the programme. The proposed controls to address these concerns are detailed in risks 1 – 4 of the Risk Log. To address concerns about delivery and implementation of an effective mobile platform the ICT and Digital First Timetable has also been updated to reflect the progress being made with implementation of the tablet and trialling of the associated UNIFORM applications. This is detailed in Appendix 1 page 27.
- 1.3 This report sets out the Business Case for a new Field Officer role as part of the wider Communities & Neighbourhoods Portfolio, which was reported to the NICE Committee in July 2017. The business case focuses on how we deliver enforcement and inspection functions across services to reduce the costs to the council and give a better service to our communities across the City.
- 1.4 Working in our communities and with our communities promotes a more proactive and preventative way of working, that delivers solutions and resolves problems.
- 1.5 The Business Case has been developed in collaboration with staff and service heads, external partners, unions and also information collated from recent community workshops. Work being done by other local authorities in this field has also been considered.

- 1.6 The Business Case was presented to Corporate Modernisation Delivery Board on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and all the recommendations were approved.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Committee are recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree the creation of a Field Officer Team as set out at Option 1 of the Business Case on page 12 of Appendix 1;
- 2.2 Agree the revised proposed phasing of functions and services based on the outcome of workshops with frontline staff and managers as set out at paragraphs 3.43 to 3.50 of the report;
- 2.3 Agree the funding and resources required for the set-up of the Field Officer support role as set out at paragraphs 3.29 to 3.42 of the report, and Appendix 1 pages 16 to 20;
- 2.4 Note the timetable for implementation and associated communication and engagement work with key stakeholders as set out at section 5 of the report (paragraphs 5.1 to 5.12) and at Appendix 1 pages 28 to 29 and pages 38 to 39;
- 2.5 Note the updated risks and mitigation actions as set out at Appendix 1 pages 21 to 26;
- 2.6 Note the updated Digital First timetable for delivery as set out at Appendix 1 pages 27 to 28;
- 2.7 Note that the detailed amendments to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers referred to at paragraphs 3.16 to 3.19 of the report will be reported to the Policy Resources and Growth Committee for approval, before the Field Officers start to exercise Council functions.

## **3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The aim of the administration's Communities & Neighbourhoods Portfolio is to put communities at the heart of service delivery, make effective use of resources and support the delivery of savings. Different ways of thinking and working are needed to collaborate and achieve positive change.
- 3.2 A business case has been developed for the wider Communities & Neighbourhoods Portfolio, which was agreed in May 2016 by the Corporate Modernisation Delivery Board. The option agreed was to implement a model of collaborative working and service improvement.

3.3 The Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio is delivering 3 programmes:

- i. Community and neighbourhood hub development (physical and virtual)
- ii. Community collaboration (volunteering and governance)
- iii. Enforcement & inspection (development of the Field Officer role).

3.4 For the Enforcement and Inspection Programme a new Field Officer role is being developed to deliver coordinated fast and effective enforcement and inspection work across a number of council services, while at the same time working proactively with communities, and our partners. Delivering a better customer service for our residents, visitors and businesses is at the centre of this programme.

3.5 It is noted from the latest Customer Insight Report 2016-2017:

- Customer satisfaction with the city council is 60%. This is a 1% increase. The national benchmark is 68%. This shows that the council needs to continue improving its customer satisfaction levels.
- Customer satisfaction is highest when using a face to face channel, and lowest for contact by email. This reinforces the need for a Field Officer role working in our Communities and having face to face contact.
- The method of customer contact continues to move in the direction of increased digital access. With budget pressures and increased demand the council needs to strongly consider further digitalisation.

3.6 It is proposed that the Field Officer will work flexibly across services, preventing duplication, reducing response times and improving the way customers access services, with improved customer satisfaction. Digital solutions are being developed and piloted to enable this to happen.

### **Objectives**

3.7 The aims and objectives of the proposed Field Officer role are consistent with those of the Communities & Neighbourhoods Portfolio, namely to put communities at the heart of service delivery, while at the same time supporting delivery of savings and making effective use of resources. The objectives of this new role are to:-

- Improve customer satisfaction with services through citizen engagement, joined up service delivery making services easier to navigate
- Be better connected, sharing information and expertise with our key partners to avoid duplication, move away from silo working and reduce the number of interactions customers have with different services
- Be smarter with universal services, providing digital solutions for high level transactions, automating connections to back office services, reducing the need for officer intervention and promoting self-help
- Work with communities to build resilience, allowing residents to take greater control to make a difference in their neighbourhoods

3.8 3 elements of the role have been identified:-

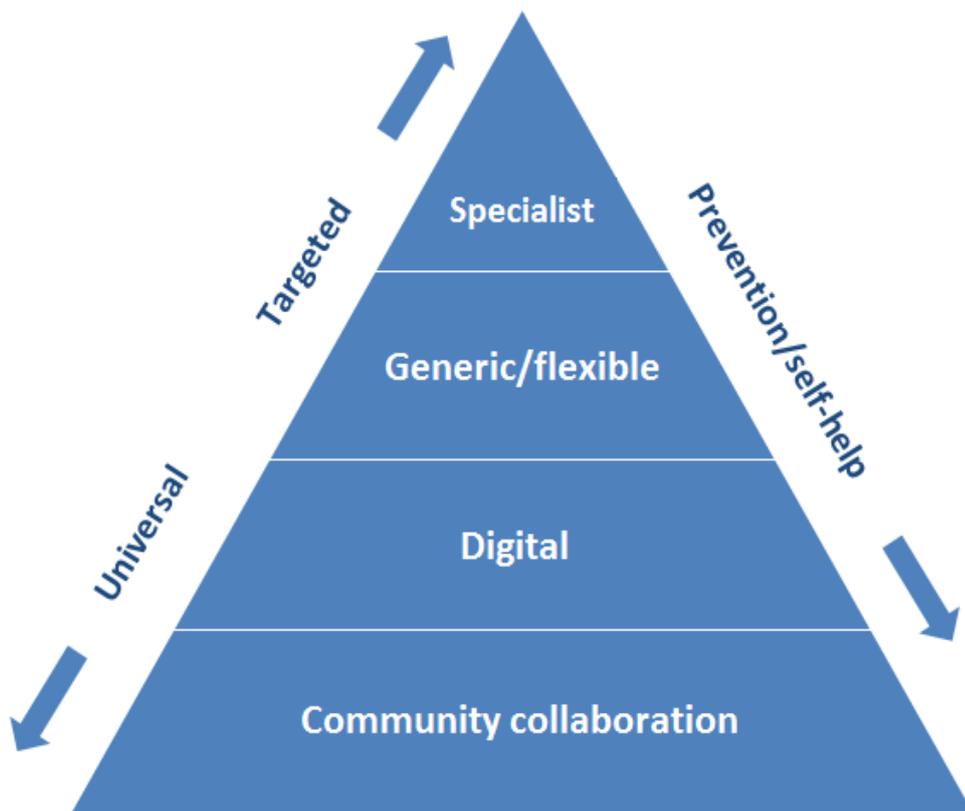
1. Enforcement activities that are quick and responsive to customer needs (include Fixed Penalty provisions). Timely effective enforcement action resolves problems which will reduce unnecessary demand on partners and services.
2. Gathering intelligence and evidence for existing specialist services. Gathering quick and robust evidence including photographs, mapping and statements to inform these services and enable them to deliver faster, more effective and coordinated enforcement action that is resolving both environmental and community problems.
3. Working proactively promoting behaviour change and community collaboration.

3.9 Section 4 of the Business Case (Appendix 1- page 13 to 15) details the non-cashable benefits of this programme and many of these are common to the overarching Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio.

### **Service delivery model including rotas and geographical areas**

3.10 The service delivery model for enforcement and inspection aligns with the proposed service delivery model for the wider Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio.

#### **Communities & Neighbourhoods: Service Delivery Model**



## **Principles:**

**Specialist:** High cost services/interventions with individual customers (eg. social care, housing)

**Generic/flexible:** Services provided by staff to non-specific customers (generic customers, flexible staff)

**Digital:** Information and services delivered electronically

**Community collaboration:** Services designed and delivered in consultation and/or partnership with the community

The model will be the same for each neighbourhood and community of interest

The size of each segment will be relative to the needs of the neighbourhood or community it serves

Some services will be targeted, some universal. Focus is on prevention and self-help to reduce demand

- 3.11 The proposed new Field Officer role needs to be generic and flexible, working across existing services and supporting the specialist/technical roles located in these services.
- 3.12 Existing specialist technical roles deliver highly skilled work and are often involved with complex cases, and can require professional qualifications. The Field Officers will help to release existing skilled and specialist staff to focus on this lengthy and complex casework and enforcement activities. It is aimed that this will help existing services to use their current resources more effectively and efficiently, task the Field Officer to gather evidence, and also undertake quick win immediate enforcement roles. There is also opportunity for these specialist staff to focus on new areas of work and possible income generation. This could include providing highly skilled technical services for neighbouring local authorities.
- 3.13 This flexible and generic role will often be demand led with fast response times and responding to community needs and priorities using new digital technology. This may include new enforcement fixed penalty notice work such as the enforcement of the new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). This is reflected in the model above.
- 3.14 When developing a new role working across so many different service areas there is a risk of increased demand and having a negative impact on customer service. It is for this reason that we need to have clear baselines that we work to, and at the same time link this to resources we have available. In some cases initial demand can be mitigated through new solutions i.e. Digital.
- 3.15 Delivery of this role relies on clearly defined work processes with clearly defined 'hand offs' when a case is passed to another agency or specialist team, and to also clearly define when a case is concluded. This needs to be supported by a comprehensive programme of training.

## **Delegation of powers**

- 3.16 It will be necessary to delegate relevant enforcement powers to the new Field Officers so that they are equipped to exercise the Council's enforcement functions across the full range of relevant services. This will be addressed by implementing changes to the Council's Scheme of Delegations to Officers: a proposal which has already been approved in principle following a Report to the Council's Policy, Resources & Growth Committee on 9th February 2017 when it agreed that new 'Field Officer' posts be created to carry out enforcement and inspection activities across the full range of Council functions so as to enable officer resources to be maximised so as to increase overall effectiveness.
- 3.17 The Constitutional Working Group had previously considered the available options for amending the Scheme of Delegations to Officers and took the view that the optimum approach is for the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to delegate relevant enforcement powers directly to Field Officers on the basis that they exercise them in accordance with the direction and guidance of the Executive Director (or other lead officer) who has responsibility for the function being delivered. This proposal was subsequently reviewed by Counsel, who has provided reassurance regarding the legality of proceeding in this way.
- 3.18 The detailed amendments to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers referred to above will be brought before the Policy Resources & Growth Committee at a future date, before the Field Officers start to exercise the Council's functions. The proposed changes will be appended to a Report on other proposed changes to the wording of the Council's Constitution.
- 3.19 On 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017, the Council's Policy, Resources & Growth Committee amended the Scheme of Delegations in relation to the Neighbourhoods, Communities and Equalities Committee to make it responsible 'for the development and oversight of support to the Council's enforcement functions, including Field Officers'.

## **Services in Scope**

- 3.20 The service delivery model for enforcement and inspection has the opportunity to work across a number of services and it is proposed these initially include:-
- Regulatory Services
  - Housing
  - Private Sector Housing
  - Planning Enforcement
  - Community Safety
  - City Parks
  - Highways
  - Travellers
  - Seafront Office

## **Citywide approach**

- 3.21 By operating a 'city wide' service rather than a smaller area eg. Central Brighton and Hove and Hanover & Elm Grove we are delivering a consistent 'city wide' customer service. This approach would prevent dividing the city into different models of service delivery and risking the creation of hotspots and varying degrees of enforcement. The city wide service would need to be agile and respond to unanticipated service pressures, community priorities, emergencies or hotspots. It can form a single point of contact for councillors or MP's. It is important that the objectives and service delivery are not compromised.

## **Rotas and working pattern**

- 3.22 The business case Appendix 1 page 16 presents 4 different rota options with different staffing levels, different hours of delivery, and different costings. All options include resource for annual leave and sickness. This is budgeted for and provided from within the Field Officer team, not relying on cover from the services in scope.
- 3.23 Two shift patterns are presented and these are 8.00-20.00 hours and 12.00-20.00 hours. Each of these options has been costed with two staffing options.
- 3.24 This new service delivery model needs to be agile and respond to not only community needs, but also service needs, and seasonal demands. As this role is launched it is critical that a cautious approach is adopted, that the work, performance and outcomes are strictly monitored and where change is needed that this is quick and responsive.
- 3.25 The role and functions delivered will be routinely reviewed to ensure that service delivery remains focused on community and service needs, resource, and seasonal demands.
- 3.26 One of the aims of the role is to deliver fast effective enforcement action citywide so it is therefore important that there is sufficient staff and resource to achieve this fast responsive delivery model. Feedback from the staff workshops highlighted that demand focuses later in the day and evening and generally not as early as 8.00am.
- 3.27 For all these reasons it is proposed that the preferred option for service delivery be 7 days a week, 12.00-20.00 with a rota of 7 full time equivalents. This would ensure that on any one day there will be between 4 and 6 staff working across the city.
- 3.28 No firm decision has yet been made on the form of the employment contract in terms of annualised hours or other contractual arrangement. These options will depend on the anticipated flexibility needed to respond to seasonal or in-week patterns of demand.

## **Resources and Health and Safety**

- 3.29 The intention is that all the costs of the proposed new role will be funded from existing budgets across a variety of services. The services in scope are located

in NCH and EEC. The table below highlights the FTE equivalent needed from each directorate and breaks down the resource required for 'existing' functions and the resource required for 'new' functions. In the original business case Appendix 1 page 19 the total resource was 7.19 FTE, this has now been updated to include the City Parks contribution and is now 7.29 FTE. The table below is the updated version.

<b>Fulltime Equivalent (FTE)</b>	<b>NCH</b>	<b>EEC</b>
TOTAL FTE for EXISTING functions	4.84	1.27
TOTAL FTE for NEW functions	1.07	0.11
TOTAL	5.91	1.38
TOTAL from both Directorates inc New and Existing functions	<b>7.29</b> Including all 9 services in scope	

- 3.30 This proposed new Field Officer role has an indicative grade of SO1/2 with the proviso that it is managed by M10 grade or higher.
- 3.31 The assessment of new and existing work from the services in scope matches the recommended rota for seven members of staff.
- 3.32 Appendix 1 Pages 16 to 20 of the business case details the costs required to deliver this role city wide. Including transport costs this is now updated to be £0.358m for the first year, and thereafter £0.321m per annum. Initially all of this will be funded by NCH directorate using a combination of identified budgets of £0.161m, and a contribution of £0.049 from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). An additional £0.109m relates to a carry forward request to Policy, Resources & Growth Committee to use NCH underspends from 2017/18 to accommodate this service in 2018/19. This approach will enable the benefits to be evidenced and the service will then look at mainstream funding.
- 3.33 No staff will need to transfer into these new roles and no redundancies will be required to fund this proposed service.
- 3.34 There is an additional one off £0,050m allocation to tackle growing issues with tented communities. It is proposed to align this funding with the implementation of the proposed Field Officer role. This would fund an additional post working across the city with the aim that the service works with colleagues in City Parks to cover issues relating to tented communities.
- 3.35 There is also an existing one off £0.020m allocation to City Parks to address anti-social behaviour issues in central Brighton and Hove parks, including the Level. This intervention is currently being targeted every Friday and Saturday night for the remainder of this financial year, and the remaining resource will continue through to next financial year where there will be the opportunity to align with the proposed Field Officer role.

- 3.36 As part of this funding it is proposed to move £0.042m from the existing Noise Patrol service into the Field Officer service and review how noise services are delivered out of hours. The business case includes a more detailed report on the Noise Patrol service (Addendum pages 5 to 8) on how this service is currently delivered (including resource), and the changes that have happened over recent years.
- 3.37 The service has been operating for over 20 years and over that time the service delivery model and the hours and days of operation have changed very little.
- 3.38 In recent years we have witnessed changing trends and challenges in relation to drug and alcohol use, knife attacks, and most recently ‘acid attacks’. This ever changing environment and changing social trends are presenting new risks to the staff that deliver this service. Reductions in Police resources often means that police support is delayed or not available so in reality physically stopping a large party, or getting the music reduced to an acceptable level is not going to happen. Likewise where someone is causing a disturbance and under the influence of drugs and or alcohol stopping the noise that night rarely happens for a variety of reasons, access denied, risk, and lack of cooperation. What can be practically achieved on the night to stop the noise safely and without risk is becoming an increasing challenge and an intervention the following Saturday or Sunday is a far safer and more practical solution. Staff in the Environmental Protection Team will continue to work flexibly out of hours to respond to ongoing noise complaints. We will continue to use digital noise recording equipment to gather evidence and enable notice abatement notices to be served. We will also continue to develop partnership working with the Police to witness noise from persistent offenders.
- 3.39 The service is based at the Carelink Offices in Patching Lodge, Edward Street and operates Friday and Saturday 22.00 hours – 03.00 hours (excluding Christmas and New Year weekends). Two officers work together and deliver the service Citywide, which depending on the call pattern can result in significant travelling times, and delayed response times for our customers.
- 3.40 Officers from Regulatory Services deliver the service. This is non contracted overtime but delivered via a casual contract in addition to their substantive contract, and paid at M11. Being non contracted overtime makes the service vulnerable and on occasions the service has been cancelled as no officers have been available to work.

2016/17 Cost of service £0.042m	420 complaints over 12 months	239 visits over the year	£176 per visit
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- 3.41 This is an opportunity to modernise how we deliver noise services out of hours and review how this resource could better serve our communities and be better value for money. Lack of a mobile device in the field requires officers to routinely return to the office to check databases and property history, to print enforcement notices, and retrieve customer calls from the answer machine.
- 3.42 As the role of Field Officer is developed throughout 2018/19 and the scope is more defined, it is anticipated that the operational impact, and potential to reduce

costs and/or generate income will be monitored to inform the ongoing cost of the service from 2019/20.

- 3.43 To manage lone working, and staff health and safety, risk assessments, include lone working risk assessments will be an ongoing process. These are all established corporate processes for managing the health and safety of staff when working away from the office. Remote personal alarm systems such as 'Sky Guard' will also be available for staff to use, including the established corporate Clients of Concern database. Body cams are also being considered as part of the personal protective equipment required by the Field Officers. The Field officers will be working as a team and where necessary can call upon each other to do joint visits. Other colleagues from specialist teams and our partner agencies, including police, can also be called upon by the Field Officer.

### **Functions and phased approach**

- 3.44 The Field Officer role and functions have been developed through a series of workshops and drop in sessions with over 60 frontline staff and managers. Discussions with Assistant Directors and DMT members have also been held regularly with NCH and EEC Directorates.
- 3.45 Evidence from our Customer Feedback Team and workshops with communities, including East Brighton and Moulsecoomb, have started to inform how we can work better together, deliver services that meets customer need, and in a way that our customers can easily access.
- 3.46 As a new and innovative programme crossing a broad range of services, all at different stages of modernisation and digitalisation, we need to adopt an agile and cautious approach to the implementation and development of this role.
- 3.47 Phase one of this programme will see Field Officers taking on the functions detailed in (Appendix 1 pages 31 to 35), this is an updated version defining the Functions more clearly. This distinguishes between new and existing functions.
- 3.48 Phase one, from June 2018, includes:
- Noise nuisance investigations inc buskers, alarms, initial response to domestic noise complaints.
  - Smoke and dust nuisance investigations for both domestic and commercial premises.
  - Low level antisocial behaviour complaints.
  - Waste on private land complaints.
  - Street trading enforcement.
  - Housing Estate Inspections.
  - Public Space Protection Order enforcement.
  - Condition of land or a property is considered harmful to the area
  - Initial assessment and evidence gathering for alleged unauthorised signage inc estate agent boards.
  - Breaches of planning condition that are easily quantifiable such as hours of use or delivery time restrictions.
  - Third party complaints relating to private sector housing inc HMOs inc overgrown gardens and drainage.

3.49 This will also include the comparatively new work around Public Space Protection Orders which is currently delivered by Travellers, City Parks and Seafront Team (extremely limited). These PSPO offences are:

- Occupying any vehicle, caravan, tent or other structure
- Driving any vehicle on grass
- Littering or fly tipping
- Lighting or maintaining a fire
- Defecating or urinating

3.50 The Field Officer role will be able to work jointly with these services to enforce PSPO offences, and will mean that these capabilities are available for evenings and weekends.

3.51 Phase 2 will start approximately three months after Phase 1 ( i.e. September 2018) Phase 2 will review the functions delivered in Phase 1, and starts to introduce additional functions from other services, including a review of Highways functions.

3.52 A further Phase 3 review will be carried out in December, and again in April 2019, again looking at all functions.

### **Proposed Job Description and Person Specification**

3.53 The draft person specification and job description (Addendum pages 9 to 14) has an indicative grading of SO1/2 on the proviso that it will be managed by a grade no lower than M10. It will go to a formal panel once the details and functions of this role have been finalised.

3.54 This role will be working in the community with communities and engaging with businesses and partners. Mobile digital technology will enable this role to work in the field and in the range of council accommodation. Police and Fire Services have also offered opportunities around possible colocation.

### **Digital First**

3.55 Digital First have been working closely with services and teams to understand how services work, the processes they use, identifying examples of good working practices but also the potential for further service improvement and in particular the benefits that digitalisation can bring. The aim is to deliver a mobile tablet device, enabling fast referrals, fast effective information sharing, and moving customer contact (booking appointments, making payments) online. More on this work, including the revised proposed timetable for implementation is Appendix 1 pages 27 to 28.

### **Communications and Engagement Plan**

3.56 A Communications and Engagement Plan has been developed and will continue to be delivered as this role is implemented, see Appendix 1 pages 39 to 40. Trade Unions and support services (including Finance, HR, Legal, IT and Digital First) have been engaged throughout.

- 3.57 The staff workshops and drop in sessions have been a valuable tool to develop this role and understand how it can be delivered. Also, how existing services and the proposed new Field Officer role can work together to improve customer satisfaction, develop stronger community collaboration, improve service delivery and use resources more effectively and efficiently.

### **Field Officer Training Needs**

- 3.58 The consultation process and in particular the staff engagement workshops started to identify training needs associated with this proposed new role. The training needs document focuses on the 3 elements of the Field Officer role and shows the skills and training needs that staff repeatedly identified as part of this process. Staff identified their current skills, the future Field Officer skills, and associated training to carry out the functions of the role. The majority of training will be carried out in house with the Field Officer working closely with the existing specialised teams.

## **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Options for delivery of this role have been explored and are detailed in (Appendix 1 pages 12 to 13), also repeated in the paragraphs below 4.2 to 4.5.
- 4.2 **Option 1** – Preferred – Create a Field Officer team, working city wide across 9 services. This option creates a team of multi-functional Field Officers supporting a wide range of different enforcement and inspection functions, and resolving or forwarding as much as they can on the spot, improving customer satisfaction. The need for other officers to visit is kept to a minimum, and mobile working improves productivity and customer satisfaction. Field officers get to know their areas and the needs of the people who live there - communities have a greater sense of ownership. This is consistent with the objectives of the wider Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio.
- 4.3 **Option 2** - Digital First Solution only - Could the project be delivered through the Digital First work alone? This option maintains the separate silos of individual enforcement and inspection services, but would transform their ability to transfer information, service requests and data between services, leading to improvement in response times and customer satisfaction, and greater productivity from mobile working. So the individual service benefits are not dissimilar to the Field Officer option. But each officer is still fundamentally responsible for their 'own' service. The Field Officer role has much greater potential for a genuinely collaborative approach, not only between services but also as the eyes and ears of the council and potentially in a closer relationship with the communities they serve. This option also loses the productivity benefits that flow from a single officer responding to everything they see, avoiding the stereotypical case of several officers having to inspect or enforce at the same address.
- 4.4 **Option 3** – Large all-encompassing enforcement team made of individual services - Another option which is also not considered in greater detail here is the possibility of pulling together a wider range of enforcement teams into a specialist Enforcement Service. There is a risk that this would become too large and diverse and silo working. It would not fulfil the remit to deliver a cross-service

flexible workforce supporting community collaboration and behaviour change, and would be disconnected from the Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio, and not deliver the objectives and benefits that this has identified.

4.5 **Option 4 - Do nothing** – This option does not address the objectives of the Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio. It does not include digitisation of services and the benefits this brings. It is not consistent with the proposals already agreed at Committee.

## 5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 A communication plan for the programme is routinely reviewed to ensure that all stakeholders are informing the development of this role. An ongoing programme of collaboration and engagement will ensure that this role fulfils both community and service needs, and helps to coordinate service delivery with our partners.

5.2 Over the summer over 60 staff from 9 services attended 5 business improvement workshops, and 4 drop in sessions. These staff engagement opportunities provided a safe and confidential space for individual staff to raise any concerns / group work to discuss current working practices; suggests areas for improvement including how technology support us; identify good practice and improved customer service; and how we can work better together with our partners and communities.

5.3 Aims of the 5 staff workshops

- Staff informing the development of the Field Officer role
- Workshop outcomes reinforce the outcomes and benefits already identified through the wider Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio work
- Job Description and Person Specification have been compiled, reinforcing the need for the three elements of the role
- Responsive fast effective enforcement and inspection work
- Intelligence gathering and fast effective referrals
- Community collaboration and behaviour change
- Best practice recommendations on how we move forward with developing the role, for example, addressing lone working and transport concerns.
- All workshop outcomes will inform the next phase of the modernisation programme, including an implementation plan and enable staff to champion the role of the Field Officer.

Staff Engagement	Outputs
Workshop 1: What we do now	Seven services involved in process mapping a scenario based on customer complaints received by services, helped identify improvements to customer service and removal of duplication
Workshop 2: How technology can help us	Five services involved in identifying good practice and issues to inform a digital solution to enable a fast effective responsive approach to enforcement and inspection and referrals
Workshop 3: What we've learnt so far	Six services involved in identifying Field Officer skills and training requirements; addressing lone working and transport issues and concerns raised by individual staff;

	and potential functions and task of the Field Officer
Workshop 4: How we can work better together with partners and communities	Building on the work of the previous workshop staff from two services co-ordinated partnership working with a focus on benefits to our communities and what customers value
Workshop 5: Mapping a current process	Four services involved in mapping and providing constructive challenge to an existing process - support and advice provided to a prospective HMO customer – with the view to identifying good practice; opportunities for improved communication and how technology can better support.

- 5.4 In addition there were routine briefings with heads of service at NCH and EEC DMTs. As part of this programme there were also routine briefings with union representatives. Further briefings and workshops are planned.
- 5.5 Meetings have also been held with external partners inc briefing to City Management Board and Community Initiatives Partnership.
- 5.6 Utilising information from workshops with communities in Elm Grove and Hanover, Moulsecomb, East Brighton has also helped to inform the development of the role.
- 5.7 Addendum pages 24 to 26 details a table of the outcomes and benefits of the Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio, and aligns these with the three elements of the Field Officer role. This consultation process has enabled us to demonstrate the enforcement and inspection programme is an essential component part of the Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio, and the need for this modernisation opportunity.
- 5.8 As this proposed role has developed there have been ongoing discussions and meetings with both unions, GMB and UNISON, but also with external partners including Police and Fire.
- 5.9 GMB have made the following comments:

*We do not support this role and we find it very difficult how this can be justified in the current financial climate that the council find itself in. This will also cause further confusion and duplication and not in our view assist the public in anyway. And finally as the NCH directorate is going through a major restructuring this is money that could be spent elsewhere for benefit of staff and the wider community*

*Mark Turner  
GMB*

- 5.10 UNISON have made the following comments:

*Unison opposes the introduction of this new role.  
We believe this is an unnecessary expensive and irresponsible proposal.  
As members will know we have gone through many years of cuts to budgets and redundancies and these are set to continue into the next financial year, this is a*

*£300K+ growth item whose costs could have been used to offset the redundancies in the latest NCH re-organisation.*

*The role as designed also has the effect of increasing the demand for Council services through feeding into increased expectations of the public and therefore runs contrary to the strategy that has been followed for the last six years of decreasing the expectations of the public of what can be delivered by the Council following on from austerity.*

*It duplicates the services provided by departments and lacks clarity in lines of accountability of service provision.*

*It attempts to portray the Council as open and accessible 24/7 but is paid for through cutting the Weekend Noise patrol a service that many desperate residents turn to when they have anti-social neighbours.*

*It throws up a number of health and safety concerns around lone working and isolated staff without effective supervision.*

*In summary it is an expensive gimmick that will do nothing to increase the efficiency of the Council.*

*Richard Woolven  
Unison*

5.11 Nigel Cusack City Borough Commander, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service  
East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service has made the following comments:

*As a proposal the business case for the Field Officer Role within the Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio gains support from East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFR) and has the potential to support the aims of the Service in relation to Collaborative working. In addition this role also supports reaching out across our communities offering support and assistance to those that are deemed vulnerable within our communities.*

*The role specifically identifies the sharing of information and expertise with BHCC key partners avoiding duplication, and moving away from silo working, to reduce the number of interactions customers have with different services, ESFRS are fully supportive of this approach and would look to provide some early awareness and training to support the delivery of Home, Business, Road or Water safety education, or deliver training in the awareness in the pathway referral process and identification of those vulnerable to fire.*

*Fire and Rescue priorities have synergy with the role in relation to community collaboration and supporting the work with communities to build resilience, allowing residents to take greater control to make a difference in their neighbourhoods. This is currently reflected by our work in partnership with BHCC and the City Initiatives Partnership (CIP) which identifies key themes to seek ways of improving health and wellbeing and access to safety information. It is felt that the Field Officer role could support this partnership and provide additional data on those that would benefit from fire safety and wellbeing advice or intervention.*

*There are also clear links to the PSPO elements that are identified in support of the reduction of deliberate fire setting, either by disaffected youths or by those in tented communities and or residing on the streets of Brighton and Hove.*

*As a final strand we would like to seek out the opportunities for collaborating across services and the possibility for the Field Officer roles to be agile in their work and be able to utilise our three fire stations across the City to enhance working relationships, open communication and referrals routes and support the wider agenda of collaborative, efficient working.*

- 5.12 Edward De La Rue, Superintendent, Brighton and Hove Division Sussex Police wanted to add the following comments:

*I see the proposed Communities & Neighbourhoods Field Officer role as a very positive development. Sussex Police are currently introducing and embedding our new Prevention model for local neighbourhoods; this will be focused on dedicated officers protected from abstraction in order to work with local communities and partners. Brighton & Hove City Council are a critical partner for us, and I believe that the creation of a team of dedicated Field Officers able to address local issues through enforcement and wider community collaboration initiatives will enable both organisations to work together more efficiently and effectively and thereby deliver a better service to local people.*

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The proposed Field Officer role is part of the wider Communities and Neighbourhoods Portfolio, and has been developed collaboratively with staff, service heads, communities and our partners.
- 6.2 This new flexible role will deliver coordinated fast and effective enforcement and inspection work across 9 council services, while at the same time working proactively with communities, and our partners.
- 6.3 It is proposed to have seven Field Officers delivering services, citywide, 7 days a week, between 12.00 and 20.00. This role will have access to a mobile device facilitating fast effective referrals while also enabling information and evidence to be quickly and accurately gathered. This delivery model will enable services to be accessed early evening and at weekends when currently there is little or no service provision.
- 6.4 This role needs to be responsive and agile to meet customer and service needs, and ensure that a collaborative approach to service delivery is maintained.
- 6.5 This new service delivery model will bring services together to deliver a better customer service for our residents, visitors and businesses.

## **7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The cost of the recommended Option 1 is an up-front cost of £0.039m to pay for counsel advice, the software and the hand-held tablets, and an annual ongoing cost of £0.321m. The up-front costs of £0.039m will be paid for by the digital first programme (£0.038m) and £1,000 from current supplies and services budget for counsel advice. The Field Officer Service is estimated to cost of £0.319m during 2018/19 (the business case in Appendix one does not include the transport costs

estimate of £9,940) All of this will be funded by NCH directorate using a combination of identified budgets of £0.161m, a contribution of £0.049 from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and £0.109m. This relates to a carry forward request to Policy, Resources & Growth Committee to use NCH underspends from 2017/18 to accommodate this service in 2018/19.

- 7.2 The business case describes that cashable benefits may be possible as the result of better productivity through the use of the new digital first platform. There is some evidence in the pest control service that the use of the mobile devices may free up existing staff time so that the existing service has greater capacity to complete income generating work. However, it is too early to quantify this at this stage of the programme. Therefore, current budget proposals for this service assume no extra income generation for 2018/19 and beyond.
- 7.3 As the role of Field Officer is developed throughout 2018/19 and the scope is more defined, it is anticipated that its operational impact and potential to reduce costs and/or generate income will be monitored to inform the ongoing cost of the service from 2019/20.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks      Date: 01/11/17*

Legal Implications:

- 7.4 The Council's enforcement and inspection powers may be exercised out only by those of its officers to whom relevant powers are delegated, or who are authorised to exercise the powers delegated to more senior officers. This report has outlined the need to delegate relevant enforcement powers to the new Field Officers to equip them to exercise the Council's enforcement functions across the relevant services. This need will be addressed by implementing changes to the Council's Scheme of Delegations to Officers: a course of action which has already been approved in principle following a report to the Council's Policy, Resources & Growth Committee on 9th February 2017. That Committee's formal approval to make the necessary changes to the Scheme will be sought in a future Constitutional Review Report to which will be appended the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

*Lawyer Consulted:                      Victoria Simpson                      Date: 01/11/2017*

Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Communities & Neighbourhoods Portfolio is due March 2018.
- 7.6 However, EIA's for the Communities and Neighbourhoods component programmes are currently being developed by the Communities and Neighbourhoods Coordination Group. This includes the EIA for this proposed Field Officer role.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.7 Where possible waste and litter that is still in relatively usable condition, for this to be re-directed to local charities. There may also be scope to building in a

partnership with the local Freegle coordinator (Cat Fletcher [cat.scrig@gmail.com](mailto:cat.scrig@gmail.com)) to help redirect the waste that is found and prevent it from being taken to landfill. This could also reduce our landfill charges, contribute to circular economy in the city and support local charities.

- 7.8 It would be good to include information about the Biosphere programme into the Field Officer training.
- 7.9 Ensure FO is linked well with all local Community Development Workers. CDWs have a lot of knowledge/expertise of their communities, issues and concerns relating to particularly individuals and particular hotspots in the area. Similarly that they are linked in with Friends of Groups and the new citywide group that is being established (as a Biosphere project) for bringing all friends of groups together. This is called - Brighton and Hove Green Spaces Forum network of friends groups. (contact Rich Howorth for further details – [rich.howorth@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:rich.howorth@brighton-hove.gov.uk)).

*Sustainability Development Officer: Mita Patel*

*Date : 13/11/17*

#### Crime & Disorder Implications

- 7.10 The proposed new Prevention Policing Model will shortly be implemented and work alongside the Field Officer role.

#### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

- 7.11 The updated risks are detailed in Appendix 1 Page 21 to 26 of the business case.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Appendix 1: Business Case – Proposed Field Officer Role

Addendum: Documents embedded within the original Business case (Appendix 1)