

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**Decision Taken By:**  
**Cabinet Member for Community Services**

**Decision No:**  
**D230081MEM**

**Date: 21 September 2023**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**KCC Community Warden Consultation Response**

**(Report of Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive)**

**Consideration was given to a proposed response from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council in respect of the KCC Community Warden review, which was out for consultation until 3 October 2023.**

The proposals presented as part of the Consultation had been developed with information from service users and input from staff and partners and were intended to redesign the service to achieve savings of £1million by 2024/25.

The work of the Community Wardens across Kent and within Tonbridge and Malling and the proposed cuts to the service were detailed at 1.2 and 1.3 of the report.

Members expressed concern that cutting, or reducing, the Community Warden service would lead to increased costs in other organisations and a lack of support for vulnerable residents. There were also concerns that Local Authorities would be expected to provide and/or support services in those areas where the service would be withdrawn. It was recognised that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council did not have the resources, capacity or experience to fill these gaps.

The Committee had regard to the legal implications, financial and value for money considerations and the risk assessment set out in the report and expressed significant concern that the proposed reduction to one Team Leader and three wardens covering Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling would severely stretch resources. The role of the Community Wardens in supporting residents in their own homes and addressing safeguarding concerns was valued.

Following consideration by the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee, the Cabinet Member for Communities resolved that:

- (1) the summary of the consultation document and the potential implications for the Borough Council of the review of the KCC Community Wardens service be noted;

- (2) the Borough Council's response to the consultation should be to strongly object to the proposals, recommend that there should be no change to the service and the significant concerns regarding the impact on other agencies and vulnerable residents should be highlighted; and
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Community Services, to submit a final consultation response by the deadline of 3 October 2023.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee of 21 September 2023.

Signed Cabinet Member for Community Services:	D Keers
Signed Leader:	M Boughton
Signed Chief Executive:	J Beilby
Date of publication:	25 September 2023

This decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5 working days after publication unless it is called in.