



Overview & Scrutiny Board

12 January 2016

REPORT

Subject Heading:

Requisition of a Cabinet decision regarding Attestation of Parks Protection Officers

CMT Lead:

Andrew Blake Herbert – Group Director of Communities and Resources

Report Author and contact details:

Richard Cursons - Committee Officer
richard.cursons@havering.gov.uk

Policy context:

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013-15

Financial summary:

There are no significant, immediate additional costs arising from the Cabinet report.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Havering will be clean and its environment will be cared for	[X]
People will be safe, in their homes and in the community	[X]
Residents will be proud to live in Havering	[X]

SUMMARY

In accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Rules, a requisition signed by two Members representing more than one Group (Councillors Ray Morgon & Keith Darvill) have called in the Cabinet decision of 16 December 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board considers the requisition of the decision of the Cabinet Decision and determines whether to uphold it.

REPORT DETAIL

At its meeting on 16 December 2015 Cabinet:

1. **Authorised** the permanent members of the Parks Protection Team to be attested and secure the same powers as police officers, but only to be exercised within the boundaries of Havering's parks and open spaces.
2. **Authorised** the permanent members of the Parks Protection Team to use batons but only in self-defence and in relation to dealing with dangerous animals.
3. **Authorised** the Parks Protection team to develop new partnership arrangements with the police service so that the more serious incidents which might occur in parks and open spaces were more effectively dealt with.
4. **Agreed** to receive a progress report once the attestation powers had been in place for a 12 month period.

Reasons for the requisition:

A requisition was received on 22 December 2015, signed by Councillors Morgon and Darvill. The reasons for the requisition were as follows:

1. No clear evidence provided on the difference between the powers available to officers and the members of the public now, compared to the new powers that would be available after attestation.
2. No evidence put forward to demonstrate the level of incidents would require the new powers to provide effective performance.
3. No evidence provided on the practical application of the new powers for example will officers have to keep note books for potential court evidence, will officers have to go through formal arrest procedures in cautioning any offender and will it be recorded.
4. No evidence provided of the number of incidents attended by officers over the past couple of years that also needed the Police to attend.

5. No evidence provided showing what partnership arrangements are in place with the Police.
6. Insufficient evidence provided on the full risk assessment carried out.
7. No information on how members of the public will be aware that Parks Protection Officers will have extended powers.
8. No cost information for example on additional training, equipment, uniforms and potential transfers to Police Stations.

Cllr Ray Morgon

Cllr Keith Darvill

Background Papers List

Appendix A – Cabinet Report 16 December 2015