NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report to: Licensing Committee Meeting – 19 March 2026

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director – Communities & Environment

Lead Officer: Damian Wilkins, Environmental Health & Licensing Manager

Report Summary	
Report Title	Update on Pubwatch Schemes currently in operation.
Purpose of Report	To provide Members with an update on Pubwatch Schemes currently operating in Newark & Sherwood.
Recommendations	That the report be noted.
Reason for Recommendation	To keep the Licensing Committee informed.

1.0 Background

1.1 Pubwatch is a voluntary organisation set up to promote best practice. Their aim is to achieve a safer drinking environment in all licensed premises throughout the UK. Pubwatch meetings consider issues such as problematic customers, licensing issues, previous incidents & how they were managed, and up and coming events that may impact on licensed premises.

1.2 The Licensing Committee has previously supported the local Pubwatch groups by promoting Schemelink which is a mobile phone app developed as a central point for easier data sharing and communication across Pubwatch for unifying online services for members, the Police and Councils.

1.3 Features of Schemelink include:

- Group chat
- Incident logs, which once submitted are sent through to all members
- Push notifications
- Notice board, for sharing information for example, photos of counterfeit notes
- Ability to poll about a ban rather than wait until the next meeting
- Banned gallery – which includes individual watermarks for members, so if images were shared inappropriately, it would be easy to discover who had shared them.

1.4   In Newark & Sherwood, we now have three active Pubwatch Schemes. They are based in Newark; Blidworth & Rainworth; Ollerton, Boughton & Edwinstowe (OBE); and Southwell. Each area meets once a month and discusses issues that affects them and helps the share of information.

1.5   **Newark** - has now been in place for approximately 40 years and have held their meetings at several locations (pubs) in the Newark town centre over the years but over the last 8 or 9 years have become a real voice in the town and it is now a very professionally run group.

1.6   The group meets monthly at the Rutland Arms which is home to the Chairman David Potter who has been in place for approximately 3 years and whose wife Natasha is the groups secretary. Other members of the committee are John and Kelly Kehoe from the White Hart and David Duddles from the Navigation. There are currently 17 active pubs in the scheme whose representatives scarcely miss a meeting and they are as follows:

1.   The Rutland Arms
2.   The White Hart
3.   The Navigation
4.   The Duck
5.   The Old Post Office
6.   The Prince Rupert
7.   The Grove
8.   The Swan and Salmon
9.   The Wheatsheaf
10.   The Lord Ted
11.   The Fox and Crown
12.   Oscars Inn
13.   The Old Kings Arms
14.   The Town Hall
15.   The Loose Cannon
16.   The Queens Head
17.   The Locke and Keye

1.7   At each meeting the representative of each pub is asked if there have been any incidents over the previous month and if the answer is affirmative, each incident will be explained to the group who will then decide if the offending person(s) should receive a ban from entering any of the pubs in the scheme.

1.8   The bans that can be handed out range from 3 months for minor incidents to a lifetime ban for the most serious and the range in between is 6 months, 1 year, 2 years and 5 years. At the moment there are 96 people on the banned list which comprises of 78 males and 18 females and this includes 14 people on lifetime bans including 2 females.

1.9   Members should note that there is a right of appeal for every person receiving a ban where the offender will attend the following meeting to plead their case and there are cases where the length of the ban has been reduced and on occasions removed to allow a probationary period to show good behaviour.

1.10   All of the pubs are given free Schemelink membership funded by N&SDC (currently £35.99 a year, per member) and they also have their own WhatsApp group in order to notify each other of any potential problems / incidents.

1.11   This group is having a positive effect because there have been far fewer incidents within the town centre over the last couple of years. Over the last Christmas and New Year period there were the fewest incidents ever recorded.

1.12   **Ollerton & Edwinstowe** - Following the last Chairperson of Pubwatch leaving about a year ago there have been no volunteers to take over this fundamentally important role and therefore the group now meet informally every other month to discuss relevant incidents and potential trouble causers. After the chair left the number of pubs attending dwindled to just a few, but recently a few new people have attended and hopefully this will continue to improve. As there is now no Chairperson, they are unable to Pubwatch/blanket ban anyone from all pubs in the area for serious offences but all pubs tend to note down details of those individuals who have been banned from one pub and generally decide not to allow them into their own pubs. There is also a WhatsApp group for everyday alerts of incidents which is really good for safeguarding staff.

1.13   **Blidworth & Rainworth** - This is a good strong group attended by most of the pubs in the area, who meet every 2 months and share information about incidents and trouble causers. They have a chair currently who has sent out quite a number of banning and warning letters to people involved in serious incidents such as drug dealing/taking (inside and outside the pubs), assault, threatening behaviour, criminal damage. They also have a WhatsApp group, as do all the Pubwatch Schemes which as stated above is really good for alerting staff about incidents and potential trouble causers.

1.14   **Southwell** - Similar to the Blidworth & Rainworth PW group most pubs attend the meetings, there have been a few changes of chair which has been challenging and the latest chair is still getting to grips with managing the PW. This is probably the quietest of the three PWs on the Sherwood part of the district, with only a few serious incidents. They also have a WhatsApp group which works well as described above for all the Pubwatch schemes. They meet every 2 – 3 months.

1.15   LEO's and the police continue to attend all PW meeting to support them and provide advice, resources such as posters and any other relevant information such as licensing legislation. Local police officers, licensing councillors and council CPO's are also invited. All the Pubwatch Schemes are being encouraged to implement a Pubwatch constitution for all members to sign up to, which includes adherence to data protection principles. We've attempted to introduce the approved Schemelink across the Pubwatch Scheme, and the council have been paying for membership but this is difficult to manage as many members struggle with using it.

2.0   Proposal /Options Considered

2.1   Members of the Licensing Committee should be aware of the current position with the various Pubwatch Schemes across the Newark & Sherwood District including the support officers continue to provide these Schemes.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	N/A	Equality & Diversity	N/A
Human Resources	N/A	Human Rights	N/A
Legal	N/A	Data Protection	N/A
Digital & Cyber Security	N/A	Safeguarding	N/A
Sustainability	N/A	Crime & Disorder	N/A
LGR	N/A	Tenant Consultation	N/A

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

For additional information only - National Pubwatch & Schemelink