

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

15 MARCH 2021

REVIEW OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report reviews the Council's existing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, which is scheduled to be reviewed every three years.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Council's existing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy was adopted in 2015 and ran for a period of three years, before being reviewed in 2018. A further review is now due.

2.2 The previous policy dealt with the changes brought about at the time by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014, which introduced a process of simplification of the existing legal powers. Previous legal powers available for tackling ASB had been reduced from nineteen to six and this remains the case. These powers are now established and embedded into the day to day work of those with a responsibility for tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

2.3 Following the integration of the Housing Services back into the Council the policy review this year has focussed on ensuring that the Issues of ASB in the Councils Housing stock are incorporated within the new policy. Colleagues from Housing Services have been involved in the policy review.

3.0 Content of the ASB Policy

3.1 The core message still remains and is aligned with Home Office guidance that accompanies the legislation; namely that we will focus our attention on the impact that ASB has on victims and communities. Consequently the action that we take individually as a Council or collectively with our partner agencies will be designed with victims' needs at the heart of the decision making process. This element has been strengthened with additional content included on the use of the 'Community Trigger' process.

3.2 The policy continues to recognise the need to work in partnership with a range of agencies, both statutory and voluntary. It also recognises the role that the Bassetlaw, Newark & Sherwood Community Safety Partnership plays in helping to address ASB across the district. The CSP reviews its priorities each year and it has this year identified ASB as a key priority to reflect the increase in ASB that has been generated during the covid-19 pandemic.

3.3 Section 4 lists the three policy objectives, whilst section 5 confirms the responsibilities of those working at the Council, including the responsibility of the Homes & Communities Committee to develop and adopt the policy.

3.4 Section 6 lays down the Council's commitment to supporting the victims of ASB and lists some of the actions we will take to achieve this. It establishes the options that victims of ASB or their representatives have for reporting incidents to the Council.

3.5 Vulnerability and safeguarding are covered at section 7 and the policy recognises the disproportionate impact that ASB can have on vulnerable people and the need to make

safeguarding referrals in appropriate cases. The Council's safeguarding responsibilities are often intertwined with cases of ASB. All staff involved in ASB casework are regularly trained in Safeguarding and how to make referrals to the appropriate agency.

- 3.6 In order to protect victims from harm the Council sets out its commitment at section 8 to take an "uncompromising approach to the initiation of enforcement action". In practice this means that we will be prepared to take the necessary enforcement action using all of the powers at our disposal aligned with the resources that we possess. We will also use our influence to encourage partner agencies to support and take action where it is jointly agreed to be appropriate. This section also takes account of the need for any action taken to be proportionate to the nature of the ASB and table one sets out some of the measures, both legal and otherwise, that we have at our disposal.
- 3.7 Section 9 sets out the Council's commitment to partnership working, listing some of the agencies and partners who we will work with and the benefit of working in this way.
- 3.8 Additional information on how to access and implement the Community Trigger process is set out in section 11.
- 3.8 Equalities are addressed in section 12 and the Councils' commitment to deal with hate motivated ASB or behaviour that is malicious in nature, offensive, or targeted towards a particular group of society is reinforced.
- 3.9 A range of consultations have taken place with partner organisations on the amendments to the policy. They include
- Nottinghamshire Police
 - Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
 - Notts Fire and Rescue
 - Nottinghamshire County council
 - Victim Support
 - Housing Advisory Group
 - Housing tenants
- 3.10 The consultation comments have been reviewed and where appropriate changes have been made to the policy.

4.0 Digital Implications

- 4.1 None from this report

5.0 Equalities Implications

- 5.1 An equalities checklist has been completed and has determined that it is not necessary to proceed to a full Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). This is because the existing policy is being reviewed and the changes made do not alter the principle aims of the Council around dealing with ASB. The refreshed policy recognises the disproportionate impact that ASB targeted against minority groups or certain sections of society can have and commits the Council to deal with such cases with a heightened priority. This can be viewed as a positive intent towards achieving greater equality within our communities.

6.0 Financial Implications (FIN20-21/9158)

6.1 There are no financial implications resulting directly from this report.

7.0 Comments from Director and or Housing Advisory Group

7.0 At the meeting on 18th February 2021, the group felt the overarching policy was good and brought together housing within the wider council. The group recommended that Officers look at linked policies e.g. effective tenancy and estates management and recharges e.g. balancing leaving tenant damage to be at their cost versus essential repairs such as glazing that are a health and safety issue and a blight on the look of an area.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes the report and approves the adoption of the updated Anti-Social Behaviour Policy by the District Council for the period 2021 – 2024.

Reason for Recommendation

To ensure that the Council has an adopted Policy setting out its approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Alan Batty ext 5467

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