

S44. Anti-social Behaviour Scrutiny – Progress Report

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the review of Anti-social Behaviour.

As part of the Scrutiny Plan the committee had established a Scrutiny Panel in 2018 to undertake a review of the anti-social behaviour. The panel reported to the Committee on 4 April 2019. The committee had agreed the panel recommendations and requested a 6 month update on progress.

The actions were:

- Encourage the good partnership working in place by all agencies in addressing Anti-social Behaviour. These to continue and be built upon as opportunities arise. Services should actively engage with communities when activity has been reported, being proactive rather than reactive, Services should work in partnership with other Councils ensuring that proven good practice on Anti-social Behaviour- is shared and routinely updated.
- Services should actively seek to engage with all individuals outwith community facilities giving particular consideration to young people, elderly isolated people, those with recognised substance abuse issues, and those with recognised mental health issues and through methods which, best suit them;
- Services should review the support offered to victims of Anti-social Behaviour, whether the victim be directly or indirectly affected Anti-social Behaviour or whether the victim be the recipient of vexatious Anti-social Behaviour complaints against them;
- Guidance should be provided for Councillors to assist in dealing with complaints relating to Anti-social Behaviour, including best practice regarding mediation, mental health training and how to have challenging conversations, the Council also recognises the role of local members in issues relating to Anti-social Behaviour as legitimate advocates on behalf of constituents. The Council must recognise the role of the elected member and the expectations on the elected member of the general public;
- Requests that the Housing Allocations Scrutiny Panel includes in its work plan consideration of the link between allocations and perceived Anti-social Behaviour, thus giving us a more rounded approach to dealing with Anti-social Behaviour from a specific service delivery point;
- Council though recognising the complex nature of Anti-social Behaviour ensures that collective and holistic approach is taken to information given to Councillors to enable them to assess situations correctly while being mindful that all Councillors are Registered Data Controllers, with the Information Commissioner's Office and doing so

within the parameter of GDPR and potential future legislation relating to data protection.

The report set out progress made in respect of each of the actions.

The committee welcomed the restructure of services to create a centralised team and noted the ability of services to be more proactive. Following a question the Head of Housing confirmed that the arrangement facilitated better communication, in particular with hard to reach groups. Nonetheless members asked examples which indicated that anti-social behaviour remained prevalent. In regard to support to victims Ms Young stated that officers both investigate and provide support. This can be face to face or by signposting partner agencies. It was important to note that not everyone wanted to be seen as a 'victim'. The aim Ms Young stated was to support and build pro social rather than anti-social behaviour and uplift communities. The Head of Housing added that the Council sought to build communities citing locality planning as an example, building a One Council approach.

In response to a question, the Head of Housing, confirmed that noise monitoring equipment had been effective and stated that officers were currently evaluating the cost: benefit with a view to purchasing additional equipment.

During the discussion it was stated that in flatted accommodation noise was exacerbated when the property wasn't completed. Conversely members stated that by refusing applications for grants for carpets there was a potential lurch in regard to instances of anti social behaviour.

Following discussion the committee asked for a further update in 6 months.

Decision

The Scrutiny Committee noted the progress being made towards implementing the Committee's recommendations on Anti-social Behaviour, and requested that a further progress report be made to the Committee in six months.