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## TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

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Meeting to be held in 6 & 7 - Civic Hall, Leeds on  
Friday, 26th April, 2019 at 1.15 pm

*(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 1.00 p.m.)*

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### MEMBERSHIP

Sallie Bannatyne

John Gittos (Chair)

Michael Healey

Maddy Hunter

Rita Ighade

Stephen Ilee

Peter Middleton

Roderic Morgan

Jackie Worthington

Mary Farish

Stanley Burton

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*Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded*

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# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>RESOLVED</b> – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>No exempt items have been identified.</b></p>	
2			<p><b>LATE ITEMS</b></p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
3			<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
4			<p><b>MINUTES -</b></p> <p>To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019.</p>	1 - 8
5			<p><b>DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING &amp; COMMUNITIES) HELD ON 13TH MARCH 2019</b></p> <p>For information only.</p>	9 - 16
6			<p><b>RECRUITMENT UPDATE</b></p> <p>Members are asked to note the update provided and discuss any further comments around this area of work.</p>	17 - 18
7			<p><b>UPDATED RESPONSES TO ASB INQUIRY</b></p> <p>The Head of Anti-Social Behaviour and a Senior Manager from Housing Leeds will be attending to provide an update on previous responses to the recommendations made during the ASB Inquiry. Members are asked to note the update provided at the meeting and discuss any points they wish to raise with the officers in attendance.</p>	19 - 40
8			<p><b>TSB WORKPLAN</b></p> <p>Members in attendance are requested to note the 2018/19 municipal years' work programme.</p>	41 - 42
9			<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 1pm This meeting will take place at Navigation House GFW Boardroom.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
			<p><b>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</b></p> <p>Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts named on the front of this agenda.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice</p> <p>a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.</p> <p>b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.</p>	
2				
a)				
b)				

## TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

FRIDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> March 2019

**PRESENT:** John Gittos (Tenant Chair)

Tenants: Stanley Burton, Mary Farish, Maddy Hunter, Stephen Ilee, Peter Middleton, Jackie Worthington.

Officers: Keith Mack (Scrutiny Officer), Paul Harris (Income Manager for Housing Leeds), Mandy Sawyer (Head of Neighbourhood Services), Ian Parr (Housing Assistant),

### 71 Exempt information

None.

### 72 Late Items

JG raised a late item for consideration. The service charges for all tenants in high rise and Retirement Life properties are to increase. JG asked for a breakdown of the charge, and asked if tenants will all pay the same rate regardless of the different services provided at each block.

### 73 Apologies for Absence

Michael Healey, Rita Ighade, Roderic Morgan, Sallie Bannatyne

### 74 Minutes – 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018

JG opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. A round of introductions were made for the benefit of the guests.

**RESOLVED** – The minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 February 2019 were passed as a true record

### 75 Minutes of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing, and Communities)

Information only item

### 76 Update on Recruitment to TSB

KM provided an update to the board members, informing them that MF and SBU are now full members of the board. KM further explained that he had spoken with the third prospective member who was interested in joining the board, and that he has since moved out of the Leeds area. KM said he would continue to use the annual home visit data that was used to identify and contact interested tenants as there are still vacancies on the panel.

SI suggested that younger people could be more effectively targeted to join the board by the creation of a presentation detailing the work of the TSB, as well as the possible introduction of training or qualifications gained as a part of being a member of the TSB. SG recalled a pamphlet that had previously been circulated regarding tenant engagement activities, and that there were previous discussions held around having a tenant engagement 'jobs fair' which could be attended by tenants to speak to members of the individual groups. KM agreed that SI's ideas were valid, though they might be better discussed with Mandy Sawyer who would be speaking later on in the meeting.

JG informed the board that he will be attending the next Repairs and Investment Group meeting to speak to members about why the group is so attractive to them and consider how tenants can be recruited to the TSB.

## **77 Universal Credit Update**

JG introduced Paul Harris, Income Manager for Housing Leeds, to update the board about the current situation regarding Universal Credit.

PH explained that the Universal Credit system was launched in Leeds on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2018, and is applicable to anyone of working age making a new claim which would cover any of the previous six legacy benefits; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, and Housing Benefit.

Any tenant in receipt of one of the legacy benefits before the 10<sup>th</sup> of October will continue to receive the same benefit until they make a new claim or are eventually transferred to the Universal Credit system.

PH explained that Leeds City Council have signed up to be a trusted partner with the Department of Work and Pensions, allowing council staff to access the landlord portal and see who has made an application for Universal Credit and to verify their rent and tenancy details. If an application is made by someone who is heavily in arrears or is vulnerable, LCC can apply for an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) to be put in place, allowing the housing element of their payment to be paid directly to the council rather than the tenant just as the housing benefit system does. Managed payments can also be set up for those who might be unable to pay their rent regardless of whether they have arrears, that will pay their housing element and up to 20% from their monthly allowance. This has the potential to be much higher than the current rate of payment so care must be taken to ensure this is the correct route, and whilst the APA cannot be appealed, the percentage taken from their payments can be reduced.

PH told the board that there are 15 Enhanced Income Officers to support applications within each housing office. When a new claim is received, an officer will contact the applicant within 5 days of the claim and ensure that they have enough money to live on until the payment date just over a month after the initial claim. Support and guidance will be offered to help applicants that need it. The month following the date of the claim is known as the assessment period, following which the first payment is made 7 days later. It is possible to claim for an advance on payment from the first day of a claim, however the amount borrowed must be paid

back, deducted from future payments spread over the subsequent 12 months. Two of the Enhanced Income Officers have been seconded to work with the DWP, allowing for a mutual exchange and understanding of working processes. The officers will work with the seven job centres across Leeds, with further support available from contact centres, libraries, and the four hubs which have a specialist support officer. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, the same support service paid for by the DWP will be paid instead to Citizens Advice, however the same level of support offered by Housing Leeds will remain available.

A database of UC claims has been developed to record number of claims and any rent owed or arrears. Based on these details, contact will be made from the Enhanced Income Officers to engage with the tenants and be offered one of three levels of support:

- Advice and guidance – for those that can manage their journal and do not require much help
- Standard – For those who may need a moderate level of support
- Enhanced – For those who are vulnerable or that would not be able to manage their claim independently

Those who fall outside of even the highest level of help can be referred to the DWP service centre to handle their claim. Each applicant has their own individual journal and all documents are uploaded online. It is up to the claimant to ensure all necessary documents are uploaded and correct and to inform of any changes in their circumstances as this can affect their payments. A breakdown of the Universal Credit payment can be viewed once it is received, looking similar to a wage slip, with the total figure shown on top and deductions shown below. Claimants are assigned a work coach where applicable to help them find work. If council tax support is required it must be made as a separate claim made at the same time as the original application.

From the 10<sup>th</sup> of October up to the present meeting there have been 4,113 claims verified, with new claims being made continuously. It is estimated that by the end of the year there could be around 10,000 individual claims, which includes those that have been migrated from their existing benefits claim. Between 2019 and 2023 those who were receiving benefits but have not made a new claim will be migrated over to Universal Credit, though by 2023 there should be relatively few such cases. The figures reflect how many claims have been made, however it is impossible to know when somebody stops claiming unless the council is directly informed by the tenant.

From the 10<sup>th</sup> of October to the 31<sup>st</sup> of January there were 2,815 verified cases of which 815 claims were offered advice and guidance, 1,775 were standard cases, 187 were offered enhanced support, and 38 applicants were unable to be contacted or refused any engagement at all.

Up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2019 the average amount of arrears held by a new claimant is £358, with the average increase in arrears caused as a direct result of Universal Credit is £68 per account. The total arrears increase because of Universal

Credit across all applications is £192,720. 727 APAs have been put in place, with 28 referrals to a food bank and 28 receiving fuel support.

PH handed out some information leaflets which are given or are available to those making a new Universal Credit claim, and opened the floor to questions. JG questioned how Universal credit might impact those who are moving in and out of work, such as those on temporary contracts. PH answered that a new claim would have to be made when the person is not in employment and then the DWP would stop the payments when they were back in work, however the council would only be made aware of this if they are told directly by the claimant or if the rent falls into arrears. A new claims would be required each time a person is out of work for any reason as long as they were earning over the minimum threshold from that period of employment, otherwise claims can be continued up to six months following. PH further clarified in response to a question from SI that the payments will always be made in arrears, almost like working a month in hand.

JG asked what the criteria is for an APA to be applied to a tenant. PH answered that if the tenant is identified to be vulnerable by support staff - including those with drug and alcohol dependency or those suffering from mental illness - or if they have rent arrears of 8 weeks or more an APA can be applied for. Those who are on Universal Credit should not be taken to court for non-payment of rent given the month long wait for payment. Similarly from the date of the claim to the date of payment tenants will not be taken to court or have further action taken to retrieve any more rent, as the priority is to keep tenants in their properties rather than forcing them to move out.

JG asked if the DWP were paying for LCC staff for their support. PH confirmed that currently the council claim money from the DWP for the support provided, however after the 1<sup>st</sup> of April the contract will be given to citizens advice, although council staff will still be there to support claims as they were already doing. JG asked if there is a chance that the support contract could be offered to another company after the initial year, PH replied that it is, but it is not possible to know any details at this stage, and reiterated that the council are doing the best they can to provide uninterrupted support.

JG asked if information is still kept private between the DWP, LCC, and Citizen's Advice now that GDPR regulates how data is processed. PH clarified that personal data is kept completely private on the tenant's portal and only those with a login can see that information, unless permission is specifically granted to share that data. Data also cannot be shared over the phone unless specifically permitted by the claimant. Housing Leeds will soon be utilising tablets to allow officers to meet with applicants in their homes to submit queries to the DWP.

JG thanked PH for his attendance, and suggested he may be invited back for another update as Universal Credit continues to be implemented.

## **78 TSB Future Report**

JG introduced Mandy Sawyer, Head of Neighbourhood Services who joined the meeting at this point. JG explained, for the benefit of the newly-appointed members, that there has not been a new investigation this year, which has given

the board the opportunity to look over the previous reports and review the work of the TSB and consider the future plans for the board.

MS thanked JG for inviting her to speak, and explained that she is keen to discuss the ongoing activities of the board. MS reassured everyone that the housing service are committed to maintaining the board and hearing its views, and that the enquiries made by the board have been helpful when reviewing housing services with relatively few recommendations having been challenged.

MS noted that the TSB in its current form has been established for around five years, and there are still many ways the structure and function of the board can be developed, especially learning from the TPAS events attended by JG, SBa, and JW. MS suggested that other similar boards in other authorities have seen success with formats whereby workshops and forums are conducted with particular customer groups to target their specific opinions, and proposed the idea that smaller, less wide ranging enquiries might be held alongside the larger enquiries to improve the agility of the board, with multiple teams able to hold independent small reviews and feed results back to the larger group.

There is still, however a challenge as to how to best engage with the wider tenant voice, as annual home visit data suggests that 8,000 tenants would like to be involved, but that number becomes significantly lower when a tenant is asked if they would like to attend meetings. MS suggested that adopting a workshop format or holding forums with tenants and staff over a number of days might provide evidence for more intensive scrutiny. Engagement could also be further digitalised through online surveys and forums, however this would be more experimental.

MS concluded by reiterating that the housing service supports the role and aims of the board, and that through development of the methods of the board their suggestions for improvement can become even more robust.

JG thanked MS for her update, and commented that the TSB are aligned with the Environment and Housing Scrutiny board which also conducts shorter investigations. JG prefers longer investigations as they offer more opportunity for everyone to be involved with the same project, but accepted that during previous investigations the board had divided into smaller groups to cover more topics. JG agreed that smaller investigations would allow the board to be more mobile, and engage with a topic closer to the time it arises. The board could produce a list of topics of investigation and reduce it based on votes from the members, so no member would have to engage with a large project that may not ultimately affect them.

SI reiterated his earlier suggested the creation of a presentation to demonstrate the work of the board might better attract younger members. Since younger members would more than likely be in work or seeking work, SI also suggested the provision of training or qualifications similar to TPAS as a part of being a member, as this could then be used as experience on a CV and improve the prospects of members seeking employment. MS agreed that the offer of qualifications has not been trialled before, however it can be pursued through links with colleges and training providers. JG suggested that dedicated training on how to chair a meeting would be

beneficial for all members of the board previously, recalling similar training delivered by TPAS attended by some members of the board. MS suggested that a skills audit of the current board members could be undertaken as a future agenda item to identify the members' skills as well as any areas in which training would be beneficial, as more focussed training could then be targeted.

JG commented that the current make-up of the board could still better reflect the wider demographic of Leeds, suggesting the timing and location of the meetings can be a barrier for those considering joining the TSB for those in work. JG said the Civic Hall location can add authenticity to the meetings, but agreed that meeting elsewhere on occasion should be considered by the board.

SI disagreed that the TSB meetings had to reflect the other council scrutiny boards, and that their suggestions should also not impact what the TSB choose to investigate. JG responded saying that the comment 'reflect' was not wise as the impression given is that TSB copy other Scrutiny boards which isn't the case. The terms of reference of the TSB are similar but that was the way LCC set this up. JG disagreed that the suggestions about future inquiries from the likes of Environment, Housing, and Communities Scrutiny Board played a big part in deciding which service the board investigates, and wherever the suggestions come from are left in no doubt the final decision is made by TSB. Over the past four investigations only one inquiry suggested to the board and taken up was from VITAL which is made up of tenants.

SI suggested the formality of the meetings can put off potential members who would much rather be involved at a more local level. SI asked if a pool of interested residents can be created who may be consulted for their concerns on relevant topics, and who might be able to attend more local meetings with less pressure on LCC officers to be on the record and to prepare their statements. JG replied that the HAPs are already a local forum for tenants, but SI continued that the issue is that nobody knows what any of the forums do if they are sent an email, and that there is little up to date information online about the HAPs and other areas of the council owing to the long approval times of minutes.

MS agreed that regarding recruitment, the kind of activity that tenants want to be involved with is not recorded on the annual home visit data, but the contact can be followed up and those that express interest can be signposted to the appropriate forums. MS continued that in her opinion, the meeting location feels very formal and does not promote the type of natural discussion that could yield better outcomes, and a more diverse approach to venues and discussion could prove beneficial. MS agreed with SI about the website and its content, and following a review of the repairs pages is also being improved to become more user-friendly, and updated more often.

KM reminded the board that the recent round of recruitment where over 1,000 emails that were sent out to interested tenants, only seven responses were received. KM accepted there was the potential for more sophisticated approaches to be utilised to target more specific groups and interests. KM acknowledged members' views that whilst consulting the senior managers was important for the board to understand a services aims and objectives, the evidence gathering and

investigation process could be strengthened by holding conversations with tenants in forums and workshops and encouraging the evidence to come out organically. SBU added that as a new member he perceives the current meeting format as very formal, and a more informal environment could be beneficial.

JG asked if MS could produce a report regarding recruitment for the various tenant panels for the May meeting. MS replied that she could produce a report, however she would prefer to work with the Board to jointly develop some proposals for the future development of Tenant Scrutiny work in Leeds. JG asked if the May meeting could be held at Navigation House as a workshop to trial a less formal approach.

JG thanked MS for her attendance at the meeting.

#### **79 TSB Work plan**

JG informed the board that the LASBT review is not yet ready, but that they will be attending a meeting before the end of the year.

#### **80 Election Process for Chair and Vice Chair**

JG advised the board of his intention to resign from the chair and the board at the April meeting, and asked that expressions of interest for either the Chair or vice Chair position should be submitted to KM or IP by email or phone before the 12<sup>th</sup> of April.

JW subsequently asked if due to the uncertainty of the board moving forward JG could stay as chair until June. A vote of board members suggested there was a consensus for this hence JG agreed to accept JW's proposal. Board members agreed that a vote for election of a new chair will be postponed up to the June meeting.

**RESOLVED** – The election of a new chair/vice chair will take place during the June meeting (Expressions of interest for either the Chair or vice Chair position should be submitted to KM or IP by email or phone before the Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June).

#### **81 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – The next meeting will take place on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April.  
(Pre-meeting for all board members at 1:00pm)

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 3:00 PM

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## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

WEDNESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, H Bithell, D Collins,  
A Gabriel, P Grahame, P Gruen,  
M Harland, A Khan, S McCormack and  
P Truswell

**70 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals.

**71 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There was no exempt information.

**72 Late Items**

There were no formal late items of business, however the Board received the following supplementary information:

Agenda Item 11 – Scrutiny Inquiry into kerbside collection and recycling of domestic waste – Draft Scrutiny Inquiry Report.

**73 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

**74 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Wilkinson, Bentley and A Blackburn.

**75 Minutes - 25 February 2019**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be approved as a true record.

**76 Update on Universal Credit (UC) full service in Leeds**

The report of the Chief Officer, Customer Access and Welfare provided an update on the Government's introduction of full service Universal Credit (UC), the impacts across the city and how front line services are continuing to support people affected by the UC programme/system.

The following were in attendance:

- Lee Hemsworth – Chief Officer Customer Access & Welfare
- Dianne Lyons – Citizens Advice Bureau
- Allison Long and Rebecca Elling – Job Centre Plus
- Diane Gill – Senior Policy Development Officer
- Susan Murray – Head of Customer Contact
- Kevin Bruce and Mandy Sawyer – Housing Management
- Cllr. D Coupar – Executive Member for Communities

Key issues identified in discussions with the Board included:

- The changes implemented by the Government to the way UC claimants are to be supported. The funding has moved from Local Authorities nationally to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) the Local Authority will still provide support where possible to customers where possible with UC claimants being signposted to CAB. Members heard that CAB in Leeds have up to 9 full time advisors working with UC and it was reported that CAB are dealing with 300 enquires per month.
- Members queried whether the Government or MP's had seen the related scrutiny report, or acknowledged the impact that the implementation of UC was having in Leeds, and that this wholesale change of what was previously a good support network would be disruptive for all. Members were informed the Executive Board Member, has written to the Government and DWP and met with local MP's to discuss concerns.
- Concerns were raised that it would be difficult for members to direct residents when assisting with complex UC queries without a network of contacts and it was requested that the local authority work with CAB to monitor the effect of the introduction and that evidence be reported back to Scrutiny.
- The provisions in place for residents with language barriers and training in place for staff to assist. Members heard that CAB Leeds & Chapeltown offer a free interpreting service to all residents, and are working with partners to identify venues that can be accessed by the public.
- Clarity was sought on the primary location of staff. Members were informed the city centre office provides advice in 30 locations around the city and is open 5 days a week with telephone access also.
- Clarity was sought on the approximate waiting times for appointments. Members were informed that UC claimants are prioritised and residents can also use the Job Centre Plus to make claims.
- The capacity and provisions in place to assist people digitally.
- The Chair also agreed to undertake to write to the Government, to raise the concerns of the Board regarding the revised support programme.
- The Board identified that an update position regarding universal credit and how well the new support system was being embedded, should be scheduled into the 2019/20 work programme.

**RESOLVED** – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the report.
- b) Noted the information provided at the meeting and the issues identified for further consideration.
- c) Resolved to write to highlight the concerns of the Board.
- d) Recommended that the successor board schedule a further review on the new Universal Credit – impact and support arrangements, be scheduled into the 2019/20 work programme.

## **77 Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts through Tackling Failure Demand - Tracking of scrutiny recommendations/desired outcomes**

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support and the Director of Communities and Environment set out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts through Tackling Failure Demand.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Lee Hemsworth – Chief Officer Customer Access & Welfare
- Susan Murray – Head of Customer Contact
- Wendy Alinson – Development and Improvement Manager
- Cllr D. Coupar – Executive Member for Communities

The status of the recommendations as set out in the report, were agreed as follows:

- Recommendation 1 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 2 - Achieved
- Recommendation 3 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 5 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 6 - Achieved
- Recommendation 7 - Achieved
- Recommendation 8 - Achieved
- Recommendation 9 - Achieved
- Recommendation 10 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)

Key issues identified in discussions with the Board included:

- In relation to Recommendation 3, Members requested additional information regarding the requested service changes. Members were informed that the use of available technology was maximised in regard to sending out information, to prevent cost issues and confusion regarding housing repairs.
- Clarity was sought regarding the number of missed calls; Members were informed that work is on-going to ensure measures are in place, to mitigate this issue, through the recruitment of additional staff.

**RESOLVED** – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the report.
- b) Approved the status of the recommendations as set out above.

## **78 Community Hubs - General Update and Tracking of scrutiny recommendations/desired outcomes**

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support and the Director of Communities and Environment set out a general update regarding community hubs and also provided the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into the development of Community Hubs.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Lee Hemsworth – Chief Officer Customer Access & Welfare
- Susan Murray – Head of Customer Contact
- Cllr D. Coupar – Executive Member for Communities

The status of the recommendations as set out in the report, were agreed as follows:

- Recommendation 2 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 3 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 4 - Achieved
- Recommendation 5 - Achieved

Key issues identified in discussions with the Board included:

- Clarity was sought regarding the status of phase 4 of the implementation. Members representing Burmantofts and Richmond Hill and Cross Gates and Whinmoor sought to clarify when focus would be provided in their respective wards. Members were informed that phase 4 is a nominal phase. It was also highlighted that development in the east of the city would be linked to the ELOR development. The Board noted the partnership arrangements with CCG and City Development to identify suitable areas going forward.
- Members raised the need for Ward Members to be better informed on the progress in the development of the community hub programme in their wards.
- In relation to Recommendation 2, the Board queried the involvement of Parish and Town Councils in terms of the roll out of the Community Hub Network. The Executive Member informed the Board a charter is being introduced, and will provide guidance on how to engage and communicate with the wider community.
- The Board acknowledged the value of community hubs and the social value being delivered from the established hubs.

**RESOLVED** – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the report and information provided at the meeting.
- b) Approved the status of the recommendations as set out above.

## **79 Migration in Leeds - Annual Update**

The report of the Director of Communities and Environment provided an update on Strategic Migration Board activities and an exploration of the national arrangements applying to EU citizens in Leeds.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- David Brown – Head of Migration Yorkshire
- Shaid Mahmood – Chief Officer Communities
- Henriette Mahamane – Leeds Migration Support
- Samantha Powell – ESOL Strategy Manager
- Michelle De Souza – Domestic Violence Service Manager
- Cllr D. Coupar – Executive Member for Communities

The Chief Officer Communities introduced the report and informed Members a report is due to go to Executive Board in July 2019. Officers in attendance highlighted matters including:

- The positive feedback in terms of the rollout of the EU Settlement Scheme and the pilots in Leeds around how the scheme works.
- The work undertaken to provide support to victims of modern slavery.
- The delivery of local projects such as ESOL
- The Asylum Dispersal Contract – the transition is underway and the change of providers from G4S to Mears Group.

The Chair thanked officers and the Executive Member for their hard work on the programme.

**RESOLVED** – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the report

## **80 Draft Scrutiny Inquiry Report - Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling of Domestic Waste**

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support provided an update on refuse collection and recycling service, including current performance. Members received a draft Scrutiny Inquiry report for consideration.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Sandra Pentelow – Principal Scrutiny Advisor
- Helen Freeman – Chief Officer Environmental Services
- John Woolmer – Deputy Chief Officer Waste Management
- Cllr D. Ragan – Deputy Executive Member

The Chief Officer Environmental Services was invited to provide advice to the Board prior to agreeing the report. The Board was advised that advice has been sought from the Executive Board Member in advance of the meeting.

The Board considered the appended Inquiry Report and suggested that the following be included:

- In relation to recommendation 2, Members requested that the narrative had stronger reference to the DEFRA Waste strategy regarding the recycling of plastics and ethical purchasing.
- In relation to recommendation 3 the Chief Officer Environmental Services requested that the provisional date of July 2019 be extended. The Board agreed that the date for the Director of Communities and Environment to outline a plan which identifies the approach to meeting the 2020 recycling rate of 50% can be discussed and agreed with the Scrutiny Chair.
- In relation to recommendation 8, a change was requested so that the Director of Communities and Environment is asked to bring an action plan in January 2020, which outlines how all existing problems will be resolved, to the Scrutiny Board rather than an progress update.
- In relation to recommendation 15, a change was requested by the Chief Officer, Environmental Services which would enable the Director of Communities and Environment to bring an progress update to the Scrutiny Board in July 2019 rather than reporting the outcome.

**RESOLVED** – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Approved the draft Inquiry report subject to the amendments to recommendations as outlined above.
- b) Agreed that the final version of the inquiry report be approved the Scrutiny Chair before publication.

## 81 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2018/19 municipal year.

Appended to this report for Members' information was a copy of the Board's completed work schedule and the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

The Board also considered the provisional meeting dates for the next municipal year which were agreed in principal subject to membership changes at the next Annual Meeting of Council. The Board also acknowledged the developing work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.

In conclusion of the meeting, the Chair took the opportunity to thank Board Members, officers and the relevant Executive Board Members for their support and commitment throughout the year.

**RESOLVED** – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the matters outlined in the report.
- b) Agreed the overall work schedule (as presented at Appendix 1) as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2018/19.
- c) Considered the provisional meeting dates for 2019/20 which were agreed in principle.

d) Considered the draft work schedule (as presented at Appendix 3).

**82 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

It was noted that precise dates and times are to be confirmed in due course.

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Report author: Keith Mack

Tel: 0113 3789703

**Report of Scrutiny Officer**

**Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 26 April 2019**

**Subject: Recruitment Update for Tenant Scrutiny Board**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## 1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Board discussed and agreed at their October meeting that recruitment to the Board would be a priority piece of work for the Board during this municipal year.
- 1.2 The Board requested that an update be provided at future meetings around progress and to notify where there may be issues which need resolving with the Board's support.
- 1.3 The board will be updated on discussions with prospective new members since the previous meeting.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the update provided and discuss any further comments around this area of work.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS <sup>1</sup>

- 3.1 None

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Report author: David Longthorpe  
Tel: 0113 3783195

**Report of** Head of Housing Management

**Report to** Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date:** 26 April 2019

**Subject:** Update on Recommendations made on ASB Inquiry

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## 1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Boards inquiry in 2017/18 municipal year focused on Anti-social behaviour.
- 1.2 The Board received response to the inquiry recommendations in June 2018 and given the LASBT service had announced there would be a full review of the ASB service, requested a future update on the ones which remain incomplete.
- 1.3 The Board have in attendance today the Head of Anti-Social Behaviour and a Senior Manager from Housing Leeds to give the responses to the recommendations

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the responses to the recommendations and provide feedback as appropriate to finalise its inquiry into the Anti-Social Behaviour Service.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS<sup>1</sup>

- 3.1 Final ASB Inquiry Report

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Position Status Categories

1. Stop monitoring or determine whether any further action is required
2. Achieved
3. Not fully implemented (Obstacle)
4. Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
5. Not fully implemented (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
6. Not for review this session

**Desired Outcome – Improve customer satisfaction**

**Recommendation 1** – That the Anti-Social Behaviour team carry out an initiative such as a 'Noise Action Week' to provide a wide range of information about noise, around prevention in the first place and how to deal with this if it does occur.

**Response – Recommendation Accepted**

In the last 12 months the LASBT West Team in conjunction with the ASB Response Team, have been conducting pop-up events at a number of locations in the predominantly student-dense areas of LS4, LS5 and LS6, so to a degree we have already been meeting some of the Board's recommendations, however it would be appropriate to roll this out to other areas in Leeds so that tenants more widely can benefit.

For background, to highlight previous work, one of the ASB Response Team's CCTV Vehicles is utilised as a visual reference and the team have a marquee and pop-up banners. On average we will hand out a minimum of 1000 leaflets. Initially the team started by taking up prime positions on campuses and more recently have included areas with a large footfall of students and the general public for example local shops in the area. Whilst this is targeted activity centred around student populations, this will have an impact on wider communities and council tenants living in them.

The service would like to develop an action week in line with the Board's recommendation which is likely to include,

- Using social media to provide advice and display the results of noise nuisance action i.e. seizures, court prosecutions etc and to also highlight (subject to Council approval) new elements of the tenancy agreement that are being introduced around everyday, practical issues that can impact on noise, i.e. dog barking and laminate flooring.
- A redesign of the student noise leaflet/pamphlet in order to create a version that is aimed at Leeds City Council tenants. The leaflet/pamphlet would provide advice and guidance to tenants, around household noise, what is deemed a noise nuisance, ways to avoid complaints and how to be a mindful neighbour. The leaflet could help dispel the myths and rumours, for example noise nuisance being allowed until 11pm (it can occur at any time).
- An internal communication reminding staff about day to day noise management practices, hints and tips, key contacts e.g. new tenancy visits and annual home visits where we can raise noise risks and myth busting.

- Research with Housing Leeds to identify 'hot spot' areas, and where appropriate instigate any local action, e.g. a local leaflet drop in an enhanced block which by virtue of its type attract higher levels of noise complaints.

The service anticipates undertaking the above during a week in October 2018 subject to other service demands or campaigns. In addition, the service would wish to revisit some of the key messages to tenants and staff coinciding with the National Noise Action Week in May 2019 and where the wider implications are highlighted of noise to the health and well-being of communities and to individuals <http://www.noiseactionweek.org.uk/>

Housing Leeds and LASBT will work together to track the volumes of cases relating to noise for the duration of the implementation period of this response – i.e. until at least May 2019, to be able to report back to the Board whether there has been a reduction in noise related cases reported. The service awaits with interest to see what the effect of raising awareness about noise will have, and if this results in fewer or more noise related cases.

**Desired Outcome** – Increased service improvements, efficiencies and opportunities for savings

**Recommendation 2** – That the Board support the implementation of a new computer system for Anti-Social Behaviour cases and that the Board are kept informed of the implementation of this.

**Response** – Recommendation Accepted

Housing Leeds new computer system will replace multiple legacy systems. The Housing IT Solution project has prioritised Lettings and Allocations (go-live proposed in August 2018), Capital and Planned Programme Contracts (go-live proposed late 2018), Rent and Arrears and Repairs (go-live yet to be determined).

Therefore whilst Anti-Social Behaviour cases can be put on the new system, development work is currently programmed toward the later end of the project plan. The whole project aims to deliver all modules during 2019. There is a business engagement plan to ensure that there is the appropriate input from relevant staff users and partners. The Tenant Scrutiny Board will be included in such communication and kept informed of progress.

**Desired Outcome** – A consistent approach to the link up of CCTV cameras

**Recommendation 3** – The Council look at their current plans and consider in certain circumstances to use rooftop signals to provide centrally linked up CCTV quicker – but with a longer term objective of moving over to fibre.

**Response** – Recommendation Partially Accepted

The Council are adopting a mixed approach to the use of fibre CCTV connections and digital infrastructure to provide CCTV coverage. Some multi-storey blocks are to have a permanent fibre solution installed or existing fibre connections upgraded which will permanently link blocks into the LeedsWatch camera infrastructure. This infrastructure provides the Council with high quality images, monitored centrally. The investment in fibre

connectivity to blocks also enables the service to use rooftop signals to link a local network of CCTV cameras. This is a more cost-effective solution for the service and is one that can respond to any local priorities as and when they emerge.

**Desired Outcome** – Customers are clear as to what CCTV pictures can and cannot be used for

**Recommendation 4** – That the Council make available a clear code of practice around the sharing of CCTV camera pictures to members of the public.

**Response** – Recommendation Not Accepted

Whilst we are understanding of the common public perception that they have the right to access CCTV images, this is subject to various laws. Where residents want access to CCTV images because of an incident, this can be obtained by the Police when investigating incidents, or insurance companies and solicitors can request footage when they are investigating a claim or other incident where the allegation needs to be verified or evidenced.

The Council's Code of Practice for CCTV gives clear instruction to staff on the circumstances around which footage can be shared and with whom. This is in compliance with GDPR and Human Rights Act.

We have provided examples of how footage can be obtained on the Council website <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/saferleeds/Leedswatch-security-service> and also the reasons why this cannot be obtained by individuals. Please see text below from the website:-

*I've been involved in an incident, can I request CCTV footage?*

*PLEASE NOTE that members of the public are NOT permitted to request or view CCTV footage. If you have been involved in an incident, the following action is advised:*

- Car collision / incidents (without Police involvement / crime number) You should contact your insurance company / solicitor to request the footage (which will be chargeable) and these should be sent to [cctvenquiries@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:cctvenquiries@leeds.gov.uk) by your insurance company / solicitor*
- Car collisions / incidents (with a Police crime number) You should report an incident / crime to the Police who have an internal procedure for requesting CCTV footage. Callers should NOT contact Leeds City Council direct as they will be advised to re-contact the Police.*
- Parking tickets / fixed penalty notices / lost property If you are disputing the issuing of any tickets / notices you need to address this direct with the issuer. CCTV footage cannot be used to sort out parking disputes or matters such as lost property.*

*Can I make a Freedom Of Information (FOI) request for footage?*

*Members of the public can request footage of themselves ONLY and must state clearly the time when the incident occurred. FOI requests should be sent to the FOI team for assessment, in the first instance. Requests should be sent to [E&N.data.enquiries@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:E&N.data.enquiries@leeds.gov.uk)*

**Desired Outcome – Staff are equipped with the most up to date knowledge to support their role**

**Recommendation 5** – That the Council agree, as a matter of priority, their approach to carrying out future training with staff, especially in regard to the new IT system which will be implemented in the future.

**Response – Recommendation Accepted**

Refresher training has been delivered to 189 members of staff during summer 2017. These included all Housing Managers, Team Leaders and Housing Officers working in Housing Management.

A new starter ASB Training Pack and portfolio of training material was introduced in January 2018 and is available to all staff on Housing Leeds SharePoint site. Team Leaders can also utilise this resource to address locally identified training needs.

ASB Induction Training was delivered to 65 new starters in November 2017, and a further 30 new starters in June 2018.

Ongoing refresher training to all staff is delivered every 6 to 12 months dependent upon turnover and identified training requirements. ASB training needs will also be identified with individual members of staff on a rolling basis during one to ones, mid-year reviews and year end appraisals.

Changes to policy and procedure are communicated to staff through Wednesday afternoon staff training sessions, via our internal staff newsletters and through the attendance of colleagues from Legal Services and other teams updating managers in regular leadership team meetings within Housing Management and LASBT.

With the introduction of new electronic ASB management and monitoring systems all staff will receive training tailored to the needs and demands of the new systems prior to implementation.

**Desired Outcome – Reassure customers of the service the Council provides**

**Recommendation 6** – That the Council consider providing information that reporting Hate Crime does not affect an asylum case which may be ongoing.

**Response – Recommendation Rejected**

In terms of supporting Asylum Seekers there are a number of areas we are working on and partners which we work closely with:

- Pro-active work in communities with a high concentration of Asylum Seeker properties to encourage them to report incidents of hate crime without them feeling that it will impact on their asylum status.
- Safer Leeds continues to inform G4S on their decision making in terms of the purchase of new properties to house Asylum Seekers i.e. provide information on crime and incidents of hate crime therefore allowing them to select housing appropriately.

- We aim to develop and deliver a bespoke hate crime training session with a focus on Asylum Seekers to Leeds by working closely with G4S Asylum Seeker case workers and with input from Migration Services.
- Support a review of the G4S Asylum Seeker welcome pack.

Whilst the service understands the intent behind this recommendation it is unable to accept the recommendation as the Council does not make the final decision on asylum applications, but, as described above, is committed to working with partners to help ensure all forms of Hate Crime are reported and sensitively managed.

### Desired Outcome – Reassure customers of the service the Council provides

**Recommendation 7** – That the Council consider providing information that reporting Domestic Violence can be done with confidence.

#### Response – Recommendation Accepted

Domestic Violence posters are displayed in office public areas / Community HUBs which will help provide confidence to visitors of these offices.

In relation to giving confidence that the Council can deal with Domestic Violence confidently, Housing Leeds are:

- Working with Safer Leeds Domestic Violence team to attain the Domestic Violence Quality Mark in housing management.
- A Domestic Violence Champion support network has also been established and is meeting bi monthly.
- All staff are undergoing the Domestic Violence training module run by Safer Leeds and supported by staff in housing management who have undergone training the trainer.
- Promoting the Leeds Domestic Violence Service telephone helpline (0113 246 0401)
- Working with The Front Door Safeguarding Hub which involves over 15 agencies coming together on a daily basis to share information, co-ordinate and plan responses in high risk cases of domestic violence.
- A Domestic Violence toolkit and Policy for staff has been created.

Whilst there is no routine questioning by Housing staff, they have undergone ‘awareness’ training to recognise signs of Domestic Violence and what are the appropriate actions to take. This is done through completion of DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and ‘honour’-based violence) forms and MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) referrals where appropriate.

### Desired Outcome – Confidence that all is being done on long term ASB cases

**Recommendation 8** – That the Council consider introducing a form of audit of ASB cases which have been ongoing for a period of time.

#### Response – Recommendation Accepted

Monthly Team Leader Case Reviews and Housing Manager Quality Assurance checks have now been introduced and lessons learned from these are built into training requirements.

It should be noted that the Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team look at anything over three months to check that everything that can be done has been done on the case.

Lessons learned from customer feedback surveys and complaints are also built into training programmes.

### Desired Outcome – Improve customer satisfaction

**Recommendation 9** – That the Council consider looking at the survey being used and identify if dissatisfaction is more predominant in Housing Officer cases or Anti-Social Behaviour Team cases.

#### **Response** – Recommendation Not Accepted

Whilst we understand the reasoning behind the Board's recommendation, Housing Leeds and Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour team adopt a 'One Council approach', where there is no wrong door to accessing services, with teams communicating well with each other and information shared. The survey is aimed at understanding the whole customer experience regardless of the extent of local Housing Office or LASBT involvement and lessons will be learnt and shared equally for the whole services and tenants benefit.

It should be noted the new Housing Management system will be more integrated in future and has the benefit of providing ASB case management which will provide prompts on the process at specific points to also improve the customer experience of reporting and being kept informed of their cases progress.

### Desired Outcome – Customers are aware of all the different types of services available to resolve their complaint

**Recommendation 10** – That the Council provide more information around the Mediation Service, and more importantly the benefits to this in potentially resolving complaints between parties.

#### **Response** - Recommendation Partially Accepted

The service has undertaken further analysis of our mediation activity. Approximately one in three mediation cases have a successful outcome. This is for a number of reasons including one or more parties not wishing to engage, or where an agreement cannot be reached.

The service wishes to look into more detail the reasons for non-engagement with mediation before any consideration is given to promoting this service more widely with tenants. The service also needs to consider its capacity and appetite to undertake more mediation activity if success rates remain at the current level.

As a principle, all officers engaged with managing ASB activity are encouraged and supported with training, such as with restorative skills, to be able to seek early and local resolution, using their local knowledge, in dialogue with tenants without the need for formal mediation work that may occur later in the life of the case.

The service also wish to monitor the impact of a new clause within the tenancy agreement (subject to final Council approval) that states tenants “may be expected to engage with mediation” and therefore setting clearer expectations, especially for lower level ASB that we may not be able to resolve an ASB case without both parties engagement in the process.

The change in tenancy also represents an opportunity for Housing Officers to resolve issues at an earlier stage, however, the service may wish to consider further mediation and conflict resolution training for staff to support this. This may prevent the increase in formal mediation cases but increase engagement much earlier which longer term is like to achieve better outcomes.

**Anti-Social Behaviour Service  
Tenant Scrutiny Board Inquiry  
April 2018**



# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Desired Outcomes and Recommendation Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Introduction and Scope</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Evidence and Witnesses</b>	<b>12</b>



# Desired Outcomes and Recommendations

**Desired Outcome** – Improve customer satisfaction

**Recommendation 1** – That the Anti-Social Behaviour team carry out an initiative such as a 'Noise Action Week' to provide a wide range of information about noise, around prevention in the first place and how to deal with this if it does occur.

**Desired Outcome** – Increased service improvements, efficiencies and opportunities for savings

**Recommendation 2** – That the Board support the implementation of a new computer system for Anti-Social Behaviour cases and that the Board are kept informed of the implementation of this.

**Desired Outcome** – A consistent approach to the link up of CCTV cameras

**Recommendation 3** – The Council look at their current plans and consider in certain circumstances to use rooftop signals to provide centrally linked up CCTV quicker – but with a longer term objective of moving over to fibre.

**Desired Outcome** – Customers are clear as to what CCTV pictures can and cannot be used for

**Recommendation 4** – That the Council make available a clear code of practice around the sharing of CCTV camera pictures to members of the public.

**Desired Outcome** – Staff are equipped with the most up to date knowledge to support their role

**Recommendation 5** – That the Council agree, as a matter of priority, their approach to carrying out future training with staff, especially in regard to the new IT system which will be implemented in the future.

**Desired Outcome** – Reassure customers of the service the Council provides

**Recommendation 6** – That the Council consider providing information that reporting Hate Crime does not affect an asylum case which may be ongoing.

**Desired Outcome** – Reassure customers of the service the Council provides

**Recommendation 7** – That the Council consider providing information that reporting Domestic Violence can be done with confidence.



# Desired Outcomes and Recommendations

**Desired Outcome** – Confidence that all is being done on long term ASB cases

**Recommendation 8** – That the Council consider introducing a form of audit of ASB cases which have been ongoing for a period of time.

**Desired Outcome** – Improve customer satisfaction

**Recommendation 9** – That the Council consider looking at the survey being used and identify if dissatisfaction is more predominant in Housing Officer cases or Anti-Social Behaviour Team cases.

**Desired Outcome** – Customers are aware of all the different types of services available to resolve their complaint

**Recommendation 10** – That the Council provide more information around the Mediation Service, and more importantly the benefits to this in potentially resolving complaints between parties.



# Introduction and Scope

## Introduction

1. This is our fourth Inquiry report since the amalgamation of the scrutiny panels previously established under the three ALMOs.
2. Our first Inquiry report looked at Annual Home Visits. The second report focused on Environment of Estates. The third was around the responsive repairs service in East Leeds, provided by Leeds Building Services. This report focuses on the Anti-Social Behaviour Service.
3. This inquiry has been a complex one, especially in comparison to the previous inquiries the Board has carried out. The number of agencies and parties, alongside the large variety of case types which the team have to deal with means this area of work is not easy to recommend improvements to.
4. Co-ordination of services and agencies
5. Developing and delivering standards
6. Performance measuring
7. Customer satisfaction
5. The Inquiry was conducted over six formal evidence gathering sessions which took place between October 2017 and March 2018.
6. The Board also conducted a survey with involved residents and tenant groups.
7. The Board would like to thank all those involved in this Inquiry. A full list of those who participated is detailed at the end of this report.

## Scope of the Inquiry

4. The Board chose this topic as there was compelling performance evidence and feedback from key stakeholders that indicated there was a need to improve performance and service for tenants.
5. The Terms of Reference for this Inquiry were agreed on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017 when it was concluded that the purpose of the Inquiry would be to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
  - Current policies and processes
  - Consultation with tenants (questionnaire)



# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Noise Nuisance

1. The Board noted from their evidence gathering throughout the inquiry, that the largest type of Anti-Social Behaviour cases are around noise and that this complaint makes up around 50% of the workload.
2. The Board appreciate that there are a number of factors which can cause this complaint, from lifestyle, flooring and property construction type.
3. Evidence suggested that some noise, especially in blocks of flats was caused due to children running around above and that this is becoming more prevalent, given the shortage of stock the Council has not got the ability to rehouse families in other types of property.
4. It should be noted that the Board support the Council's initiative to have some blocks in the City identified as 'Family Friendly'.
5. The Council have a difficult task in dealing with noise, but the Board felt that there was more emphasis on dealing with the problem once it had happened, rather than trying to prevent it occurring in the first place.
6. The Board were also informed that there is often a number of weeks wait before noise equipment can be installed, and the Board were told this can't always be used in some cases because it would not be possible to identify the source of the noise.
7. The Board therefore recommends that the Council look towards carrying out a 'Noise Action Week' which could

highlight what things can cause noise, in an educational format. The Board believe it would be appropriate to involve partners in this week, such as local housing offices.

8. This measure could potentially cause an increase in number of noise complaints as any such initiative would, but it may have longer term benefits of informing tenants of the ways their lifestyle may be having an impact on their neighbours which they were otherwise unaware of. It is important that the name of the week is considered, and has a positive stance, because the image which needs to be portrayed is that the Council want to deal with noise nuisance when it does happen but and also prevent it.

**Recommendation 1** – That the Anti-Social Behaviour team carry out an initiative such as a 'Noise Action Awareness Week' to provide a wide range of information about noise, around prevention in the first place and how to deal with this if it does occur.

## IT Systems

9. It has been a theme during all the Boards investigations that the IT systems which are used are not always positively received by those using them.
10. However, the Board were informed during their evidence gathering about the introduction of a new Housing Management system, which as part of it contains a module for Anti-Social Behaviour case monitoring.
11. This will replace the current system being used, which was reported by officers as



# Conclusions and Recommendations

being 'clunky' and not user friendly. An example of this being that template letters which are in the system cannot be easily changed to be more bespoke to a particular case. This has an impact on the time taken to carry out general administration of a case.

12. The Board were also advised that the current systems do not easily identify whether a property is Council or privately owned.
13. The Board are supportive of any measure which will make Officers work easier and more efficient, and appreciate there will always be issues faced when introducing a new IT system into an organisation.

**Recommendation 2** – That the Board support the implementation of a new computer system for Anti-Social Behaviour cases. The Board request future updates around the benefits of integration of this system to other Council systems and that the system is providing benefits to ASB Case Officers and the Board are kept informed of the implementation of this.

## CCTV

14. The Board support the view that CCTV should be an effective tool for supporting with Anti-Social Behaviour case evidence.
15. However, the Board were informed that there currently isn't a consistent approach to CCTV across the City, and this has been due to how systems have been installed in the past.

16. Because of this, the Board were informed that there is a programme ongoing to make this consistent across the City and that all areas are linked centrally.
17. It was explained that there are two possible approaches to ensuring this; through fibre or rooftop signals.
18. The Board were told that fibre is a more expensive approach when compared to rooftop signals. However, rooftop signals would be a quicker way of providing the ability to link up cameras centrally.
19. The Board appreciates in the longer term, fibre is the future and by ignoring this option could leave the Council technologically disadvantaged in the future.
20. However, the Board recommend the Council look at their current plans and consider if it would be appropriate in some instances to use rooftop signals to provide centrally linked up CCTV quicker – but with a longer term objective of moving over to fibre.
21. The Board also felt that tenants should be informed when works are to be carried out as currently there is no indication that this is provided.

**Recommendation 3** – The Council look at their current plans and consider in certain circumstances to use rooftop signals to provide centrally linked up CCTV quicker – but with a longer term objective of moving over to fibre. Provide clarification to tenants on works to install CCTV via a works programme



# Conclusions and Recommendations

22. The Board were told of a project to identify where the Council and Police have CCTV cameras. This is so that in future, both parties do not install cameras in the same place, as it was told that the camera pictures can be shared with both parties in appropriate circumstances. The Board appreciate that in some cases, Police operational cameras would remain secret and that duplication could be an unavoidable occurrence.

23. The Board also queried the ways that CCTV pictures could be viewed by members of the public. The Board were informed that there are limitations as to who can view it and under what circumstances. The Board felt that this should be made clear to residents, who may rely on this information in the case of incidents occurring to themselves or their property.

**Recommendation 4** – That the Council make available a clear code of practice around the sharing of CCTV camera pictures to members of the public.

## Staff Training

24. The Board appreciates the work which has gone on whilst the inquiry has been ongoing around training Officers around Anti-Social Behaviour, especially for new starters in the Department.

25. The Board however are concerned as to how this training is carried out in future, especially in regard to new policies and procedures and for existing staff. The Board were informed of the complexities

of taking out a large number of Officers from their roles to provide training to.

26. The Council need to agree, as a matter of priority, their approach to carrying out future training with staff. The Board feel that training allows Officers to carry out their roles effectively and efficiently.

**Recommendation 5** – That the Council agree, as a matter of priority, their approach to carrying out future training with staff, especially in regard to the new IT system which will be implemented in the future.

## Hate Crime

27. The Board acknowledge the good work being carried out on Hate Crime by the Council.

28. However, the Board are of the belief that Hate Crime is still being under-reported. Concerning information was received which explained sometimes asylum seekers who could be more at risk of a Hate Crime, think that if they were to report this to authorities it may jeopardise their asylum case.

29. Given the above, the Board were assured this wasn't the case by Officers, however the Board feel that if this is the perception, then there is a need to provide confidence to people that this isn't the so and the Council should consider better information, perhaps through leaflets on this.



# Conclusions and Recommendations

**Recommendation 6** – That the Council consider providing additional literature that reporting Hate Crime does not affect an asylum case which may be ongoing to help build confidence to report hate crime.

## Domestic Violence

30. As with Hate Crime, the Board felt that there could be concerns around confidence of reporting domestic violence to authorities.
31. The Board note that in some cases domestic violence may be reported via the Police, but the Council should advertise that people are able to report Domestic Violence to the Council in confidence.

**Recommendation 7** – That the Council consider providing information that reporting Domestic Violence can be done with confidence.

## Response Time to Cases

32. The Board were provided with evidence in a number of ways around concerns around the time taken to respond to Anti-Social Behaviour cases. Evidence received from Officers and also via the involved tenant survey showed this was a concern.
33. Tenants expressed concerns that response times in some cases were poor. However when the Board

presented this concern to Officers, it was explained that there are service standards which act as the timescales in which cases should give updates to tenants. The Officers when explaining this said that the service standards should be seen as a minimum, and that in some cases more frequent contact would be better.

34. The Board understand that some ASB cases would be quicker to resolve than others, and that tenants may have a mind-set where they think something should be resolved quickly, when in practice this isn't possible.
35. Following on from this, Officers expressed concerns around where other agencies may need to be involved with a case that they often have such a backlog that they do not get dealt with quickly which makes a case go on longer, with a knock on effect of causing dissatisfaction.
36. In providing advice the Board felt that Officers should, even though it may be a difficult conversation, be honest about timescales and what can be done on a case at the outset, which may help with setting expectations.
37. Evidence was received by the Board that what are deemed 'low level' cases, which are usually related to the tenancy, are dealt with by local Housing Officers. More serious or complex cases would be dealt with by the Anti-Social Behaviour Team.
38. The Board received evidence of cases which are deemed low level and continue for a long period of time without resolution.



# Conclusions and Recommendations

39. The Board were informed that Housing Officers can liaise with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, for advice and if they could help with resolving the case, but the Board felt that because these cases were ongoing for such a long time that something wasn't working right.

40. It seems logical therefore, that there is some mechanism introduced, in the form of an audit of these type of cases to ensure all which can be done has so and also there is added weight that something needs to be escalated.

**Recommendation 8** – That the Council consider introducing a form of audit of ASB cases which have been ongoing for a period of time.

41. The survey conducted by the Board also provided evidence on dissatisfaction with the Anti-Social Behaviour Service.

42. The Board have looked at this information and have questioned which element, is it the Housing Officer cases or the Anti-Social Behaviour cases, or both causing the dissatisfaction. And if dissatisfaction is being caused because the Housing Officer is carrying this work out, is it because they have other duties which take up their time, and so cannot commit more time to cases?

43. The Board feel that this is an area of work which should be looked at, perhaps through the current survey which is carried out at the end of the case, which highlights who was responsible for satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

44. The Board in providing the recommendation below do not wish to cause a 'them and us' attitude between the two teams who deal with cases, and that this information should be used to drive service improvements and thus provide a better service to customers.

**Recommendation 9** – That the Council consider looking at the survey being used and identify if dissatisfaction is more predominant in Housing Officer or Anti-Social Behaviour Team cases.

## Mediation

45. Finally, in closing this report the Board met with the Mediation Service, which is provided internally within Leeds City Council.

46. The Board were informed of what the service provides and in what types of cases this is used.

47. However, the Board were surprised to learn that the mediation service isn't taken up by complainants very much.

48. The Board appreciate some of the reasons that this might not be the case, most importantly that both parties have to agree to such an approach, a case going on for so long that mediation is no longer viable, or in some cases it wouldn't be appropriate, but there were other cases the Board found surprising that this isn't taken up by complainants.

49. The Board feel that there may be some work which the service can do which could encourage better take up of mediation, for example providing more information on the mediation service,



# Conclusions and Recommendations

how it works and how it could provide a quicker resolution to cases.

**Recommendation 10** – That the Council provide more information around the Mediation Service, and more importantly the benefits to this in potentially resolving complaints between parties.



# Evidence and Witnesses

## Monitoring arrangements

Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.

The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.

Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

## Reports and Publications Submitted

- Terms of Reference for the Board's inquiry into East Leeds Repairs
- Questionnaire on Anti-Social Behaviour Service and responses

## Witnesses Heard

- |                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Harvinder Saimbhi  | Head of Operational Delivery   |
| • Jeff Clarke        | Area Manager                   |
| • Sharon Guy         | Area Manager                   |
| • Lee Ward           | Neighbourhood Services Officer |
| • Neil Bowden        | ASB Team Manager               |
| • Jamie Martin       | Housing Manager                |
| • Claire Smith       | Housing Manager                |
| • Bryan Wagner-Adair | Senior Housing Advisor         |
| • Zahid Butt         | Service Development Manager    |
| • Michelle Pollard   | Police Link Officer            |
| • Leon Burton-Davies | Housing Officer                |
| • Michael Vilia      | Housing Officer                |
| • Maria Wheeler      | ASB Officer                    |
| • Melissa Pye        | ASB Officer                    |

## Dates of Scrutiny

Tenant Scrutiny Board meetings were held on:

11 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
15 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	14 <sup>th</sup> February 2018
13 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2018

**Tenant Scrutiny Board  
Anti-Social Behaviour Service April 2018  
Report author: Lee Ward**

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**Report of** Housing Manager, Tenant Scrutiny

**Report to** Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date:** 26 April 2019

**Subject:** 2018/19 Work Programme

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## 1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Board previously resolved a workplan will be provided in all future agenda packs.
- 1.2 The updated work programme at Appendix A provided includes details for the 2018/19 financial year includes reference to the forthcoming Chair's election process
- 1.3 It should be noted that the workplan does not refer to main inquiry at present as the Board agreed to focus during 2018/19 on recruitment whilst reviewing previous recommendations.

## 2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members of the Board are requested to note the 2018/19 municipal year's work programme.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS<sup>1</sup>

- 3.1 None

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

**APPENDIX A**

**Tenant Scrutiny Board Work Schedule for 2018/19 Municipal Year**

AREAS OF REVIEW	March 15 <sup>th</sup>	April 26 <sup>th</sup>	May 17 <sup>th</sup>	June 21 <sup>st</sup>	July 19 <sup>th</sup>
Main Inquiry				X	
Preparation of Final Report					
(X) Recommendation Tracking/ (P) Presentations	P  (1) Universal Credit Update  (2) Housing Leads/Tenant Scrutiny Board	X  <b>LASBT Response</b> (Delayed due to LASBT /Safer Leads ASB Service Review)	Housing Leads/Tenant Scrutiny Board (Future Development Workshop)  @ Navigation House GFW Boardroom	X  Consideration of new inquiry	
<b>UPDATES</b>					
Attendance	(1) Kevin Bruce/ Paul Harris (2) Mandy Sawyer	(1) Harvinder Sambhi (LASBT) & David Longthorpe (Housing Leads)	ALL board members and senior Housing leads Managers.		
Board Administration					
Election of Chair Election of Vice Chair	Notification of election Process	Elections for Chair/vice Chair			
Action Plan updates to Tenant Scrutiny Board	X	X			
Communal Cleaning					
Universal Credit Discussion (once live)	X				