

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 DOCUMENTS¹

- 3.1 Final ASB Inquiry Report

¹ 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
<p>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.</p>
<p>Response – Recommendation Accepted</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The service would like to develop an action week in line with the Board’s recommendation which is likely to include,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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

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.