

Report of Director of Communities and Environment

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 11 July 2019

Subject: Update Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team (LASBT) Review

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, 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

Summary of main issues

1. This report updates the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board on progress with the LASBT review following consultation with the Board in December 2018 and February 2019.
2. A consultation process, including discussions with scrutiny members, identified a need to change the way in which the LASBT team operates in in order to respond to unsustainable levels of demand for the service and the increasingly complex vulnerabilities presented by perpetrators and victims interacting with the service.
3. A key recommendation to come out of the review is that decision making should be based on an effective triage system with the identification and assessment of risk embedded in procedures from the first point of contact.
4. This report sets out the recommendations agreed at the Executive Board meeting on 26 June 2019. The proposed actions aim to complement wider corporate ambitions around the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy and reflect the priorities of the Safer Leeds Community Safety Strategy and the Best Council Plan.

Recommendations

The Scrutiny Board is requested to comment on the contents of the report and progress made since initial consultation took place with the Board.

The full Executive Board report, as agreed at the meeting on 26 June 2019, is attached.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report updates the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board on progress with the LASBT review following consultation with board members in December 2018 and February 2019.
- 1.2 It sets out the recommendations agreed by the Executive Board on 26 June 2019.
- 1.3 The recommendations reflect the priorities set out in the Safer Leeds Community Safety Strategy, which was considered by the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board in July 2018 and was subsequently approved by the Executive Board in October 2018.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The volume, complexity and breadth of cases being referred to LASBT has evolved since the service was established. Demand for the service has increased, and the team is responding to a far greater number of high risk incidents.
- 2.2 The volume of incoming referrals relating to noise nuisance, in particular, is significantly limiting the team's ability to deliver much needed work around prevention, intervention and community empowerment.
- 2.3 Furthermore, an increasing number of those interacting with the service – both victims and perpetrators - are displaying complex support needs and vulnerabilities such as mental health issues. Those support needs often require specialist interventions, which LASBT is not best placed to deliver.
- 2.4 The consultation undertaken during the review underlined the strengths of the multi-agency approach to tackling ASB in Leeds, and reinforced the importance of a joined up approach to tackling the underlying causes of ASB. However, there was general acknowledgement that present arrangements are not sustainable.
- 2.5 Recommendations have been developed that seek to enable the service to better respond to these issues. These recommendations were endorsed by the Executive Board on 26 June 2019 and will now be implemented.
- 2.6 It is anticipated that once implemented, changes to working practices will enable the LASBT team to work more effectively to complement wider ambitions around the Council's inclusive growth strategy, especially in the context of support for priority neighbourhoods, and also work within children's services and adult social care to support vulnerable families.
- 2.7 Throughout the review officers have worked to ensure connections are made to the priorities identified in the Safer Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2018-21.

3. Main Issues - Recommendations Developed Through Consultation

- 3.1 **Triage of referrals:** The service will implement a triage system for all incoming referrals so that cases can be appropriately prioritised.
- 3.2 That system, which embeds the identification and assessment of vulnerabilities from the first point of contact with service users, has already been designed. Discussions regarding the implementation of these proposals are advanced and, with the agreement of Executive Board secured, this will now be delivered.
- 3.3 The system will be supported by a new system of performance monitoring.
- 3.4 Where cases are assessed as not being ASB cases but a support need is identified customers will be signposted to alternative services. For complex cases it may be appropriate to refer the case for consideration by a community MARAC.
- 3.5 It is crucial that partnerships are in place to enable officers to access support from colleagues in services such as mental health, youth offending, children's services adult social care and housing, as well as partners such as West Yorkshire Police.
- 3.6 **Community MARACs:** For complex and persistent cases the service will begin to use community MARACs. This will promote early resolution of cases, joint decision making and more effective problem solving. This will enable officers to assess and manage risk more effectively for both perpetrators and victims.
- 3.7 **Mediation:** A flexible mediation service will be commissioned to promote early intervention. This approach has the potential to resolve more ASB cases before they escalate and become increasingly entrenched. Not only could this deliver improved outcomes for the individuals involved it also has the potential to reduce costly demands on public services.
- 3.8 **Noise:** Over 60% of incoming referrals relate to noise nuisance. The existing resources cannot meet the demand and expectation of the service. The provision therefore needs to be revised, joining up day time and out-of-hours services more effectively and ideally delivering increasingly flexible coverage.
- 3.9 A separate review of the noise service is taking place. However, in the interim communication with customers will be improved so that they can understand more easily what actions they can take themselves in order to try and resolve the situation they are concerned about.
- 3.10 **Communication:** External communications are being revised in order to provide more clarity and advice to those seeking to use the service.
- 3.11 In order to manage customer expectations a document has been developed which sets out what the service will – and will not – deal with.
- 3.12 With the introduction of the triage process customers should receive more accurate information, from the outset, about how their case will be taken forward.
- 3.13 The consultation process has highlighted a gap in terms of social media presence. Discussions are taking place with the communications team to address those concerns.
- 3.14 **Location of the West Team:** Work is on-going to identify a suitable alternative base for officers currently based in the west of Leeds, ideally co-located with other services in the same area of the city. Discussions with Trade Union representatives are ongoing.

- 3.15 **ASB Strategy:** An Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy has been drafted for the city – this document is attached as an appendix to the Executive Board report. With the endorsement of Executive Board it is proposed that further consultation takes place with stakeholders with a view to developing a final strategy.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 A wide range of consultation events have taken place with staff, elected members and partners. This has included a multi-agency OBA session and a series of staff workshops.
- 4.1.2 Additional work was undertaken with West Yorkshire Police Independent Advisory Board and residents were consulted via TARA. Additional consultation took place via the citizen's panel.
- 4.1.3 Members of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board were consulted in December 2018 and February 2019. Community Safety Champions were consulted in January 2019 and further consultation took place with Community Committee Chairs.
- 4.1.4 The Executive Board member for Communities has been consulted and engaged throughout the process.
- 4.1.5 In addition the LASBT review steering group, which is chaired by the Chief Officer for Safer Leeds, includes officers from a range of services including Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Communities and Housing. Two elected members also sit on the board, along with a Trade Union representative and colleagues from partner organisations such as Victim Support, West Yorkshire Police and the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the project.

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

- 4.3.1 The Best Council Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21 includes Safe, Strong Communities as a Best City Priority and one of the intended outcomes of the plan is for people to 'be safe and feel safe.'
- 4.3.2 The LASBT review aims to enable officers to increasingly focus on preventative activities and early intervention, with a view to empowering residents and supporting communities to become more resilient. The outcomes that could be achieved through that work would support the ambitions set out in the Inclusive Growth Strategy.
- 4.3.3 The proportion of the households reporting anti-social behaviour is included as one of the KPIs used to measure progress against the Best City priorities.
- 4.3.4 The LASBT review aims to enable the service to work towards priorities set out in the Safer Leeds Community Safety Strategy, which was approved by Executive Board in October 2018.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The aim of this review is to change the way LASBT operates in order to maximise the value derived from existing resources.
- 4.4.2 The ambition is to enable officers to work with communities, and to make better use of early intervention tools, thereby reducing demand on public services and the associated cost of dealing with complex cases that have escalated.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The Safer Leeds Executive has accountability for the LASBT review. As a significant programme of change, the review has been a standing agenda item for the Safer Leeds Executive.
- 4.5.2 There are no exempt items so there are no access to information issues.
- 4.5.3 There are no legal implications for the work set out in this report.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The increased volume in cases being handled by the LASBT team is unsustainable. Current systems are also not flexible enough to enable a priority based response to reflect varying degrees of severity of ASB and its potential consequences.
- 4.6.2 The key to ensuring a sustainable, effective LASBT service will be to enable decision making to be based upon need, to inform targeted use of resource and capacity. This will rely upon join-up working with colleagues and partners.
- 4.6.3 Safeguarding runs through all the work of the LASBT service and the community safety partnership, as outlined in the corporate risk report on community cohesion.
- 4.6.4 Delivering the proposed changes to the service will ensure vulnerable victims and perpetrators receive a prioritised response and appropriate support from either the LASBT team or through signposting to an alternative service. Embedding an identification and assessment of vulnerability will be a fundamental part of the proposed triage system and is reflective of the ambition to be a compassionate city.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Following the Executive Board meeting on 26 June 2019, it was agreed that under the Chief Officer for Safer Leeds LASBT will oversee the implementation of the recommendations set out in the Executive Board report.
- 5.2 At an operational level the LASBT Review steering group will continue to meet in order to bring partners together to shape the programme as it develops.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Board is asked to comment on the content of the report and the progress made since consultation with the Board in February.

7. Documents Attached

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Executive Board Report