

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2021

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE



DATE	14/07/2021
PORTFOLIO	Community Services
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PURPOSE

1. To seek Executive approval of the proposed Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2021-24

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Executive is recommended to approve the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2021-24

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. The policy outlines the Council's approach to how it will deal with and support our communities and partner agencies in dealing with anti-social behaviour.
4. The proposed policy reflects that whilst the Council has no statutory obligations to publish an ASB Policy and Procedures document, a clear and concise document would formalise the Home Office Minimum Standards, our existing procedures and reflect the best practice adopted by other Local Authorities.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

Background

5. The statutory duty for local authorities, who are landlords, to have a policy and procedure for dealing with anti-social behaviour was enacted back in 2003. *The Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003)* required these Council's to have a policy and procedure to deal with anti-social behaviour across its communities and that, from time to time, this policy be kept under review and, when it thinks appropriate, a revised statement be published.
6. Since this period the nature of anti-social behaviour and the required response has remained dynamic. The requirement for Council's to provide effective ASB support for its

residents and the necessity to work in partnership to address these issues (also enshrined in legislation) have both grown in magnitude since the early 2000's.

7. Prioritising and aiming to reduce anti-social behaviour can and will have a clear positive impact on the quality of life of our residents. Anti-social behaviour left unchecked can be pernicious and adversely impact our residents on an individual basis and de-stabilise our communities if left unchecked. The Council has a proven track record and a strong response to its anti-social behaviour duties and its activities have remained a key strategic priority. In accordance with best practice, the Council's response embeds early intervention, multi-agency working, a witness centered approach, effective community empowerment and enforcement.

Anti-Social Behaviour Local Delivery

8. Supporting victims and complainants of anti-social behaviour inevitably often requires multi-agency intervention. The Council's anti-social behaviour team has intrinsic links and works with a variety of partners including; Selective Licensing, Calico, The Police, the Children, Family and Young Person's Service and partners across the community support, voluntary and diversionary sectors. There are extremely good links between organisations and multi-agency action plans and meetings that allow joint working and information sharing, especially in relation to vulnerable and high-risk complainants.
9. Anti-social behaviour continues to be identified as a statutory priority as part of the Council's / Pennine Lancashire strategic priority setting for Community Safety. This Council has a long legacy of multi-agency partnership working across community safety and anti-social behaviour.
10. The local landscape for effective anti-social behaviour has changed over recent years. Anti-social behaviour is a recognised thematic strand of the Council's response and also that of Pennine Lancashire's Community Safety Partnership. These strong links have enabled local strategies and responses to current ASB priorities across the footprint and partnership agencies to be adopted. For instance, the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team works closely with local partners and the Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-Ordination (MATAC) Group provides the local partnership co-ordination and response to emerging local ASB priorities. The local group is also supported by strategic commissioning and direction by the Pennine Group. The Head of Streetscene co-chairs with the Police the Pennine Community Safety Partnership's Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Group. This has contributed to the current effective local delivery structures and response to emerging trends.

Current Policy and Service

11. The proposed policy recognises the requirement that from time to time a policy should be reviewed following existing good practices, changes in legislation and local priorities. As effective responses are put in place to address anti-social behaviour, community confidence to report can increase and the nature of incidents can change, requiring different responses. The ASB Team continue to respond and deal with a high volume of cases. Last year, for example, over 700 cases were recorded and dealt with. These include, neighbour disputes, dog issues, noise and youth nuisance.

12. Obviously in light of the Pandemic, 2021 has been a particularly challenging year for a number of frontline services. The significant periods of national restrictions and lockdowns have contributed to increased reports of ASB across many local authority areas. This unprecedented year has also presented unique challenges that have contributed to increased reports. The new Covid powers have placed a duty for the Team and others, requiring investigation and action. Most Lancashire Authorities have seen an increase in reported ASB over this period. Prior to this year, this Council was recognised across Lancashire as being proactive in its approach to tackling anti-social behaviour, being at the forefront in the innovative use of legislation and providing examples of best practice. The proposed revision of the Policy encapsulates these good practice responses and performance management. Subject to Executive approval the performance of the adopted Policy will be provided by existing channels; for instance; via Full Council / Scrutiny reports and periodic reports via the MATAC Group.
13. The policy has been drafted after reviewing our current practice and to adopt and integrate the best practice and "Policy and Procedures" of other Local Authorities. It builds on the foundations set out in our previous Community Safety Policy (CSP) which was a reflection of the minimum standards established by the Home Office in "Protecting the Public". These standards were adopted by the Lancashire CSP. Our policy has now been formalised to give a greater understanding of the role of the ASB department, the legal constraints under which it operates and the expectations that the Council has in relation to the behaviour of our residents.
14. There is now a clear division between the formal ASB Policy and the operating procedures which set out the process of how each complaint will be dealt with, and the response that any complainant can expect from the council. These expectations have also been incorporated into a "Customer Commitment" that is an easy reference tool for residents to follow.
15. There is now also reference to other Council policies such as the Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy, Hate Crime, the Harassment Policy and it also reflects the Council's commitment, set out in its Strategic Plan, to provide residents with a clean, safe and attractive place to live.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION

16. The work of the team and policy are met from existing budgets.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

17. The Policy should be subject to review after 3 years or in response to changes in legislation or good practice, whichever is the sooner.
18. An Equality Assessment has been undertaken and the impact is neutral with no adverse effects.

ITEM NO	[AgendaItem]
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DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

19. Consultation has been conducted with Calico, Smile Mediation, Together Housing and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team managers sitting within the Pennine Community Safety Partnership.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

20. None

FURTHER INFORMATION

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