

# REVIEW OF ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PARTNERSHIP WORKING IN THE BOROUGH

*FROM THE EXTERNAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOLLOWING THE REVIEW BY THE ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR WORKING GROUP*

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Douglas Mills
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration
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<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix A - Review Of Anti Social Behaviour Partnership Working In The Borough

## HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Purpose of report</b>	To consider the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group's review of anti social behaviour partnership working in the Borough.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	Putting our residents first.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	No direct financial cost. However, any potential financial implications contained within the attached report are subject to the budget planning process.
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	External Services Scrutiny Committee
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Cabinet endorse the wide range of investigation and enforcement issues undertaken by the ASBI and Community Safety Teams, putting residents first, noting that this Council is the first to amalgamate this type of enforcement, regulatory services and ASB in this way.
2. That the Cabinet endorse the continued development of a vulnerability assessment tool to allow officers to identify vulnerable victims of ASB, offer them additional support during the investigation process and link them to any further support available within the Council, partner agencies or in their community.
3. That the Cabinet Members for Community, Commerce and Regeneration and Social Services, Health & Housing consider requesting that officers introduce a modular approach to training packages for the ASBI Team and other Council staff to maintain skills and increase knowledge and awareness of the issues that are dealt with by ASBI Team.

4. That the Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration consider whether to request that the Corporate Services and Partnerships POC undertake a review of the current Members' Enquiry system during the 2014/2015 municipal year to ensure information and intelligence generated by it provides added value to Councillors, relevant services and residents.
5. That the Cabinet note the planned upgrades to current computer and mobile devices across the organisation and, in conjunction with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, ensure that the ASBI Team is supplied with effective modern, mobile technology in order to spend the maximum amount of time in the community investigating issues and taking remedial action.
6. That the Cabinet request that officers investigate the possibility of increasing the number of Council tenants included in the annual ASB satisfaction survey.
7. That the Cabinet Members for Central Services and Community, Commerce and Regeneration consider with the Head of Communications the possibility of additional publicity being given to what constitutes ASB and how residents can report it.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

During the course of its investigations, the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group elicited information from witnesses in relation to anti social behaviour partnership working in the Borough. The Working Group identified what partnership working was already taking place and in the Borough and then focussed on what further action could be taken to improve this.

These recommendations have been formulated to help improve the services provided and therefore the support offered to residents in relation to anti social behaviour.

### **Alternative options considered / risk management**

The Cabinet could decide to reject or amend some or all of the Committee's recommendations.

### **Supporting Information**

1. The External Services Scrutiny Committee established the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group to undertake a review into the way in which the Council works with its partners in relation to anti social behaviour (ASB).
2. The Terms of Reference of the review were as follows:
  1. To consider the existing relationship between the Council and its partners in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) and make suggestions for any improvements that could be made to increase the effectiveness of partnership work in relation to ASB;
  2. To consider internal and external arrangements in the Borough with regard to ASB, and any improvements that could be made;
  3. To review whether ASB arrangements in the Borough are timely, effective and cost efficient;
  4. To review the guidance and support that is currently available from the Council and partners to those who have been the victim of ASB;
  5. To seek out views on ASB of residents and partner organisations, including the voluntary sector;

6. To examine best practice elsewhere through case studies, policy ideas, witness sessions and visits; and
  7. After due consideration of the above, to bring forward cost conscious, innovative and practical recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to ASB arrangements in the Borough.
3. The breadth of the review subject matter has led the Working Group to formulate a range of recommendations. With regard to implementing the recommendations, the following supporting information is provided for Cabinet to consider:
- a. **Recommendation 1:** The merger of the ASBI and Community Safety teams has enabled every officer within the new team to deal with any issue that arises. Although there will clearly be individuals that retain a specialist knowledge of certain areas, all staff are now able to deal with any service related issue. This will provide residents with a much more joined up and effective service.
  - b. **Recommendation 2:** The vulnerability assessment tool is a questionnaire that is being developed by ASBIT and is basically the same as the one already used by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). There is an assumption that the Mayor of London will, at some point, expect local authorities to act in a more joined up way, working more collaboratively with the MPS, and use the same assessment tool. As such, Hillingdon has been proactive in its approach. In the future, further consideration could be given by the Council's Transformation Team to applying the use of this tool / questionnaire to other front line services. Consideration is also being given to how an ASB complainant can be kept updated to reduce instances of avoidable contact.
  - c. **Recommendation 3:** The Council currently utilises a rather large training package called *Be Safe At Home* which is thought to be unwieldy. It is proposed that the package be broken down into modules that will enable it to be more targeted and manageable. This would mean that it could be used by the ASBI Team as well as other officers around the Council. The training package could include a module which looks at the way in which vulnerable victims are identified and supported and the tools and powers available to deal with ASB, including those introduced through new legislation expected in 2014.
  - d. **Recommendation 4:** It is thought that the information and reports generated by the current Members Enquiry system are not as useful as they could be. As such, it is suggested that the Corporate Services and Partnerships POC consider undertaking a review in the next municipal year to look at the possibility of including a new category of enquiry (distinct from enquiries about policy or process) which are "Member service requests" – actions raised on behalf of residents which require short term investigation and remedial action by an officer. These could then be tracked alongside service requests received direct from residents and thereby record the total volume of work dealt with by the service.
  - e. **Recommendation 5:** In an ideal world, ASBIT officers will be able to log an issue and take photos which can immediately be attached to an electronic file and are instantly accessible to the Contact Centre if an enquiry came in whilst the officer was still out in the field. Corporate ICT have been working well to develop remote authentication using a virtual private network which will provide effective access from tablets as well as laptops in a mobile environment. In order for ASBIT to access the specific data in the field, IT is now assessing the introduction of an upgraded Onyx mobile portal.

- f. **Recommendation 6:** The ASBI Team has a performance indicator where a survey needs to be undertaken with residents that have reported instances of ASB to establish their satisfaction levels with the way in which the Council dealt with the issue. It has been suggested that there would be value in increasing the number of Council tenants that are included in the survey sample.
- g. **Recommendation 7:** It should be noted that the MPS definition of ASB is different to the Council's definition. Although the MPS no longer has a dedicated communications officer, the Council's website provides residents with comprehensive information about ASB. It is suggested that further consideration could be given to defining what ASB services a resident could access by phoning the Council, 999 or 101.

## **Financial Implications**

The majority of the Working Group's recommendations can be taken forward within existing Council resources. In respect of Recommendation 5, a business case has been developed to address the mobile working ICT issues identified during the course of the Working Group's review which, subject to evaluation and the necessary Member approvals, could be included in future revisions of the ICT Single Development Plan.

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendations?**

The recommendations in this report are designed with the purpose of raising awareness of ASB and improving the way in which the Council works with its partners to tackle ASB in the Borough. Consequently, it is intended that the improvements recommended in the report will have a positive impact on the lives of our residents and our staff.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

The Committee heard evidence from a range of witnesses during the course of the review.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate finance has reviewed the report and concurs with the financial implications detailed above.

### **Legal**

The Borough Solicitor advises that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Whenever necessary the Legal Service works closely with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team to address such behaviour through the legal process and protect the well-being of Borough residents.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL