

PETITION REQUESTING THE REMOVAL OF A BENCH LOCATED IN BLACK ROD CLOSE, HAYES.

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Douglas Mills
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Community, Commerce and Regeneration
Officer Contact(s)	Ed Shaylor, Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix attached

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	This report seeks to respond to a petition received by the Council to request a bench to be removed from Black Rod Close, Hayes. It was received at Democratic Services on 16th June 2014 .
Contribution to our plans and strategies	This report contributes to the Safer Hillingdon Partnership Plan.
Financial Cost	Nil
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee
Ward(s) affected	Botwell

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member

- 1) Notes the views of the petitioners.
- 2) Informs petitioners that removal of the bench is not considered to be the most appropriate way of dealing with the issue.
- 3) Informs residents that new legislation will soon come into effect which will give police and local authorities power to put in place a Public Spaces Protection Order if one is required.

Reasons for recommendation

Objections to removing the bench have been received by the Council. On this basis, it seems that the bench does serve a useful function in the location. However, it also is associated with significant anti-social behaviour which needs to be dealt with.

Alternative options considered / risk management

None.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

A petition with 32 signatures has been submitted to the Council with the following request:

'Petition to have bench removed from Black Rod Close - Reasons for wanting removal are non-residents sitting on the bench, drug dealing, drinking alcohol and intimidation of residents and causing a lot of noise disturbing the residents during the day and night. The rubbish left behind leaves our road unsightly and is left for us to clean up.'

Petitioners have requested the removal of a bench located in Black Rod Close as it is frequently used by non-residents who are engaging in anti-social behaviour such as drug taking, drinking and intimidation of residents. The nuisance they create for local residents includes excessive noise and litter.

The Council could remove the bench if a decision is made to do so. The bench is located on publicly adopted highway. A2 Dominion Housing Association who own/manage the majority of the housing in this area has confirmed that they have no ownership or financial attachment to the bench, however, they have asked that the views of the residents of adjacent properties be taken into account when making a decision.

An officer of the Council has written to residents in all the properties from 13-30, 70, 72 and 66 Black Rod Close, which are the houses surrounding the area where the bench is located. In this letter, they were advised that the Council had received a petition to remove the bench. They were asked that if they disagreed with the proposal they should complete the form attached to the letter stating reasons for their objection by 8 August 2014. Two responses have been received stating that they disagree with removing the bench as it provides a convenient place to rest in the open air.

A Public Spaces Protection Order would give the police powers to deal with people who do not live in the area and use the bench as a location for nuisance behaviour.

Financial Implications

The cost to the Council of removing the bench is estimated to be £180 which can be met from the existing Community Safety budget. A Public Spaces Protection Order does not have any specific costs associated with it, but any ancillary costs such as publicity would be met from the existing Community Safety budget.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The enhanced powers to deal with anti-social behaviour will enable police to deal effectively with people who create nuisance especially if they do not live in the area.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Consultation has been conducted with A2 Dominion Housing Association, the Local Policing Team and residents of the relevant part of Black Rod Close.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

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

It is noted that the costs of removal of the bench and of publicity associated with a Public Spaces Protection Order can be met in full from existing General Fund revenue budgets.

Legal

There are no specific legal implications relating to the recommendations 1) and 2) above.

The relevant provisions relating to a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) are contained in the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Disorder Act 2014 (the Act). These provisions are currently not in force. When the relevant provisions come into force, the Council will be able to issue the order, and before doing so, must consult with the chief officer of police, the Police and Crime Commissioner and any representatives of the local community they consider appropriate — for example, a local residents group or a community group that regularly uses the public place. The Council must be satisfied that two conditions identified in sections 59(2) and (3) of the Act are met prior to making a PSPO. The Act will make it an offence for a person to do anything which is prohibited by a PSPO or failure to comply with a requirement to which the person is subject under a PSPO.

Relevant Service Groups

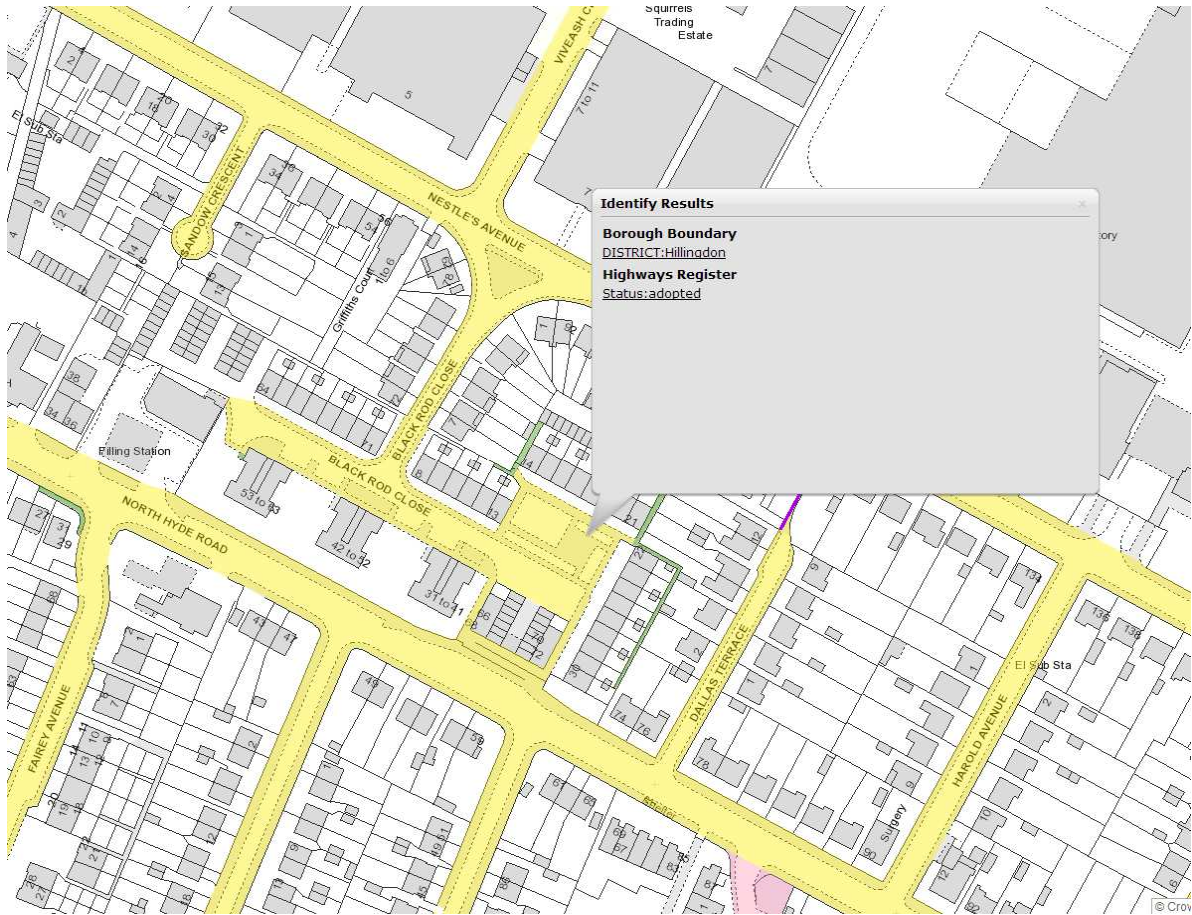
Not applicable

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Appendix

Map and street view to show the location of Black Rod Close, Harlington



PART 1 - MEMBERS, PUBLIC AND PRESS