

A Review of Alley Gating in Hillingdon

Committee name	Residents' Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Liz Penny – Democratic Services
Papers with report	Scoping Report

HEADLINES

This item will encompass the first witness session regarding the Committee's review into Alley Gating in Hillingdon.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Residents' Services Select Committee notes the evidence heard at the witness session and seeks clarification as necessary in the context of its review of alley gating in Hillingdon.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

At its meeting on 19 October 2022, the Residents' Services Select Committee elected to undertake a major review of the Council's alley gating scheme. The scoping report for the review was subsequently approved at the Select Committee meeting on 19 January 2023. This review aims to consider ways in which the current alley gating scheme could potentially be improved to better meet the needs of Hillingdon residents. The purpose of the current alley gating scheme is to improve the security of residential properties thereby reducing the opportunity for crime to be committed and decreasing the fear of crime. The scope of the Select Committee's review is limited to the application of alley gates to alleys and paths which are not public rights of way.

At this first witness session, key officers representing the Community Engagement Team, namely Helena Webster and Neil O'Connor, will be in attendance to answer any questions that may arise. Evidence will also be received from local Hillingdon residents of their experiences and views on the matter.

Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were noted for this review, subject to any changes agreed by the Committee:

1. to gain a thorough understanding of the Council's current alley gating scheme and what it entails;
2. to scrutinise a service that was established some 17 years ago and review its effectiveness;
3. to explore ways in which the current alley gating scheme in Hillingdon could be improved in terms of its efficiency and ability to meet the security needs of local residents;
4. to look at other local authorities and housing organisations that have established similar schemes for any best practice;

5. to review the success of older gating schemes in the Borough and explore if there are challenges faced by residents; and
6. subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose actions, service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

Possible Lines of Enquiry (questions for residents)

1. Do you believe the alley gating scheme in your area has led to a reduction in crime? – why / why not?
2. When were the alley gates installed in your area?
3. Are they kept locked at all times?
4. Has the scheme been generally welcomed by residents?
5. What was your experience of the installation process?
6. Have you experienced any issues with the scheme since implementation?
7. Are you able to suggest any ways in which the current scheme could be improved?
8. Are the gates in good working order and how are they maintained?
9. Who is the main holder of the keys?
10. What is the procedure when someone new moves into the area?

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations from the Committees are presented to Cabinet to consider, and ultimately seek to improve the way the Council provides services to residents.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.