

**REPORT TO:** Police, Fire and Community Safety Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 29 November 2017

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive - Partnerships and Community Services

**SUBJECT:** Ongoing Measures to tackle Antisocial Behaviour

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the number of antisocial behaviour complaints made to East Lothian Council during the reporting period and to advise on ongoing actions being undertaken by local partner agencies in tackling antisocial behaviour.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the terms of the report.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council, Police Scotland and other partner agencies continue to recognise that antisocial behaviour is most effectively addressed by *working together* in conjunction with other partner agencies and local communities.
- 3.2 The reported increase in the number of antisocial behaviour complaints made to Police Scotland in 2016 necessitated further inquiries to be made *at that time* in to the way in which both agencies were recording antisocial behaviour complaints, how “repeat victim” cases were being addressed, and the way in which youth related antisocial behaviour was being responded to. Discussions took place within the context of a Short Life Working Group chaired by the Local Area Police Commander.
- 3.3 As previously reported, changes to the way in which Police Scotland recorded and collated its antisocial behaviour data had an effect on the figures produced in the previous reporting year; Police Scotland and the Council have now aligned their reporting categories, with any legacy issues now having been fully addressed. Antisocial behaviour figures covering the year to date with comparisons to the previous year are now produced on a weekly basis by the Safer Communities Team. This allows for expeditious action to be taken in relation to emerging trends.

- 3.4 An interrogation of antisocial complaints made to the Council shows a decrease from a figure of 851 received during 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016 to 823 received during the first six months of the current reporting period. Complaints are received from a variety of different sources, including the widely publicised Antisocial Behaviour Helpline, social media and via an on-line reporting form. All complaints are progressed in accordance with East Lothian's Antisocial Behaviour Partnership's Antisocial Behaviour Policy.
- 3.5 The Council continues to raise legal proceedings against those engaged in the most serious and persistent forms of antisocial behaviour. Instructions to litigate emanate from the four weekly and multi-agency Adult Case Monitoring Group. There are currently 29 live Antisocial Behaviour Orders in East Lothian, with 11 having been granted since the beginning of the current reporting period.
- 3.6 The work of the case monitoring group and the general implementation of the aforesaid policy is overseen by the Antisocial Behaviour Overview Group. This group meets on a quarterly basis and is chaired by the council's Head of Communities and Partnerships. Members include the Local Area Police Commander, senior managers from local housing associations, members of East Lothian's Tenants and Residents Panel and various managers from across the Council.
- 3.7 The vast majority of antisocial behaviour cases are addressed without the need to raise judicial proceedings. The aforesaid policy provides for a suite of interventions; including, amongst other things, the issuing of joint warnings, the signing of Acceptable Behaviour Agreements, the provision of support measures for those accused of behaving antisocially and the making of referrals to the newly created East and Midlothian Resolution Service. All interventions have the objective of preventing further acts of antisocial behaviour. Great emphasis is also placed on supporting those affected by antisocial behaviour with referrals being made to statutory agencies and Victim Support (Scotland).
- 3.8 In June 2017 East Lothian Council signed a Service Level Agreement with Midlothian Council for the future delivery of resolution and mediation services. There have been 70 referrals made to the new service since its formal inception on 1 August 2017. Facilitating access of parties in dispute to trained mediators is seen as a vital component in addressing and preventing antisocial behaviour. Agreements reached between parties minimises the need for formal intervention from statutory agencies and affords parties a sense of empowerment in finding their own solutions to problems that may have arisen.
- 3.9 On a weekly basis, the council funded Antisocial Behaviour Police Liaison Officer and the Team Leader of the council's Safer Communities meet with a view to examining a list of repeat complainers. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that all actions have been taken by the relevant agencies in addressing the behaviour in point, and that the appropriate support interventions have been delivered to the complainer.

- 3.10 Public space youth related antisocial behaviour continues to be primarily addressed via the weekly East Lothian Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Group. Representatives from Police Scotland, East Lothian Council and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are represented at same. Antisocial behaviour “hotspots” are identified via the interrogation of police, council and fire service databases. Resources are deployed on the basis of this analysis. Those include, the council funded police Community Action Team, community wardens, neighbourhood outreach workers, the council’s permanent and mobile CCTV facilities and, in appropriate circumstances, fire personnel.
- 3.11 Acute problems unique to specific geographical areas are attended to via the formation of multi-agency Problem Solving Partnerships. During the reporting period, there were two such partnerships in operation; one in relation to youth related antisocial behaviour occurring within the locality of the Brunton Hall, and the other in relation to similar problems being evidenced in Haddington. The formulation and implementation of co-ordinated action plans has led to a reduction in reports of antisocial behaviour at both *loci*.
- 3.12 From 1 December 2017, and between the hours of 1800 and 0200 on Friday and Saturday evenings, two community wardens will be tasked with deploying the council’s marked CCTV van in areas of concern. The purposes of this is two-fold; one to deter, and one to capture any vital evidence of antisocial behaviour. Police officers will be afforded contact with the wardens on duty during those hours.
- 3.13 In September 2016, and in order to address an increase in youth related antisocial behaviour complaints being made to Police Scotland, the issuing of Parental Advisory Letters was re-introduced in East Lothian; 274 letters have been issued to date with 55 being issued during the relevant reporting period. Parents whose children are witnessed by police officers behaving in an antisocial fashion, or who are found at locations at which antisocial behaviour had been identified as being a prominent issue, are now written to by the Police’s Antisocial Behaviour Police Liaison Officer and the Council’s Safer Communities Team Manager. The purpose of these letters is, not only to alert parents to a situation that they may have been hitherto oblivious to, but also to offer support to them in addressing the behaviour of their children. This initiative, combined with the ongoing work of Police Scotland’s two Youth Community Officers and the delivery of joint school talks on community safety to the county’s school students is aimed at addressing the most visible aspect of antisocial behaviour.
- 3.14 In early 2017 East Lothian Council and Police Scotland will publish their Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for the next three years. The emphasis of the strategy will be on prevention and early intervention, underpinned by co-ordinated joint agency working, with the caveat that robust enforcement action will be taken against those who behave in a persistent and serious antisocial manner.

3.15 Although the causes of both group related and individual antisocial behaviour cases can be complex, and the application of an effective solution cannot always be delivered in the instant, the fact that Police Scotland, the Council and their partners in East Lothian are working together in tackling *all forms of antisocial behaviour*, maximises the chances of securing long term and sustainable solutions in the vast majority of reported cases.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial – None

6.2 Personnel - None

6.3 Other – None

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None

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