

REPORT TO: Police, Fire and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

MEETING DATE: 29 May 2019

BY: Depute Chief Executive - Partnerships and Community Services

SUBJECT: Tackling Antisocial Behaviour

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the number of antisocial behaviour complaints made to East Lothian Council during the reporting period (1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019) 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 local communities.
- 3.2 East Lothian's Antisocial Behaviour Partnership's Antisocial Behaviour Policy provides a suite of measures designed to deal holistically with *individual cases* of antisocial behaviour as well as creating an infrastructure within which performance is monitored. The emphasis is on *prevention and early intervention*, with enforcement action only being used as a last resort. Substantive decisions in individual cases are made collegiately via multi-agency Case Monitoring Groups. The application of the policy is overseen by the Antisocial Behaviour Overview Group, chaired by the council's Head of Service for Communities and Partnerships, and made up of senior officers drawn from a broad spectrum of different council teams, Police Scotland and East Lothian Housing Association. Representatives from East Lothian's Tenants and Residents Panel are also permanent members. The Antisocial Behaviour Officers

Group is a cross-party group of practitioners charged with maintaining the validity and currency of the policy and developing and maintaining relevant procedures. The Officers Group, with links to the National Antisocial Behaviour Officers Forum, reports to the Overview Group on a quarterly basis.

- 3.3 *Group related antisocial behaviour* requires a cross-agency co-ordinated response and this is achieved via the weekly evidence and intelligence led Tasking and Co-ordinating Group made up of representatives drawn from Police Scotland, East Lothian Council and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
- 3.4 Acute problems unique to specific geographical areas are addressed via temporary multi-agency Problem Solving Partnerships (PSPs). During the reporting period there were three PSPs in existence; one established to combat the youth related antisocial behaviour manifesting itself at Lochend Woods / Ashfield Park, Dunbar, the second formed to tackle the property-based antisocial behaviour affecting residents of Goose Green Avenue, Musselburgh and the third initiated to address the mainly daytime antisocial behaviour being exhibited on Haddington High Street. In the first of these PSPs, officers from the Council's Safer Communities Team, the Community and Learning Development Service, Amenity Services, Road Services, local Elected Members and Education worked alongside parents, within the context of an Action Plan, to reduce the incidences of antisocial behaviour occurring at this locus. The PSP adopted a blend of measures; including, heightened hi-visibility Police and Community Warden weekend patrols, enhancement of street lighting, the facilitation of changes to the physical environment, engagement with those parents whose children are identified as being present during times when antisocial behaviour is witnessed via Police Scotland's / East Lothian Council's Parental Advisory Scheme, and the sharing of information with staff from Dunbar Grammar as to pupils identified as being present when antisocial behaviour is occurring. During the reporting period there was a marked reduction in the number of antisocial behaviour made to Police Scotland and East Lothian Council. In the last of the referred to PSPs, representatives from the local business community were instrumental in contributing to the efforts in reducing day-time antisocial behaviour occurring on the High Street.
- 3.5 The Council continues to fund four additional Police Constables to the value of £119 000 per annum. Three of the Officers constitute part of East Lothian's Community Action Team, with the remaining Officer imbedded within the Council's Safer Communities Team. The performance of the funded officers is monitored by the Antisocial Behaviour Overview Group.
- 3.6 An interrogation of antisocial complaints made to the Council during the reporting period shows a mild decrease from a figure of 607 received between 1 October 2017 and 31 March 2018 to 606 received during the respective period in 2018/2019.

- 3.7 Appendix 1 shows a graph containing a linear analysis of antisocial behaviour complaints made to East Lothian Council over the last seven financial years.
- 3.8 Of the 606 cases progressed during the reporting period, 269 related principally to noise with 114 being youth related. The remaining complaints consisted of, amongst other things, shouting, swearing, the issuing of threats, vandalism, fire-raising, aggression towards staff and drug and alcohol misuse. Many of the complaints received were multi-faceted. Around 6% of the complaints registered were made within the context of ongoing neighbour disputes. 187 of the 606 complaints were received from Musselburgh and the surrounding environs, 103 from Tranent, 104 from Dunbar, 74 from Prestonpans, 91 from Haddington and 47 from North Berwick.
- 3.9 Of the aggregate figure, 48 of the complaints were received from anonymous sources with 43 identifiable complainers making three or more calls during the reporting period.
- 3.10 The Council continues to raise legal proceedings against those engaged in the most serious and persistent forms of antisocial behaviour. There are currently 48 live Antisocial Behaviour Orders in East Lothian. There are currently five antisocial behaviour related eviction cases before Edinburgh Sheriff Court.
- 3.11 During the reporting period, East Lothian Council, with the support of Police Scotland, successfully applied for Antisocial Behaviour Orders in relation to five alleged members of an English based Serious and Organised Group operating within East Lothian. It was alleged that all five males were involved in targeting vulnerable local residents and that they were responsible for drug dealing, intimidation and acts of violence. All five are now prohibited from entering East Lothian.
- 3.12 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, the deployment of noise recording equipment and the making of referrals to East and Midlothian's 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). Since 1 August 2017, 317 referrals have been made to the Resolution Service.
- 3.13 In the Summer of 2019, Police Scotland and East Lothian Council will put out to public consultation their new three year Antisocial Behaviour Strategy. The emphasis will be on prevention, early intervention, joint agency working and the continued involvement of communities in finding solutions to problems that affect their neighbourhoods.

3.14 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.

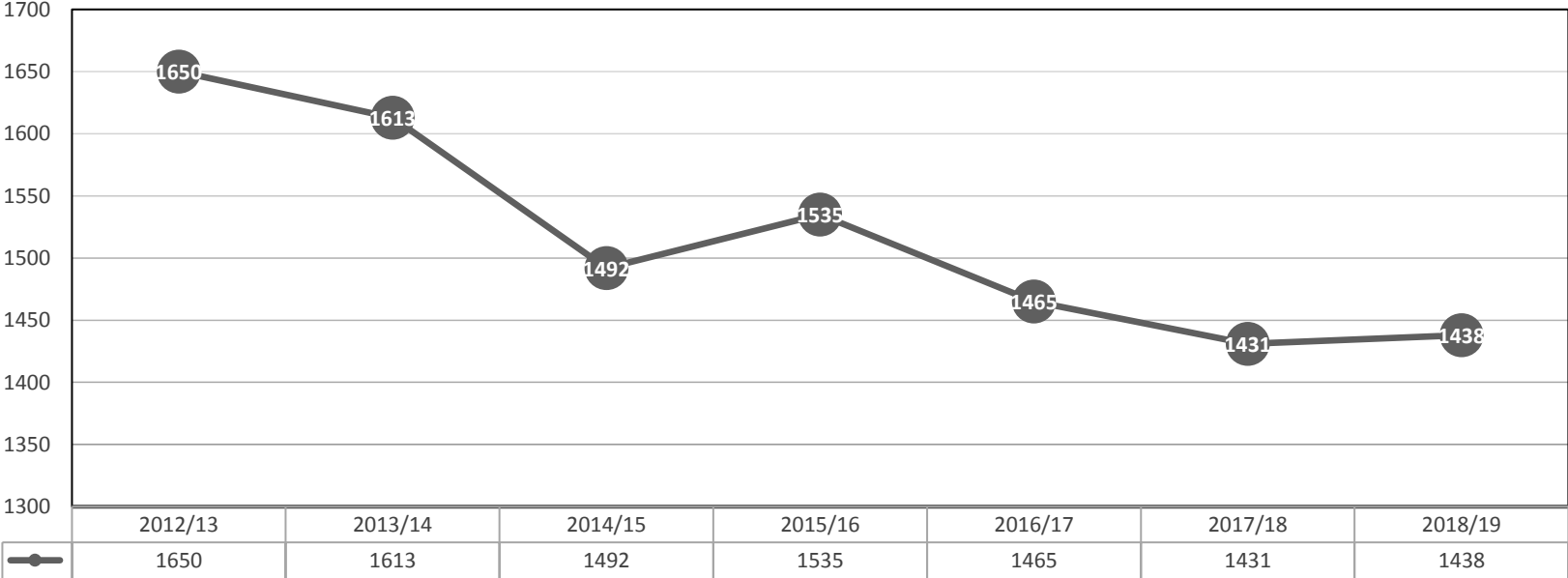
7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Graph – Antisocial Behaviour Complaints made to East Lothian Council 2012-2019.

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Appendix 1

Number of Antisocial Behaviour Complaints made to East Lothian Council



YEAR