

Classification: Public
Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Community and Leisure Cabinet Committee
Date: 26 September 2019
Reporting officer: Strategic Manager (Community Safety Unit)
Subject: Draft Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2019-23

Purpose and summary of the report:

This report provides Members with a proposed new corporate approach to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) contained within a draft ASB Strategy 2019-23. The Strategy has been developed to ensure that the Authority is as effective as possible in addressing the challenges presented by ASB which place considerable demands on many of our different service departments' resources. It provides a framework for dealing with ASB from preventative work through to enforcement in local neighbourhoods and our town centre as a means of achieving longer-term and sustainable improvements in quality of life.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- i) Consider and comment upon the content of the draft Strategy.

1. Background to the Strategy

- 1.1 Tackling ASB is one of the most important issues affecting our local area and the approach we choose to adopt for dealing with it has the potential to achieve real change in levels of ASB and people's perceptions of the Borough or to undermine the positive features of Gravesham that we want to promote. As the Local Authority, we deal with reports of a variety of forms of ASB on a daily basis yet whilst we have striven over a number of years to develop better joint working with external partner agencies (both statutory and voluntary) to try to address the issue, we have not developed as fully the coordination of our efforts and resources across our own departments.
- 1.2 The aim of the ASB Strategy is to drive forward a review of how we currently deal with ASB to identify where our responses are fragmented and how we can work more collaboratively across our service areas. This will mean we can make much more effective use of different knowledge, skills and expertise as well as the range of powers and tools available within different departments. Taking a more unified approach will not only make best use of our resources, it should also mean that we can respond more quickly and effectively when ASB is first reported and deliver better outcomes for the individuals and/or communities affected.

2. Broad basics of the Strategy

- 2.1 The Strategy has specifically been written with the intention that it can be a public-facing document as well as framework document for Council officers. It explains why addressing ASB is so important, the behaviours that fall with ASB which the Council can help to resolve and importantly, what we will not be able to investigate. Key legislative powers available to

the Council are explained and links to other local policies, in particular those to the draft new Corporate Plan 2019-23, are made.

- 2.2 The Strategy includes some contextual information in the form of recorded levels of ASB and data collated from local consultation processes.
- 2.3 The core of the Strategy is the suggested new approach which includes:
- Prevention and community involvement;
 - Early identification;
 - Supportive intervention;
 - Enforcement; and,
 - Communication and reassurance (cutting across each of the above).
- 2.4 It is suggested that departmental representatives form an ASB Strategy Delivery that will have a shared responsibility and have ownership of the creation of the Action Plan that will support the delivery of the Strategy. This will provide a mechanism by which performance can be regularly monitored and progress reported both internally and externally as appropriate and create lines of accountability.

Reference documents: Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: Anti-social behaviour powers – Statutory guidance for frontline professionals

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/823316/2019-08-05_ASB_Revised_Statutory_Guidance_V2.2.pdf

IMPLICATIONS	
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to work with partner agencies to address ASB (Crime and Disorder Act 1998). The Council also has the ability to use a range of legislative powers to tackle ASB e.g. those contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour, Policing and Crime Act 2014, Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005.
Finance and Value for Money	Additional financial resources to enable the full delivery of the proposed ASB Strategy are not yet identified as these will become clearer and would need to be approved once the Action Plan to support the Strategy is developed. Streamlining the way in which the Council works to tackle ASB should mean resources (staffing and other) are used more effectively, that problems are resolved much earlier and ultimately, costs reduced by preventing problems from escalating. Strengthening our enforcement capacity will require financial support but may generate some income and help deter ASB from recurring – generating savings in the longer term.
Risk assessment	Failure to deal effectively with ASB will reduce public confidence in the Local Authority's ability to support individuals and communities and allow negative perceptions of the Borough to continue and potentially worsen. Responding to ASB in an unstructured and disjointed way will serve to keep any positive impact at a minimum and makes improvements less sustainable long-term.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<i>A data protection impact assessment (OPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i>
	a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of <u>personal data</u> or <u>special category data</u> or <u>criminal offence data</u> ? No.
	b. If yes to question a., have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/a
	c. If no to question b., please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk
Equality Impact Assessment	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? No.
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? Yes – communities suffering higher levels of ASB frequently also have higher levels of deprivation – improving services to respond to ASB will make a positive contribution to quality of life.
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>
Corporate Business Plan	The Strategy makes a direct contribution to addressing a significant number of the commitments contained within the draft new Corporate Plan 2019-23.
Crime and Disorder	s.17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – as mentioned above - tackling ASB is a corporate and Community Safety Partnership priority.
Digital/website website implications	Communications and Reassurance is a fundamental part of the proposed Strategy. It is anticipated that, subject to approval and the development of a supporting Action Plan, there will be a wish to increase the information, support and assistance available to people experiencing ASB on the Council's website.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	The safeguarding of vulnerable young people and adults is a high priority for the Council and partner agencies. Victims of ASB who have personal characteristics that mean they are more vulnerable to victimisation will receive more tailored support and assistance to protect them from future harm.