

TITLE OF REPORT: ITEM REFERRED FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 9 DECEMBER 2014 – THE COMMUNITY TRIGGER – ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

The following is an extract from the Draft Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 December 2014.

54. THE COMMUNITY TRIGGER – ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

The Acting Head of Housing and Public Protection presented the report entitled The Community Trigger – Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and drew attention to the following:

Corrections to the Report

Paragraphs 2.2 and 8.8 – The words “North Hertfordshire Community Safety Partnership” to replace the words “Responsible Authorities Group” in both Paragraphs.

Paragraph 7.2

The current Government had committed to reform of the methods for dealing with anti-social behaviour, which had resulted in the passing of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This included new tools and powers which replaced the existing provisions.

Paragraph 7.3

The community trigger aimed to be a safety net for the most vulnerable in the community enabling victims to ask for a case review.

The Act specified relevant bodies responsible for making arrangements to carry out ASB case reviews. These were the District Council, the Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups and local social housing providers, who will be co-opted onto this group.

Paragraph 7.5

The Act provided a statutory framework for ASB case reviews, although allowed some discretion amongst agencies to agree local processes and procedures.

Section 8

The key issues to be considered regarding the Community Trigger in North Hertfordshire were what the trigger should be, the involvement of local social housing providers and the arrangements for responding to applications for ASB case reviews.

The recommendations contained in the report had regard to trials of the community trigger in five areas, which were overseen by the Home Office.

North Hertfordshire had a generally low incidence of anti-social behaviour, high customer satisfaction with existing procedures for dealing with ASB and a strong community partnership which was overseen by the Responsible Authorities Group.

Members asked several questions including why was North Herts Homes the only social housing provider involved in any review, how individual complainants would be aware of other complainants and whether there was a time limit for case reviews to be undertaken. Members queried whether the number of complaints would likely increase, whether there was an appeals procedure and whether details of the Community Trigger and how to complain would be published.

The Acting Head of Housing and Public Protection informed Members that, having consulted with other social housing providers they were happy that North Hertfordshire Homes representing them in case reviews and in respect of time limits, Officers were still developing detailed procedures. He suggested that it was unlikely that the number of complaints would vastly increase and that details about the Community trigger and how to complain would be published on the website, with a press release also being issued. He advised that, if an applicant was not happy with the outcome following a case review, they had a right to appeal to the Responsible Authorities Group.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer advised that a joint database was held and that the Officers had a duty to be aware of complaints.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

(1) That Cabinet adopt the following as the community trigger for North Hertfordshire:

“Three reports from an individual about separate incidents within a six month period or three individuals have separately reported anti-social behaviour within a six month period”;

(2) That Cabinet approves the North Hertfordshire Homes Co-option onto the North Hertfordshire Community Safety Partnership with statutory responsibility for conducting anti-social behaviour case reviews;

(3) That the Head of Housing and Public Protection be delegated responsibility to approve the case review procedures, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder;

(4) That the Head of Housing and Public Protection be delegated responsibility to represent the Council in relation to any case review applications.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the report entitled “The Community Trigger – Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014”, prior to consideration by Cabinet on 16 December 2014.

[NOTE: The report to which this referral relates is Item 11 on this agenda.]