



CABINET

Subject Heading:

Housing Services – Anti-Social Behaviour Policy (2024)

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Paul McGeary – Cabinet Member for Housing and Property

ELT Lead:

Neil Stubbings, Strategic Director, Place

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

This report sets out the Council's policy in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour in relation to Council tenants and leaseholders.

It aligns with other Council policies, such as Domestic Abuse (2024) and Hate Crime (2024).

It is required to be a stand-alone policy by the Social Housing Regulator.

Financial summary:

No financial implications.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes, because it will have a significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed? Annually, to ensure it continues to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements.

Reviewing OSC: To be reviewed by the O&S Board.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	<input type="checkbox"/>
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 requires local housing authorities, as social landlords, to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as:

- (a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm, or distress, to any person;
- (b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; or
- (c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Most people care deeply about the neighbourhood and community in which they live. Many play an active part in making their neighbourhood a more pleasant place to live.

This policy fulfils a legal requirement for the Council to publish an ASB policy.

This policy is designed to give a clear statement on the Council's approach to ASB, and the way it works with residents and expert, partner organisations, to address it within the Council's housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The reputation of the Council would benefit from clearly stating and communicating its position concerning ASB; defining the consequences for perpetrators and the support available to victims and witnesses.

Cabinet are asked to approve the policy.

REPORT DETAIL

This new Housing-specific policy explains:

1. The purpose, aims, scope and legal context of the policy;
2. Defines the term 'Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)';
3. Our approach to tackling ASB;
4. The obligations of tenants and leaseholders;
5. How we protect our staff and appointed representatives (e.g. external contractors);
6. Sets out the remedial actions currently available to the Council and the consequences for perpetrators;
7. Sets out the support currently available to victims and witnesses;
8. The support available to our staff and appointed representatives.

The proposed policy - produced in partnership with a range of internal and external expert partners - is set out in full in Appendix 1.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision:

- We have a public service obligation to Havering residents who expect and deserve to live in a better, safer borough;
- This policy is a requirement by the Social Housing Regulator;
- Having a robust policy in place is recognised as good practice;
- It assures the public that we take ASB seriously; people should not feel reluctant or afraid to report it to us and that we have robust mechanisms in place to help combat ASB in Havering;

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- It informs victims and witnesses about the various support measures currently available.

Other options considered:

- **No action**
The continuing presence of ASB in Havering cannot be ignored. Saying nothing and not having a robust policy in place does not help combat the problem and presents the Council in a poor/weak light. It also makes victims and witnesses feel that we do not take such crime seriously.
- **Allow councillors to represent their views in the absence of Council-agreed guidance**
The lack of an up-to-date policy would expose councillors and the Council to unnecessary and avoidable challenge, such as via resident complaints, FOI requests, press enquiries, etc., and could impact adversely on the reputation of the Council.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None. This policy will be delivered using existing financial resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population.

Legal implications and risks:

Section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) requires local housing authorities, as social landlords, to prepare and publish policies and procedures in relation to ASB in the following documents:

- A Statement of Policies and Procedures on ASB
- A summary of current policies and procedures on ASB.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None. This policy will be delivered using existing HR resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population.

IT implications and risks:

None. This policy will be delivered using existing I.T. resources and will pose no risk to the Council or the population.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion implications and risks:

This policy does not differentiate and applies equally across the entire population, as stated in Section 8 (Equal Opportunities statement) of this policy and further detailed in the accompanying Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Wellbeing implications and risks:

None. This policy could, if anything, help to improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents by helping to create a better, safer environment.

Environmental and Climate Change implications and risks:

None. There will not be an impact on climate change. This policy could, if anything, help to improve the living environment of residents.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.