

# Policy

Title: **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Date of Issue: December 2009

Issue Number: 2.0

Date of next review: December 2012

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Service Area applies to: Housing Services

Approved By: Customer Services Committee

Electronic Storage: Sharelt / Published Documents

A policy should be a short statement which describes in general terms or objectives what a service area's principles and key objectives are on a particular subject and should be no longer than a 2 pages in length. The aim of the policy is to give practical effect of the strategy it supports.

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## Introduction

Halton Housing Trust (the Trust) is committed to providing safe homes and communities. To achieve this it will encourage all within the community to treat each other with respect and will work with our customers, stakeholders, statutory and voluntary organisations to achieve this outcome.

Occasionally individuals act anti-socially which can cause alarm distress and harassment to other customers and the wider community. The Trust believes that Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is not acceptable and will take all reasonable steps to tackle both the causes and effect of anti-social behaviour and promote positive behaviour for the benefit of all customers and the local community

## Aims / Objectives

The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy will use the Respect Standard of Housing Management as the primary tool to achieve the aim and objectives. The Respect Standard has a wider aim than tackling ongoing anti-social behaviour, to develop an environment which encourages positive behaviour and community tolerance and cohesion.

Through targeted action the Trust will support all our customers in the following:

- To maintain customers right to their chosen lifestyle but this must not interfere with the quality of life of others.
- To achieve tolerance and respect for the needs of others.
- To strive to make sure all customers enjoy peaceful possession of their home.
- To challenge and rectify inappropriate behaviour by the use of sanction and support as appropriate

## Scope

The aim of the policy is to meet the Trust's wider commitment to our customers to deal with anti-social behaviour while also working to promote positive behaviour and a climate of respect

## Policy Statement

### Definitions and Examples

The term 'anti-social behaviour' (ASB) can cover many different types of behaviour.

For the purposes of this policy, the Trust accepts working definitions of anti-social behaviour as being '*conduct which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and directly or indirectly impacts on the housing management functions of the Trust*'; as well as '*conduct which consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by the Trust for an unlawful purpose*'. An

alternative definition that is equally acceptable to the Trust is *'conduct that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not in the same household'*.

As well as anti-social behaviour the following need to be considered as part of the policy statement:

- Nuisance – This term also covers behaviour that unreasonably interferes with other people's right to the use and enjoyment of their home and community; e.g. playing loud music late at night.
- Harassment – This involves verbal or physical behaviour that intimidates, dominates or harms an individual, a family or a group.
- Hate Crime – is seen as behaviour which involves verbal or physical behaviour that intimidates dominates or harms an individual, a family or a group and is motivated by prejudice on the grounds of age, disability, gender (including transsexuals) religion & beliefs or sexual orientation.

The Trust considers the following list to be examples of anti-social behaviour, although it recognises the examples listed below are not exhaustive or exclusive:-

- noise nuisance – e.g. loud parties, shouting, excessive noise from TV's, hi-fi, machinery and vehicles;
- all forms of intimidation and harassment including hate behaviour that targets members of identified groups because of their perceived differences
- aggressive or threatening language and behaviour, or the threat of violence;
- actual violence against people or property;
- using homes to sell drugs or for other unlawful purposes
- environmental factors, such as litter, dog fouling, graffiti, fly tipping,
- misuse of property and nuisance from vehicles

## **Respect Standard for Housing Management**

The Trust is committed to dealing with anti-social behaviour and encouraging respect within the community. The Trust aims to make the community pleasant and secure places to live in. This will be achieved by meeting the six core commitments of the Respect Standard of Housing Management. The following sections show how the Trust will work to try to meet each of the six core commitments.

### Commitment 1: Accountability, Leadership and Commitment

The Trust is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour and promoting positive behaviour in all the areas it provides a service. To meet this commitment the Trust has expanded the service to more effectively deal with ASB, including:

- Trained Housing Officers and Customer Service Team to investigate initial complaints of ASB.
- Joint funding of Police Community Support Workers to provide additional presence in the local community and support to the Trust to tackle ASB.
- A specialised team of ASB Officers to deal with serious cases of ASB which is supported by the Trust's legal team
- Information and training to all staff and board members to re-enforce understanding of their wider responsibility on behalf of the Trust to have a positive impact on behaviour within the community.
- Understanding and seeking out best practice and adopt new approaches by the following:
  - attendance at training sessions, conferences and seminars
  - networking with colleagues in other similar organisations and Environments
  - making use of best practice and government sponsored web sites to understand and adopt best practice
  - make use of relevant manuals and periodicals to achieve best practice

In tackling ASB the Trust understands the importance of ensuring staff, customer representatives and voluntary workers can deliver their functions free from abuse and inappropriate behaviour. The Trust provides full support to staff and others and has a zero tolerance towards inappropriate behaviour. If abuse occurs the Trust will take appropriate action including legal action as appropriate to stop this abuse and behaviour

The Trust understands that it can not resolve issues of Anti-social Behaviour alone and needs to co-operate with other agencies to deal effectively with this process. The Trust is an active partner with other agencies at a strategic and operational levels to resolve these issues, these include:

- Multi agency meetings (involving Police, Social Services, Education and other agencies to discuss individual cases of ASB)
- Housing Partnership Meetings (involving Halton BC & other local RSLs)
- Local Management Review Meetings
- Task and Co-ordination Meetings (involving the Police, Youth and Community Services to direct action to tackle hotspot locations )
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (Strategic meetings to tackle crime and ASB)
- Youth Involvement Support Panel ( Meetings aimed at supporting young people to prevent them ending up in the criminal justice system)
- Partnership arrangements with local schools

### Commitment 2: Empowering and Reassuring Customers

The Trust is committed to involving customers in effectively managing anti-social behaviour within the community and understands the primary role of customers to help manage and direct the service. To achieve this aim the Trust will work in partnership with customers and other agencies, seeking their views and priorities and effectively responding and acting on their concerns.

As well as using the customer involvement policy and strategy additionally the following action will be taken to enhance customer involvement:

- Developing and publicising the process for communities to be involved in Good Neighbour Agreements so that local standards of conduct can be developed, agreed and maintained.
- Undertaking publicised estate walkabouts which sets out local standards to be maintained and enable customers to identify and target action on ASB and wider environmental concerns.

The Trust will work to engage harder to reach groups such as local BME populations and young people.

The Trust will also consider using a range of diversionary activities to try to lessen the occurrence of certain types of anti-social behaviour. For example, to help engage and work with young people the Trust will work independently or with partner agencies to provide constructive and purposeful activities (e.g. volunteering, community clean ups, sports and the arts and activities during school holidays). Part of this approach by the Trust will aim to bridge the generational gap which can sometimes exist between communities and generations and help to use its influence to resolve local issues that generate tensions within a neighbourhood.

The Trust will keep all customers informed of action to deal with anti-social behaviour and also to promote and re-enforce positive behaviour in the community. The Trusts will use its newsletter to provide details of specific action taken on behalf of customers and also general information on ASB, crime reduction and community safety.

Where the Trust has taken successful enforcement action to tackle ASB, if appropriate, this will be publicised to the local community for information, reassurance and monitoring. The Trust will publicise any successful legal action via its own publications and the local media as appropriate to emphasise its stance on such matters. The Trust will always ensure that any information given to the media is fair and accurate and is not detrimental or harmful to children. Positive work within the community will also be publicised.

The Trust appreciates that publication of successful action against anti-social behaviour can be seen as a powerful deterrent to future problems occurring within the wider community. It can be used to highlight the consequences to those people whose behaviour causes nuisance and distress to others. It can also show the wider community that action will be taken against those who cause anti-social behaviour, and could encourage people to come forward with evidence that in turn could lead to further successful legal action.

The Trust understands that in the multi tenure environment where it provides its services, it has to work with other statutory and voluntary agencies to reach and respond to the needs of all customers. It will work with all partner agencies to improve services for the community and where appropriate it will develop wider links to encourage community capacity building and community cohesion (e.g. facilitating projects to foster inter-generational understanding or community).

The Trust will provide budgets to support groups and activities that reward positive 'community minded' behaviour and activities which support individuals to address and amend inappropriate behaviour (e.g. sponsoring activities for young people who contribute to the community). The Trust will also consider working with others and celebrating customers who have 'taken a stand' and give support to action to tackle anti-social behaviour).

To obtain feedback from customers on the quality of the service provided the Trust undertakes satisfaction surveys on all closed cases of ASB. This information is used to measure and improve the service we offer to the community.

### Commitment 3: Prevention and Early Intervention

The Trust understands that early intervention can help tackle and prevent an escalation of ASB and that prevention needs to begin before the customer takes on the tenancy

When an application for housing is received, if there is evidence of anti-social behaviour, the Trust may in certain circumstances exclude individuals from its waiting list for a fixed period of time. (See the Trust's Meeting Housing Need and Access to Housing Policy.) The Trust will also use the application process to consider if customers require additional support to help maintain their tenancy and to reduce any likelihood of ASB

The Trust will demonstrate to all current and new customers that it will not tolerate acts of serious anti-social behaviour or nuisance. By signing the Trust's tenancy agreement and by the Trust publicising this policy and firmly and professionally implementing it, all customers will be aware that they are personally responsible for acts of nuisance and crime committed in and around the locality of their home. This responsibility will extend to other members of their household and to visitors to their property.

When a customer signs for a new tenancy the Trust will explain clearly our policy for promoting positive behaviour and steps to prevent and tackle ASB. The tenancy used by the Trust clearly specifies the customer's responsibility. These responsibilities and rights will be fully explained during the sign-up interview for each new tenancy with the Trust. A customer handbook and a neighbour nuisance leaflet will be provided; and the Trust's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy will be explained in detail together with the standards of behaviour that will be expected from customers. Prior to taking on a tenancy the Trust will also undertake an assessment of any support needs that may be identified and will signpost or provide the support to our customers as necessary.

Any new customer of the Trust will be asked to sign an assured shorthold – 'starter' – tenancy which will initially last for 12 months. This allows the Trust, where necessary, to take action quickly against anti-social behaviour being committed by new tenants. Support and action will continue with the post tenancy visits - initially at four weeks and then at 6 and 9 months. These will be used to both identify and provide any support needs that the customer has and also to tackle any ASB issues that may have arisen.

Upon receipt of any complaint of anti-social behaviour the Trust will try to resolve the problem at the earliest opportunity. It will do this through early contact with both the complainant and perpetrator and will follow up with information and action to resolve the problem. If there is evidence of ASB, clear warnings will be given detailing potential action to be taken and confirming action taken in the past in similar circumstances

The Trust will encourage the use of independent mediation as this can be an effective tool to tackle anti-social behaviour, especially when used at an early stage following the receipt of a complaint. When any report of anti-social behaviour is received and where appropriate, the investigating officer will offer both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator the opportunity to use an independent mediation service. This can often lead to an early and effective resolution to complaints.

The Trust recognises that early intervention to deal with ASB will resolve most cases at this early stage. As well as the action detailed above to successfully manage ASB the

Trust will use Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Parenting Contracts. These will be linked to provision of support where appropriate

The environment can often have an impact on the incidences and type of ASB and to help reduce ASB and promote positive behaviour the Trust will consider improvements that alter the layout estates or provide additional security facilities that design out anti-social behaviour. The Trust will consider funding some works itself for design improvements to tackle anti-social behaviour. For example, through its maintenance and environmental improvement programmes it may upgrade door entry systems to blocks of flats, provide additional lighting to footpaths / garage sites and additional security measures in customers' homes such as secure letter boxes. The Trust will also look to other sources of potential funding for such works, including the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Community Safety funding. The Trust will also consider involving Halton BC and the Police with environmental gating schemes, security lightning, natural barriers and additional fencing.

The Trust will take swift action on environmental damage (e.g. rapid removal of offensive graffiti and clearance of fly tipping) to give a strong signal that action will be taken. This will be backed up by estate walkabouts to ensure that the environment is effectively managed

The Trust realises that it doesn't work in isolation and is part of the wider community in Halton. It also appreciates that some anti-social behaviour issues can be very complex and it is unlikely that the solution will lie solely within the remit of any one organisation. Prior to any allocation the Trust will share information when making/accepting nominations to identify any issues with past behaviour and establishing support needs

The Trust will work closely with its partners, in particular the Police and Halton Borough Council. It will work with the Council's Community Safety Team and the Safer Halton Partnership where appropriate and will contribute in the preparation and effective implementation of Halton's Crime and Disorder Strategy when required.

The Trust believes that the Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP) meetings in Halton are essential for successful partnership working to prevent and resolve ASB. These meetings enable a co-ordinated approach by specialist agencies - including the Police, Youth Offending Team, Education, Social Services, Probation and other Housing Associations active in Halton - to provide perpetrators of anti-social behaviour with the support to prevent and tackle ASB. This co-ordinated intervention may assist the Trust to resolve the issue(s) without taking legal action in relation to anti-social behaviour and help the perpetrator with their problems. The Trust will also work with partners at all levels to highlight and identify antisocial behaviour hotspots and areas where incidents appear to be emerging; and will actively contribute to the delivery of tailored strategies to address these problems.

The Trust is committed to the joint funding of Police Community Support Officers to provide a visible presence within the community. They will provide reassurance to customers, act as a deterrent to ASB and help with evidence gathering to tackle ongoing ASB problems.

#### Commitment 4: Tailored Services For Residents And Provision Of Support For Victims & Witnesses

When taking any action regarding ASB, the Trust will work closely with witnesses supporting them throughout the process of action on ASB. This will include maintaining

regular contact and providing protection and security where necessary. Successful action to tackle ASB rests on our customers coming forward to provide information and evidence. This often requires courage and we will look to provide all support necessary to assist such customers. The support needs to take account of individual needs within our overall approach to support to customers. Trust staff will support complainants by dealing with all complaints promptly, keeping the complainant informed of any developments regarding their complaint and being sympathetic towards any problems they raise.

The Trust's policy encourages the reporting of anti-social behaviour and reports will be accepted in any form, including by telephone, letter, in person, e-mail and via a third party including anonymous complaints. The Trust allows customers to report ASB 24/7 via an out of hours phone service and a web-based service Therefore the service is sensitive to the various needs of the customers.

The support process for those affected by anti-social behaviour will start at the receipt of the initial report. The Trust will make early and prompt contact with all parties affected by anti-social behaviour. The Trust will use other achievable but challenging deadlines for each key stage of the process and will agree appropriate action with the complainant. On occasions where deadlines cannot be met, explanations will be given as soon as possible. To meet the needs of customers all staff throughout the organisation will be helpful, courteous and sensitive to the stress reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour often involves. All staff will be trained and understand the procedures to be followed when receiving an ASB complaint.

At the initial contact, Trust staff will explain what action can be taken to deal with the complaint, the options available to resolve the problems and what support can be provided to the individual and the local community. The initial contact will also gather information which may be used as evidence to justify or disprove the allegations. The Trust will use a variety of measures to obtain information during investigations including diary sheets. When undertaking any investigation the Trust will ensure that it is clearly focused on the outcome involving the customer in this process with clear timetables for further action, resolution or closure of the case

Throughout the process of dealing with a complaint, the Trust will maintain regular contact with the complainant and any witnesses so that the fear and isolation of customers at a stressful time is minimised. This will include informing them of any action taken to date and proposed future action in the case. Additional support and information will be provided at key stages later in the process; including the service of any relevant Notice to Seek Possession, and any Possession or other Court action.

If a case goes to Court extra support will be offered including pre-court visits, transport to and from Court, and a Trust Officer being in attendance throughout the hearing.

When working with witness and complainants the Trust will carry out a risk assessment and consider the following issues, working with other agencies where necessary including

- carrying out full assessments of the support needs of individuals who report anti-social behaviour and/or agree to provide evidence/act as witnesses.
- systematically supporting victims either directly or in conjunction with specialist cares and support agencies (e.g., witness support services and networks).
- prompt deployment of reassurance measures where appropriate including regular patrols and (housing officers, wardens, police etc),visits, provision of personal alarms and CCTV systems

- focus on ‘target hardening’ – (e.g. fire proof letter boxes and wide angle spy holes) liaising with Crime Prevention services as necessary.
- liaison with court services to minimise the stresses of a hearing support will continue after the resolution of legal action or other measures dependant on the needs of each customer. The Trust will also provide support for customers who are the victims of actions of others who are not customers of the Trust.

The Trust will engage the services of Halton Community Support Witness Support service and will make contributions to the expansion of the service.

In order to try to deal with such cases more effectively, the Trust has also developed separate detailed Harassment and Hate Crime, Domestic Violence and Relationship Breakdown policies which are intended to complement this policy.

#### Commitment 5: Protecting Communities through Swift Enforcement

If problems persist, the Trust will use the legal powers that are available, including:

- obtaining injunctions,
- taking possession action,
- demoting tenancies, and
- obtaining anti-social behaviour orders.

The Trust has and will make use of the range of tools that are available to tackle ASB, The Trust will use these as quickly and effectively as possible to protect customers and the community ensuring that the most appropriate tool is used and that it does not have a one size fits all approach.

If the Trust is satisfied that there is a justifiable complaint and the perpetrator has not improved their behaviour, then legal action to resolve the anti-social behaviour or nuisance will be considered. In deciding what legal action to take the Trust will consider the nature of the complaint, the degree of any co-operation from the perpetrator, the involvement of other agencies and the wishes of the complainant.

Court action will always be seen as a last resort with eviction as the final step.

The Trust will always try to resolve any anti-social behaviour or nuisance issues prior to instigating Court action. As well as taking action independently, the Trust will also consider taking legal action in partnership with other agencies. The Trust will use all the existing powers available to them and will adapt their approach in response to legislative changes and best practice

The types of legal powers that can be used will include:-

- Possession Action – Using powers available to the Trust under the Housing Act 1988, action will be taken to seek eviction of a customer in cases of serious anti-social behaviour. The Trust will serve the appropriate Notice and apply to Court for possession. The outcome of the Court action may lead to the eviction of a customer for causing nuisance.
- Injunctions – These may be used to prohibit behaviour capable of causing nuisance or annoyance which directly or indirectly affects the Trust’s housing management function. This could include improper use of Trust properties and breaches of conditions of tenancies. The Trust may even consider asking for the

- power of arrest to be attached to some injunctions, particularly where there is threatened or actual violence.
- Demotion of Tenancy – In certain cases the Trust may apply for a Demotion Order in the County Court. If granted, such an order demotes a customer from an assured tenancy to a less secure one for a year. This would make it easier for the Trust to obtain possession should the customer continue to act anti-socially.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders – Under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, the Police or the Trust can seek an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) against anyone over the age of 10 who has acted in an anti-social manner and where people need to be protected from further anti-social acts. These are granted in the Magistrates Court and last for a minimum of 2 years. Breach of an order can lead to imprisonment for up to 5 years.
- Closure of Premises (where drugs are used unlawfully) – A Senior Police Officer can issue a Closure Notice on any property where there are reasonable grounds for believing that over the past 3 months the premises have been used in connection with the unlawful use, production and supply of a Class A controlled drug, and this has led to disorder and serious nuisance to the public. Once the Notice has been served an application can be made to the Magistrates Court to grant a Closure Order on the premises for up to 3 months.
- Abatement Notices – Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the Council's Environmental Health Department may take proceedings upon anyone causing a statutory nuisance if they have served a notice on them. The Trust would work with Environmental Health Officers and support such action if it considered one of its customers is doing something prejudicial to the health of or is committing acts that are a nuisance to their neighbours. Examples could include concerns about the condition of the property generally, or because of an unacceptable accumulation of rubbish and repetitive loud noise.

When using the powers available the Trust aim is always to resolve the nuisance and stop the behaviour rather than to move the problem elsewhere. The Trust will consider action to retain the customer in their home, having clear procedures in place to minimise the use of eviction, through the use of other tools to tackle anti-social behaviour in situ (e.g. injunctions etc). When taking legal action the Trust will robustly verify the evidence to ensure that the action it takes is the most appropriate.

However there are occasions when swift action is needed to stop ASB and reassure the community. In these circumstances robust case management procedures will be put in place which enable fast-tracking of legal action where required (e.g., systems which facilitate pursuing interim injunctions at short notice and enforcement of breaches).

The Trust will use a wide variety of sources to gather evidence including:

- customers diary sheets and statements
- video and audio evidence
- professional witnesses both directly employed by the Trust and/or from other agencies
- PCSO statements and evidence
- Police statements and information from criminal proceedings

The Trust sets clear standards of behaviour for customers and this is communicated and monitored by:

- the Tenancy Agreement with clear rights and responsibilities for both the tenant and landlord;
- a Customer Handbook which also provides detailed information on the expectations of customers;
- a suite of information leaflets that have been produced which cover various aspects of estate and tenancy management which reiterate expected standards;
- ensuring that ASB and related policies and procedures are understood and used effectively by employees, with regular reviews and updating to meet best practice and legislative changes;
- ongoing monitoring of the Trust's estates by Housing Officers who will challenge inappropriate behaviour complimented by a programme of customer-led Estate Walkabouts to maintain standards;
- taking action to deal with issues affecting standards, such as fly tipping, abandoned cars etc.

Having taken legal action to tackle ASB the Trust will continue to monitor the case to ensure that there are no breaches of any orders, this monitoring will include:

- ensuring that all agencies are informed of the details of any order granted to the Trust and the consequences of any breach by publicising the information at the Multi Agency Meetings;
- attendance at local task and co-ordination meetings to highlight cases with the local Police;
- Ensuring that HHT joint-funded PCSOs are aware of the cases for active monitoring;
- Using the links with the Court to ensure any breach can be quickly tackled by taking further legal action

#### Commitment 6: Support to Tackle the Causes of Anti-Social Behaviour

The Trust is aware that on occasions there can be difficulties for vulnerable customers in maintaining their tenancies and their behaviour may cause nuisance to others. In such circumstances, the Trust will endeavour to establish the needs of the individual. At initial interview with the alleged perpetrator the Trust will ascertain if there are support needs which can be identified and addressed. The support needs identified will be tailored to the individual and can include the following:

- Substance Misuse – Referrals by Trust staff could be made to local substance misuse services based at Ashley House.
- Mental Health and Disability – If there are concerns that mental health or disability issues are having an impact on the perpetrator's behaviour, a referral will be made to Social Services using the Customer Service contact point in either Runcorn or Widnes as appropriate.
- Young People – When dealing with anti-social behaviour complaints caused by youths or children, it can be important to provide support where appropriate as part of the process of investigation/resolution. This can often be achieved by working in partnership with other agencies. If there are problems with young people, the officer investigating the case may make a referral to the Connexions Service or the Youth Offending Team or refer a case to the Youth Inclusion Support Panel.

- Parenting - If there are concerns regarding parenting then the Trust can contact the Halton ASB Parenting Practitioner or the ASB floating support worker as part
- of Halton BC Family Intervention Project. Where the investigating officer has concerns about younger children, they may also refer the family to Social Services via the Customer Service contact point in either Runcorn or Widnes.
- Community support and intervention - For example via Kool Down Plus.

The Trust has clear procedures on dealing with vulnerable customers and it is important that any needs which support perpetrators is identified at initial contact following a complaint and this is reviewed and updated with ongoing monitoring of the case. Any change in circumstances or any new action will be used to trigger a reassessment of support needs.

The Trust will look to use orders available from the courts as part of the effective management of ASB. The Trust will consider any support or treatment orders that are included with orders and can include Parenting Orders, Individual Support Orders & Intervention Orders.

If needs are identified and support offered there is an expectation that customers will engage with the Trust. If there is no engagement the Trust will continue with the next action, including legal action as appropriate.

Following intervention the Trust will ensure that reasonable time is given for the intervention to be successful. However if the anti-social behaviour continues the Trust will not allow the ongoing support prevent taking enforcement action. It is important to remember that when dealing with ASB that the Trust balances the need of an individual against the wider community

The Trust appreciates that it is unable to resolve all anti-social behaviour issues by itself. Effective action is often taken by working in partnership with other agencies. An information exchange protocol will be sought which enables the passage of information between agencies. Partner action will be taken with individual agencies such as the Police and Social Services. This is enhanced by regular liaison between with all agencies involved in action on anti-social behaviour. Monthly meetings will enable action on individual areas and the development of a strategy to tackle and prevent anti-social behaviour within the community.

## **Responsibility**

Ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation and monitoring the use of this policy will lie with the Director of Customer Services.

Day to day responsibility for implementing and monitoring the policy will lie with the Area Manager (Runcorn)

## **Service Standards**

The following service standards are applicable to the anti-social procedure which is linked to the policy

- From the initial receipt of a complaint the customer should be interviewed within:
  - 24 hours for a hate crime case or case involving violence
  - 5 working days for all other cases.
- Following from the initial interview with the complainant the perpetrator will be interviewed within 5 working days.
- After the initial investigation the complainant will be contacted within 20 working days with an update and proposed further action.
- Where the case is being dealt with by a Housing Officer, and if after 6 weeks no further complaints are received, the case will be closed and all parties will be advised accordingly.
- Where the case is being dealt with by an Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, and if after 3 months no further complaints are received, the case will be closed and all parties will be advised accordingly.
- An 80 % satisfaction level is expected to be achieved at the conclusion of the ASB case.

## **Performance Measures / Monitoring**

To ensure that the Trust is taking the most effective action to resolve ASB it uses Academy system's Customer Services Module (CSM) for the recording, management and monitoring of individual cases.

The Performance Management system will monitor the following:

- Types and location of ASB
- Age, sex and ethnicity of perpetrator and complainant
- Action taken to resolve ASB
- Most successful action prior to resolution
- Costs of provision of service to tackle ASB

The Trust has set up an ASB Focus Group as another way to manage performance in this area. This group meets on a quarterly basis and consists of representatives from the Area Housing teams & ASB teams to monitor :

- Customer service satisfaction
- ASB Housemark Benchmarking
- Performance management
- Case audit
- Service Improvements

To enable effective wider benchmarking the Trust uses the Housemark ASB benchmarking service as a management tool to monitor ongoing service, benchmarking and to feed into a broader review of services.

With these various approaches the Trust is able to monitor effective action and target resources in the most effective way to provide value for money for the organisation and its customers.

## Consultation arrangements

Customers views on this procedure have been sought in the following ways:

- Customer Questionnaire - A customer questionnaire was sent to all customers on the customer panel to seek their views on ASB and how the Trust should tackle the problem. They were also invited to be part of a customer focus group to discuss the issue.
- Customer panel - During the development of the policy consultation took place with a customer panel set up following the initial customer questionnaire

## Benchmark Analysis

The Trust is a member of the following organisations:

- Social Landlords Crime & Nuisance Group
- Housemark ASB Benchmarking Group
- Halton RSLs ASB group

It has used these organisations to benchmark its service and has also used best practice available as a signatory to the Respect Standard of Housing Management

## Regulatory and/or Legal Compliance

The Trust's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and its associated procedures are compatible with obligations imposed by existing legislation, including:-

- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003;
- Housing Act 1985 (as amended by the Housing Act 1996);
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- Police Reform Act 2002;
- Local Government Act 2000;
- Homelessness Act 2002;
- Protection from Eviction Act 1997;
- Children Act 1989;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice on Rented Housing 1991.

## KLOEs affected

The policy links directly with the Audit Commission's KLOE on Tenancy and Estate Management. Although the whole of this KLOE will impact on the policy, there is a direct link to section 6.4 - Enforcing tenancy conditions and dealing with anti-social behaviour, and this has been taken into account when the policy was developed.

## **Equality and Diversity Considerations**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy. It concluded the following :

- The policy is not directly or indirectly discriminatory
- The policy increases equality of opportunity by permitting or requiring positive action or action to redress disadvantages
- An action plan has been developed which can be adopted that will further enhance the equality of opportunity in the context of this policy.

## **Links to Strategies, Procedures and Associated Documents**

Harassment and Hate Crime Policy & Procedure  
Relationship Breakdown Policy  
Domestic Abuse Policy

## **Business Impact**

It is not expected that this policy will have a direct impact on the Trust's Business Plan. However effective action taken via this policy may have a positive impact on its business activities in general. By effectively dealing with ASB this will help sustain tenancies and therefore communities . With sustained tenancies it is expected that the Trust will have lower void costs and rent loss which will increase revenue and reduce the Trusts costs. This will also have a less tangible but positive impact of improving satisfaction with the Trusts' homes and the communities it serves.

## **Self Assessment Compliance Statement (SACS) Considerations**

The revision of this policy will have a positive impact on achieving SACS-111.1 taking a lead role in the co-ordination of a borough wide approach to dealing with ASB