

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 11th June 2024

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Enforcement Team overview, including annual Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review update.

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide Members with a summary of the work conducted by the Enforcement Team.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That Members note the content of the report and comment on any key matters.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In September 2023, the Board received an update report on the Enforcement Teams progress since July 2023 when the Enforcement Team Manager came into post. The team currently covers anti-social behaviour, environmental crime, waste, and CCTV. This report provides an overview of the teams including an annual update on the Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review.

3.2 Anti-Social Behaviour

Since September 2023, the service has continued to embed improved working practices with partner agencies and adapt to respond to the needs of the community. The service continues to respond to referrals from partner agencies by providing support to those experiencing anti-social behaviour, this support includes:

1. Co-ordinating action plans
2. Support with pursuing offenders and diverting away from negative behaviours.
3. Using restorative practice and early intervention

3.3 There are currently twelve residents being supported in this way. The service has received thirty-five referrals for this type of support since September 2023.

3.4 The service chairs Halton's multiagency meeting that aims to problem solve key resource intensive location and/or individuals. The governance arrangements were reviewed, and the Tasking and Co-ordination and Multi Agency Groups disbanded and was replaced by the Problem-Solving Group

which meets monthly reporting into the community safety partnership, Safer Halton.

- 3.5 The Problem-Solving Group has accepted twenty-four referrals for people and ten referrals for place. As well as referrals for specific locations and individuals, the meeting has taken the lead on driving forward key issues for the partnership such as the implication of changes in Dangerous Dog Legislation and broadening the use of Community Protection Notices within the partnership. Two examples of recent work are: -
- 3.6 Case Study One
Increased reporting of anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, and noise nuisance from a residential children's home. Multiagency approach to identify offenders and put in place anti-social behavior contracts, worked with the home to identify, and implement factors that could deter anti-social behaviour at the address. This was monitored regularly through meetings with the relevant agencies and supported by the implementation of a re-deployable camera. A multiagency walkabout took place to reassure residents and explain the course of action. Residents were appreciative and incidents at the location have subsided.
- 3.7 Case Study Two
Property causing high demand for the police and multiple reports to housing. Occupants open to several council services and vulnerable. Consultation with several agencies took place to ensure support was given and the opportunity to change behaviour was explored extensively. Behaviours persisted and a closure order was agreed and actioned, giving the community much needed respite from the negative impacts.
- 3.8 The service secured additional funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners office to upgrade and increase re-deployable CCTV cameras. The service has ten cameras, seven of which are deployed in areas of high anti-social behaviour, the remaining three are used for environmental enforcement. Camera locations are agreed in the problem-solving group and are typically in situ for 8-12 weeks.
- 3.9 Since September 2023, the service has received two requests for Anti-Social Behaviour case reviews; neither have met the threshold therefore have been progressed by the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, housing provider and police endeavouring to respond to residents' concerns.
- 3.10 Environmental Crime & Waste Enforcement
During the last two quarters (1st October – 31st March 2024), the Enforcement Team have been involved with investigating 160 incidents including waste related offences ranging from a single refuse sack in an entry to fly-tipping of large amounts of building waste, green waste etc. dog fouling complaints, littering complaints, storage and management of commercial waste generated from business premises, incorrect/nuisance storage of waste receptacles, waste being stored on private land, and other

forms of environmental crime.

- 3.11 As a result of these investigations, officers have been able to take 116 actions which has included the issuing of fifteen fixed penalty notices, twelve issuing of statutory notices, 89 issuing of advisory and warning letters and there are currently 9 cases pending prosecution and awaiting hearings at Magistrates Court. There will be press releases in relation to these cases once they have completed the Court process.
- 3.12 The Enforcement Team took part in an initiative in the Central & West Bank ward during the 'Great British Spring Clean' a national campaign promoted by the charity Keep Britain Tidy between the 15th and 31st March 2024. Officers conducted patrols in the ward, engaged with residents providing education regarding waste management and dog control measures. The Council's Neighbourhood Environmental Action Team were also on hand to remove waste deposited in entries and recover any evidence from the waste which was then forwarded to the Enforcement Team resulting in investigations which are currently ongoing.
- 3.13 New signs were installed on all alley gates throughout Central and West Bank reminding residents of the correct refuse procedure that must be followed. The signs also include QR codes which are easily scanned, with a link to the Councils bulky items collection service, a link to independent waste carriers who are officially registered with the Environment Agency, a link to all licensed scrap metal collectors and a link to the council's online fly-tipping report form. All households also received an information leaflet containing the same information and QR codes.
- 3.14 On the 18th of March 2024, a new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to Dog Controls was implemented. The continued PSPO aims to reduce problems caused by irresponsible dog ownership in public places. The PSPO makes it an offence for dogs to be off a lead in specified areas, highlights public spaces in which dogs are not permitted (dog exclusion zones) and makes provisions for authorised officers to direct a person in charge of a dog to put and keep the dog on a lead.
- 3.15 The team have recently been working closely with the Community Payback Team with a view to setting up some partnership working in the coming months. The Community Payback Team have proved to be a big asset to the Council in the past, deploying resources into some of the more problematic areas in the borough having a positive effect hence, the service is keen to be re-establishing joint work to benefit Halton's environment.
- 3.16 Enforcement is currently undertaking a recruitment process to appoint two Neighbourhood Patrol Officers for 12 months who will be primarily tasked with day-to-day foot patrols in relation to small scale offences such as littering and dog fouling. This resource will strengthen the team, providing a high visibility presence, subsequent deterrent and allowing the existing Officers to tackle some of the more significant and wider issues across the Borough. External funding has been secured for the posts, once mobilised

the service will be evaluated for impact and an approach for sustainable arrangements developed as appropriate.

3.17 CCTV & The Control Room

Halton's control room and its CCTV Operators monitor 148 cameras across the borough. The teamwork with partner agencies such as Police, Pub Watch and Mersey Gateway to respond to incidents and maintain public safety.

3.18 The team has been operating at a reduced capacity for some time, although a 24/7 service has largely been maintained, this is unsustainable in the current format. As such a funding opportunity has been identified to increase the capacity of the service and improve resilience.

3.19 The team have been working towards improving practices and policies within the service. As this is an ever-developing area, a specialist is working with the team to produce a gap analysis, identifying any gaps in compliance and improvements. This will form the work plan for the team Manager and supervisor going forward.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Enforcement team sits within the Community Safety & Protection division which accords with the statutory functions and requirements across a range of legislation:

- Crime & Disorder Act 1988
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no new financial implications as a result of this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The Enforcement Team impact directly on this priority through its work on tackling the causes and effects of anti-social behaviour and approaches to deliver diversionary activities and work towards making neighbourhoods safer.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

There is further scoping work and service remodelling to define the services functions which will generate further training, development, and employment opportunities, growing the workforce and enabling skills development.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The Enforcement Team activities positively impact the cleaner and greener environment in Halton influencing residents' health & wellbeing.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The Enforcement Team responsibilities and multi-agency work, all contribute directly to a Safer Halton. Programmes of work vary from reactive to pro-active, providing support to victims where needed, working to shift outcomes and build resilient, safer communities in Halton.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The Enforcement responsibilities directly impact on the physical environment. The overall function strives to reduce crime, protect vulnerable residents, and create safer neighbourhoods, all of which contribute to building strong and vibrant communities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None to report.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None identified.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None identified