

# Public Document Pack

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Cabinet Housing Panel  
30 October 2023

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

\* Reporting to Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET HOUSING PANEL held on Monday 30 October 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors G.Moore (Chairman)  
M.Birleson (Vice-Chairman)  
  
J.Cragg, S.Goldwater, T Kingsbury, R.Lass, T.Rowse,  
F.Thomson, A.Scott, S.Tunstall and J.Weston

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Chesterman, Executive Member for Housing  
Chris Andrews, Residents Panel  
Ardita McHugh, Residents Panel  
Ian Webb – Regional Director, Morgan Sindall  
Helen Sheen – Head of Social Value, Morgan Sindall

OFFICIALS PRESENT: K.Ng, Chief Executive  
S.McDaid, Service Director (Resident & Neighbourhood)  
E Manzie, Service Manager, Property Maintenance  
L Bradbury, Housing Portfolio Manager  
C Claydon, Community Intervention Team Leader  
R Misir, Democratic Services Officer  
C Samuels, Democratic Services Assistant

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17. SUBSTITUTIONS

The following substitution of Panel Members was made in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

Cllr Tony Kingsbury for Cllr Roger Trigg.

18. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Trigg.

19. MINUTES

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The minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2023 were approved as a correct record.

20. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 15

There was no urgent business.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Kingsbury and Thomson declared a non-pecuniary interest in items on the agenda as appropriate by virtue of being Members of Hertfordshire County Council.

22. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND PETITIONS

There were no public questions or petitions.

23. HOUSING COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Cabinet Housing Panel (CHP) received the report of the Chief Executive which followed on from the update at the previous meeting and which set out the compliance position as at 13 October 2023. Electrical blocks were now 100% compliant and it was noted there were still a few access issues with domestic electricity and gas. Members recognised the work that had gone into reaching this position and commented on the need to encourage tenants to allow access for their own safety.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the content of the report.

24. HOUSING REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR- HIGHLIGHT OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE CONTRACT

The Chief Executive introduced Ian Webb (Regional Director) and Helen Sheen (Head of Social Value) from Morgan Sindall, noting this was the first anniversary of them having the housing repair and maintenance contract. It had been a positive first year and Morgan Sindall had attended the monthly cross-party board since the contracts were signed; discussions there had led to the request that they attend CHP.

Morgan Sindall representatives went through a presentation that covered an overview of the contract, mobilisation, repairs and maintenance, damp and mould, voids, performance, challenges and social value. The presentation noted:

- A number of staff had been TUPE-d into the organisation.
- The contract term was 5 plus 5 years with an optional extension.
- The main workstreams were delivering repairs, maintenance, out of hours work, voids and planned work and the contract was intended to promote

collaborative working in order to provide seamless delivery to residents and learn from feedback.

- Clear contract governance had been set out and there was a good understanding of what was expected in terms of contract delivery.
- Co-location was important for staff, meaning teams were close to any queries. Conversations were encouraged and there had been a lot of investment into management and managing the workforce while making sure staff were aware of changes in ways of working and the delivery model.
- A joint damp and mould strategy had been established.
- Since the start of the contract there had been around 34,000 repairs cases and the challenge was to turn those affected into satisfied residents, with effective communication.
- Plumbing was a key area of demand and it was important to understand what was behind this so a strategy could be developed to reduce that repair demand. Data relating to electrical works would also be analysed to inform a planned preventative maintenance approach.
- Operatives were identifying cases of damp and mould when carrying out other repairs and these were validated on a daily basis and escalated as appropriate.
- Vulnerability data was now being collected and work was taking place to link that with repairs.
- There had been a crossover plan to ensure continuity with voids; around 360 void properties had been completed since the start of the contract. While a quick turnaround was desirable, work also needed to ensure properties were safe and clean.
- For the year to date, 97.6% of repairs had been completed on time, with 99.3% of emergency repairs completed on time. There were challenges around first time fixes and Morgan Sindall was working with Council staff to understand how this could be improved. Appointments made and kept were at 98.3%. Resident satisfaction was at 86% which was likely to increase, and work was ongoing to understand why this figure was not higher.
- It was important to understand residents' rant and rave scores which were a useful operational tool, and to communicate effectively with residents so they were clear what was happening with a repair.
- Challenges over the year had included culture change and new ways of working. Large volumes of legacy work had been a challenge at the start; this was work in progress the team had managed well.
- Staff retention and skills shortages were an issue but staff engagement was a priority and a skills matrix had been developed with staff development plans seeking to plug the gaps. Morgan Sindall was in touch with recruitment agencies who were aware of workplace trends, and it was making sure apprenticeship schemes were available.
- Challenging the status quo was encouraged in order to improve value for money for residents and find the best ways to deliver services.
- It had been a positive first year in terms of social responsibility with some good collaborative projects. Morgan Sindall attended Hatfield Job Centre

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each week to support residents furthest from the job market and so far had supported 115 residents with CVs, mock interviews etc. 10 weeks work experience had been offered to both adults and students. 19 people had so far improved their skills via an online training portal which would be further promoted over the next year, and 48 people had taken part in a digital inclusion session. A project had recently started aimed at people over 50.

- 4 estate days had been supported and as a result, over 6 tonnes of fly-tipping had been removed. A Christmas appeal had raised over £2,000 which was donated to local community organisations and another appeal would take place this year. Online energy sessions had taken place. Work with Oaklands College was taking place to see how students could be supported, and support had also been provided in schools. Using the Housing Association Charitable Trust model (a social value calculator), just over £690k had been created in wellbeing which meant that for every £1 spent in the last year on social value in Welwyn Hatfield, £38 had been created in wellbeing for residents, which was described as a fantastic result. As well as continuing previous work, Morgan Sindall would be working with Hertfordshire County Council to support care leavers or young people not in education or training; working in partnership with One YMCA; delivering basic DIY skills to residents about to get their own homes; and supporting Isabel Hospice to raise funds for equipment.

Members welcomed the presentation and the work done to date. The following points were made in the discussion:

- Members asked about the challenges in terms of first time fixes and about void targets. Morgan Sindall said it always did what it could to get a first time fix but this was difficult if repairs were complex, and they stressed the importance of communicating clearly with residents. Void turnarounds had increased which was mainly due to specification increases; turnaround times would be worked on once the balance was right in seeing voids were clean and safe. Officers added that the voids specification had been rewritten to include issues such as damp and mould.
- A Member asked about apprenticeships and Morgan Sindall advised they wanted to recruit local people, now had an apprenticeship academy which would have a new intake next July, and would be working with schools in the borough in the interim.
- Asked about support for the over 50s, Morgan Sindall explained that the programme was focused on people using job centres, many of whom did not have digital skills and/or were experiencing unemployment for the first time, and explained how their wraparound programme worked.
- A Member asked about steps taken to address damp and mould and officers said they were looking at agreements that could be included in the contract so that damp and mould could be managed and prevented.
- A Member asked about remodelling services to meet customer need and Morgan Sindall responded by citing changing the voids specification as an example, which could include preventative maintenance.

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- A Member noted that rant and rave was excellent at capturing feedback from residents who had digital access and asked how the views of other residents would be obtained. Morgan Sindall sent out cards seeking feedback to them but noted rant and rave was more about immediate feedback about how residents felt during the repairs process and could perhaps be extended to feedback via the internet.
- A Member asked about issues such as repair operatives sometimes turning up at the wrong place for the wrong job. Morgan Sindall responded that they were co-located in the same room as the call centre; diagnosis was important in getting the right operative to the right job and joint collaborative training about understanding diagnoses would be worked on over the next year.
- A Member asked whether elderly or vulnerable residents could be identified so their needs could be met more proactively. Morgan Sindall explained they had a 'conditions' field on their paperwork which was escalated to supervisors to better support work being prioritised.

Morgan Sindall were thanked for the presentation.

## 25. DAMP AND MOULD POLICY

The Panel received a presentation (attached as an appendix to these minutes) and the report of the Service Director (Resident and Neighbourhood).

A summary of the discussion is below:

- A Member asked whether mould wash worked as residents had said mould had recurred and asked about the interface between using mould wash and installing proper insulation, as well as progression with zero carbon homes work. Officers explained mould wash got rid of the immediate risk as an interim measure and the Council then determined what works were required. A stock conditions survey would be starting soon which would provide more data; it was hoped to then make a bid for more funding. Morgan Sindall was helping with the latest phase of decarbonisation funding and the Climate Change officer was speaking with relevant teams.
- A Member noted the cross-party group received figures showing the number of damp and mould cases which were not included in the report. Officers advised so far this year there had been 926 damp and mould cases; 810 had had their first inspection, 39 were to be inspected and 77 were cancelled as damp and mould cases as they were due to other issues eg leaks. Of the 810 properties inspected, 226 had further works ongoing and 584 had been completed. There was a small KPI that provided some information about damp and mould and the Council had requested one specifically for damp and mould cases that could be tracked.
- A question was asked about how to encourage people with damp and mould to come forward. Officers advised there would be a communications campaign; training had been carried out with staff and

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contractors so they could look for damp and mould when doing other works; and it would also be looked for during tenancy audits.

- A Member reflected that the policy did not reference private sector housing. Officers noted the communications campaign would be amended so private renters were aware of how to report damp and mould.
- The flowchart in the report (page 23 of the agenda pack) did not reference what would happen if there were vulnerability or safeguarding issues. Officers undertook to revisit this and amend as appropriate.
- It was agreed a tracked changes version of the report would be produced so the changes were evident.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet Housing Panel:

1. Noted the self-assessment the Council took of its approach to damp and mould against the Housing Ombudsman's guidance and the proposed actions to further enhance the approach; and
2. Noted and agreed the damp and mould policy which would incorporate the changes agreed at the meeting and comments from the Residents' Panel.

26. PROPOSAL TO END THE USE OF FLEXIBLE (5 YEAR FIXED TERM) TENANCIES

The panel received a presentation and the report of the Service Director (Resident and Neighbourhood). The Council had introduced flexible 5 year fixed term tenancies from April 2013; nationally it had been found that these types of tenancies had not realised the anticipated benefits to tenants/ providers and the government, as well as many councils and social housing providers, had moved away from providing this sort of tenancy. Following a report to CHP in 2022 which recommended a review of flexible 5 year fixed term tenancies, a consultation with existing and prospective tenants was undertaken and the ending of fixed term tenancies was overwhelmingly supported by the majority of respondents (94%).

Members welcomed the report, noting the policy would be a positive outcome for all tenants given the financial hardship faced by many; people who were secured more productive lives.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet Housing Panel:

1. Noted the report's findings in terms of the effectiveness of fixed term tenancies and the feedback from the public consultation which overwhelmingly supported the ending of fixed term tenancies and the transfer to secure tenancies, and
2. Recommended to Cabinet that fixed term tenancies should end with immediate effect and that all new tenancies were granted as secure Council tenancies.

27. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

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The panel received a presentation and the report of the Service Director (Resident and Neighbourhood). The updated draft policy provided guidance on how the Council would tackle antisocial behaviour (ASB) through a framework of prevention, early intervention, support and enforcement. The changes that had been made included referencing the Respect standard and noting that accidental damage as well as actions that were not persistent might not be considered ASB. A new paragraph had been introduced whereby ASB complaints deemed to be vexatious or dishonest might not be investigated and the Vexatious and Persistent Behaviour policy might be invoked. Additionally, as well as using the community trigger process to review ASB cases, the ASB review process could also be used.

Members commended the report. The following points were made in the discussion:

- It would be a delicate move to manage potentially vexatious claims. Officers responded that it was rare for them to have to use the Vexatious and Persistent Behaviour policy; the intention was not to deter people from reporting ASB but to avoid people causing distress to others over something that had not taken place.
- A question was asked about who it was best to approach when ASB was linked to drug use, for example. Officers said it was best to approach the ASB team who would work in collaboration with other teams and partners as appropriate.
- A Member sought clarification about what was considered ASB with response times to investigate. Officers advised they would respond within 24 hours when cases were urgent eg hate crimes/domestic violence which would include involving other agencies, whereas less urgent cases would be responded to within 5 days.
- A Member asked how the policy would be shared with residents. Officers explained it would be on the website and that staff would reference it as appropriate when they had contact with victims, potential perpetrators and people reporting ASB, as well as during communications campaigns.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet Housing Panel:

1. Recommended to Cabinet the adoption of the updated ASB policy set out in Appendix A of the report; and
2. Recommended to Cabinet the adoption of the updated ASB strategy 2023/25 set out in Appendix B of the report.

## 28. INTRODUCTION OF A PET POLICY

The panel received a presentation and the report of the Service Director (Resident and Neighbourhood). It was a requirement of the Council's current and proposed new tenancy agreements that tenants must seek permission before keeping pets in their home. It was intended to introduce a pet policy for Council housing in order to formalise arrangements, give clearer guidance to residents

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and provide clarity over their responsibilities and circumstances where they might be required to rehome their pet or have enforcement action taken against them.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- Members noted the importance of supporting responsible pet ownership.
- A Member asked how the policy would impact on housing when people wanted to install a cat flap. Officers advised it was important that fire doors were not compromised. A cat flap would be considered a tenant alteration which would need permission; each case would be decided on its own merit.
- A Member commented on the expectation that residents who had a pet and had not sought permission should apply for it retrospectively and asked about the resources required for this as well as enforcement powers. Officers explained enforcement would be dealt with under the tenancy agreement; officers had obtained injunctions where necessary as a last resort and support was provided to tenants who needed to rehome pets. The Council already had details of pet ownership but a triage system would be implemented should there be an influx of applications. Asked about people breeding pets, officers advised that a licence was needed for dog breeding which would involve liaising with the Licensing team; there was not specific legislation that applied to cat breeding. Tenancy agreements stated that no animals should be bred in Council properties.
- A Member asked if appropriate resources were in place and officers confirmed arrangements were being formalised within existing resources.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet Housing Panel:

1. Considered and noted the policy; and
2. Recommended approval of the pet policy to Cabinet.

29. CHP HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q2- 2023-24

The panel received the report of the Executive Director (Place) which provided a summary of the key performance indicators (KPIs) and commentary on performance across the Council's housing services. The KPIs were monitored quarterly by the Senior Management Team and Cabinet at the Council's performance clinic meetings.

- Members asked for an update in respect of targets that had not been met. Officers advised domestic electrical testing and gas servicing had been discussed under the Housing Compliance report. CHP had received a report about the action plan for addressing voids in June 2023 which had taken longer than they would have liked but the key-to-key process (from a tenant handing in their key to when a new tenancy was taken up) was being improved and internal changes were being made to reduce void times. CHP would be advised when these measures had been more fully implemented with a progress report on voids performance.



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- A Member was unclear about the way some data was presented within the report and felt it would be helpful to include actual figures; it was agreed this would be done in future so the number of cases was clear.
- A Member noted the KPI for Housing Options applicants to receive an assessment within 14 days of being assessed to an officer (BPI 126) was below target and asked how this would be addressed, as well as the KPI for the percentage of Housing Needs Register applications being assessed within 35 days. Officers advised the demand for the service where both KPIs were concerned had substantially increased and the Chief Executive undertook to provide a written response after the meeting. Another Member commented that in respect of BPI 126, the average time taken to assess cases was 12.4 days which suggested the KPI was particularly short of the target.
- A Member asked whether there was a KPI specific to ASB. Officers explained the ASB team had KPIs in terms of how many cases they had per month; details about that, how long cases were open for etc could be shared with Members as part of the narrative. It was agreed this would be provided to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet Housing Panel noted the contents of the report.

30. CHP WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

Members agreed the work programme.

Meeting ended at 9.30 pm

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# Cabinet Housing Panel

## 30 October 2023

Sue McDaid  
Service Director (Resident and  
Neighbourhood)

# Damp and Mould Policy and Self- Assessment

# Damp and Mould Policy

- The policy explains our approach towards damp and mould in council homes
- Provision of a damp and mould policy is a strong recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman in their national spotlight reports (2021 and 2023) on complaints they upheld by social housing tenants (*none of which were WHBC cases*), especially following the tragic death of the toddler Awabb Ishak in Rochdale (the coroner's finding that death caused by exposure to damp and mould)
- The policy also helps towards demonstrating our compliance towards the Home Standard and Consumer Regulations set by the Regulator of Social Housing

# Formulation of the Policy

- The Policy was developed by a group of officers from various teams across the council, using relevant guidance
- The draft damp and mould policy and self-assessment was discussed at the Housing Maintenance Cross Party Group on 23/8/23
- The Resident's Panel have also reviewed it and provided helpful suggestions and feedback

# Residents' Panel feedback

- **Process Map (page 23 in the report):**
- Suggested we ask the tenant to provide photos when they report the damp and mould
- Queries and it was clarified that the actions of booking a mould wash and booking a surveyor appointment are concurrent rather than consecutive
- In terms of a follow up inspection/visit after 6 months – queries and clarified that ‘if necessary’ means a visit for those damp and mould issues that are not straightforward
- Queried and clarified that for a leak reported damp - for diagnosing and undertaking the repair, the timescales are in accordance with the standard repair timelines (which depends on the nature of the repair required) and that if redecoration is required that it will be included in the repair when that job is raised
  
- **Damp and mould policy:**
- Page 1 last bullet point. Add of after move out.
- Page 2 section 1.2 - Delete 'are to' (repeated). Should also mention Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Page 2 section 2.1 - Add in 'or from stock condition surveys'
- Page 2 section 2.3 - What is the situation if it is a window problem in a Leaseholder property? *In most cases it will be the leaseholder's responsibility but depends on the lease and which part of the window is the issue, but we will endeavour to help leaseholders where we can*
- Page 3 section 2.4 - What does sufficient response mean? – *this means in accordance with the policy and process map in terms of actions taken and timescales*
- Page 3 section 3.1 - Add 'and meet Decent Homes Standards'.
- Page 5 section 4.8 - Replace 'a few' with 'relevant. New sentence after 'needs of the resident'.



# Damp and Mould Policy

- The policy outlines how we will implement processes designed to:
  - Ensure a suitable and sufficient response to initial reports of damp, mould or condensation
  - Identify the cause of damp
  - Take steps to address the damp and mould where required; such as ordering remedial works
  - Keep the resident informed of the remedial works and timescales
  - We will follow up with the resident at 1 and 6 months on conclusion of the damp and mould case to ensure no recurrence
  - Provide advice or other assistance to residents, where there is condensation present in their home
  - Increase awareness for residents through a range of communications and information on how to manage/prevent condensation in their home
  - Ensure staff have adequate training and knowledge
  - Monitor performance and reporting to enable us to review damp and mould related complaint and repairs and target proactive remedial work and targeted interventions.



# Damp and Mould Self-Assessment

- We have assessed ourselves against the Housing Ombudsman's damp and mould self-assessment tool
- Many of the recommendations in the toolkit are already in place
- We have identified some measures to improve our approach further:
  - Review our complaints policy, repairs handbook, mutual exchange and voids process to ensure they are aligned with the damp and mould policy
  - Look at further ways to engage harder to reach residents to be aware of and report damp and mould
  - Review our tenancy audits to ensure they capture issues relevant to damp and mould
  - Annual analysis of our damp and mould cases for trends (we also review them monthly)
  - Further training of staff and members
  - Develop plans for net zero carbon homes

Questions?

# Proposal to end flexible (5 year) tenancies

# Proposal to end flexible (5 year fixed term) tenancies

- The Localism Act 2011 introduced the ability for Councils and social housing providers to offer flexible fixed term tenancies
- The overall objective was to make best use of housing stock against a backdrop of shortage in supply
- The key aims of flexible tenancies were to:
  - Make the best use of council stock
  - Increase mobility
  - Target social housing for those in genuine need
  - Support tenants to take up work
  - Support tenants into other housing options
  - Support vulnerable/young people to develop skills to maintain tenancies
  - Tackle ASB and other tenancy issues

# Proposal to end flexible (5 year fixed term) tenancies

- We granted the first flexible tenancies in 2013
- There have been 2,375 offered and there are 1,502 remaining
- Government research has found that flexible tenancies have not achieved the aims that were intended
- Flexible tenancies are no longer being supported by Government and social housing providers have/are moving away from them

# Proposal to end flexible (5 year fixed term) tenancies

- Findings from our own review of flexible tenancies identified some significant challenges experienced in using them
- The gains in social mobility and making better use of our housing stock have not been realised and have not had the success that was envisaged
- Only 2 properties of the 850 flexible tenancies that have ended have been available for re-letting
- We have found flexible tenancies to be administratively complex to manage and resource intensive with no real positive outcomes for the Council or tenants

# Proposal to end flexible (5 year fixed term) tenancies

- A public consultation was undertaken between 5 June and 3 July 2023 on proposal to end flexible (5 year fixed term) tenancies and issue secure tenancies in their place
- A short survey was undertaken of existing council housing tenants and prospective tenants on the housing needs register
- Feedback from the public consultation was that there was overwhelming support (over 90%) to end these and move to secure tenancies
- If this recommendation is agreed, tenants currently on 5 year flexible fixed-term tenancy will be notified in writing of this change, informing them that their tenancy will automatically transition to a periodic secure tenancy once their 5-year term expires

Questions?



# Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and ASB Strategy 2023-2025

# Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Strategy

- The current policy has been revised
- The Policy applies to council housing tenants, leaseholders and all tenures
- Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, there is a duty for the council to work with named partner agencies (eg Police) to tackle crime, ASB and drug misuse
- In addition, in the Regulatory Standards published by the Regulator of Social Housing there is a requirement for social housing landlords, like Councils, to have an ASB policy
- The Policy and Strategy align with the 4 key themes in the Community Partnership Action plan:
  - Help people to feel safe within their homes & local community
  - Safeguard vulnerable people
  - Support and protect victims of domestic abuse and prevent future harm
  - Working in partnership to prevent and tackle serious violence

# ASB Policy

- The updated draft ASB Policy will tackle anti-social behaviour through a framework of prevention, early intervention, support and enforcement.
- The Policy reflects changes to the previous policy in the following areas:
  - Review of legislation and regulatory standards (*now also refers to the 'Respect Standard'*)
  - Clarification on what is considered ASB (*under para 5.2 makes reference to behaviour may not be considered to be ASB if it is not persistent – as well as no pattern, as well as behaviour not being unreasonable if it is accidental damage*)
  - *A new paragraph 5.4 about where there are repeated, unfounded reports that we believe to be either false, exaggerated or dishonest which are being made to cause detriment to another person, we reserve the right not to investigate them. Where necessary, we will apply our Vexatious and Persistent Behaviour Policy*
  - *Added into para 15.3 that a victim of ASB can request a review through the ASB review process, as well as the Community Trigger process*
  - Minor typos amendments
- The ASB Policy underpins how the ASB strategy will be delivered operationally

# ASB Policy

- The ASB Policy sets out:
  - what the Council considers to be ASB with reference to legislation
  - what powers we have available to prevent ASB from occurring, and what action we can take when it does occur
  - is clear about safeguarding and supporting vulnerable groups, victims and witnesses, as well as dealing robustly with issues such as Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse
  - provides for a consistent and proportionate response to all behaviour we define as being anti-social
  - is clear on the council's commitment to delivering a preventative and harm centred approach to tackling ASB

# ASB Strategy 2023-2025

- The overarching Strategy outlines our priorities for the next three years:
  - Maintain a **harm-centred and accessible ‘victim first’ service**
  - Achieve communities where people feel safe through **preventing anti-social behaviour** and taking action that is proportionate and timely
  - Maintain effective partnership responses and information sharing to combat **county lines, cuckooing and associated serious violence** and criminality within the Community Safety Partnership
  - Identify improvements in our partnership response to the increasing demand of individuals with **substance misuse issues, serious mental health problems/complex needs and dual diagnosis**
  - Provide a robust response to **domestic abuse, violence against women and girls (VAWG), hate crime and any other form of harassment and or intimidation**
  - Tackle the issue of **Youth ASB** and the relationship and involvement that some of those young people have with county lines

Questions?

# Pet Policy

# Pet Policy

- Requirement of our tenancy agreements that tenants must seek permission before keeping pets in their home
- The pet policy has been prepared to formalise arrangements and provide greater clarity to council housing tenants about:
  - their obligation to request permission to keep pets in their home, and
  - clarity of their responsibilities and circumstances where we might require them to rehome their pet, or where we might need to take enforcement action against them
- The Resident's Panel were asked to review and provided helpful feedback



# Pet Policy

- The health and wellbeing benefits of pet ownership are well known, but we also have to acknowledge that irresponsible pet ownership can cause a nuisance to others living nearby and, in some cases, present a health and safety or fire risk
- Applications (new form) for new requests for pets. Not retrospective – unless had not previously sought permission
- The Policy sets out factors that we will consider when determining an application. This includes factors such as:
  - Size and type of animal
  - Size and type of property
  - Proximity to outdoor space
  - Other animals already present in the home

# Pet Policy

- The Policy sets out responsibilities and expectations for responsible pet ownership such as:
  - Contingency arrangements should the tenant need to leave their home temporarily
  - Microchipping and collar and tag – if relevant
  - Responsible ownership ('duty of care') under the Animal Welfare Act
  - Cleaning up of any fouling in communal etc areas
- The Policy sets out the timescales for consideration of the application (usually within 10 days or up to 28 days in more complicated situations)

Questions?

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