



Customer Opinion Panel Minutes
Wednesday 7th May 2014 – Council Chambers

Gosport Borough Council

Charles Harman - Head of Operational Services
Denise Hudson - Resident Involvement Officer
Sam Downing - Resident Involvement Officer
Elspeth White - Housing Officer
Rachel Seymour - Housing Officer
Carol Garrett - Housing Officer
Jamie Paterson - Senior Solicitor
PC Clare Parry
PCSO Gemma Broster

Guests:

Mr K Burns	Mrs M Cook	Miss S Bellerby
Mrs S Greenwood	Mr J Mardle	Ms V Manton
Mr P Batty	Mr D Redford	Mrs P Ripley
Miss R Walker	Ms V Twyman	Mrs S Beardmore
Mrs A Barnes	Mrs P Morris	Mr B Wakefield
Miss J Anders	Mrs R Hill	Mrs P Grant
Mrs M Gorgan		

Apologies:

Mr & Mrs R Thomson	Mrs A Clayton	Mrs L Smith
Mrs M Griffin	Mrs J Brown	Mr J Cante
Mrs S Spelzini	Miss J Rowe	Mrs J Atkinson
Mr E Withers	Mrs W Burnett	Mr B Hudson
Mr J Kennewell	Mr R Forster	Mr G Lidgey
Mrs P King	Mr & Mrs C Walder	

		Action
1.	Welcome and Introduction Denise Hudson opened the meeting and gave introductions.	
2.	Charles Harman – Head of Operational Services Charles Harman gave a presentation on the Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Review (please see enclosed presentation). The presentation gave background information on Gosport Borough Council's (GBC) Anti-social Behaviour processes. A more in depth workshop to look at Anti-social behaviour and to review the processes will follow later on this year.	

	<p>Questions raised:</p> <p>Q) Why does GBC not have a designated ASB officer? A) Some years ago there was an ASB Officer but this post was cut and now the Housing Officers deal with ASB cases.</p> <p>Q) Why are unsuitable people allocated a property in a block of flats causing nuisance for those living there? A) Some of the council properties are designated for ‘over 60’s’ and ‘over 38’s’. When allocating properties, the team who allocate them discuss the suitability of a property. However, with Choice Based Lettings (CBL), properties are allocated on the points system. If someone has been identified as having caused ASB issues they are penalised with penalty points. There is some control on who we can allocate a property to.</p> <p>Q) Is it true that in the past nuisance and ASB offenders were all placed in whole areas? A) Approximately 15 years ago this is what GBC did appear to do. We no longer allocate in this way, as we can’t be seen to stereotype people.</p> <p>In some areas it does appear that bad behaviour can result from others’ bad behaviour causing problems in that area.</p> <p>Q) Residents of Agnew Family Centre and Barclay house who cause ASB are evicted straight away, why doesn’t this happen in Council properties? A) Both Agnew Family Centre and Barclay House are temporary accommodation therefore the residents do not have a secure tenancy. This means, if a resident causes nuisance they can be evicted. Secure tenants have more rights, making it harder to evict them.</p> <p>Q) Why can’t the Council stop someone from living in an area? A) In some instances the Courts can put an injunction to prevent someone from living in an area, but only in extreme circumstances.</p>	
3.	<p>Elspeth White and Rachel Seymour – Housing Officers</p> <p>Housing Officers Elspeth White and Rachel Seymour gave a presentation on how Housing Officers handle ASB complaints from a Tenancy Management perspective (please see attached presentation).</p> <p>Q) What if someone is unable to complete log sheets? A) If someone is unable to complete the log sheets they can report ASB via the 101 number or contact their housing officer by telephone during working hours. HOs are happy to look at other ways to communicate, such as use of Dictaphones / phone recording apps etc although there can be issues with</p>	

	<p>compatibility of hardware etc.</p> <p>Q) Do you tell the perpetrator when a property is monitored for noise? A) Yes, both the complainant and perpetrator are advised.</p> <p>Q) Do you think that the ASB process takes a long time because of all the other work that Housing Officers have to carry out? A) Yes in some instances. If the Housing Officer (HO) just dealt with ASB issues then some cases possibly could be dealt with quicker. However, some cases do take some time to resolve because the HO has to work with other agencies such as The Police or Mental Health Team etc.</p> <p>Q) How long do you store records on ASB for? A) All information is stored onto the electronic house file.</p> <p>A comment was raised regarding cases where complainants feel intimidated by the perpetrator which then puts them off from reporting ASB.</p> <p>Q) Would it be better if more staff was employed to deal just with ASB issues? A) Due to budget restraints extra staff will not be employed.</p> <p>Q) How many evictions were there last year? A) In 2013-2014 there were 11 evictions for rent arrears and no evictions for ASB.</p>	
4.	<p>Jamie Paterson - Senior Solicitor</p> <p>Jamie Paterson (Senior Solicitor) gave a presentation about the legal implications of dealing with ASB (Please see attached presentation).</p>	
5.	<p>PC Clare Parry and PCSO Gemma Broster</p> <p>PC Clare Parry and PCSO Gemma Broster explained how they liaise with GBC on ASB matters. All Police information is recorded on SafetyNet which is their electronic based system. HO's have access to Safetynet where they can also record instances of ASB. The Police liaise regularly with the HO's and will raise a concern if they feel a need to and on occasion if there are issues of ASB in an area joint visits with the HO are carried out. There will be changes to The Police Beat by 2015 – details to be confirmed.</p>	

6.	Date of next COP Wednesday, 13th August 2014	
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Distribution:-

Attendees, HMT, Chairman of Community Board, Housing Spokesmen, Group Leaders,
Web Site