

Tenant Scrutiny Committee (TSC)

Report on the Anti Social Behaviour Service

1. Introduction

The TSC have not previously undertaken a review of the anti social behaviour service. With new ASB legislation being put in to place in 2015, this means that Arcon will need to update its policies and procedures, therefore the TSC felt it was timely to undertake a review of the service.

The TSC considered the following for their review:

- How easy is it for Arcon tenants to report anti social behaviour
 - What information is available to tenants and how easy is it to access?
 - Are the mechanisms for reporting ASB easy to use?
- How are tenants expectations managed with regard to tackling ASB
 - Is it clear to tenants how their case will be managed and what their options are to resolve the issue?
 - Are tenants kept up to date on progress with their case?
- Does Arcon comply with the regulatory standard on ASB?

The TSC wanted to achieve the following outcomes from the scrutiny review:

- Ensure that the ASB service is accessible to all tenants
- Assess if Arcon meets the regulatory standard with regard to ASB

2. Methods used for the scrutiny of the Arcon website

To assess the ASB service the TSC carried out a number of exercises, these included:

- Identifying and assessing what written information is available to tenants on the service.
- Comparing Arcon's information with other social housing landlords.
- Reviewing information on Arcon's website and comparing with other social housing landlords.
- Assessing diary sheets for ease of use.
- Receiving a briefing from staff on how the service is delivered.
- Discussing with Gorton Wardens how they respond and deal with ASB.
- Assessing Arcon against the Neighbourhood and Community Regulatory Standard.

3. Overview of scrutiny findings

Overall the TSC felt that it is easy to report ASB to Arcon and that Arcon works well with a range of partners to tackle ASB. The TSC were impressed with the service that the Gorton Wardens provide. It was felt that Arcon complies with the regulatory standards relating to ASB. The TSC did feel that Arcon could make some improvements to its service particularly with regard to keeping tenants updated on their case.

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The report is broken down in to two key areas where strengths and areas for improvement with the service have been identified, followed by recommendations on how the service could be improved.

3.1 How easy is it to report ASB to Arcon?

The TSC explored what information is available to tenants on how to report ASB and considered how easy it is for tenants to report ASB.

Strengths

- Tenants can access information on how to report ASB in their tenants handbook and online.
- Tenants can report ASB by telephone, in person or by e-mail.
- Tenants can provide evidence for their case in a way that suits them; this can be by use of diary sheets, telephone calls, using Astra Line outside of office hours, e-mails and text messaging.

Areas for improvement

- Information on ASB for tenants has not been updated to include details of the new powers introduced by the 2014 Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act. Some of the new legislation will directly impact on tenants, for example the community trigger and anti social behaviour injunctions (ASBI's) and tenants need to be aware of what these powers can do to tackle ASB.
- It is not easy to locate information on ASB on the Arcon website and Tenants cannot report ASB via the website. There is no search button on the site to enable you to locate information on ASB and there is no separate section of the site dedicated to ASB.
- Arcon provide limited information to tenants on how to complete diary sheets. When the TSC compared Arcon's diary sheet with other landlords, they found that more extensive information was given on how to complete them. The TSC particularly liked the diary sheet provided Paragon housing. It was felt that diary sheets may be used more effectively by Arcon tenants if clearer information was provided on how to complete them.
- It is not widely publicised that tenants can contact Astra Line to report and record incidences of ASB outside of office hours.

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Recommendations

1. Re-write the tenants ASB leaflet to include information on the community trigger, ASBI's and other relevant ASB tools and powers.
2. Update the Manage Your Home section of the Arcon website with a page on ASB. We liked the information on the St Vincent's Housing Association website and would like to see something similar for Arcon's website.
3. Develop a new diary sheet that communicates clearly to tenants how to complete them. We liked the style and information contained in Paragon's diary sheet.
4. Publicise to all tenants how Astra Line can be used to report and record incidences of ASB.

3.2 How are tenants expectations managed with regard to tackling ASB?

The TSC examined how cases are managed and how tenants are kept informed of what is happening with their case.

Strengths

- Arcon work with tenants and a range of partners to try and resolve cases of ASB. Arcon identify with tenants how issues may be resolved and agree with them what approaches will be taken to tackle the problem.

Areas for Improvement

- Arcon do not routinely agree with tenants how and when they would like to be contacted regarding their complaint. It is not written in to procedures that staff should agree with tenants when they will be updated on their case and how this will be done. As a result tenants may not always be aware that Arcon is working on their case.

Recommendations

5. Ensure that staff agree with the complainant / tenant the preferred method of communication and frequency that they will up date them on the management of their case.

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3.3 Does Arcon comply with the regulatory standard on ASB?

The TSC assessed Arcon's ASB service against the regulatory standard.

After interviewing staff and considering Arcon's policies and procedures the TSC found that Arcon is compliant with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. The TSC felt there are some areas that could be developed further to achieve an excellent service, which forms the basis of this reports recommendations.

The TSC were very impressed with the Gorton Warden Service that Arcon supports and thought it was an excellent service for Arcon tenants in the Gorton area. The TSC felt this was a good example of Arcon working in partnership with others to deliver services and that Arcon should continue to look for opportunities to develop more neighbourhood partnerships to tackle ASB.

4. Support for the Scrutiny

The TSC wishes to express its thanks to those members of staff who have assisted with this scrutiny and the Gorton Warden Service.

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Appendix 1 - Recommendations

Area	Recommendation	Management response	Proposed actions	Timescale	Responsibility
How easy is it to report ASB to Arcon?	1. Re-write the tenants ASB leaflet to include information on the community trigger, ASBI's and other relevant ASB tools and powers.	Agreed.	ASB leaflet will be revised to include the new ASBI's and other relevant ASB tools such as the community trigger.	Oct 2015	JOC
	2. Update the Manage Your Home section of the Arcon website with a page on ASB. We liked the information on the St Vincent's Housing Association website and would like to see something similar for Arcon's website.	Agreed	A separate section on ASB will be put in the Manage your home section on the website.	Oct 2015	JOC/RY

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	<p>3. Develop a new diary sheet that communicates clearly to tenants how to complete them. We liked the style and information contained in Paragon's diary sheet.</p> <p>4. Publicise to all tenants how Astra Line can be used to report and record incidences of ASB.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Agreed</p>	<p>A new diary sheet will be produced giving clear instructions on how to complete the sheet. We will use the Paragon diary sheet as a template.</p> <p>This will be advertised in the winter newsletter and in the revised ASB leaflet.</p>	<p>Nov 2015</p> <p>Dec 2105</p>	<p>JOC</p> <p>JOC</p>
<p>How are tenants expectations</p>	<p>5. Ensure that staff discuss with tenant when and how they</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Staff will agree how tenants want to be kept upto date with progress on their ASB complaint. The procedure will be changed to reflect this.</p>	<p>Oct 2105</p>	<p>JOC</p>

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managed with regard to tackling ASB?	would like to be updated on the management of their case.				
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