

## Communities Scrutiny Committee

11 February 2022

### MINUTE EXTRACT

#### **CSC/ Scrutiny Review - Potential 'Out of Hours' Service**

**52/2**

**1-22**

Members conducted a series of interviews to ascertain if there was a need for an out of hours' service and how this might work throughout the District.

#### Interview One with the Head of Neighbourhoods and the Head of Corporate Services at Rykneld Homes Ltd

Members heard that Out of Hours calls for Rykneld Homes Ltd were handled by SPS. If these calls required a site visit, then this would be conducted by a Rykneld employee. Eight senior managers were available via an emergency escalation phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Vulnerable residents also had the option of a community alarm service that operated seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Depending on the type of emergency, a visit would be made by the emergency services, named contacts or a next of kin. Employees of Rykneld would not typically attend. This service was provided by Tunstall.

The Committee heard that the SPS out of hours service also covered incidents of anti-social behaviour. The out of hours service had typically received between 400 and 450 calls per month but this would increase during periods of bad weather. Some months had been in excess of 1200 calls.

It was noted that the anti-social behaviour service was not as widely used and the Community Alarm Service, which had 560 customers, and received a majority of calls during normal operating hours.

The interviewees considered that a joint service between the Council and Rykneld could be possible. The call handling response would be able to accommodate other requirements if necessary.

Members heard that the cost of implementation was £23,000 per year.

Committee was informed that Rykneld monitored the performance of SPS. SPS would always provide the staff necessary for the work and there had not been any issues with this.

Tenancy management was conducted within normal operating hours only. Members also noted that DCC offered a falls recovery service and at least one ambulance service had a falls recovery unit.

#### Interview two with the Principal Planning Enforcement Officer

The Officer informed Members that there was not a need for an out of hours' service. In the year 2020 there had been 229 enforcement enquiries, and in 2021 there had 315. In both years, only three of those enquiries had been out of hours.

Members heard that it was not always necessary to deal with those enquiries out of hours and when it was, it was possible to accommodate this due to the use of flexi-time.

Committee were informed that how an out of hours service might work would depend on what issue they were trying to resolve. Currently, there was very little need for planning enforcement to operate out of hours.