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Police should have the power to issue stiffer fines for anti-social behaviour, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

The party wants to create a two-tier system of the punishment, allowing officers to double the current penalty from £50 to £100 for the more serious offences.

Shadow justice secretary Liam Kerr said it would hand police more flexibility to deal with offences like vandalism and breach of the peace.

The increased on-the-spot fine would also dissuade some people from embarking on behaviour which causes misery for communities across Scotland, he added.

A two-tier system exists elsewhere in the UK, and police in Scotland are understood to be keen on mirroring that approach here.

The higher level of fixed penalty notice would be intended for offences who currently receive a £50 fine, not incidents deemed serious enough for the courts system.

Nearly 1000 anti-social behaviour reports are received by Police Scotland every day, ranging from noise disturbances to neighbour disputes.

Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary Liam Kerr said:

“Doubling the fine handed out for the more serious anti-social behaviour offences would be relatively easy to do, and would give officers more flexibility in dealing with this problem.

“It means we can get tougher on the troublemakers who vandalise communities and intimidate their neighbours.

“This isn’t about allowing dangerous criminals to dodge court.

“But increased fines means more crime could be punished, delivering swift justice to low-level offenders who might otherwise be let off the hook altogether.

“It would be up to police when to impose this stiffer penalty but, from

speaking to officers, we know they feel some of the more serious offending warrants a tougher punishment.”