

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

24 JANUARY 2022

UPDATE ON ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND INTERVENTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide the Committee with information on the current position with regard to anti-social behaviour across the district and the interventions and enforcement used to combat this behaviour.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 ASB covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment. Anti-Social Behaviour may include but is not limited to the following examples,

- Persistent, unnecessary or excessive noise
- Excessively loud or persistent parties
- Dogs persistently barking
- Verbal or written abuse including via social media
- Threats of violence
- Damage or threats to damage property
- Graffiti
- Dumping rubbish and littering
- Dog fouling
- Anti-social behaviour as a result of alcohol or drug misuse, including street drinking
- Inconsiderate or inappropriate use of vehicles e.g. off-road motorbikes

2.2 Levels of ASB in Newark and Sherwood

ASB does not recognise council structures or partnerships and therefore there are a number of ways in which ASB is measured and recorded. However, the measure used in this report are the ASB incidents reported and recorded by the police.

2.3 The Council's ASB Officers work within the Public Protection Business Unit and this team is the council's main focus for addressing ASB. The ASB team are supported by the Council's Community Protection Officers. Certain types of ASB, i.e. noise nuisance, dumping of rubbish, are also dealt with by colleagues in Public Protection and Environmental Services.

2.4 There are other posts within the Council that have a role to play in reducing ASB, such as Housing Officers, Licensing Officers, Street Wardens, Tenancy Officers Environmental Health Officers, Park Rangers, Environmental Protection Officers.

2.5 The police are a key partner in addressing ASB and they record levels of ASB. The figures for the year to date compared to the same 12 months in 2019/20 are shown below.

2019/20	2021/22	% change
1,759	2180	+24

2.6 One of the Councils key performance indicators is the ‘% Reduction in ASB’. Prior to the pandemic the trend for ASB was a decreasing figure with each year showing a decline in the number of reported cases.

2.7 The impact of the pandemic has resulted in an increase in ASB. In order for a comparison to be meaningful the current level of ASB is being compared to 2019/20. Therefore it can be seen that there has been an increase in ASB but this is well below that being experienced last year.

2018/19	- 4.0
2019/20	- 1.5
2020/21	+71
2021 to date	+24

2.8 The increase in ASB over the past two years is not a Newark and Sherwood phenomenon, but is a picture that is repeated across the county. The percentage increase across the Nottinghamshire force for the past 12 months is 18% and a neighbouring authority to Newark and Sherwood has seen an increase of 33%.

2.9 The Housing service play an important role in dealing with ASB within the council’s own housing stock. The number of ASB incidents recoded over the same period as set out above are:

2018/2019	193
2019/2020	211
2020/2021	195
2021 to date	104

2.10 ASB incidents are also reported directly to the Public Protection team. These can be from a range of sources and can often result in the requirement for partnership working with the police, Housing Services and many other agencies.

2.11 The numbers of cases recorded by Public Protection’s ASB team are set out below.

2018/2019	259
2019/2020	236
2020/2021	248
2021 to date	161

3.0 Enforcement and Interventions

3.1 There are a range of interventions available to both the Council and the police to tackle ASB. The response will very much depend on the type of ASB being caused. Whilst officers will do all they can to reasonably prevent ASB, at the same time they will take proportionate enforcement action, and will do so at the same time as employing preventative measures if necessary.

- 3.2 The use of the available powers and tools are never done in isolation. One or a number of these powers may be used in succession or concurrently and in most cases at least one partner organisation will be involved.
- 3.3 ASB does not recognise housing tenure, and therefore it is essential that there is effective joint working between the Anti-social Behaviour officers and colleagues in Housing Services. Officers from all services will employ a range of measures to tackle ASB and the overriding principle is that victims must be protected from those who perpetrate ASB and that the Council is committed to reducing ASB in its communities. This means that the officers will use all legal powers at its disposal and also work with and encourage partners to do likewise.
- 3.4 The Business Manager for Public Protection meets regularly with the local Neighbourhood Policing Inspector to discuss a range of issues. Staff at operational level across the Business Units with the council work effectively together and with the police and with other agencies to identify the sources of ASB and to implement solutions.
- 3.5 The Community Safety Partnership at its last Joint Strategic Board agreed that ASB should remain a priority. The Community Safety Partnership annual delivery plan identifies number of activities to address this priority.

4.0 Actions and Interventions

- 4.1 Whilst there are very apparent reasons for the increase in ASB across Newark and Sherwood this should not detract from an ambition to reduce ASB back to the pre covid levels. A range on interventions and activities have been developed and implemented to address ASB
- 4.2 The police have dedicated team that is deployed to respond to reports of ASB. This has now been in place for a number of months. It is deployed to known ASB hotspot for proactive patrolling but is available to react to live reports and to provide a swift response to try and catch the perpetrators in the act of committing ASB.
- 4.3 The Council's ASB team have worked in a number of local communities where ASB has been identified. This have included, Newark town centre, Church Gardens, Hawtonville, Balderton, Fernwood and Boughton. The ASB seen in these areas has covered a wide range of activities including youths gathering, wildlife crime, low level vandalism and general neighbourhood disruption. The interventions delivered in these areas has been designed and delivered to match that ASB taking place.
- 4.4 The Newark neighbourhood policing team joined forces with Newark and Sherwood District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council to combat criminal activity in the Hawtonville area in response to concerns raised by the local community and businesses. The behaviour included reports received of youths causing issues such as throwing bricks and eggs, shouting abuse at people, shoplifting and kicking doors. Dispersal powers have used to deal with people causing issues, enabling police to order those people to leave the area and not return for up to 24 hours. There were 16 people issued with Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. These contracts specify prohibited acts and the consequences of any breaches.
- 4.5 The ASB team along with the Community Engagement officers and Housing colleague's team have delivered a range of diversionary activities in these areas where ASB is prevalent. The

graffiti project on two bridges on the Sustrans cycle route adjacent to Clay Lane Newark is a good example of this type of activity.

4.6 The ASB team have worked very closely with the police to address serious crime and disorder in Boughton. There has been a multi-agency approach to tackle specific individuals involved in incidents of violence, violence with weapons and drug related issues.

4.7 Whilst there is a low level of begging in Newark the ASB team continue to work with local businesses to find solutions to any problem areas.

4.8 As part of the Clipstone Day of Action a graffiti project was delivered that provided positive engagement with a large number of school age children. The project centred on respect for each other and local areas. It was very well received by all those that took part. A summary of the outcomes from the day of action are set out below.

- handed out 2 community warnings
- issued 5 speed warnings to motorists
- visited 25 businesses
- issued 30 dog fouling notices
- worked with 3 classes on the graffiti project
- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue visited 31 houses and fitted 16 fire alarms
- collected 10.5 tonnes of waste which included 9 tyres, 2 gas bottles, a car front bumper, ironing board and rocking horse.

4.9 In addition to reacting to reports of ASB the council is also proactive in identifying ASB in its earliest stages and seeking to prevent it escalating. The Community Protection Officers and Housing Street Wardens play a key role in this. The patrols the Community Protection Officers carry out are targeted based on local intelligence and they seek to provide the early intervention that will reduce or eliminate ASB.

5.0 Equalities Implications

5.1 The Council has made a commitment to ensuring that it complies with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010. Part of this commitment requires an understanding of how policies may affect people with 'protected characteristics' under the legislation.

5.2 It also recognises that people with 'protected characteristics', such as those who are older or younger, who have disabilities or who are from a minority ethnicity, may be particularly vulnerable to ASB. The Council will work to ensure that any risk assessments or consultation takes this into account and that our response is tailored accordingly. Hate motivated ASB or behaviour that is malicious in nature, offensive, or targeted towards a particular group of society will be dealt with as a high priority because of the elevated risk

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 None from this report.

7.0 Digital Implications

7.1 None from this report

8.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

8.1 All the work around ASB has an impact on the Community plan theme to ‘Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and increase feelings of safety in our communities.’

9.0 RECOMMENDATION that:

- a) The Committee note the data relating to ASB and the range of activities, both delivered and planned that are in place to address ASB**

Reason for Recommendation

To update the Committee on the current position in relation to the enforcement and interventions relating to ASB

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Alan Batty (Business Manager – Public Protection).

Matthew Finch

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