



Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 11th July 2023  
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Taylor – Public Protection and Community Relations  
 Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director Communities & Environment  
 Lead Officer: Jenny Walker, Business Manager – Public Protection, Ext.5210

<b>Report Summary</b>	
<b>Type of Report</b>	Open report, non-key decision
<b>Report Title</b>	Responding to increased demand in anti-social behaviour and safeguarding
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide an update to Cabinet on the demands within Community Safety and in particular ASB and Safeguarding cases and projects. To further strengthen the service and the work managed and delivered by increasing resources within the Community Safety Team.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note the current work on Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety as set out in Section 1;</li> <li>• approve the additional one Full Time Post to the Council’s establishment;</li> <li>• approve the overspend in salaries 2023-24 funded by the overall predicted overall council General Fund underspend in year; and</li> <li>• approve the growth of Salary Budget set out above for all future years from 2024-25</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative Options Considered</b>	Continuing service delivery with existing resources which would not help to combat the increasing demand.
<b>Reason for Recommendations</b>	To note the current work the council currently undertakes to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour within the district and to look how this can be improved and enhanced ensuring support for the team and residents.

**1.0 Background**

1.1 The Council’s Community Plan (2020-2023) has a key objective to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the district and to increase the feelings of safety in our communities. The Community Plan set out a number of outcomes linked to this objective and many of these have been undertaken and will continue to be delivered.

1.2 Policy & Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) set up a working group to look at Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in June 2022. The working group looked at current ASB working practices and made a number of recommendations that were presented to Cabinet on 21 February 2023. The recommendations were broken down into 5 categories:

- Improve Communications
- Community Protection officers (CPOs)
- Partnership Working
- The Community Safety Charter
- CCTV

1.3 Many of the 15 recommendations made have been completed, this includes the purchase of a hybrid van to assist the CPOs in working across the district (delivery date to be advised), a quarterly ASB newsletter that provides updates to Members and selected partners, continued funding of the Police Analyst as part of the Community Safety Partnership and to continue to work closely with partners and ensure the council retains a strong focus on a collaborative approach to tackling ASB.

### 1.3 Current ASB initiatives and Action

1.3.1 Newark & Sherwood has been successful in bringing external funding to the area through the Safer Streets Programme. Applications have seen almost £1.2 million of investments made in key locations including improvement at Chatham Court, which has now not had a single burglary in two years.

1.3.2 Most recently we were successful in our application for Safer Streets 4 Funding following previous Safer Streets successes. The current programme is due to finish at the end of September 2023 and on completion will see the following actions to have been taken:

- Installation of security gates at St Marks Precinct
- Replacement of 4 CCTV cameras
- The provision of 3 new additional CCTV cameras
- Replacement lighting in Market Square and on Church Walks
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – Nights of action in the night-time economy, training for those working in those setting and the creation of Gym Safe
- Installed a new door entry system to prevent burglary at Tithe Barn, Queen's Court and Lovers Lane, learning from the impact at Chatham Court
- Promotion and extension of the ShopWatch Scheme
- Environmental Improvement – removing benches from locations where they were a source of ASB, cutting back hedges and tress to increase the feelings of safety

### 1.4 Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Funding

1.4.1 Each year the OPCC opens up for bid submissions from authorities for two pots of funding, the first is Locality Funding (up to £200k), where request for funds are made for projects, schemes or works that contribute to the Make Notts Safe Strategy. This

funding has been provided to Newark and Sherwood successfully for a number of years for the provision of diversionary activities to reduce ASB, women's safety, safe drinking campaigns, wildlife and rural crime/ASB, substance misuse, taxi marshals for peak times of the year and key events such as the world cup, and cybercrime.

1.4.2 The current bid submission for 23-24 has been submitted to the OPCC for consideration alongside other bids from the other Nottinghamshire Authorities. The bid includes again funding request for diversionary activities to reduce ASB and crime, seasonal ASB campaigns around Halloween, Bonfire Night and Christmas, Rural and Wildlife Crime to continue work on off road motor bikes etc

1.4.3 The second fund is Safer4All funding. There are no bids submitted for this fund for 23-24 as a joint bid submission was made in 22-23 with Bassetlaw District Council through Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for a Rural Crime Initiative. This bid was successful and provided £200k to reduce rural crime across Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw, focussing on hotspot locations, to liaise with affected homes and business and seek to provide target hardening measures following an appropriate risk assessment for the locality. This project is being led by Nottinghamshire Police and reported into the Safer Streets existing project meetings and through the CSP.

## 1.5 CCTV Review and Replacement

1.5.1 As part of the ASB working group, a recommendation was made for a CCTV review to be undertaken and presented to members in late 2023. This is a large ongoing piece of work looking at many aspects of CCTV including but not limited to the following:

- Overview of current process – location at Sherwood Lodge, staffing and processes
- CCTV Partnership in place with Broxtowe, Ashfield and Rushcliffe - Costs for NSDC for staffing and maintenance as part of the contracts
- Cameras – number of cameras and their location, the age of the cameras and the new planned replacement scheme
- Town and Parish Council cameras – number of cameras, who they are run for, costs and process for those cameras
- Data and Legal – CCTV requirements and accreditation, legal agreements in place or required.

## 1.6 Community Protection Team

1.6.1 There are only two ASB Officers who sit within the Community Protection Team, this is made up of Environmental Protection, Community Protection Officers, Emergency Planning, CCTV and the Community Safety Partnership, which includes the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator. The ASB Officers work closely with the wider team on shared cases and directly link and work with other colleagues as the need arises. There are also a number of related groups and panels that the ASB Officers either attend regularly or when a case arises, these include:

- Community Safety Partnership – NSDC and Bassetlaw District Council
- Vulnerable Persons Panel – Attends most panels where individuals have been identified as vulnerable for a variety of reasons to include mental health issues and, addictions and their vulnerability in the community due to risk of becoming victim to criminal behaviour.

- ASB Panel – Attend all panels and present updates on cases listed. The chairing and administration of this panel sits within the team and will receive and process referrals from a variety of agencies prior to and after the meetings.
- Hoarding Panel – Will attend when able to contribute to the issues of the individuals being discussed.
- Disruption Meeting – Facilitated by the Police, this panel is for those that have moved beyond the ASB Panel in terms of seriousness of their offences and actions. The aim to prevent further deterioration of their ASB and criminal behaviour
- Child In Need/Safeguarding meetings – Led by social services and will attend on a case-by-case basis.

1.6.2 The team also have to be aware of wider partnership meetings for work that is being undertaken in the Community Safety arena and how it links with their roles, these include:

- Serious Violence Duty
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Duty
- Child Sexual Exploitation Panel
- Child Criminal Exploitation Panel
- Domestic Violence Partnership Board
- Hate Crime Board
- Prevent Duty

## **2.0 Current Demand**

2.1 There is demand from multiple sources for the current ASB Officers, whilst the foundation of the role is to deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour this fundamentally links into other areas of work and partnerships that create demand on the role.

### **2.2 Delivering of enforcement for Housing**

2.2.1 The two ASB Officers assist in the provision of the enforcement function for NSDC housing. As part of this an internal recharge is made to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) of £34,000 per year to support the costs of the two existing posts. Housing have a responsibility for tenancy management and undertake certain level of enforcement and ultimately tenancy breaches and evictions. The ASB Officers assist with wider ASB enforcement action that sits outside of the housing function.

### **2.3 ASB Enforcement**

2.3.1 Alongside delivering the enforcement function for housing services the ASB Officers undertake enforcement actions related to ASB across all tenures. Enforcement should always be a stepped approach, beginning with advice and warnings, to more enforcement measures such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), Community Protection Warning and Notices to Injunctions and Criminal Behaviour Orders.

2.3.2 It is essential for the officers to work well with all partners such as the Police, Youth Justice, Youth Offending Team, Social Services and local schools to ensure that cases can be holistically managed and co-ordinated. Working in a collaborative way aims to create more sustainable solutions to cases. On some occasions incidents that occur are so severe and previous warning and actions have been to no avail that we have no choice but to take firm enforcement action.

## 2.4 Safeguarding

2.4.1 The ASB officers are the council's safeguarding officers, alongside the Homeless Strategy and Safeguarding Officer from the housing team. All three deal with all safeguarding referrals made by council officers or via our partners such as Active4Today. They also deliver all in house training which is required to be delivered to all staff and elected members. The priority of these referrals is high, and the content and issues presented in these referrals often require rapid action to ensure the individual in question is not in immediate harm and if they are, take swift action and liaison with the Police.

2.4.2 Our Annual Partner Assurance Tool, which has to be completed and returned to the County Safeguarding Adults board has identified that the level of safeguarding concerns increased in 2022/23 to higher levels than those experienced pre-covid 2019/20. The number of concerns received in 2022/23 has increased by 47% since 2020/21. The referrals made are now much more complex, require multiple partners to be involved in and a significant number relate to mental health concerns.

## 2.5 Vulnerable Persons Panel, ASB Panel and Safeguarding and Disruption Meeting

2.5.1 These are the main meetings where ASB cases are discussed and are led by a combination of the Community Protection Manager and ASB team at NSDC and senior officers from the police and youth justice services. They occur on a 4 weekly/monthly basis. The aim of these meetings is to provide a safe and secure environment to share information/actions on any individual with a variety of agencies who can then work collaboratively to resolve the issues raised. There is excellent attendance at all the meetings which enables cases to be resolved in a timely manner.

## 2.6 Diversionary Activities

2.6.1 Through the funding bids mentioned above and other partnership working the ASB Officers organise and attend diversionary activities for youths set up across the district to try and actively engage them in different activities and to keep them busy. These events are well attended, most recently:

- Supporting Community and Tenancy engagement colleagues in Easter event in Rainworth
- Extreme Wheels event at Blidworth Skate Park
- Extreme Wheels event at Newark Skate Park
- Fishing projects with 2 local schools in Balderton and Newark

- Working with Notts County Council Youth Services teams to deliver diversionary activities, including a vegetable garden at Bilsthorpe Young People’s Centre, an engagement session at Hawtonville Young People’s Centre and establishing a cooking club.
- The Hill Holt Project is still running and following further funding from the PCC is now able to take referrals from ourselves and any other partner agency if we identify an individual who may benefit from the skills they teach.

## 2.7 Schools and Education

2.7.1 The ASB Officers, alongside the Community Protection Officers, all take part in visits to schools and community events to provide education and advice to groups of all ages in relation to ASB matters. This may include alcohol awareness, reporting ASB, dog control, partnership working with the Police etc. The officers were all recently involved in the Newark Show, with a busy stand with lots of activities to take part in to highlight various issues. They also arrange Water and Fire Safety days in our local parks with Notts Police, Fire and Rescue and our own Park Rangers to get the safety message across but also to ensure that they are aware of the consequences of swimming in open water and of setting fires.

## 3.0 Case Reporting and Enforcement Data

3.1 The table below shows the number of cases reported for the ASB Officers for both ASB cases and Safeguarding referrals. It should be noted that these are numbers of cases reported to NSDC, we are aware that there is an issue in underreporting to both ourselves and the Police. There have been a number of recent incidents that have come through to our attention via social media that haven’t been reported to either agency.

3.2 We recognise that data only paints part of the picture and that the perception of feeling safe for our residents is key. The table below illustrates that with increasing ASB cases, enforcement action taken by the officers is also increasing year on year.

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024 to date (21/06)
<b>Number of ASB Cases reported</b>	250	208	214	144
<b>Enforcement action taken</b>	1 Closure Order 7 CPW 3 CPN 8 ABCs	1 ASB Injunction 5 CPW 1 CPN 3 ABCs 1 PSPO	3 Interim Orders 2 Criminal Behaviour Orders 10 CPW 1 CPN 7 ABCs 3 PSPOs	13 ABCs

<b>Number of ASB Cases Reported that are Council Housing</b>	47	45	51	28
<b>Enforcement action taken</b>	2 x CPW 1 x CPW + CPWN	1 x ABC 3 x CPW 1 x CPW + CPWN 1 x Injunction	8 x CPW  3 x Interim Injunctions	2 X ABC 1 X ABC + Injunction Warning 4 x Stage 2 Letter 4 x Stage 1 Letter 1 x CBO/Injunction Warning
<b>Number of Safeguarding Referrals</b>	35	39	78	14

3.3 Safeguarding referrals were lower during COVID restrictions due to less customer contacts or visits being undertaken. The numbers provided are actual safeguarding referrals and does not include advice and guidance given that may not have resulted in a referral. In relation to Anti-Social Behaviour there were increased recording during COVID restrictions as potential breaches in COVID rules were recorded as ASB.

#### **4.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered**

4.1 The report above details the work undertaken by the service and shows the increasing demand and complexity of cases managed by the existing team alongside competing demand of ad hoc funding bids aimed at making further improvement. This is an area of increasing demand in both cases but in expectation of communities and the impact anti-social behaviour has on their lives. Increasing resources by creating a new Senior ASB Officer post into this area and the wider work within Community Safety will offer a fundamental benefit for our communities.

4.2 This role would supervise the Community Protection Officers on a daily basis ensuring deployment of patrols in key locations in a timely manner, assist the existing officers in dealing with more complex ASB and Safeguarding cases to provide more resources and assistance to manage the continued demand.

4.3 In addition, this role will also take a lead on projects including bid funding to further free up resources to ensure bids and projects are completed in a timely manner. This will include future OPPC funding bids and any future Safer Streets programmes with the aim of dealing with the stubborn upward spike we've seen in Newark Town Centre as well as any latent demand that may arise from asking residents more strongly to report matters to the Council.

**5.0 Implications**

5.1 In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

**5.2 Financial Implications FIN23-24/5041**

5.2.1 The proposed Senior ASB Officer role has been subject to NSDC Job Evaluation process and has been awarded a grade of NS12. As a new role, not part of the existing establishment, there are financial implications. The funding of this new role cannot be funded through existing budgets within Public Protection.

5.2.2 In order to fund the new role it is proposed that, subject to member approval, that the funding for the new role for 23-24 be funded from predicted overall council underspend in year. For future years the post will be included as a growth item for 24-25 and become part of the establishment budget from April 24.

5.2.3 A one-off indirect cost to Public Protection of a new laptop, ICT equipment and additional licenses is in the region of £2,000.

5.2.4 It is anticipated that the post will be occupied from August 2023; this is to give an indication of part year costs calculated to be £35.8k in 2023-24. Any movement on this start date will fluctuate the costs accordingly.

5.2.5 The table below illustrates the General Fund budget impact; if approved by Members, from August 2023-24 the costs are anticipated to be £35.8k, and each year of the Medium-Term Financial Plan starting from £55.3k, inflated as per the pre-approved budget strategy 2023.

5.2.6 The Salary Scale for 2023/24 is at 2022/23 rates plus 5% pay award inflation, which is subject to change pending the pay award settlements. These figures include assumptions for Salary, National Insurance and Superannuation. The grade for this post has been assumed at the top of the scale, therefore working on maximum budgetary impact. If the post is agreed at a lower grade, this will result in a favourable variance to this request.

CODE	Post	Grade	HOURS	W.e.f Date	2023/24 PART YEAR COST	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
A10823	SENIOR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OFFICER	NS12 - SCP33	37	August	35,792	55,337	57,035	58,783
	<b>TOTAL COST/(SAVING)</b>				35,792	55,337	57,035	58,783

**5.3 Human Resources**

5.3.1 This is a new post that, if approved, will be created within the organisation and recruitment to the post will be conducted in line with our recruitment & equalities



procedures. This may present an opportunity for advancement for an existing member of staff or to bring in external talent to the organisation.

5.3.2 The new post has been reviewed by a Job Evaluation Panel as per the Policy and has been assigned NS12 grade.

5.3.4 In line with procedures, a report will go to the Joint Consultative Committee for consultation if approved.

#### 5.4 Digital Implications

5.4.1 The proposal will result in an increase to the establishment of 1 FTE, which will mean that additional ICT equipment and licenses is required – noted in the financial implications.

5.4.2 The digital strategy action plan has some planned projects for Public Protection, however not specifically in relation to this post and it is unlikely this type of service could benefit from digital transformation to reduce the need for plus 1 FTE

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Working Group Review – Cabinet Report 21 February 2023