The Scrutiny Panel is currently undertaking a review investigating the impact of anti-social behaviour on the town.

**Key lines of Inquiry:**

- To investigate the levels of anti-social behaviour in the town, such as tackling psychoactive substances, alcohol, littering (including chewing gum), graffiti, fly-tipping, street urination and dog fouling.
- To consider the nature of the psychoactive substances market and any health consequences.
- To review the policies and strategies for dealing with the impact of anti-social behaviour in the town.
- To consider the paper/Bill that is currently being drafted by the Home Office to address the issue of psychoactive substances.
- To identify the prevention strategies that can help to address anti-social behaviour on the town.
- To identify ‘hotspots’ of the impact of anti-social behaviour on the town.
- To consider the enforcement powers that the Council and other Agencies has in respect of anti-social behaviour.
- To consider how Northampton Borough Council can work in partnership with local groups, Agencies, organisations and residents to reduce and prevent the impact anti-social behaviour has on the town.

The expected outcomes of this Scrutiny Review are:

- To make informed recommendations to all relevant parties on methods to deal with anti-social behaviour on the town.
CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. Please provide details of your organisation and its role in addressing anti-social behaviour.

Northampton Borough Council’s “Direct Services” is the department that provides the Neighbourhood Warden and Park Ranger Services. They are the frontline staff that come face to face with the general public on a daily basis. They are empowered to take enforcement action against anybody that is acting in an anti-social manner, such as: Dog fouling enforcement, dropping of litter offenses, removal of alcohol and tobacco off underage children. They are also a conduit to escalate the more serious offenses to the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU).

2. What Strategies and Policies do you have in place for addressing anti-social behaviour? The more serious offenses are deal with by the ASBU using the policies and procedures' that govern their legal actions. The Neighbourhood Wardens and the Park Rangers are required to undergo training in order to become an “Accredited Person” for the purposes of the Police Reform Act 2002. This gives them the power to acquire from an offender their name and address, so that a fixed penalty notice can be issued.

3. What specific practices and measures do you currently undertake to address/tackle anti-social behaviour? The Neighbourhood Wardens and the Park Rangers liaise with local schools to educate and raise awareness about environmental issues and to promote the Junior Wardens Scheme. They deal with enquiries/complaints/correspondence from members of the public, assessing the nature and priority of the query and initiating any remedial action, such as, liaise with the Police, other agencies and our own internal services to inform of, or investigate offences. They will take enforcement action under appropriate legislation, including the issuing of Section 46 notices and fixed penalty notices in respect of incidents of environmental defacement including dropping of litter, failing to pick up after their dog and fly-tipping/side waste. The Neighbourhood Warden will arrange for the removal of untaxed or uninsured cars off the Highway or Housing land working in partnership with ELVIS (End of Life Vehicle Impound Scheme).

4. Do you have specific budget/resources/funding in relation to addressing anti-social behaviour, if so please provide further details. Apart from the budget provided by the Council to employ the Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers, there is a budget for small purchases, such as, graffiti wipes, litter pickers and bags, etc.
5. **Are the current partnership arrangements for tackling anti-social behaviour sufficient, and if not where are the gaps?** The current Partnership arrangements are working well for the neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers.

6. **Do you feel there is adequate co-ordination between Agencies regarding dealing with anti-social behaviour? If not how could it be improved?** There is adequate coordination between the different agencies. However, when a police response is require by the Neighbourhood Warden in the town centre, they are very slow to respond, if at all.

7. **How does anti-social behaviour impact upon you/organisation?** The Neighbourhood Wardens, more so than the Park Rangers, in the town centre do come into contact on a daily basis with street beggars, drinkers and rough sleepers. These daily encounters do consume much of the Neighbourhood Wardens time, when they could be carrying out other duties.

8. **What do you think could be done to ensure effective strategic and operational links are made to tackle anti-social behaviour, or improve, on a town scale?** The existing arrangements that link agencies together would be adequate, if they were properly resourced. The biggest issue, which is always denied, is the lack of back up from the police when required, which wouldn’t necessary be a 999 emergency, such as assistance with the moving on of drunks, rough sleepers or the removal of alcohol from drinkers refusing to give it up.

9. **Please provide details of the enforcement powers that you have in respect of anti-social behaviour:** The Neighbourhood Wardens and the Park Rangers are required to undergo training in order to become an “Accredited Person” for the purposes of the Police Reform Act 2002. This gives them the power to acquire from an offender their name and address, so that a fixed penalty notice can be issued. They will take enforcement action under appropriate legislation, including the issuing of Section 46 notices and fixed penalty notices in respect of incidents of environmental defacement including dropping of litter, failing to pick up after their dog and fly-tipping/side waste. The Neighbourhood Warden will arrange for the removal of untaxed or uninsured cars off the Highway or Housing land.

10. **Do you have the resources to enforce the powers that you have? Please explain.** There are enough Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers carrying out regular patrols throughout the town to deter potential offenders from offending.

11. **Do you have information regarding the nature of the psychoactive substances market that you are able to inform the Scrutiny Panel of?** No

12. **Please can you provide details of any health consequences of using psychoactive substances:** No
13. Do you have any suggestions on how, as partners, we can improve our approach in addressing anti-social behaviour? The Neighbourhood Warden and Park Ranger resources provided by the Council is adequate for minor offences, but with the growing problem of rough sleepers, drinkers, beggars and people taking illegal highs within the town centre there does need to be a better presence of Police Officers, not PCSO’s, as they only have the same powers as the Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers.

14. What do you think is the key contributing factor to anti-social behaviour across Northampton? Elements of the community have no regard to the laws / regulations that govern our civilised society, knowing that they have a very high chance of getting away with any offence they carry out!

15. Do you have further information regarding the impact of anti-social behaviour on the town of which you would like to inform the Scrutiny Panel? If the Police are going to have a less of a high profile role in our communities, then maybe we should increase the number of Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers to help compensate this!