

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
Response to Core Questions for NBC Scrutiny Committee

Director of Public Health

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

Northamptonshire County Council addresses anti-social behaviour as part of its overall responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Council has a team which leads on community safety strategy and policy, with the manager jointly reporting to Northamptonshire Police. The team has led the production of the countywide ASB Strategy 2015-18 and action plan. The strategy has been adopted by Northampton Borough Council.

In addition, the Council commissions, delivers or is a partner in many services which contribute to reducing anti-social behaviour – for example, the Troubled Families programme, the Youth Offending Service, early help and prevention teams for young people, and associated support services.

2. What Strategies and Policies do you have in place for addressing anti-social behaviour?

The Council has adopted the Northamptonshire Partnership ASB Strategy 2015-18 and the associated ASB Action Plan.

3. What specific practices and measures do you currently undertake to address/tackle anti-social behaviour?

Within the Communities Team, the policy and strategy is set, with best practice identified and shared through the Youth Crime & ASB Prevention Officer. The Early Help programme provides specific support to young people and their families, which will cover many issues (e.g. risk of abuse, domestic abuse, mental health, drug and alcohol use) depending on the family, and also anti-social behaviour.

The Communities Team is a member of the Northampton Community Safety Partnership and the Northampton Priorities Group whose focus is the implementation of policy into delivery.

4. Do you have specific budget/resources/funding in relation to addressing anti-social behaviour, if so please provide further details.

The Communities Team is funded by £153k of public health grant, and includes a specific role focused on Anti-Social Behaviour. In addition the Council commissions services that contribute to tackling anti-social behaviour in the county e.g. Early Help programme.

5. Are the current partnership arrangements for tackling anti-social behaviour sufficient, and if not where are the gaps?

While partnership arrangements are in place, there are opportunities to further strengthen early help interventions based on shared intelligence. One challenge is to continually review partnership meetings to ensure that they are relevant and effective.

6. Do you feel there is adequate co-ordination between Agencies regarding dealing with anti-social behaviour? If not how could it be improved?

The Council has a good relationship with the community safety team in the Borough, but is very willing to build on those relationships in developing effective and co-ordinated arrangements.

7. How does anti-social behaviour impact upon you/organisation?

Anti-social behaviour is often a symptom of many challenges faced by families, and therefore increases demand for support for children, including (in some cases) social care. Those committing anti-social behaviour may be doing so because of underlying issues such as substance misuse, abuse or issues regarding emotional wellbeing, which can also drive demand for services. People who are victims of anti-social behaviour can experience negative mental wellbeing and social isolation, for example, children, vulnerable older people and people with disabilities; this can also increase demand for support.

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 increased use of E-Cins (which is a shared case management database) and more effective use of ASB Action Groups, so that the intelligence from E-Cins can inform the Action Groups.

9 Please provide details of the enforcement powers that you have in respect of anti-social behaviour

There are no specific powers, unless anti-social behaviour requires interventions under the Children Act or a Youth Offending Service response because a young person is in the criminal justice system.

10 Do you have the resources to enforce the powers that you have? Please explain.

Resources are available, but the demand for services where ASB is partly a driver for demand has a significant impact on the Council's budget.

11 Do you have information regarding the nature of the psychoactive substances market that you are able to inform the Scrutiny Panel of?

There are a number of shops which sell such substances in Northampton and other towns in the county. The belief is that this is growing. However, there is also a substantial online market.

12 Please can you provide details of any health consequences of using psychoactive substances

A growing number of adults and young people are presenting with mental health issues associated with these substances. These include presentations for treatment, including at A&E departments. In other areas of the country, some presentations for sexual health treatment have been linked with use of psychoactive substances. Use of these substances is also linked with anti-social behaviour.

13 Do you have any suggestions on how, as partners, we can improve our approach in addressing anti-social behaviour?

Using analytical capacity in the public health team, the partners can further identify the evidence base for the causal factors for anti-social behaviours, and potentially align interventions in geographical areas with the greatest need more effectively.

14 What do you think is the key contributing factor to anti-social behaviour across Northampton?

The impact of the first two years of life is highly significant in anti-social behaviour in the longer term, and addressing causes of ASB in early years is therefore a key focus.

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?

Our feedback has been covered in the answers to the previous questions, but we will continue to build on effective working relationships with the Borough in addressing anti-social behaviour and other aspects of Community Safety.

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