

7 September 2010

Monitoring of Recommendations made by the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Cllr Z Ali – Communities and Partnerships

Executive Summary:

The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Working Group established in 2008 by the Neighbourhoods' Scrutiny and Performance Panel, conducted an extensive investigation into how this issue is addressed through a borough-wide multi-agency approach. The Working Group witnessed examples of good practice and identified areas where process and service delivery could be enhanced.

Their findings were outlined in a report which was presented to the former Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel on 30 April 2009 and to Council on 6 July 2009.

The final report included a number of recommendations based upon the group's experiences and observations. Subsequently an action plan was prepared to address these recommendations which was presented to Cabinet on 16 September 2009. The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the progress made in response to those recommendations.

Reason for scrutiny:

Tackling anti-social behaviour continues to be a key strategic priority for Safer Walsall Partnership. It has now been almost a year since these recommendations were put before Cabinet. The appendix to this report demonstrates the progress made in key areas and updates Members on how partners are delivering against the recommendations in a changing economic and political climate.

Recommendations:

That the Community Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel

- a) note the update on progress against each recommendation of the ASB Working Group as shown in the update within the final column to the original action plan of the ASB Working Group as shown in the appendix;
- b) note that work will continue to develop the Partnerships response to tackling ASB in line with the recommendations herein.

There has been positive action in all areas of the action plan and there are no outstanding actions of concern.

Background papers:

1. Anti-social Behaviour Working Group Report to Neighbourhoods & Performance Panel - April 2009. This is a large document that can be accessed via the following link. <http://www2.walsall.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=7015>
A copy of the report has been sent separately to Elected Members and is available to members of the public on request.
2. Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan (September 2009.)

Resource and legal considerations:

This report outlines the actions taken in response to the recommendations of the ASB Scrutiny Working Group. There have been significant changes both locally and nationally since the original action plan was developed. Locally, the Community Safety Service, of which the ASB Unit is a key part, has merged with the existing Public Protection Service to form the integrated service area of Public Safety. This has resulted in a major staffing restructure, significantly within the area of Community Safety.

The staffing of this new service area has been developed in order to respond to the requirements of the new neighbourhood management model and will need to meet the challenges of new financial restraints and policy amendments following the change in central government.

Funding of service provision will be an issue, with in-year cuts already impacting upon delivery. It is unclear what the future grant regime will be for supporting Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships/Community Safety Partnerships (CDRPs/CSPs) as there has been very little communication from Home Office sources. However, in line with national and local austerity measures now in place, it is anticipated that resources will be limited. Anti-social behaviour continues to be a strategic priority in the latest Strategic Assessment and it will be a challenge for all partners to respond to this by ensuring delivery is coordinated and targeted at areas where there is greatest risk and need.

Citizen impact:

The work of partners to tackle anti-social behaviour has a significant impact on residents, businesses and visitors across the borough. This issue also has an economic and social impact and influences perceptions of feeling safe, crime and public confidence.

Environmental impact:

ASB encompasses issues such as graffiti, vandalism, fly-tipping etc. A reduction in these environmental crimes would make a positive contribution to reducing the public's perception of ASB and contribute to a safer, cleaner, greener borough.

Performance management:

Performance management of this area of work is currently under review following the actions of the Coalition Government in dispensing with many centrally, pre-set performance indicators. Methods of measuring public perceptions, such as the Place

Surveys have also been discontinued, as has the police single confidence target.

Work is to be carried out shortly on identifying local performance measures. ASB continues to be a key strategic priority within the new Strategic Assessment, although there has been a significant reduction in reports.

The ASB Scrutiny Working Groups' recommendations will continue to support the future direction for partnership working.

Equality Implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out in connection with this report. Equality implications are considered in the development and delivery of interventions and projects aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour.

Consultation:

This report has been prepared with input from Walsall's Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Integrated Young Peoples Support Service and Walsall Housing Group.

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ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACTION PLAN

Panel Recommendation	Commentary	Proposed Action	Timescale	Up date August 2010
<p>1. A borough-wide anti-social behaviour unit be introduced combining the ASB related resources of the Council and its Partners.</p>	<p>The introduction of a borough-wide unit would have major implications for all current service providers and would require a total review of service delivery and resources across partner agencies. A complete buy-in to the borough-wide combined unit from all organisations would be necessary in order to provide a unified service. This may not realistically meet the needs or be deliverable within the resources of all current service providers.</p>	<p>Discussions to take place with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) at senior strategic level to explore implications and opportunities for more effective working together through a more unified approach in lieu of a combined service.</p> <p>Develop an agreed joint protocol on service delivery targets for customers.</p>	<p>Sept/Oct 2009</p>	<p>Following the merger of the former Public Protection Service with the Safer Walsall Partnership Community Safety Services and the resulting major restructure, significant progress is being made in unifying reporting, case management and information sharing via an integrated IT system. Key partners such as the police and WHG are looking to improve coordination and develop a more unified and standardised approach to reports of ASB across the borough. At the time of writing, the tender document is being developed by a Walsall MBC systems architect.</p>
<p>2. In the interim period before the establishment of a borough-wide Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU), consideration be given to Safer Walsall Partnership (SWP) ASBU obtaining external funding in order to further</p>	<p>Current financial restraints have placed significant pressure on the ASB Unit in terms of expansion, service delivery and staff development. Bids have been made to external sources in order to meet the funding shortfall and address these areas. Other income streams will be explored as appropriate.</p>	<p>Explore further funding opportunities and deliver efficiencies through re-alignment of services. Continue to bid for external funding as appropriate.</p>	<p>Sept 2009 Onwards</p>	<p>Following the above merger of and the resulting major restructure, it has been possible to appoint 2 additional ASB case-workers, to ensure that each Neighbourhood Management Areas (NMA) has a dedicated ASB officer. A Home Office grant has been</p>

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expand, be this from external sources or by recharging.				utilised to funding accredited training for all ASB officers within Walsall's ASB Unit.

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<p>3. In the interim period before the establishment of a borough-wide ASB unit, a compilation document containing the range of ASB policy and practice across the borough to be drafted and made publicly available.</p>	<p>ASB legislation is complex and the tools available to local authorities and partners to tackle issues change in response to shifting priorities and Home Office directives. The current resource document is out-dated and the full range of interventions has changed. It would be necessary to compile a 'living document' that is up-dated regularly in order to reflect these changes. This could make the production of one definitive guide a costly and labour intensive exercise. However, guidance on ASB is necessary and the ASB Unit and its partners are committed to improving communication with all service users. Accessible straightforward information must be made available for all service users. The ASB Unit is supporting this by taking a pro-active part in community events in order to distribute information and guidance.</p>	<p>The ASB Unit and partners will be addressing this issue as part of the proposed ASB Strategy and guidance will be contained therein.</p> <p>Look at positively promoting the work and outcomes of the ASBU, WHG and other agencies and develop ideas to address identified gaps in delivery.</p>	<p>Commencing Sept/Oct 2009</p>	<p>Following the development of the ASB unit's Delivery Improvement Plan, contact was made with the Home Office who subsequently supported us in delivering training for partners in tools and powers and provided financial support which will enable us to develop advisory literature for all service users. This has subsequently been put on hold, pending an announcement on what the new tools and powers will be. This follows a recent speech by the Home Secretary in which proposed changes were announced. At this stage, we have no knowledge of what these changes will be or when they will take place, other than it will be imminently.</p>
<p>4. The 'Referral Process for ASB' to be implemented by SWP.</p>	<p>There are several referral methods currently in place, designed to meet the needs of our diverse community.</p>	<p>A more unified process will be developed to ensure efficiency of response is maximised. The referral process will form part of the planned ASB Strategy document. This will then be publicised and introduced to all service users.</p>	<p>Commencing Sept 2009</p>	<p>As part of work around the Delivery Improvement Plan protocols for referring ASB between agencies are being re-visited/reinforced.</p>
<p>5. A generic ASB referral form be developed for use by the Council and its partners.</p>	<p>Each organisation has its own referral process at the moment. The form currently in use within the ASB Unit required modification to enable officers to respond quickly and not</p>	<p>New referral form to be introduced.</p>	<p>Sept 2009</p>	<p>Work is currently underway on the implementation of a new or upgraded ASB case management/ and recording system. In addition to</p>

	be delayed by lack of information at the referral stage.			integrating with other council systems this will included standardisation of forms and procedures
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	<p>A new referral form has been developed and consulted upon with RSLs. It contains a 'check-list' to ensure that adequate information is being provided and appropriate avenues have been explored prior to referral to the ASB Unit. Use of the form is currently being introduced.</p>			
<p>6. Financial assistance is provided to SWP to improve the publication of ASB orders and other similar convictions.</p>	<p>It is current practice within the ASB Unit to produce information leaflets when an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) has been granted. This is designed to advise the immediate community which has often been affected by the actions of the perpetrator.</p> <p>The use of publicity where young people are involved is currently under review by the ASB Unit and Youth Offending Service (YOS). The production of publicity material must be contained within the budget available.</p> <p>Local media is currently being utilised to advise residents of any actions taken to tackle ASB.</p>	<p>Explore with partners opportunities for additional funding to assist with publicising ASB Orders and similar convictions.</p> <p>Utilise opportunities within partner agencies to publicise activities.</p>	<p>Sept 2009 onwards</p>	<p>The ASB Unit continues to welcome the support of the partnerships communications group in publicising its work. The remit of the Neighbourhood Justice Coordinator includes developing publication of sentencing outcomes, which is currently being discussed for Walsall at senior police/criminal justice levels. This would provide a means to publish the outcomes of local cases, thus ensuring that justice is seen to be done.</p>
<p>7. Walsall Council re-establish an ASB mediation service.</p>	<p>Mediation is recognised as a valuable approach to resolving conflict situations. An external service provider has been used in the past, but is no longer available. Accredited training of ten members of staff from SWP has now taken place so that this service can be delivered 'in-house.' This is in addition to the service provided by Walsall Housing Group (WHG) and other</p>	<p>Introduce the new SWP Mediation Service subject to accreditation from the awarding body.</p> <p>Maximise take up of SWP and WHGs service amongst customers.</p>	<p>Sept 2009</p>	<p>Accreditation has now been received and, following the completion of the staffing restructure, mediation training will be put in place for new officers. Although this intervention has been delivered informally as individual cases require it, a formal service will be developed and form part of</p>

	partners. SWP Mediation Service is currently in development with a proposed commencement date of September 2009. This date is dependent upon all accreditation from awarding body being in place.			the service areas delivery plans.
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8. All Councillors trained in mediation techniques.	Ten officers within Safer Walsall Partnership have received accredited training on mediation. WHG also offers this service. Following discussion with the member development team, training of members may be cost and time prohibitive. It may also impact upon the development of the services already being set up within the partnership.	An awareness session will be delivered in order to advise members of the services available, what mediation entails and when it may be appropriate.	Oct/Nov 2009	Mediation awareness will be delivered in conjunction with on-going elected member training and information sessions from Sept./Oct. 2010 onwards.
9. Further training opportunities on ASB related topics be organised for all Councillors.	The training session delivered during the scrutiny process was very positively received. The potential for delivering an on-going programme of training on all community safety issues has been discussed with the member development team.	Training to be made available to all members on a twice yearly basis, commencing September/October 2009.	Sept/Oct 2009	Upon completion of the merger and restructure, training for elected members will re-commence from Sept/Oct. 2010 onwards and information sessions will be delivered, outlining the services now delivered via Public Safety and how to access them.
10. Councillors be kept fully aware and informed of all activities and initiatives that are relevant to their responsibilities as ward and borough-wide Members.	The group identified the need for improved communication between service providers and elected members. Current methods of communication include regular written updates to portfolio holders, CATS meetings, updates from individual service areas (i.e. Safer Walsall Newsletter.) Further methods will be explored through on-	Explore further opportunities to ensure that members are informed of all relevant issues relating to ASB and its management within their wards. Joint reporting mechanism developed with RP's (formerly RSL's) informing councillors of tools and techniques in use by RP's and raising awareness of what RP's do.	April 2009 onwards	Portfolio Holders up-dates are continuing and members are advised of specific ASB actions within their area i.e. dispersal orders etc., Specific issues, including ASB, relating to individual wards will now be discussed within area partnership meetings.

	going work with the Corporate Communications Team and member Development Team. All service areas will be required to ensure information is shared with portfolio holders and relevant elected members.			
11. RPs adopt a common database of tenants and common tenant application form to assist in vetting process of prospective tenants.	Following a meeting of Walsall Housing Partnership in July, the RPs advised that 'vetting' was inappropriate terminology as prospective tenants should be assessed on their need for housing rather than their suitability.	It has since come to our notice that RPs are looking to implement a common housing register as Choose and Move is rolled out for use by all RPs operating in Walsall – which will result in a common housing application form.	August 2009 onwards	Although this option was thoroughly explored by RPs, this system was not implemented. One of the reasons cited was that agencies have different criteria, client bases and assessment needs, so a generic form was seen to be unworkable.
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	It is proposed that this will be discussed within the Respect group and as a part of the broader work for the forthcoming ASB strategy document.			
12. The Young Advisors Scheme, as utilised at the Young Persons Information Centre in Blakenall, be recognised as a model of good practice and rolled out across the borough.	<p>The group felt that the function of this service and the work carried out in areas such as peer mentoring was of particular merit and would be a positive addition to service provision across the borough.</p> <p>The Youth Service has now implemented a senior young person's scheme which follows a similar process to the young advisors, and is accredited by OCN (Open College Network). Developing across localities.</p>	To note the recommendation and Youth Services' response.	On going	<p>Senior young person scheme is being developed within an overall integrated young people's service volunteering strategy.</p> <p>The best practice identified through the work developed by YPIC will be considered as part of the positive activities review and the development of the positive activities offer over the next couple of months.</p>
13. That a borough-wide comprehensive needs assessment be	The group identified areas where youth provision was less apparent than in others. A borough wide	Further work is planned by IYPSS supported by Regeneration and Property services.	On going	Youth assets review is an integral part of the AM 2012 programme. IYPSS is working

carried out as regards the allocation of youth provision. This will ensure that resources are based on need not deprivation.	assessment would identify gaps in provision and areas of need. An audit of location of buildings and provision has taken place as a precursor to the full exercise, which is currently pending.			closely with property services to review all of young people's centres across the borough
14. The Youth Service provides a seven days a week service.	The group recognised the positive contribution of Youth Services in engaging young people who otherwise may be involved or at risk of becoming involved ASB. The need for provision at key times i.e. Friday, Sat evenings etc was identified. Provision is currently under review. Some localities are offering 6 days a week service to young people in partnership with YCAP developments. Further developments will be part of the IYPSS programme.	Complete Youth Services' review.	On going	An Autumn review of Positive Activities will be using the working smarter model to redesign youth provision across the borough. A pilot is being planned in the south area partnership with the aim to roll this out across the borough. The Youth Service has now fully reconfigured under Integrated Young People's Support Services (IYPSS). IYPSS now provides services across 4 strands : Positive Activities, Information and guidance, Targeted Youth Support and Youth Justice.
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				Consultation around need in weekend provision has been undertaken and the outcomes from this will inform youth work provision across the borough. Further reconfiguration of LA provided youth work will be informed by the PA review.
15. All school pupils be encouraged to participate in the Safer Schools Programme.	Safer Schools Partnership is an on-going process of working together with key agencies. Walsall Children's Services (Serco) has representation at Borough Tasking Group. There has been a range of collaborative	Participation at Borough Tasking will continue, with the partnership welcoming further engagement with appropriate agencies. ASBU will explore further appropriate engagement with	Oct. 2009	The ASB Unit has built up links with a number of schools across the borough and has undertaken some proactive work. These links will be further developed when following the

	initiatives with the police service within the Anti-Bullying Strategy through Helen Turnbull (Bloxwich Police Station.)safer schools partnership has presented to the annual Anti-Bullying Conference which is open to all schools in the borough.	Safer Schools partnership		Public Safety restructure ASB officers are aligned to the six Neighbourhood Management areas. This work will also be supported by the recently formed Reassurance Team
16. The Youth Warden Scheme to be rotated across all secondary schools that wish to take up the scheme and not be fixed on any particular schools for indefinite periods.	A strategy document outlining the possible future direction of the Youth Wardens has been prepared. This includes the preferred use of a rotation system and potential for development of their role.	Further consideration be given to the strategic response to this issue. Consultation with schools to be undertaken.	Sept 2009	The role of Youth Warden has been superseded within the new staffing structure of Public Safety. Six new generic roles of Reassurance Officer (3) and Asst. Reassurance Officer (3) have been established in order to engage, inform and provide an advice and education service across all communities within the six NMAs. These officers will continue to liaise with all schools and support the ongoing work of police schools liaison officers and IYPSS officers.
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<p>17. Further targeted positive activities for young people of all ages should be operated in key periods, such as school holidays, to divert young people from anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>Youth provision has a key role to play in positively engaging young people and diverting them away from negative behaviour during key periods. Core work is still targeted at 13 – 19 age group. See also response to recommendation 14 above. Work already completed or planned includes:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summer programmes/Half Term activities offered in partnerships with other agencies to ensure that all ages are catered for. - Over 100 activities were offered to young people across all districts throughout the summer i.e. residential, away days, trips to leisure facilities. Publicity book is available. - A Positive Activities TAP is being produced which involves key partner agencies. 	<p>Complete Youth Services' Review.</p>	<p>2009/2010</p>	<p>Please see point 14</p> <p>Availability of 3 detached teams and 3 hoppers (mobile buses) and a technology bus to respond quickly to youth ASB issues as identified through areas, partners and borough tasking. Additional funding has been made available through Borough tasking to introduce diversionary activity in the 6 NMAs. Currently in the process of developing an ASB / Positive Activity strategy. Currently developing a positive activity website. This will be a website where all partners will be able to publicise positive activities for young people. The website will be launched the first week in November. Working together with the 3rd sector, Leisure services and IYPSS to develop a coordinated holiday offer for young people.</p>
<p>18. The Youth Service and other key anti-social behaviour related Partners make reports and presentations to Local Neighbourhood Partnerships on local activities.</p>	<p>The sharing of information about service delivery was identified by the group as a key area for proposed improvement. This would also serve to enhance intervention through improved coordination. Reports are taken to Borough Tasking and also YCAP steering group and LNPs.</p>	<p>Note the recommendation and proposed response.</p>	<p>On Going</p>	<p>IYPSS representation at all Borough Tasking meetings, Children's Area partnership (CAP) and Area Partnership meetings has been agreed. Regular reports are being provided at these meetings</p>

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<p>19. Key partners, such as Police, PCT and Council with the SWP Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) explore and implement further initiatives that could be introduced to better manage the quantity of needles supplied in a batch, improve both the return of needles by drug users and the removal of discharged needles, in line with practises in other boroughs.</p>	<p>Service providers have been asked by DAAT to look at current practice on needle exchange and supply.</p> <p>This issue is being looked at as part of the current year's delivery and will form part of subsequent service level agreements to ensure on-going development takes place.</p>	<p>Implement review.</p>	<p>Review date Mar 2010</p>	<p>Addaction have reduced the quantity of needles they gave out at any one time (10 disposable & a sharps box which should be used and returned)</p> <p>Borough Tasking is funding Highs & Lows to clear up designated sites and to respond to public/partner calls for this service.</p> <p>A sharps bin has been purchased and will be fitted at a town centre near to a location with considerable drug related activity. Users will be educated to use this facility.</p> <p>Work is being undertaken with the support of neighbourhood managers to deal effectively with sites that are identified. It is recognised however that this really serves to move the problem elsewhere. In addition pharmacists still report low return rates of used needles. This can not however be used as a sanction and stop further needle issue as the primary aim is to prevent blood borne infection. As such this is an on going issue.</p>

<p>20. Consideration be given to continue support to Hi's and Low's to assist with needle clean-ups and to encourage drug users in treatment programmes.</p>	<p>Funding for provision of the Hi's and Low's clean-up function was temporarily halted from April 2009. The project's other services were unaffected. Funding was re-instated from July 2009 until March 2010.</p>	<p>Service to be reviewed in conjunction with relevant partners.</p>	<p>Review date March 2010</p>	<p>Funding has continued and will be reconsidered with other requests when available funds for April 2011 onwards have been confirmed.</p>
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<p>21. SWP investigates approaches to restorative justice in detail and considers where this type of approach could be considered for introduction in Walsall</p>	<p>The use of restorative justice would enable the ASB unit to explore alternative approaches to enforcement, where appropriate. This would enhance the work currently being developed through the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and support work to address emerging issues such as gang culture. However, the introduction of this approach would have resource implications and an appropriate funding stream would need to be sought. Training provision has been identified and an external funding bid has been submitted.</p>	<p>Staff training to be provided to inform practitioners of the methods available and how they should be used.</p>	<p>Jul - Sept 2009</p>	<p>Most ASB staff now trained in mediation. This will be extended during 2010, when a mediation service will be set up following the completion of the new staffing restructure.</p>
<p>22. Consideration be given to a further investigation into alcohol related anti-social behaviour by the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny & Performance Panel.</p>	<p>The group identified the correlation between ASB and use of alcohol. It was recommended that a further scrutiny exercise be carried out around alcohol issues across the borough. However, this has now been postponed due to competing work priorities.</p>	<p>This recommendation will be actioned later in the year, pending completion of other areas of work.</p>	<p>2009</p>	<p>This has now taken place with the report recently submitted to Cabinet</p>