

WIRRAL COUNCIL

FAMILIES AND WELLBEING POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

2ND FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT:	Youth and Anti-Social Behaviour
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	Director of Children's Services
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Tony Smith
KEY DECISION?	No

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the current youth provision and has a focus on anti-social behaviour (ASB), it serves to highlight the relationship between anti-social behaviour (ASB) and youth. The report gives focus to the general approach for collaborative working and specific consideration to youth anti-social behaviour.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

Youth Service Provision

- 2.1 The Youth Service delivers youth provision through district based Youth Hubs, Youth Clubs and Youth Outreach Teams. These units are supported and enhanced by Creative Youth Development service (formerly The Youth Theatre), Play Schemes, Response, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Health Services in Schools. All current youth provision has programmes which tackle and raise awareness of ASB and the consequences for young people and communities. As such, ASB is a key standard item on all youth workers' supervision and team meeting agendas. Hot spots for ASB or concerns identified through these processes are fed through to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team. However, the work of the youth service's Youth Outreach Teams makes the greatest contribution to the prevention of youth ASB.
- 2.2 In 2010 the Youth Service reconfigured youth provision to be co-terminus with Wirral parliamentary constituencies and Wirral Children and Young People's Department (CYPD) four areas for locality or district based working arrangements. This reconfiguration ensured that a dedicated youth outreach team was attached to each of the four constituency areas.
- 2.3 The Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review (2008) recommended that officers merge the then Anti-Social Behaviour Team's, Youth Respect Team and the

Youth Service Outreach Teams. This merger was subsequently undertaken in November 2011 as part of the creation of the (former) Wirral Integrated Youth Support Service.

- 2.4 This merger necessitated a review of outreach provision for children and young people aged 8-19 years. Subsequently an outreach model was developed that built on the success of earlier outreach projects. This model, which –remains in place today targets antisocial behaviour ‘hot spots’, particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings and provides support to a wider age range of young people via an integrated approach. Ensuring a seamless and joined up provision with improved accessibility for children and young people, the model also incorporated a revised set of values and priorities focusing in a more targeted way on early help and risk taking behaviour.
- 2.5 Since 2011 this Youth Outreach model has been regularly appraised, to ensure operational proficiency and effectiveness. The Service’s move into Targeted Support in 2013 has continued to ensure appropriate focus and attention on ASB, seeing preventive activities with targeted groups of young people and specific programmes of work with those young people who are the most vulnerable or at risk. During the 2013-14 reporting period to date (April to December) - Youth Outreach Teams have contacted in excess of 2,750 young people aged 13-19 years (this equates to over 10% of the 13-19 youth population in Wirral).
- 2.6 The current Youth Outreach offer consists of:
- Four district youth outreach teams, one in each constituency. Each team is led by a full-time Team Leader supported by a 5 hour per week Principal Youth Worker and a staffing establishment of 63 hours per week of Youth Support Workers (the equates to approximately 10 part time posts per district). This level of staffing allows for up to 13 individual deployments by the team per week in each district.
 - Each of the 4 teams has the use of a ‘Kontaktabus’ (converted minibus) to provide a safe haven for young people and to help deliver informal education. Each bus has floodlighting to illuminate dark and dimly lit areas for safe delivery and activities such as football.

Multi Agency ASB Operations

- 2.7 ASB relating to youths causing annoyance cannot effectively be dealt with in isolation. Therefore, Wirral has implemented a multi-agency approach to respond to such situations, as well as to ensure that the right action is taken to achieve the best result for everyone involved or affected as a consequence. This approach applies the principles of: deterrence, education, rehabilitation and enforcement to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour.
- 2.8 Due to an increase in reports of youths causing annoyance, Merseyside Police and Wirral Community Patrol ASB now generally (although not exclusively) statistically record ‘hotspots’ for locational intelligence purposes. This helps ensure the right type of response. Below outlines the multi-agency approach to tackling locational

issues of anti-social behaviour; Wirral's youth service is fully embedded into this approach.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Governance Group:

2.9 The multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Governance Group, chaired by a Police Chief Inspector, meets on a monthly basis. The group develop and implement plans to tackle current anti-social behaviour in 'hot spot' locations across the borough. The Group also provides a response to any emerging issues that are identified by agencies and gives focus to repeat victims. Consideration is also given to locations that may benefit from the use of all or some of the powers available in the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014. Any long-standing and/or problematic issues that cannot be resolved at the ASB Governance Group are passed to a multi-agency Problem Solving Group (PSG). A Team Manger from the Youth Support Service attends these multi-agency meetings alongside representatives from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Sports Development, Housing Associations, Environmental Health and the Community Safety Team.

Anti-Social Behaviour Problem Solving Groups (PSGs)

2.10 The ASB Governance Group will determine the lead officer to co-ordinate the PSG. This meeting will include representatives from all or some of the agencies attending the ASB Governance Group, depending upon the nature of the presenting issue/s and any other representatives deemed appropriate. In most instances Wirral Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team Leader will be asked to co-ordinate the Group, in the event this is led by another service relevant Council Officers (including Youth Support) will be invited to attend.

2.11 Each Problem Solving Group will adopt a SARA approach to problem solving:

- SCANNING - Identification of the problem
- ANALYSIS – The reason there is a problem *
- RESPONSE – The actions that need to take place to remedy the problem
- ASSESSMENT – Ensuring the action taken has the desired outcome

**using statistics produced by the Joint Community Safety Team.*

The members of the PSG work together over a period of time to address entrenched hot-spot locations, developing short, medium and longer term responses to help secure sustainable change and positive outcomes. This may include all or some of the following:

- high visibility policing
- enforcement activity
- referral of identified young people into the Gateway
- referral of identified adults engaging in anti-social behaviour to Wirral

Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team

- youth engagement activity
- provision of diversionary and positive activities
- education/awareness activity (including visits to schools)
- environmental clean ups
- reparation and/or community payback
- referrals into Wirral Neighbourhood Justice Scheme
- marketing/communication strategy

The PSG will also request the authorisation of the multi-agency operations, Stay-Safe (Police) and Test Purchasing (Wirral Council) and other seasonal operations, each of which are detailed below.

Operation Stay Safe:

2.12 This is a Police led multi-agency operation that is coordinated to identify under 18's involved in or at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour (ASB), relating to drug and alcohol. It is predominantly delivered on a Friday and/or Saturday night where ASB, alcohol and drug misuse are statistically recorded to be most problematic. It is targeted to identify hotspot areas affecting locations where young people (or children) are more vulnerable and at risk; namely, parks, town centre areas and where there are reports linked to the night time economy.

2.13 The multi-agency approach includes (but is not limited to) the following partners:

- Merseyside Police
- Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team (WASBT);
- Youth Support Outreach Teams and specialist alcohol and substance misuse workers
- Community Patrol
- The Brook (sexual health services)
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Education Social Welfare Service
- Wirral Council Emergency Duty Team

2.14 This operation adopts a twin track approach to challenge and support for any young person found to be at risk from drugs or alcohol. Any young person found to be in possession of, or under the influence of drugs and/ or alcohol will be subject to the following:

- substance will be confiscated
- the person involved will be taken to a place of safety (accompanied by a Police Officer)
- immediate support or intervention i.e. health service involvement, will offered to the young person

- their parent(s)/carers or legal guardian are contacted and requested to come to the place of safety to discuss the incident with both enforcement and support agencies
- The parent(s)/carers or legal guardian will be offered support and where appropriate ensure a wrap around the family approach is considered
- Referrals to the most appropriate agencies will be made to ensure sustainable engagement

2.15 The support aspect of this operation is usually provided through the Youth Support Service, whose role is to provide information, advice and guidance in the form of a brief intervention around the issues of alcohol misuse, staying safe and reducing risks and consequences. Consideration will also be given to ensure that the most appropriate support referrals are identified and completed for the whole family, including referrals to family support and the intensive family intervention programme as appropriate (IFIP).

Test Purchase Operation:

2.16 This is a Wirral Council (Trading Standards) led multi-agency operation that is coordinated to check that businesses are complying with the law. The test purchases are predominantly for alcohol and tobacco, however this operation can also be coordinated for other purchases such as knives or seasonal purchases such as fireworks. These operations can be requested for a number of reasons. However, in terms of a PSG they will likely be requested where an area has been identified as having a high level of anti-social behaviour/street drinking or other similar problems that cause concern.

2.17 A test purchase operation is where a young person usually aged no older than 16½ enters a shop attempts to or buys an age restricted product such as alcohol or tobacco. Trading Standards will take proportionate action following the sale of an age restricted product; this could be a warning, a simple caution, a license review or prosecution.

2.18 Outreach Youth Support will target areas where individuals or groups are identified as being involved and will provide information, advice and guidance in the form of a brief intervention around the issues of drug or alcohol misuse, staying safe and reducing risks and consequences.

Seasonal Operations

2.19 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and Merseyside Police coordinate activity in the two weeks from Mischief Night, covering the week of Bonfire Night and Bonfire Night itself. With both aiming to prevent issues arising from bonfires, fireworks, associated ASB, youths causing annoyance and risk taking behaviour.

2.20 Partners include, but are not limited to:

- WASBT
- Youth Support
- Sports Development Unit
- Probation Service
- Environmental Services
- Community Safety
- Voluntary Sector Services

2.21 An important aspect of this operation is youth engagement and Youth Support provide a menu of both existing and additional activities and provisions over this period to support the prevention and reduction to ASB across the whole borough.

Measuring Success of Responding to Locational Anti-Social Behaviour

2.22 Success can be measured through a reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour but there are wider measures of success, such as an increase in engagement in positive activities and improved perceptions of anti-social behaviour. A PSG will conclude its work when the anti-social behaviour issues have been resolved or reduced sufficiently. However, an exit strategy is implemented to ensure that the positive results are sustained; this includes some or all agencies continuing activity in the area.

2.23 It is important to note that the level of activity that can be provided for multi-agency operations is dependent on the level of resource available. Where funding is restricted or unavailable it limits the ability of this wider multi-agency approach, which may result in enforcement, rather than implementing the most effective method of dealing with the presenting anti-social behaviour through a collaborative multi-agency approach.

2.24 The case study (at Appendix1) illustrates the relationship between ASB and the Youth Service – it outlines involvement through a recent PSG which centred on issues of youth ASB in Woodchurch.

Community Safety Partnership Strategy

2.25 It is a statutory requirement for the Council to operate a Community Safety Partnership and produce an accompanying Strategy. The current strategy (2011-14) contains a number of priorities which were reviewed in 2014 and are directly linked to the prevention of ASB:

- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Reducing the amount of unlawful damage that occurs on Wirral
- Reducing the number of young people illegally drinking alcohol
- Reducing the impact of drug abuse
- Take effective action on all forms of hate crime
- Manage offenders who commit disproportionately high levels of crime
- Reduce shoplifting
- Sports development to engage and divert youths from Anti Social Behaviour
- Take effective action on all forms of hate crime
- 7 Beats (Extending Birkenhead's Safer Communities Initiative)

Figure 1 Wirral Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2014/15

2.26 These priorities demonstrate the importance that all partners place on ASB. This importance is also reflected in the Police and Crime Commissioners Strategy, where the reduction of ASB is seen as a priority.

2.27 As a result of these various strategies, the rising importance of ASB and the fact that ASB covers both adults and young persons an internal review of Community Safety and ASB has been undertaken as part of the Future Council work. The results of this project anticipate a move for WASBT to join the Community Safety Team as a new service which will be entitled The Corporate and Community Safety Team. It is expected that this newly formed team will relocate to operate alongside the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), the social care front door and the targeted services gateway team, at the offices in Moreton.

2.28 Partner agencies have welcomed this move as it allows for far more joined up working and sharing of intelligence.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 This report is for information, therefore no risks are outlined.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 As this report is for information, this is not applicable.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The service will evaluate information from the recent Future Council public consultation exercise to ensure it responds accordingly to public comment.

5.2 The anticipated future configuration of the anti social behaviour service, within a new Corporate and Community Safety Team is currently subject to consultation which ends on the 6th February 2015. The design principles incorporate joining the

WASBT (Wirral Anti Social Behaviour Team) with the existing Community Safety Team and relocating them to the offices at Moreton which house the social care front door team, MASH and the targeted services gateway team. This will enhance the multi-agency working principles of both these teams and make far more efficient use of the joint agency information and intelligence. There will be no direct or negative impact from joining up services in how they are delivered in local communities.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

6.1 None.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 Voluntary, Community and Faith Groups work are involved in local responses to youth ASB. In addition, both the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Youth Service work in close partnership with a range of organisations.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

8.1 The Councils delivery approach for young people is transitioning to target resource and provision on those most in need of them. Youth and play provision has not been affected by the recent Future Council savings proposals. However, the Youth Service along with services that deliver to those most vulnerable and at risk will continue to review existing provision to ensure maximum effectiveness and outcomes against the impact of interventions.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No - as the report is for information to Members and there are no direct equalities implications at this stage.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 That the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee note the content of this report to consider how it may further support Youth ASB.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 The Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee have requested this report to consider and better understand the current relationship and operational priorities between Youth and ASB.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Youth Outreach / ASB Case Study

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date
N/A	

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children's Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee – <i>Scrutiny Review: Youth Outreach Service – Final Report</i>	11 November 2008
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee - <i>Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review Update</i>	16 March 2010
Youth & Play Service Advisory Committee –	18 October 2011

<p><i>Organisation of Youth Outreach Update</i> Reference Material Date</p> <p>Community safety Partnership Strategy 2011-14 Reviewed 2014</p> <p>Merseyside Police Commissioner Priorities 2014-15</p> <p>http://www.merseysidepcc.info/home/about-us/janes-priorities.aspx 2014/15</p>	
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Case Study: Anti-Social Behaviour from Youths Causing Annoyance in the Elthan Green area of Woodchurch

Background

In November 2013 the Elthan Green area of Woodchurch was identified at the monthly multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Governance Group (ASBGG) as an emerging locational hotspot by Youth Support and Merseyside Police. This was due to an increase of reports to Merseyside Police and Wirral Community Patrol of youths causing annoyance and also Youth Support workers were becoming aware of problems through both their outreach and centre based work.

The information shared and collated enabled the prediction of a future locational hotspot. Therefore, ASBGG instructed Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team (WASBT) to coordinate a Problem Solving Group (PSG) to respond to the increase of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and prevent a long standing issue. This meeting was held in December 2013 and attended by the following.

- WASBT
- Youth Support
- Merseyside Police
- Community Patrol
- Magenta Housing
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Sports Development Unit

As is usual procedure each agency had prepared all relevant information prior to the PSG which was sent to WASBT who in turn collated the information and presented the following to the members of the PSG at the start of the meeting.

- A group of 20 youths (predominantly male) were reported to be causing anti-social behaviour in and around the direct area of Elthan Green, Woodchurch
- This group was proving to be extremely hard to reach and refusing to engage with services
- The ASB included, criminal damage, hate race, rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour towards shop worker/owners and their customers
- The police were also investigating a number of assaults and public order offence with regard to this group

Information shared at the PSG identified that the reports were not coming from the residents who lived in or directly surrounding Elthan Green they were being reported by the shop staff and customers. Police intelligence had identified that local residents were refusing to make any official complaints and this was reportedly due to a fear of reprisal.

The PSG also identified a number environmental, building security and complex design issues that were significantly contributing to the increase in ASB.

The PSG produced an action plan which focused upon:

- Enforcement
- Improving public perception to encourage and support increased reporting
- Supporting Victims
- Youth Engagement
- Improving Environment

Each area within the action plan was assigned a named lead officer/agency and all developments were monitored and continuously reported back to WASBT who acted as the central point of contact to ensure all information was being shared efficiently and effectively to all partners involved and that ASBGG was updated at each meeting.

Youth Support lead on 'Youth Engagement' and implemented a project of work designed with the most appropriate youth activity to tackle the exact issues identified at PSG. This project is outlined below:

Youth Engagement Project Out-Line

An eight week project began on January 10th 2014 and ran each Friday evening, supported by Merseyside Police, Youth Support (i.e. West Wirral Youth Outreach Team, Response, Fender Youth Club), Sports Development Unit, local community and parents.

Prior to the project starting, young people from the area, including the 20 young people targeted, were consulted with regard to what activity they would engage in.

The project comprised of two interventions:

1. **The Kontactabus:** was deployed between 6.30 – 8.30pm on a Friday evening staffed by workers from the youth clubs and outreach team and supported by a mobile sports session, through Sports Development staff. This activity was deployed in an area away from Elthan Green to give the residents respite. This supported other elements of the PSG action plan to encourage residents to report incidents of ASB. Whilst it was targeted to the 20 youths causing ASB, it was designed to be open to any young person aged 11-19 living in the area. This approach provided the opportunity to build relationships with the targeted young people and challenge and support their current behaviour.
The sessions were also attended by the Youth Support Service's alcohol and substance misuse workers who supported specific interventions to young people regarding alcohol and substance misuse.
2. **Outreach:** An Outreach Team targeted Elthan Green between 8:30pm-10:30pm . worked to engage with the very hard to reach young people and encourage them to participate in the earlier activity, support positive behaviour from the young people whilst they were in Elthan Green and also supported the wider action plan from the PSG with regard to reassuring residents and challenging community perception.

Measuring Success

In January 2014 Elthan Green was recorded (as predicted in November) as a locational hotspot at ASBGG. It should be noted that this is often the case when a multi-agency response is deployed into a locational hotspot. There is customarily an aim within a PSG action plan to reassure victims and encourage them to report ASB, this usually results in an initial increase in recorded incidents, which ensures an actual not perceived position..

It is important to measure the success not only on the reduction of ASB but also on the length of time the area continues to be recorded as a locational hotspot, as well as the wider factors such as an increase in and sustained engagement with positive activities, reduced incidents, improved relationships and an improved perception within the community of anti-social behaviour.

Project Outcomes

- Between November 2013 and May 2014 there was a **75%** decrease in ASB in Elthan Green
- The area was recorded as a locational hotspot at ASBGG in January 2014. It was no longer a recorded locational hotspot at ASBGG in March 2014*
- Over the 8 week period the project averaged 40 young people per sports session and 25 young people per outreach session
- The project developed positive relationships not only with the area youth work staff but with wider support agencies and the neighbourhood Pplice. The improved relationships allowed areas of risk to be disclosed and the youths to be directed to the most appropriate support
- It allowed Youth Support staff to build and develop relationships and to support individuals to recognise issues presented by their own behaviour, workers both challenged and supported any youth involved in or at risk of being involved in ASB;
- A number of young people involved in the project were referred to the Youth Support Service's GIRLS or LADS project – both of which provide intensive group work around risk taking behaviour for more vulnerable young people (**see notes below for greater detail);
- A number of young people contacted via the project were referred through to the Gateway for Early Help interventions via Team Around the Family (TAF). A number of young people were known to Targeted Services and already receiving a single agency intervention or involved in TAF. These interventions ensure an appropriate multi-agency response for individual young people and their families;

- This Project drew on strengths from the wider community, including young people and parents who supported the initiative, it supported wider community cohesion which developed as a response to the issues (see next point)
- A group of parents started meeting as a result with a view to enhancing and developing additional youth activities on the estate. This initiative is being supported by local elected members and Youth Support officers.

Notes:

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WASBT was in weekly contact with both the residents of Elthan Green and the staff of the local shops. Also Merseyside Police were coordinating regular reassurance visits. Therefore the reduction in reported incidents was not due to incidents simply not being reported.

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G.I.R.L.S. Project

The G.I.R.L.S. Project, funded by Public Health Outcomes Fund, is a specialist project specifically designed to support the most vulnerable and at risk young women aged 13 -19 across Wirral.

The project, offers a unique, informal and educational 12 week personal development programme to Wirral young women, which includes a weekend residential at Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre and a 'finale' celebration event.

The overall aims of the project are to:

1. *Reduce risk taking behaviour including drug and alcohol misuse*
2. *Reduce offending / re-offending and anti-social behaviour*
3. *Increase resilience around peer pressure and harmful relationships*
4. *Improve aspirations and opportunities, particularly regarding healthy lifestyles and making informed choices*

LADS Project

The project is aimed at young men aged between 13-19 years old and runs in the four Wirral localities. Each project has up to 14 young men participating on each course.

The project has been designed to address a number of issues relevant to young men in today's society, including:

- *Drug / alcohol misuse*
- *Harmful / exploitative relationships*
- *Criminal / anti-social behaviour*
- *Raising aspirations and developing resilience*

Each of the four groups take part in an 8 week informal education programme aimed at developing young men's awareness and an understanding of the above issues to support them to build confidence, self-esteem and strengthen resilience.

Towards the end of the project there is a residential run from Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre to consolidate what the young men have learned throughout the course. There is also be a focus on building on skills, strategies and aspirations and the young men work towards setting a personal action plan for their future.