

Report of the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group 2013/14

Review of Anti Social Behaviour Partnership Working in the Borough



Members of the Working Group

Cllr Dominic Gilham (Chairman)

Cllr Lynne Allen

Cllr Wayne Bridges

Cllr Janet Gardner

Cllr Shirley Harper-O'Neill

Cllr Peter Kemp

CONTENTS

Chairman's Foreword	3
Recommendations	4
Background to this Review	5
Current Situation	6
Working in Partnership / Future Work	13
Conclusions	17
Appendix A - Background Reading	18
Appendix B - Terms of Reference	19
Appendix C - Witnesses	20



CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

This Working Group was set up by the External Services Scrutiny Committee to review, understand and highlight how Hillingdon and its partner organisations deal with Anti Social Behaviour (ASB). As well as being Vice-Chairman of the External Services Scrutiny Committee, I was appointed to chair this Working Group to look at the review and report back to the parent Committee.

As the issues covered by ASB are extensive, the Council has devised a broader definition of ASB and deemed it to be: "behaviour which either deliberately, or due to negligence, causes a nuisance to other people and unreasonably interferes with people's rights to use and enjoy their homes and community".

I welcomed the opportunity to look into this important issue as, although the levels of ASB in Hillingdon compare favourably with other London boroughs, it can sometimes feel like anti-social behaviour is a blight on our community.

ASB is often thought to be a victimless crime in that it is not necessarily aimed at an individual, but this is not true. Even though it is often not directed at them, our residents can be affected by ASB. None of this behaviour is pleasant or acceptable and it can have a significant impact on individual lives.

I would like to sincerely thank all of the witnesses for their invaluable contributions to this review, especially residents who gave up their time to provide feedback in relation to the way in which Hillingdon and other parties currently deal with ASB. Their input has helped the Working Group to come up with recommendations to Cabinet which will build on the good work already being undertaken by the Council so that we continue to put our residents first.

Councillor Dominic Gilham
Chairman of the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following its review, the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group, via the External Services Scrutiny Committee, has made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- 1. That the Cabinet endorse the wide range of investigation and enforcement issues undertaken by the ASBI and Community Safety Teams, putting residents first, noting that this Council is the first to amalgamate this type of enforcement, regulatory services and ASB in this way.**
- 2. That the Cabinet endorse the continued development of a vulnerability assessment tool to allow officers to identify vulnerable victims of ASB, offer them additional support during the investigation process and link them to any further support available within the Council, partner agencies or in their community.**
- 3. That the Cabinet Members for Community, Commerce and Regeneration and Social Services, Health & Housing consider requesting that officers introduce a modular approach to training packages for the ASBI Team and other Council staff to maintain skills and increase knowledge and awareness of the issues that are dealt with by ASBI Team.**
- 4. That the Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration consider whether to request that the Corporate Services and Partnerships POC undertake a review of the current Members' Enquiry system during the 2014/2015 municipal year to ensure information and intelligence generated by it provides added value to Councillors, relevant services and residents.**
- 5. That the Cabinet note the planned upgrades to current computer and mobile devices across the organisation and, in conjunction with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, ensure that the ASBI Team is supplied with effective modern, mobile technology in order to spend the maximum amount of time in the community investigating issues and taking remedial action.**
- 6. That the Cabinet request that officers investigate the possibility of increasing the number of Council tenants included in the annual ASB satisfaction survey.**
- 7. That the Cabinet Members for Central Services and Community, Commerce and Regeneration consider with the Head of Communications the possibility of additional publicity being given to what constitutes ASB and how residents can report it.**

BACKGROUND TO THIS REVIEW

- Anti-social behaviour:*
1. (noun) behaviour that lacks consideration for others and may cause damage to the society, whether intentionally or through negligence.
 2. (broad legal definition¹) conduct by a person over 10 years of age which caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household.
 3. (wider Council definition) behaviour which either deliberately or due to negligence causes a nuisance to other people and unreasonably interferes with people's rights to use and enjoy their homes and community.

Part of the External Services Scrutiny Committee's remit is to act as a Crime and Disorder Committee as defined in the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 and carry out the bi-annual scrutiny of decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions. As well as receiving evidence from the members of the Safer Hillingdon Partnership at two meetings each year, the Committee has undertaken more in-depth reviews on crime related issues such as re-offending.

Anti social behaviour (ASB) covers a wide range of behaviour, such as damaging the environment, low-level disputes and clashes of life-style, causing serious nuisance to others and even threats of violence and criminal activity. The negative impact that ASB can have on residents' quality of life resulted in the Council launching a pledge in 2010 "to help keep anti-social behaviour out of the picture in Hillingdon". This pledge was accompanied by a range of work to support its aims.

Issues around ASB were last scrutinised by one of the Council's Policy Overview or Scrutiny Committees during the 2006/2007 municipal year. As such, it is thought that this review is timely. Members continue to regularly receive complaints about ongoing issues of ASB through their casework. It was anticipated that this scrutiny review would give Members the opportunity to better understand how the ASB strategy is being implemented on the ground and enable recommendations to be made that would enhance current service delivery.

Structure

The information, evidence and findings of this review are set out under the following headings:

1. Current Situation
2. Working in Partnership / Future Work
3. Conclusions

¹ Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s.1

CURRENT SITUATION

A significant amount of work has already been undertaken by a range of organisations to deal with anti social behaviour (ASB) in the Borough.

Anti Social Behaviour Investigations Team (ASBIT)

In September 2010, as part of a Business Improvement Delivery (BID) review, five services that dealt with anti-social behaviour across the Council were brought together into a single team – the Anti Social Behaviour Investigation Team (ASBIT). The theory behind the merger of the teams was to enable all of the officers to deal with any ASB issue that arose. Although there are clearly individuals that will retain a specialist knowledge of certain areas, every member of ASBIT is now able to deal with any service related issue. This will provide residents with a much more joined up and effective service. It is thought that this may be the only council in the country to have taken this step.

1

That the Cabinet endorse the wide range of investigation and enforcement issues undertaken by the ASBI and Community Safety Teams, putting residents first, noting that this Council is the first to amalgamate this type of enforcement, regulatory services and ASB in this way.

When ASBIT became operational, it took over the responsibilities of the former Street Scene Enforcement Team, Community Safety Tasking Team, Hillingdon Homes ASB Team, Noise Team, Private Sector Housing (nuisance) and abandoned vehicles. As well as working with other Council teams (e.g., Waste Services, Planning Enforcement, Licensing, Applications Processing), the private sector and other public bodies to respond effectively to reports of ASB, additional links are now being developed with new teams such as Early Intervention to further improve the service provision. It is anticipated that the ASBI and Community Safety Teams will continue to work with the new Early Intervention and Prevention Service to develop clear referral pathways between the two service areas.

Actions taken by the ASBIT include:

- Education – providing advice, producing information letters and supporting schemes such as JETs and Junior Citizens (the JETs programme provides an opportunity for the Council to work with primary schools to educate and encourage children to be environmentally responsible young citizens that respect their local area and others in the community);
- Support – building links with organisations such as HAGAM and the Housing Needs team with regard to rough sleepers and substance dependence; and
- Enforcement – working with the Environmental Enforcement Team (EET)/NSL, gathering evidence using mobile CCTV, information sharing (there are protocols in place with the police, CNWL and Social Services) and formal action.

The Council has recently awarded the environmental enforcement contract to NSL to provide an EET to deal with 16 offences in the community in relation to: littering; graffiti; flyposting; Dog Control Orders; street trading; nuisance vehicles; unauthorised

distribution of free printed matter; and incorrectly presented waste. These officers issued 593 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) in the first 3 months of the new contract (to October 2013) - 2% were served for illegal street trading, 5½% for spitting and 92½% for littering.

The Borough Community Safety survey in September 2013 identified that 73% of respondents thought that ASB was a priority concern. Since 2010, the percentage of Residents Survey respondents that are satisfied with the way that the Council and police deal with ASB has increased from 51% to 56% in 2012. It is anticipated that this gradual increase in satisfaction rates will continue in the 2013 survey results. Further possible improvements to these satisfaction levels might be gleaned from the victims of crime survey.

With regard to the provision of CCTV in the Borough, in addition to the permanent fixed cameras in town centres, the Council operates 11 mobile units. Two of these units are funded by TfL and are permanently installed at the Carlyon Road underpass following an incident there some time ago. This means that there are nine units that can be moved around the Borough to meet demand – although the HIP Steering Board has approved the purchase of additional units. All units are monitored at the Civic Centre.

The ASBIT regularly request land registry searches to ensure that they have the correct details for when a notice is served on the tenant and the landowner (where the owner is not the occupier). Finding the landowner sometimes takes a significant amount of time, particularly when it is in relation to a plot of land rather than a building address. Where appropriate (and requested), this type of information is shared internally. There is also an electronic register of issues that have been logged by the ASBIT which could be made available to selected officers.

Contact Centre

In the six months from April to September 2013, the Council's Contact Centre dealt with 2,972 quick queries in relation to ASB. The Contact Centre staff will soon be able to use a short assessment questionnaire to award a vulnerability score to callers if they feel that they are being targeted because of their vulnerability (based on the information that the caller provides). This action is being introduced as part of the Council's programme of continuous improvement.

The vulnerability assessment questionnaire that will be used by ASBIT is fundamentally the same as the one used by the police. Although there is no requirement for the Council to use this assessment tool, there is an assumption that the Mayor of London will, at some point, expect the MPS and local authorities to have more joined up practices. It is anticipated that using the same assessment tool as the police will help to facilitate this. To develop the usefulness of this tool even further, it has been suggested that the Transformation Team might be interested in applying it to other front line services.

2

That the Cabinet endorse the continued development of a vulnerability assessment tool to allow officers to identify vulnerable victims of ASB, offer them additional support during the investigation process and link them to any further support available within the Council, partner agencies or in their community.

Youth Offending

The Council's Youth Offending Service (YOS) works with young people aged 10 to 17 that have been arrested by the police. Some of those young people that are sentenced in the Youth Court receive an Anti-Social Behaviour Order as part of their order. The YOS then undertake an assessment based on the risk factors associated with offending and develop and deliver an intervention package designed to reduce the risk of both further offending and anti-social behaviour.

The YOS currently has about 180 open cases, which is thought to be a significant reduction over the last five years. It is suggested that this has resulted, in part, from early intervention services plus a change in police practice (i.e., the changes to pre-court options which are delivered by the YOS). This reduction is particularly impressive, given that the total number of 10 to 17 year olds in the Borough is increasing.

The Youth Justice Board has recently made monies available to Youth Offending teams to increase the skills of practitioners in delivering restorative justice. Restorative justice ranges from the perpetrator writing a letter of apology to the victim, through to face to face victim-offender conferences.

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

There has been a 30% reduction in the number of ASB related calls received by the police. The MPS has recently installed a new system called Airspace to log ASB calls and provide an audit trail of any resultant action that is taken. The system allocates a unique reference number to an incident, and enables calls to be categorised and victim vulnerability assessments to be undertaken.

The MPS vulnerability assessment questionnaire comprises 18 questions and enables the police to identify how quickly a response is needed and what level of resources are required. As a result of the questionnaire, although only two incidents of ASB in the Borough have so far been classified as urgent, there are a number of incidents of ASB that have been identified solely because the assessment was undertaken.

Since its adoption, the MPS Airspace system that is used to log ASB calls has resulted in a slight decrease in the number of repeat callers, which indicates that the calls are being dealt with in a more timely fashion. Although officers are immediately tasked with actioning the ASB calls when they come in, it is acknowledged that there are still some issues where further work is needed and improvements could be made. These issues include:

- further work before the start of the summer to reduce the number of street drinkers in Hayes Town Centre;
- reducing the nuisance caused by minors riding mini motos in the north of the Borough – the MPS would prosecute any riders caught without insurance, etc, and would also aim to target the offenders' parents for aiding and abetting;
- reducing the number of ASB incidents involving taxi drivers waiting for fares in areas around the airport;
- reducing the number of instances of ASB in betting shops around the Borough – Detective Chief Superintendent Steve Kershaw, the Borough Commander of Hillingdon, had specifically requested that violent crimes be targeted in the Borough; and

- reducing the number of street drinkers loitering in Uxbridge Town Centre – it was noted that the MPS had added to local resources by recently employing a new PCSO to patrol the area.

As with all public bodies, the MPS has limited resources and, as such, needs to target them as effectively as possible. The needs of each ward varies because the type ASB endured by each varies significantly depending on the area. However, there are good systems in place which have resulted in improvements such as a significant reduction in the number of reports of burglary.

Operation Cubo is regularly undertaken by the MPS (on instruction from the Mayor of London) to target drivers who have no insurance or who are driving badly. This police presence also acts as a deterrent to other drivers. Those drivers that are targeted by Cubo are often the perpetrators of other crimes that are unrelated to driving offences.

In addition to Operation Cubo, on two days each month, Operation Big Wing is undertaken by the MPS to target specific offences such as theft, drugs, etc. For example, as instances of “dipping” increase around Christmas, the MPS put plain clothed officers on the street to specifically target this offence. As a result of targeting specific offences at specific times, instances of robbery in the Borough have reduced by 35-40%.

ASBIT has been working closely with the police on individual ad hoc cases of ASB as well as planned operations such as Operation Big Wing. One case had started as a noise complaint and resulted in a successful drugs search and seizure.

The Police Tasking Team (PTT) includes two dedicated police officers who work solely on ASB. Although there are currently 43 active Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) prompting significant ongoing work, it should be noted that this is lower than in most other London boroughs. It is anticipated that the implementation of the new policing model in 2014 will necessitate a new injunction to replace the ASBO. This new power is expected to require a similar contribution to that currently provided by the MPS and the Council to ensure that it is effective. Until the new model becomes effective, it is unclear what impact (if any) it will have on ASB.

Hillingdon has been lucky to retain a specialist licensing police officer when many other Boroughs have lost theirs. This has enabled the police to continue to work closely with the Council’s Trading Standards to undertake test purchasing to target the illegal sale of alcohol to minors. This test purchasing is often undertaken on intelligence that comes from parents and grandparents. The majority of those businesses that are found to be prolific in their illegal sale of alcohol to children tend to be independent grocery stores and off licences. Those businesses that flout the law will continue to be targeted in 2014.

Although there had been little trouble in Hillingdon at the time, following the riots in 2011, the Multi Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) team was set up. This group meets each quarter to identify an area which has an ingrained ASB issue and then meets in the area to discuss the issue. This meeting results in the creation of a three month plan and a list of actions which are agreed by the MAPS team on site and which are subsequently followed up on site.

London Fire Brigade (LFB)

Although the London Fire Brigade (LFB) doesn't actively deal with ASB, it assists partner organisations and the community in tackling ASB in the Borough. LFB is currently delivering a lot of preventative work to reduce the amount of fires that officers have to put out and, in order to educate and inform, the Service has earmarked £1m in its budget for youth engagement.

LFB runs the Junior Citizens scheme which involves 50 schools and approximately 3,000 10 year olds and attracts a £10k grant from the Council. The scheme involves LFB running through ten different scenarios with the children in relation to issues that could be deemed to be anti social behaviour.

In addition, LIFE (Local Intervention Fire Education) is an intensive five day course (Monday to Friday) that is facilitated by firefighters at operational fire stations. The course is available to 14 to 17 year olds who, for example, have been in trouble with the police, or have an ASBO, or have issues with school. Each course involves up to 15 young people who have been referred by the Youth Offending Service or local schools. Consideration is being given to extending the LIFE course to troubled families.

The LIFE courses, which are match funded by the LFB, cost £23k each time they are run and involve seven trainers. At the end of the course, the young people are involved in a "pass out parade" and receive a certificate. 14 young people from Hillingdon have taken part in the course this year – with ten of them "passing out" at the end.

Parents of young people that have an unnatural fixation with fire are able to contact the LFB for support. The Juvenile Fire Setters Scheme was set up to help these parents by providing specialist advisors to speak to the young person about their behaviour and the consequences of playing with fire.

In addition to these services, the LFB regularly hold open days and show groups around the fire station. These groups include classes of schools children, young people on the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, Beavers, Scouts, etc. In addition, as happens occasionally, if a sole individual arrives at a fire station and asks to look around, the officers are as accommodating as they can be.

Oasis Café

The Oasis Café at St Margaret's church in Uxbridge is the only community café operating in the town centre. The café opens for four hours each day from Monday to Friday and five hours on a Saturday. Because the Oasis attracts a huge breadth of people that visit the coffee shop and/or the community drop in centre, this sometimes causes tensions. Those using the drop in facility have a range of issues and include people with mental health issues, addictions, homelessness, ex-offenders, troubled families and individuals with learning difficulties.

The Café occasionally attracts individuals who loiter on the forecourt outside the church drinking, begging or generally behaving unacceptably. There was a recent incident where a fight broke out in the church entrance porch and the police were called and another incident where a member of staff administering the foodbank was assaulted and racially abused. To help deal with these anti social incidents, it has been suggested that Café staff might benefit from additional training on things like conflict management.

Although there are boundaries of acceptable behaviour, these incidents need to be balanced against the fact that the facility is providing help for these individuals to enable them to change.

Although the assistance provided by the MPS is praised by those who run the Café, since the adoption of the new policing model, there appeared to have been a reduction in the amount of police support available to the Oasis. However, because the support and facilitation that the service provides are deemed to be incredibly valuable, the MPS has provided an additional dedicated PCSO that recently started work in Uxbridge town centre. It is hoped that this visible presence / deterrent will provide the Café with the support that it needs.

Street Angels

The Street Angels was launched in October 2009 and provides support for individuals in Uxbridge on Friday nights (and on some Saturdays too). The Street Angels patrol in groups of 3-5 and provide a range of services including: help for those that have drunk too much alcohol; providing flip flops for anyone struggling to walk in heels; helping people to get home (by organising taxis); and providing support for those that are suicidal.

The Street Angels work closely with the CCTV operators and police and, in a recent incident, were called to check on two people who were seemingly unconscious on the street near the station. On investigation, it transpired that the two individuals were aged 13 and 15 and, because they didn't have enough money to get home, had decided to sleep on the street on an incredibly cold night. It was possible that, if they hadn't been found, they could have died from exposure to the cold.

A range of training is provided for Street Angels. This training includes training on mental health issues, risk assessments, conflict management and basic training in listening skills and first aid.

Hayes Town Centre

It is thought that ASB and the fear of crime are the two most prevalent issues of concern for Hayes residents. Although Hayes town centre is often seen as being a high crime area, this is not actually true, with Uxbridge town centre having a higher number of instances of alcohol fuelled crime.

It is recognised that ASB covers a huge range of issues and, to deal with these, Hillingdon has put robust systems in place. However, to facilitate a change in behaviour, it is acknowledged that there needs to be a balance between enforcement and education, and a more proactive approach with greater emphasis on prevention and problem-solving.

It has been suggested that the loss of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team has resulted in less work being undertaken in relation to ASB as residents no longer have a local contact to whom they can confidentially report a specific individual. That said, the MPS has provided additional police presence in Hayes, which is now starting to have an effect on the levels of ASB as well as reassuring residents and reducing the fear of crime.

There have been a number of successful initiatives that have reduced the impact of ASB such as Cleaner and Greener Hayes (which was originally instigated by the Hayes Town Partnership working with the Council's Health Promotion Team). However, further improvements could still be made. For example, consideration could be given to putting measures in place to prevent the dumping of rubbish by litter bins (this would save the Council money by not having to remove the waste and incur the associated costs).

With regard to the street drinkers in Hayes town centre, HAGAM has been brought in to engage with those individuals that want to be engaged. As a result, some of the street drinkers have received treatment and some have moved into hostels. Those that don't want to engage and continue to act disruptively could end up receiving an ASBO to prevent them from going into town centre.

Young People

Although there is no apparent gang related crime in the Borough, groups of young people do sometimes hang around together. These young people are not necessarily doing anything wrong but they are sometimes deemed to be intimidating when they hang around in groups. In the past, police engagement with young people has resulted in the creation of a kickabout area, which is still in place. It is thought that establishing a dialogue with those young people that hang around would be a positive step towards resolving any issues that arise.

With regard to the perception that the older generation have of young people (and vice versa), it has been suggested there would be benefit in facilitating communication between them to break down barriers. To this end, assisted shopping events are organised and go some way to improving these relations by getting young people to help older people with their shopping. It had proved to be a real "eye opener" for both groups. In addition, the Good Deed Day organised by students at Uxbridge College and Brunel University has been so successful that it will be replicated in Hayes.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP / FUTURE WORK

Training

The progress made by officers and managers in the ASBIT and the Community Safety Team has been significant, particularly in relation to developing their ability to deal with issues that had not previously fallen within their remit. It is important that managers continue to ensure that the skills, training and procedures used by officers are kept under regular review to maintain a high standard of service provision.

Included in the Council's general training and development offering is an e-learning programme which provides basic information on the causes of fire, crime and falls. This e-learning module is targeted at all staff that deal with people that receive health or social care services in their own homes. As it stands at the moment, this training package (*Be Safe At Home*) is thought to be too longwinded and unwieldy to be used effectively. To make the training more targeted and manageable, it is suggested that the package be broken down into more digestible modules.

As well as officers around the Council being able to complete the relevant individual modules, developing the package content further would enable the ASBI Team to use the training to keep their skills, knowledge and understanding up to date. The modules could include training on the identification and support available for vulnerable victims and the tools and powers available to deal with ASB, including new legislation expected in 2014.

ASBIT continuously tries to improve the service that it provides and, as such, officers will soon be embarking on refresher training in relation to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) which ensures that investigations are undertaken lawfully.

3

That the Cabinet Members for Community, Commerce and Regeneration and Social Services, Health & Housing consider requesting that officers introduce a modular approach to training packages for the ASBI Team and other Council staff to maintain skills and increase knowledge and awareness of the issues that are dealt with by ASBI Team.

Legislative Changes

The Home Office is in the process of reviewing the use of tools and powers in relation to ASB. As a result, it is anticipated that, once the changes have been ratified by parliament, the number of formal powers held by the Council will reduce from 19 to 6 and the focus will move onto harm to victims rather than just categories of behaviour. Although these changes will result in the abolition of dispersal zones (DZs), those DZs that are already in place will remain active until their expiry date.

It is anticipated that the new powers will promote community empowerment by introducing a Community Trigger and a Community Remedy. A Community Trigger will have locally defined thresholds so that, if a victim reported X number of incidents in a specified period and did not believe that the issue had been adequately resolved, they

could request a case review. The Community Remedy would work along the same lines as a Restorative Justice and would provide out of court punishments for low level ASB that would need to be agreed by the police.

The Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) would be agreeing the menu of community remedies that would be available for use in London. Local authorities will then be expected to report back to MOPAC on the implementation of these at least once each year. Consideration will also need to be given to the menu of remedies agreed for the non-London areas that surround Hillingdon (e.g., Buckinghamshire) and how this might impact on the Borough.

Members Enquiries

Consideration will need to be given to how Members Enquiries (MEs) and the Council's petition process will fit in with Community Triggers and Community Remedies that are agreed by MOPAC. It has been suggested that the information generated by the current Members Enquiry system is not necessarily as useful as it could be and that further improvements could be made. For example, one ME could contain several reports of ASB. As such, the number of MEs in relation to a particular ward is not necessarily indicative of the number of instances of ASB in that area.

It is suggested that the Corporate Services and Partnerships POC be asked to consider whether or not it would be interested in undertaking a review of the ME system in the 2014/2015 municipal year to look at the possibility of including a new category of enquiry (distinct from enquiries about policy or process) which are "Member service requests" (actions raised on behalf of residents which require short term investigation and remedial action by an officer). These could then be tracked alongside service requests received direct from residents and thereby record the total volume of work dealt with by the service.

4

That the Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration consider whether to request that the Corporate Services and Partnerships POC undertake a review of the current Members' Enquiry system during the 2014/2015 municipal year to ensure information and intelligence generated by it provides added value to Councillors, relevant services and residents.

Mate Crime and Hate Crime

People with disabilities and other vulnerable people often become the victims of abuse which includes mate crime. Mate crime is when someone pretends to be a friend of someone with a learning disability and then uses them, their money or their belongings. This type of crime can result in reports of ASB, for example, if the perpetrator holds a noisy party in the victim's property.

Awareness of mate crime is being raised amongst front line Council officers and the police have signed up to the ten point pledge as part of Mencap's *Stand By Me* campaign to designate mate crime as a hate crime and not as ASB. To support the campaign, a DVD and leaflets have been produced to raise awareness generally about the issue of mate crime.

It has been suggested that consideration could be given to identifying the number of reports of harassment made to the Council and then breaking those figures down by type

(e.g., race related, sexual orientation related, disability related, etc) and by ward. Although race related crimes are often classed as hate crimes, disability related crimes (including hate crimes) are more often classed as ASB. As such, consideration could be given to identifying which crimes are being reported to the Council as hate crimes and which are being reported as ASB crimes.

Mobile Working

The ASBIT team moved over to mobile working some time ago and currently have laptops and dongles which enable officers to work out in the field. However, these have proven to be particularly unreliable. In an ideal world, the officers would like to be able to log an issue and take photos which can immediately be attached to the file and are instantly accessible to the Contact Centre if an enquiry came in whilst the officer was still out in the field.

It is suggested that the Council continues to investigate options to ensure that the ASBI Team is equipped with effective modern, mobile technology so that officers can spend the maximum amount of time in the community investigating issues and then taking remedial action.

5

That the Cabinet note the planned upgrades to current computer and mobile devices across the organisation and, in conjunction with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, ensure that the ASBI Team is supplied with effective modern, mobile technology in order to spend the maximum amount of time in the community investigating issues and taking remedial action.

Residents' Feedback

The ASBI Team has a number of national performance indicators. One of these indicators requires that the Council surveys all of its tenants that have reported instances of ASB to establish their satisfaction levels with the way in which the local authority dealt with the issue. This is done through an annual ASB satisfaction survey that is conducted by the Council with a sample of all residents that have reported ASB – a small sub set of these are Council tenants.

It has been suggested that further improvements (and added value) could be made by increasing the number of Council tenants included in the sample that is surveyed. This would ensure that more comprehensive feedback is received from Council tenants to enable the authority to fully meet its obligations as landlord to consult its tenants about the service.

6

That the Cabinet request that officers investigate the possibility of increasing the number of Council tenants included in the annual ASB satisfaction survey.

Awareness Raising

Residents will often not report an incident of ASB as: they don't think that anything will be done about it; they don't know who they should report it to; or they wouldn't necessarily class the behaviour as ASB. This is further exacerbated by the MPS definition of ASB

being different to the Council's definition. To help with this and to raise public awareness, the Working Group believes that consideration needs to be given to how residents could be provided with this information. Although the MPS no longer has a dedicated communications officer, the Council's website does provide residents with a lot of information about ASB. It is suggested that there may be benefit in the Council producing something like a wallet sized information card with the 999/101/Council telephone numbers which identifies what each service deals with.

7

That the Cabinet Members for Central Services and Community, Commerce and Regeneration consider with the Head of Communications the possibility of additional publicity being given to what constitutes ASB and how residents can report it.

DRAFT

CONCLUSIONS

Although the levels of ASB in Hillingdon compare favourably with other London boroughs, it can sometimes feel like anti-social behaviour is a blight on our community with patches of graffiti appearing on walls and dog foul being left on pavements. ASB is often thought to be a victimless crime in that it is not necessarily aimed at an individual but this is simply not true. Even though it is often not directed at them, our residents are still being affected by ASB. None of this behaviour is pleasant or acceptable and it can have a significant impact on individual lives.

The Council and its partners have been working hard to reduce instances of ASB in the Borough, but it is clear that this deplorable behaviour will never go away. As such, a large part of the work already undertaken has been in relation to making it easier for residents and their Councillors to report ASB. To complement this work, the police mount regular operations to proactively tackle ASB.

Clearly, anti-social behaviour (ASB) is not something that will disappear. However, that does not mean that our residents should have to endure this kind of nuisance. In addition to the work that has been undertaken locally, it is anticipated that the legislative changes expected in 2014 will go some way to helping the Council and its partners to deal with ASB. It is important that Hillingdon maintains its efforts to stamp out ASB in the Borough.

BACKGROUND READING

To assist with the writing of this review, reference has been made to a wide-ranging selection of background information:

- *Preventing and Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Beacon Update Report*; Report to the Community Safety Executive; Roy Goulding, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit Manager; Portsmouth City Council; 28 November 2007
- Definition of “anti-social behaviour”: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Social_Behaviour
- *Junior Environmental Teams*: <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/19777/About-JETs>
- *Business case: Raising awareness and training for front line staff and residents around Hate Mate crime*; *Social Care Briefing Note*
- *The Future of Tackling Anti Social Behaviour*, Local Government Association; 5 July 2012
- *Report a crime or antisocial behaviour*: <https://www.gov.uk/report-crime-anti-social-behaviour>
- *What is anti-social behaviour?*: http://www.met.police.uk/anti_social_behaviour/
- *Anti Social Behaviour*: <http://www.hmic.gov.uk/programmes/anti-social-behaviour/>
- *Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour*, London Councils; June 2013
- *Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill*; London Councils; June 2013
- *The Anti-Social Behaviour Bill*; London Councils; February 2013
- *New Arrangements for Funding Local Crime Prevention Services*; London Council February 2013
- *Local Crime Solutions, Borough/Project: Hillingdon Council Designing out subway crime*
- *Hate Crime and Mate Crime*; London Borough of Hillingdon; October 2013
- *Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter*; August 2013
- *Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter*; September 2013
- *Safer Hillingdon Partnership Board: Terms of Reference*; Ed Shaylor, Head of Community Safety; April 2013
- *Council Wins National Award for Preventing and Tackling ASB*: <http://www.boltonbsafe.org.uk/news-and-events/index.html>
- *Anti-Social Behaviour: Local Authority Responsibility and the Voice of the Victim*; The Cambridge Law Journal; Volume 62; Issue 02; July 2003; pp 305-334
- *Report of the Anti-social Behaviour Review*; London Borough of Camden; 24 January 2007

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members of the Working Group are asked to consider the following Terms of Reference for the review:

1. To consider the existing relationship between the Council and its partners in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) and make suggestions for any improvements that could be made to increase the effectiveness of partnership work in relation to ASB;
2. To consider internal and external arrangements in the Borough with regard to ASB, and any improvements that could be made;
3. To review whether ASB arrangements in the Borough are timely, effective and cost efficient;
4. To review the guidance and support that is currently available from the Council and partners to those who have been the victim of ASB;
5. To seek out views on ASB of residents and partner organisations, including the voluntary sector;
6. To examine best practice elsewhere through case studies, policy ideas, witness sessions and visits; and
7. After due consideration of the above, to bring forward cost conscious, innovative and practical recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to ASB arrangements in the Borough.

WITNESSES

Witness sessions for the review were held on 26 November 2013 and 12 December 2013 in which the Committee heard from the following expert witnesses:

Session 1

- Lynn Hawes – Service Manager, Youth Offending & Family Key Working Services, LBH
- Vicky Trott – Senior Policy Officer – Equalities & Diversity, LBH
- Liz Jones – Community Safety & CCTV Manager, LBH
- Bill Hickson – Anti Social Behaviour Investigations Team, LBH

Session 2

- Chief Inspector Rob Wilson – Metropolitan Police Service
- Inspector David George – Metropolitan Police Service
- Acting Borough Commander Martin Wilson – London Fire Brigade
- Reverend Dr June Hughman – Street Angels / Oasis Café, Uxbridge
- David Brough – Chairman, Hayes Town Partnership

In addition to the two witness sessions, Working Group Members met with a victim of cross border anti social behaviour on 7 January 2014 and visited the CCTV control room at the Civic Centre in Uxbridge on 10 January 2014.