



NORWICH City Council

Committee name: Scrutiny

Committee date: 21/09/2023

Report title: Review of how the council addresses anti-social behaviour

Portfolio: Councillor Jones, Deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety

Report from: Interim executive director of housing and community safety

Wards: All wards

Purpose

To explain how the council works to (and influences partners to) address ASB and community safety issues in Norwich. The scope of the report will explore the tools and powers available to deal with these issues.

Recommendation:

That members of the scrutiny committee consider the contents of this report and make any relevant recommendations to cabinet.

Policy framework

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the “People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city” corporate priority.

Report details

1. The purpose of this report is to show how the council work to (and influence partners to) address ASB and community safety (CS) issues in Norwich. The scope of this report will include some of the tools and powers available to deal with ASB and community safety issues. Relevant legislation will be referenced in the report.

Definition of ASB and scope of this report

2. Antisocial behaviour is behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment alarm or distress to one or more people not of the same household as the person responsible or it is behaviour that unreasonably interferes with other people's rights to use and enjoy their home and community.
3. This may include:
 - noise nuisance
 - intimidation or harassment
 - aggressive and threatening language or behaviour
 - hate behaviour that targets members of identified groups because of their perceived differences (for example, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability)
 - using housing accommodation to sell drugs or other unlawful purposes.
4. These types of behaviour, which can be committed by an individual or a group, threaten the quality of life of those living and working in our communities.¹
5. The scope of this report will cover the activities of the following teams and roles within the housing and community safety service²:
 - ASB team
 - CCTV team
 - Safer Neighbourhoods Co-ordinator
 - Community safety manager

Background to community safety team development since February 2022

6. Since February 2022, there has been considerable changes in our community safety team when an Acting Community Safety manager was installed and a ASB team manager was recruited permanently. After this we then undertook three recruitment campaigns for response officers, enforcement officers, resulting in five response officer (RO) positions being filled and two enforcement officer (EO) positions. We have also recruited an additional Triage and Support Officer.
7. We have released all agency officers and currently have two RO vacancies which we will be recruiting to at the earliest opportunity to take the team to full capacity.

¹ Norwich City Council ASB policy 2018.

² See "What we do document" for full list of roles in appendix to this report.

8. Induction and mandatory training have been completed for all new RO's. We also secured Safer Streets funding to allow five existing members of staff to complete the BTEC Level 3 -Advanced Award in Community Safety, Crime and Nuisance Management for Practitioners. In addition, all three Enforcement Officers, together with the ASB Manager, Interim Community Safety Manager and Safer Neighbourhoods Coordinator completed the BTEC Level 5 - Award in Community Safety Management for Managers. All remaining eligible team members will complete the Level 3 over the forthcoming year.
9. Karen Smith, ASB Manager, has delivered presentations detailing our tools and powers and how we use them to all Safer Neighbourhood Beat Managers in Norwich, Norwich Police Operational Partnership Team and colleagues and Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust to improve our working relationships. These have been received very well and there are plans in development to build on this. The same presentation has also been delivered to the Tenant Involvement Panel.
10. Since February 2022 we have issued:
 - 43 Community Protection Warnings (CPW),
 - 17 Community Protection Notices (CPN),
 - 3 Noise abatement Notices (NAN),
 - 3 Notices of Seeking Possession (NSP),
 - We have successfully applied at court for 3 Civil Injunctions (ASBI),
 - 3 Closure Orders
 - 3 warrants of execution to evict 3 tenants where all other interventions have been unsuccessful.
11. As a result of the above improvements the service (ASB) was removed from the Corporate Risk register at quarter four of 2022/23.

Strategic partnerships and community safety

12. Norwich City Council is part of Norfolk's Countywide Community Safety Partnership (NCCSP) which is made up of all Norfolk district councils, Norfolk County Council, Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk along with others, who are committed to working in partnership with victims and communities to tackle crime, antisocial behaviour and community safety. Since February 2022, the Acting Community Safety Manager has been a strong and vocal presence at this strategic level to help meet our statutory duties. The work involved includes the following subject areas (at a NCCSP and County level):
 - Developing a criminal exploitation communications strategy
 - Attending community relations and prevent strategic meetings
 - County lines strategic group
 - Modern slavery (Norfolk anti-slavery network)
 - Formation of the Norfolk drug and alcohol partnership
 - Prevent panel attendance
 - Norfolk domestic abuse partnership board (levering in funding for Norwich projects)
 - Supporting work on the emerging Serious Violence Duty (Strategic Assessment and Strategy)

Corporate plan and Norwich community safety strategy

13. As a result of the Corporate Plan priority work has been ongoing to produce the first Norwich community safety strategy that was published earlier this year. The strategy provides a framework through which we will work with our residents and our partners to identify and deal with issues of concern - making our city a safe place to live, work and visit. The strategy sets out our priorities for the next three years:

- Establish a new Safer Norwich Partnership Board to implement and develop an action plan and strategy delivery group.
- Reduce neighbourhood crime and Anti-social Behaviour and increase residents' feelings of safety.
- Reduce the incidence and impact of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- Reduce harm, vulnerability and violence related to substance and alcohol misuse.

14. The Norwich Community Safety Partnership will include the Council, Police, Probation and Offender Services, the NHS, social housing organisations, and voluntary and community organisations, who will work together to tackle the causes and prevent crime and disorder holistically in Norwich. The aim of the strategy and the partnership will be to deliver at a local level for our city and neighbourhoods. We will continue to take an active role in the Norfolk County Community Safety Partnership. This will allow us to have a cohesive approach to all elements of community safety. The inaugural meeting of the Safer Norwich Board will be held in September 2023.

Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative and associated activity

15. The Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative work was originally intended to focus on six neighbourhoods with the main aims of:

- understanding the community safety concerns of residents
- encouraging and supporting residents to report issues
- bringing together NCC services (CWS, Housing, ASB team, Community enabling) and external partners (particularly the police) to address those concerns. This includes informing and supporting the development of the Door Entry Access Control programme and other housing investment programmes.
- working with NCC services and others to support residents to increase legitimate use of the public spaces to deter ASB
- increasing feelings of safety in those neighbourhoods

16. Methods of engagement:

- Household feelings of safety surveys (500+ returns across the six areas)
- Multi-agency walkabouts
- 1-2-1 engagement with residents or groups

17. Survey results and walkabout feedback continues to inform activity and works in the six neighbourhoods.

Ad hoc 'Locational ASB' work

18. In addition to the more intensive long-term work in the six neighbourhoods the Safer Neighbourhood Coordinator also responds to reports of 'locational ASB' - ASB caused by persons unknown (at least initially)/transient groups - across the city.
19. The primary types of ASB reported are:
- ASB related to drug-dealing and drug-use in public/communal spaces especially in and around NCC housing stock
 - ASB related to street-drinking and chaotic/vulnerable individuals
 - ASB caused by younger people – particularly in and around housing areas and parks and open spaces.
20. The Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative approach - whether it be the long-term work or as a response to the ad hoc reports – involves working with a range of local partners and residents and is informed by the model used by the police.
- Scanning – what are the issues and are they being reported?
 - Analysis – what is facilitating or enabling the problematic behaviour (look at factors relating to the perpetrator/s, location and victim/s)
 - Response – what can be done and who will do it? (e.g. target-hardening, surveillance (natural or CCTV), environmental improvements)
 - Assessment – can/how do we measure the impact?
21. Adopting this approach means we will be able to more effectively target resources, implement measures that will have the greatest impact and learn from experience.

Anti-social behaviour related to car meets/car cruises

22. A significant piece of work over the last 18 months has been the establishment of a Public Space Protection Order to increase powers to deal with anti-social behaviour associated with car meets and car cruises.
23. Working with police, Councillors and residents to identify the issues, locations and requirements for the PSPO the Safer Neighbourhoods Coordinator led on the process of consultation and formal making of the Order.
24. The PSPO is now live and an enforcement agreement is in place with Norfolk Police and joint communications continue to be developed and deployed.

The Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative – Community Fund (SNICF) and external funding bids

25. The £50,000 SNICF is used to support community safety and anti-social behaviour objectives across the city.
26. The fund can pay for specific safety measures that benefit more than one property or to support community activity that helps deter ASB and crime. The

delivery of alley gates has been a key objective for the SNICF with 37 gates being installed providing improved protection for 169 properties.

27. The scheme is promoted through local police teams and local media. Further promotion is being planned with an emphasis on increasing the installation of gates on NCC housing alleys.
28. In addition to managing the SNICF the Safer Neighbourhoods Coordinator has also led, with partners including OPCCN and police, on the development and delivery of three successful Safer Streets Fund bids totalling in excess of £600,000.
29. These bids have funded (among other things):
- security doors and new shed doors on NCC housing stock
 - additional CCTV cameras and lighting upgrades in target neighbourhoods
 - extra capacity within the NCC licensing team to improve safety in the Night-time Economy (NTE)
 - NTE safety charter and campaign and SOS Bus support vehicle
 - Training and skills development for the ASB and Community Safety team
 - Property marking and home crime prevention advice
30. A bid for SSF5 is currently being assessed by the Home Office.

Partnership working

31. Tackling anti-social behaviour and community safety concerns requires input from many services and agencies.
32. The Community Safety team work with other NCC services and external partners in a variety of ways and through a variety of forums and meetings - some key ones are highlighted below.

Forum/meeting	Partners	Purpose	Frequency
Norwich anti-social behaviour action group	NCC services (Community safety and housing)/ police (SNTs and OPT/ housing providers/ supported accommodation services	Information sharing and problem-solving for individual ASB cases and area-based ASB	Every 4 weeks
Serious case update meeting	ASB/Community safety and OPT	Updates and actions relating to serious/long-standing ASB case management	Fortnightly
Complex Case Strategy Meetings	Full multi-agency meetings e.g. many NCC services, police, adult and children's services/mental health - whoever is needed.	Intensive case management	Ad hoc - can be requested by any service
Walkabouts/resident engagement activities	Multi-agency - especially NCC services (Community safety/ASB/CWS/Housing) and police – and Cllrs and residents	To engage communities, build relationships and gain better understanding of the issues of concern. Work with partners and residents to identify solutions and improvements	Some planned as part of SNI work or housing estate audits or LoveNorwich work. Others ad hoc if issues

			arise in a given locality e.g. requests by ward members
Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership	Statutory partners inc. police, OPCC, districts, fire service, probation, public health, children's services, adult services.	Statutory community safety partnership. Main board and multiple priority delivery groups.	Quarterly and ad hoc.
Night-time Economy Strategic Delivery Group	Police Community Safety team, NCC, OPCCN, public health, NBID	Understand and identify opportunities to reduce harm in the NTE- particular focus on Violence against Women and Girls	Quarterly

CCTV team approach

33. The CCTV team plays an important role in delivering our community safety approach. The council's CCTV system is made up of 113 fixed cameras in total, these cover the city centre (including the night time economy area) as well as communal areas in some of our residential properties across the city. There is also a small bank of redeployable cameras that can be placed in neighbourhoods for a temporary period to address community safety issues as part of a wider multi-agency response. Fixed cameras are recording 24 hours each day, 365 days a year, from a purpose-built control room. Recorded footage is automatically retained for 31 days until it is automatically overwritten by the system. Monitoring takes place at peak times.

34. In addition, we are also delivering additional CCTV coverage to areas of our city that have suffered from ASB related issues. The team are working closely with our Safer Neighbourhoods Co-ordinator, residents, and wider community safety partners to deliver these new schemes.

Tools and powers used to combat ASB and respond to community safety issues.

35. The ASB Policing and Crime Act 2014 "rationalised a large number of dedicated (but not necessarily effectively used) mechanisms and replaced them with a select few devices which are supposed to be flexible enough to deal with a wide range of ASB. Numerous separate remedies (ASBOs/ASBIs, etc) have been replaced with six new powers"³:

- Part 1 Civil injunction
- Criminal behaviour order
- Community protection notice
- Public spaces protection order
- New closure power
- Dispersal powers

36. As well as the above statutory powers the team use the following methods to curb ASB and CS issues:

- Acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs)

³ Page 1, Cornerstone on ASB, (Bloomsbury, London, 2019).

- Mediation using a third party service
- Engage support services and the use of Complex Case Strategy Meetings (CCSM)
- Signpost

Case Study

- 37.** Residents at a city centre block were reporting ASB incorporating drug use, noise and fouling of the stairwells which was making their lives unbearable. The source of the issue was identified to be a flat in the block occupied by a vulnerable substance user, who appeared to be allowing his home to be used by other users and some of the local homeless population in return for substances.
- 38.** Initially our first concerns were to support the resident to access the appropriate services to support recovery, however the resident had varying levels of engagement and advised that he wished to continue taking substances.
- 39.** When early intervention methods did not improve the situation, the resident was served with a CPW detailing the behaviour change expected. A number of these conditions were breached in a fairly short period of time, so the CPW was escalated to a CPN with similar conditions.
- 40.** We discussed other supportive measures with the resident such as a Partial Closure Order, which would effectively ban anyone without a legitimate reason to be at the property from entering, thus protecting the resident from those seeking to take advantage of his position, however he declined saying the visitors were his friends and he wanted them there.
- 41.** With no signs of behaviour change, and declining engagement with services, we eventually applied to the courts for possession of the property, and the tenant was evicted in January 2023. Other residents reported an improvement in the ASB almost immediately. Measures to reinforce the improvements and ownership of the communal area were considered but not required.

Background papers: None

Appendices: **Appendix A:** 'See What We Do' (listing team roles and their remits).

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Community safety

ASB, CCTV and Safer Neighbourhoods initiative

Chris Hancock – Housing partnerships and acting community safety manager.

Joe Siggins – National graduate development placement
Vacant – Community safety business support officer

ASB team

Karen Smith – ASB Team manager
Joanne Davis – ASB enforcement officer
Natasha Barker – ASB enforcement officer
Toni James – ASB enforcement officer

Simon Comer – ASB triage and support officer
Ahmed Sattar – ASB triage and support officer

Marc Evans – ASB response officer
Mhairi Doble – ASB response officer
Christine Bishop – ASB response officer
Ed Tyce – ASB response officer
Pete Williamson – ASB response officer
Joe Woodcock – ASB response officer
Safian Toheed – ASB response officer
Sarah Douglass – ASB response officer
Orson Carryl – Temp ending 31 May
Vacant post – ASB response officer

- Manage complex ASB casework, taking appropriate enforcement action where necessary, for all residents of Norwich, using mediation and conflict resolution where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Maintain the countywide ASB minimum standards in relation to ASB and risk.
- Take formal legal action and issue a range of ASB orders in serious ASB cases, ensuring equality considerations are given due regard. Working with the legal team Nplaw where necessary.
- Promote and coordinate the council's response to hate incidents, in its role as a third-party reporting agency for hate crime.
- Appropriately share information with police colleagues and wider partners within the approved information sharing framework and through ASBAG meetings with to support resolution of ASB.
- Initiate complex case strategy meetings (CCSM) to help resolve complex ASB cases with relevant partners and colleagues. Chair CCSM's called by other teams.
- Maintain an overview of ASB risk management in conjunction with police partners.
- Work collaboratively with council colleagues to address complex ASB cases and assist with other tenancy issues.
- Regularly attend and contribute to the Norwich Early Help Hub
- Maintain and update monitoring data on relevant County Lines activity (organised criminal drug activity) within the city, including relevant safety information for council officers and contractors.
- Coordinate sensitive let applications in cases where ASB evictions have occurred. Contribute to welfare assessments of tenants where appropriate.
- Provide specialist briefings to council members and colleagues on ASB, hate crime and County Lines issues
- Provide advice and information to colleagues in relation to ASB problem solving, tools and powers and enforcement options available.
- Provide referrals to other agencies for support and resilience.
- Manage relationships with key partner agencies including providing information and training on our role and responsibilities in resolving ASB in Norwich
- Consult with residents on their needs and priorities for resolving neighbourhood ASB
- Ensure residents feel heard and supported in all cases.



CCTV team

Manager: Sarah Clark – Early intervention and community safety officer

Lorraine Devere – CCTV operator

Peter Doughty – CCTV operator

Ian Gray – CCTV operator

- Maintain an operational CCTV system to address crime and disorder issues within the public space in Norwich, as determined by crime and disorder data from council and relevant partners
- Monitor and operate the cameras and associated equipment in the CCTV control room to support the safety and security of people and property within public spaces covered by the council's CCTV surveillance network
- Operation of radio communication facilities in the CCTV control room to maintain contact with the police and business partners in the late-night entertainment areas of the city
- Maintain the confidentiality, security and sensitivity of the service including the CCTV control room, data, and facilities. Comply with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 1998, the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's code of practice and service operational procedures at all times.
- Respond to requests for CCTV footage from members of the public and insurance companies, in compliance with the data protection act.
- Liaise with Norfolk Police control room as incidents occur, as defined in the Norfolk Constabulary and Local Authority Joint CCTV Protocol.
- Maintain clear and accurate records of incidents and data recording on the council's shared folder system, in line with relevant legislation, and ensure effective performance management systems in place.

- Ensure that all council service areas that operate a CCTV system, do so in line with relevant legislation and guidance and according to the council's current policy and procedural documentation.
- Provide advice and guidance on CCTV related matters, to colleagues and external partners.
- Process data subject access requests for CCTV footage in line with legislation.
- Manage maintenance contracts on the council's CCTV system in line with the council's contract management framework.
- Ensure council policy and procedures and information sharing protocols with relevant partners are current and adhere to the Data protection act and surveillance camera commissioner's code of practice.
- Maintain the council's CCTV web pages.



Safer Neighbourhoods initiative

Tim Bacon – Safer Neighbourhoods coordinator

- Support the development, management and monitoring of the Safer Norwich Strategy, the Safer Norwich Board and the Safer Norwich Action Plan and the delivery of the strategic priorities.
- Work with partners to develop data and intelligence to understand crime and anti-social behaviour issues and priorities for Norwich.
- Work with colleagues across the Council and external partners to ensure develop coordinated responses to 'locational' or 'community' crime and antisocial behaviour issues including:
 - Develop and implement Public Space Protection Orders for example to address anti-social behaviour associated with car meets and car cruises across the city
 - supporting strategic response to County Lines and drug-related harm in Norwich
 - working with partners on a particular location (ASB hotspots) e.g. Old Library Wood
 - Manage and support requests for, and installation / removal of, redeployable CCTV units to address as part of the joint responses to ASB and County Lines issues.
- Coordinate engagement in target NCC housing neighbourhoods identified as anti-social behaviour hotspots – supporting an integrated response across NCC services and external partners. Identifying opportunities to work with residents to develop shared responses and improve the look and feel of our neighbourhoods and increase feelings of safety.
- Coordinate the delivery of shared action plans resulting from the above activity.
- Support and encourage residents to report anti-social behaviour concerns and estate issues by promoting and improving reporting methods.
- Response and Enforcement, police (Operational Partnership Team and Safer Neighbourhoods Teams), housing providers, housing support services, mental health, and other support services.
- Manage the SNI Community Fund, supporting applicants to obtain funding for target hardening measures and other proposals to deter / reduce antisocial behaviour and crime – including alley gates.

- Support and attend multi-agency meetings to share information about anti-social behaviour cases and hotspots. E.g., the Norwich Anti-social behaviour Action Group which brings together a wide range of agencies and services including across Norwich City Council (Housing, Specialist support, Tenancy management, Anti-social behaviour).
- Identify and secure external funding to address identified crime and anti-social behaviour concerns - including working with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk.
- Manage the SNI Community Fund, supporting applicants to obtain funding for target hardening measures and other proposals to deter / reduce antisocial behaviour and crime – including alley gates.
- Develop and manage bids for external funding (for example: Safer streets funding).
- Respond to councillor and MP enquiries regarding 'locational' antisocial behaviour and community safety.

