

Scrutiny Committee - Review of Approach to Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour in East Suffolk

Written Commentary from Suffolk Constabulary

Dear Colleagues,

Apologies that we cannot not send a representative to this meeting but please find below some written commentary on the points you asked us to address.

Should the committee have any further questions we will of course be happy to receive these and provide answers.

How does the Police tackle the different types of ASB?

A new national online reporting system went live in Suffolk in September of this year (Single Online Home). This has caused us to have to make small changes in the way we initially record and assess ASB. Every report of ASB which comes in is categorised as either ASB Nuisance, ASB personal or ASB Environmental.

With the following definitions:

Personal (targeted)

This is either deliberately targeted at an individual or group or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large. It includes incidents that cause concern, stress, disquiet and/or irritation through to incidents which have a serious adverse impact on people's quality of life.

Nuisance (community)

This is an act, condition, thing, or person that causes trouble, annoyance, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims. It includes incidents where behaviour goes beyond the conventional bounds of acceptability and interferes with public interests including health, safety, and quality of life.

Environmental

This includes the interface between people and places. It includes incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings including natural, built, and social environments.

Every report is triaged via a question set which then gives an indicated risk. There are three levels of risk at this point, Priority, Routine and Desk Based. Priority being the equivalent of High risk. Routine equivalent of medium risk and desk based is the equivalent of low risk.

Depending on this initial triage depends on how it is graded (prioritised) and dispatched for officers to deal with, this involves directing those cads with the most harm (Priority and Routine) to the most appropriate resource looking for early intervention and prevention for further escalation.

Generally, but not always, desk based are dealt with before the report is dispatched to an officer as this will include for example intelligence to be recorded or perhaps words of advice including prevention advice. Anything of a Routine or Priority assessment will be dispatched for an officer to deal. At this point officers will contact the reporting person and a further risk assessment is completed (RAM – Risk Assessment Matrix) which will result in a Standard, Medium or High Risk grading.



All medium and high risk are recorded on Athena (police crime reporting system), with high-risk investigations being flagged up to Inspector level for review and oversight. High risk ASB investigation are discussed at the Daily Management Meeting to ensure it is being dealt with efficiently, effectively and with the most appropriate resource. All the time managing and working towards lowering and ultimately eliminating any risk to those involved.

ASB legislation will be used at the appropriate stage and escalated through ASB powers using the tools available to us until all has been attempted to tackle the ASB.

Targeted ASB or ASB-P is the main focus for Police as this is generally where the most harm sits. ASB-N is more of a community issue not a person being targeted and ASB-E more often falls into the nuisance and annoyance category.

There is a lot of work continuing to ensure that the ASB investigations are progressed to the highest of standards, therefore being as efficient as possible in managing the risk with a view of a satisfactory conclusion for all involved.

Are there any trends/spikes in the type or location of ASB?

Work is currently being undertaken to understand the hotspot locations and any trends of ASB. We are using data analysis but this is based on Police data alone at this time. Improving data sharing and communications between agencies would allow a more accurate picture of ASB types and locations to be developed and opportunities for joint approaches to resolve.

There is also the seasonal ASB to consider, 'fright night', School holidays, etc. Police proportionally resource these occasions with a view of prevention.

With local knowledge and data analysis we look at patterns including identification of areas of perceived low policing or interaction and engagement and areas of deprivation. It is identified nationally that these types of locations link to ASB.

Once locations are identified, these would potentially class as hotspot locations for which hotspot patrols are carried out by front line officers, both preventing ASB but also giving opportunity for community engagements.

Any challenges that you encounter that would make tackling it easier?

ASB is culturally seen as low level, other than by those directly involved, where as in fact the impact on ASB victims is acknowledged to be greater and have cumulative impact of harm caused to the victim.

The challenge is getting this culture to change to accept ASB can be serious and have large impact on victims.

Tackling ASB needs a multi-agency approach to find solutions to the more complex ASB cases, with all partners having relevant powers to assist to find solutions.

This includes identifying where support is needed around mental health

Although massive improvements have been made there are still opportunities for further collaboration which would further improve effectiveness and successfully tackle ASB.



There could be further partner cooperation with initiatives in terms of timings and aligned priorities, societal tolerance and what's acceptable. Agencies have a number of differing tools which by working together and taking positive action at the earliest opportunity can be used successfully in tackling ASB.

How you feel about how the different partners work together – are there any areas for improvement?

Tackling ASB needs a multi-agency approach to find solutions to complex ASB cases with all partners having relevant powers to assist to find solution.

As previously mentioned, there is still areas for improvement in relation to this and an enhanced joint approach would be beneficial. This is mainly in reference to agencies other than Police and council, for example Mental Health and Education but improvements have taken place and further work is ongoing to achieve better collaboration.

Information sharing could be improved, there is room for improved connectivity with local policing teams and local communities. By aligning campaigns and being seen by communities working together in partnership will add strength and confidence in the way ASB is tackled.

It is also worth noting that there is currently work ongoing between partners as to how best to deal with reports of the smell of Cannabis coming from within a dwelling (not public spaces)

The police are currently working closely with and supporting IBC in creating a specific reporting system and process for this scenario.

Just to reiterate, this is for the problem of smell alone which sits within and is dealt with under the ASB legislation.

The pilot is on track to be launched on the 8th of January by IBC for an initial period of 9 months. Regular reviews will be taking place during this period to allow for amendments and improvements to be made where needed in making this a smooth and successful process both for victims of such incidences but also allowing clarity of ownership between partners from the initial stages.

It is acknowledged that this is a problem across all areas which needs to be improved for the sake of our customers, allowing clarity for all involved including council and police. The hope is that this initiative could be adopted across all LAs.

A request has been made for IBC to share documentation of this scheme to LAs across the county for feedback and consideration of how it can be adopted and embedded within the different LAs across Suffolk