

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN HARTLEPOOL

MARCH 2020



Report of: AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Subject: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN HARTLEPOOL - FINAL REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the findings of the Audit and Governance Committee's investigation into Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in Hartlepool.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 In fulfilling the requirements of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Council's Audit and Governance Committee, explored potential issues for consideration under its statutory crime and disorder scrutiny responsibilities.

2.2 A variety of topics were considered and attention drawn to a number of specific issues with clear links in terms of cause and impact:

- ASB by Young People;
- Allocation of Police Resources (officers and other assets); and
- Drugs Usage.

2.3 Members recognised the importance of all three issues as matters of public interest with a real impact on the health and environmental wellbeing of residents. Of the three, the prevalence and impact of ASB in Hartlepool was recognised as a particularly contentious issue, with an apparent contradiction between public perception and data which showed a reduction in reported incidents year on year.¹ In addition to this, there appeared to be a misconception that young people are responsible for the majority of incidents of ASB, when in reality the highest proportion of ASB reports (2/3) relate to the actions of adults.² This apparent difference between perception and recorded data was an issue of real concern for the Committee.

2.4 Of the three issues raised, ASB was identified as the logical primary focus for investigation, with recognition of the cross generational makeup of both offenders and victims. On this basis, it was agreed that in 2019/20 the Committee would focus on the broader issue of ASB, with the impact of police resourcing and drug / alcohol misuse forming logical strands of the investigation.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

3.1 To understand the true impact and cost of ASB on our communities and explore where / how prevention and intervention services could potentially be improved.

¹ Safer Hartlepool Partnership Performance Data for Quarter 3 (October 2018 – December 2018)

² Safer Hartlepool Partnership Annual Strategic Assessment

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

4.1 The membership of the Audit and Governance Committee was Councillors Black, Hall, Hamilton, Harrison, James, Loynes and Ward, along with Co-opted Member Ms Clare Wilson.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

5.1 Members of the Audit and Governance Committee met formally during 2019/20 to discuss and receive evidence relating to its investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services and a summary of the terms of reference and methods of investigation are outlined in **Appendix 1**.

6. WHAT IS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

6.1 The Committee at its meeting on the 5th September 2019 welcomed a detailed 'setting the scene' presentation covering the following:

- ASB definitions and guidance;
- What constitutes ASB (categories and qualifiers); and
- Where can ASB be reported.

6.2 The evidence provided gave the Committee a baseline for its investigation, with a variety of views and comments feeding in to the formulation of its conclusions and recommendations (as detailed in Sections 15 and 16).

ASB Definitions and Guidance

6.3 Members learned that two separate definitions of ASB are applied with a differentiation based upon the location of the incident:

- In a public place it is '*Conduct that caused, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress*'³; and
- At home it is '*Conduct capable of causing nuisance and annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises*'.⁴

6.4 Whilst the differentiation between incidents at home or in public were apparent, Members were very aware of the confusion created by the absence of a clear distinction between what is anti-social and what is criminal behaviour, with the severity of an act a significant factor in its categorisation (i.e. some low-level crimes are identified as ASB). The vague nature of guidance⁵ was also an issue in that:

- Whilst extremely intimidating or violent behaviour would be considered a criminal offence, one-off threat would be deemed anti-social; and

³ Crime, Anti-social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014

⁴ Housing Act 2004

⁵ Home office Guidance (Defining and measuring anti-social behaviour

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/116655/dpr26.pdf)

- In terms of drug dealing the anti-social element lies less in the act, which is criminal, and more in the fact that drugs are being illegally sold and used in public areas which has an impact on those who work and live nearby.

What constitutes ASB (categories and qualifiers)

6.5 In addition to gaining an understanding of the agreed definitions of ASB, Committee explored the various categories and qualifiers of ASB used by both Cleveland Police and the Local Authority:-

i) *Cleveland Police categories of ASB* (as required to comply with National Standards for Incident Recording):

- Categories:-

- Personal (behaviour targeted at an individual);
- Nuisance (behaviour that effects communities); and
- Environmental (person or group behaviour with an effect on environment).

- Qualifiers:-

- Drugs;
- Alcohol;
- Mental Health;
- Hate types; and
- Youth related.

i) *Local Authority Categories of ASB - Table 1*

Table 1 - ASB Categories	
Substance Misuse/Dealing	Rowdy Behaviour
Street Drinking	Nuisance Behaviour
Begging	Hoax Calls
Prostitution/Kerb Crawling	Animal Nuisance
Sexual Acts	Harassment/Intimidation
Abandoned Vehicles	Criminal Damage/Vandalism
Vehicle Nuisance	Litter/Rubbish
Noise Nuisance	Hate incident

- Qualifiers (as detailed in **Appendix 2**)

6.6 Based upon a comparison of each organisations' comparators and qualifiers, surprise was expressed at the range of areas covered and whilst some were very obvious many were subjective in terms of the perception and levels of tolerance of individuals.

Where can ASB be reported

6.7 Members noted that ASB can be reported through multiple avenues (Cleveland Police, Hartlepool Community Safety Team, Thirteen Housing Group, Councillors and the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool). The Committee, however, referenced anecdotal evidence that confusion was a contributory factor to the under reporting of incidents and these concerns were supported by the outcomes of the consultation exercises outlined in Section 12 of this report.

7. NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS OF ASB

7.1 Members obtained a clear picture of ASB in Hartlepool and utilised wider regional and national data as a baseline against which public perception and evidence gathered as part of the investigation could be compared.

The National / Regional Position (April 2016 to March 2019)

7.2 The Committee discovered that over the period, between April 2016 and March 2019, the rate of ASB per 1000 population in England was 24, compared to a rate of 38⁶ rate in the North East of England.

7.3 Looking across Cleveland it was apparent that rates in Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Hartlepool are also significantly above the national and North East rates (as detailed in Table 2 below) and that Hartlepool was in fact the third worst area across Cleveland. Whilst the data provided showed a general downward trend, with a 31% reduction in 2019, Members were concerned that this was not a true reflection of the position given the feedback received from residents.

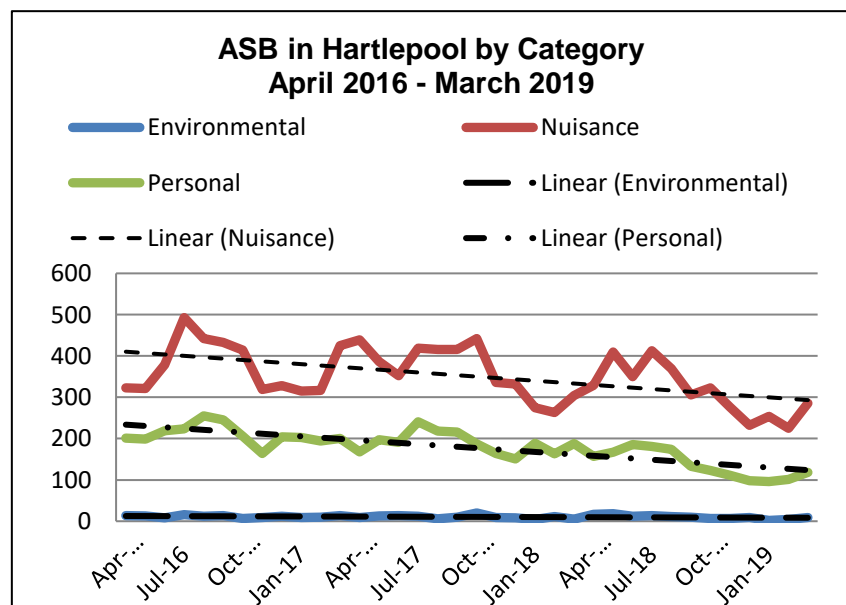
Table 2 – ASB Rates Across Cleveland (April 2016 to March 2019)

Rate Per 1000 Population	Hartlepool	Redcar & Cleveland	Middlesbrough	Stockton
2016/17	78.6	71.7	96.1	68.2
2017/18	74.4	70.9	97.4	64.4
2018/19	60.8	51.2	79.1	54.1

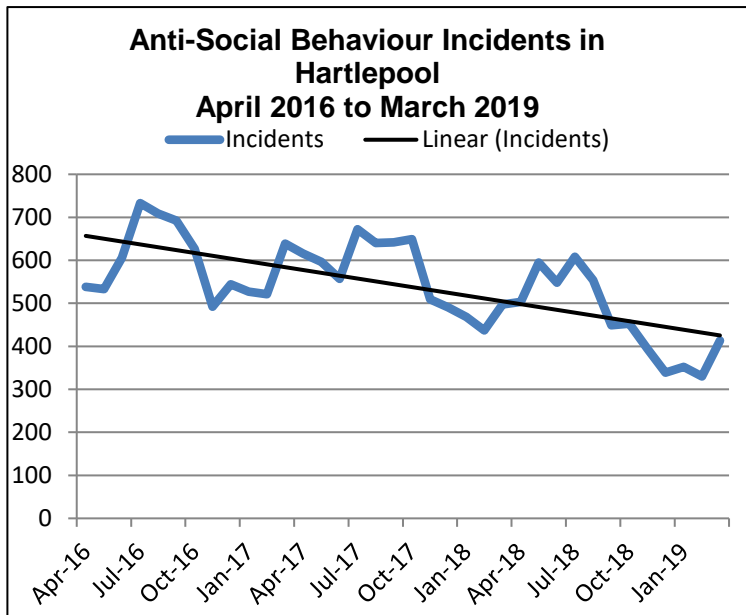
Hartlepool Position (April 2016 to March 2019)

7.4 Members were shocked to find that over the period between April 2016 and March 2019 the rate of ASB per 1000 population in Hartlepool was 61. This represented a significant increase on the North East rate and was distressingly 3 times the national figure. In further drilling down into the position in Hartlepool, Members also learned the following.

i) **Chart 1** - There had been an overall reduction in ASB reported to the Police



⁶ ONS Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area Data Tables – September 2019

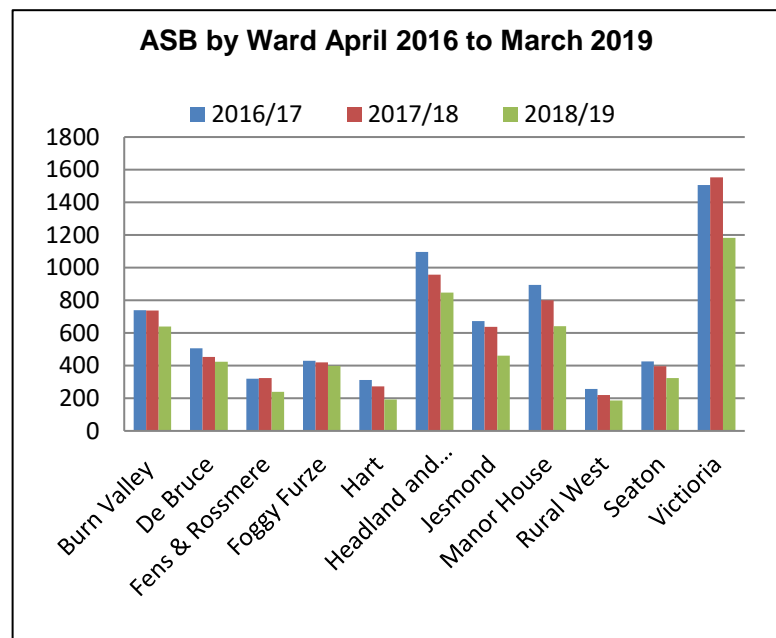


ii) **Chart 2** - ASB across all categories had fallen with:

- Nuisance behaviour the most prevalent; and
- Limited reporting of environmental ASB.

iii) **Chart 3** - ASB occurs in all Wards across in Hartlepool regardless of levels of deprivation.

However, Members were not surprised to find that the highest level of reported ASB were in the Victoria, Headland and Harbour and Manor House Wards, all of which are amongst the most deprived Wards in the town.



7.5 The Committee found that whilst ASB in Hartlepool is reported by people of all ages and backgrounds, the majority of reports are made by females aged 18-34 years. Data also showed that of the 850 perpetrators for ASB identified in 2018/19, two-thirds were male, aged 25-44 years and the number of incidents of ASB by young people in 2018/19 had decreased by 26%, compared with 2016/17.

7.6 Cased on the data provided, Members felt strongly that it was important to dispel the myth that young people are the primary perpetrators of ASB. There was also concern regarding the contradiction between the issue of under reporting of ASB and the perceived impact of a lack of confidence in responses and resulting actions, alongside a potential fear of reprisals for residents in some Wards. Also, that the reporting mechanisms did not appear to be working and that the approach needs to be rethought / redesigned. It was suggested by the Committee that more innovative, accessible and free ways of reporting incidents of ASB be explored, especially for older residents and people who are not confident with electronic reporting. This to include the development of a single point of contact.

8. EXPERT EVIDENCE

- 8.1 As part of its investigation the Committee obtained a professional view of ASB via a number of sources, as detailed below.
- 8.2 Anti-Social Behaviour Conference – 15th October 2019 - Members attended a national conference on the 15th October 2019 which highlighted the outcome of an investigation undertaken, in 2012, by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. A number of important issues were highlighted, specifically that police are failing to record ASB; only 19 police authorities had identified vulnerable or intimidated residents; victims are passed from 'pillar to post' across agencies and ASB Orders were rarely being used or enforced when breached.
- 8.3 Feedback from the conference by Members highlighted the aim of the Crime and Policing Act 2014 through simpler, more effective powers to tackle ASB and protect victims and communities. However, a subsequent piece of work commissioned by the Victims' Commissioner, entitled 'ASB: A Living Nightmare (2019)⁷, had shown disappointingly that:
- Whilst agency powers are better and more streamlined, containing positive requirements, they are not solving the problem with 38% of people witnessing or experiencing ASB – an increase since 2012;
 - Agencies are no more held to account;
 - Empowerment of victims and communities has failed;
 - Empowerment in the face of ASB and crime is important because of the effect on those it disempowers; and
 - Victims are pushed from 'pillar to post, with no one agency taking charge.
- 8.4 Members referenced discussions in relation to begging, cuckooing and problems experienced with criminal gangs and loan sharks exploiting the genuinely homeless and vulnerable (including young people / County Lines activity) as examples of ASB. In relation to these issues, support was expressed for the success of Operation Grantham, which had been launched to deal with some of the complaints received in relation to the 22 known persistent beggars. Members welcomed actions taken to support those who had wished to access support from the charity Cornerstone, who had identified 30 people sleeping rough during the three month period. It was noted with disappointment that most of the homeless offered support had refused help and it was believed that many were begging to get money for drugs. Members fully recognised the factors that lead to homelessness and the challenges that face those on the street, however, support was expressed for the enforcement action taken and the initiative implemented to encouraging people give money to foodbanks instead of directly to the homeless.
- 8.5 University of Nottingham Trent University Study - The Committee welcomed Dr James Hunter from Nottingham Trent University to a meeting on the 7th November 2019 to present further details of the ASB: A Living Nightmare report and its findings. Members were interested to learn that different types of ASB have distinctive characteristics in terms of perception, experience, reporting and impact and include:

⁷ <https://victimscommissioner.org.uk/published-reviews/anti-social-behaviour-living-a-nightmare/>

- Youths/teenagers/groups hanging around on the street
- Street drinking/drunken behaviour/under-age drinking
- Loud music or other noise
- Environmental, e.g. litter, fly tipping or dog fouling
- Nuisance neighbours
- Sexual, e.g. kerb crawling or evidence of prostitution
- Problems with out of control or dangerous dogs
- Inconsiderate behaviour
- Vandalism, criminal damage or graffiti
- People being intimidated, threatened or verbally abused
- Vehicle-related, e.g. abandoned vehicles or joy riding
- Begging, vagrancy, problems with homeless people

8.6 In addition, the Crime Survey for England and Wales had identified that:-

i) Those who experience/witness ASB are also likely to be:

- Younger
- Females
- Non-white
- Social renters
- Low income households
- Intermediate/manual occupation
- Living in more deprived areas

ii) Risk and protective factors increase or decrease the likelihood of experiencing or witnessing ASB (as in Table 3).

Table 3 – Risk and Protective Factors

RISK FACTORS		PROTECTIVE FACTORS	
Male	Married/Divorced	Older	Non white
Has Educational Qualifications		Widowed	
Household Income <£10k pa	Lone Parent Household		
Social renter	Flat or terraced house	Private renter	
Lived 12 months or more in the area	Lives house unoccupied	Higher barriers to housing	
Income deprived	High crime risk	Similar national identity	
Similar age groups		Similar social class	

8.7 Members recognised the value of this data in helping map ASB where there is under reporting, in order to better focus resources. They were also drawn to the element of the Act⁸ relating to the introduction of a community remedy called the ‘Community Trigger’ which aimed to empower victims and communities to have a greater say in how agencies respond to complaints of ASB. Of particular interest to the Committee, was the requirement to promote the Trigger to ensure that people are aware of it and that case reviews are undertaken where residents pass the required threshold⁹. However, it was apparent that the process around the trigger was not fit for purpose with a lack of knowledge / understanding by police, local authorities and housing providers; poor advertising by local authorities and failure to inform victims when they reach the trigger thresholds and a lack of transparency of trigger procedures. In fact only 3% of people had even heard of the Trigger.

⁸ Crime, Anti-social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014

⁹ Hartlepool threshold - 3 qualifying complaints reported within a 6 month period by the same person

- 8.8 The Integrated Community Safety Team acts as the single point of contact for the Community Trigger on behalf of all partners involved, and the Committee acknowledged that the position in Hartlepool mirrored that across the country, with Members and residents unaware of the Community Trigger process. This view was supported by the results of the consultation exercise (as detailed in Section 12) with to date only one Trigger request received, that failed to meet the required criteria. In terms of Members involvement in the Community Trigger process, it was strongly felt additional training is required.
- 8.9 Whilst it was confirmed that the Trigger is referenced on Hartlepool Borough Council's website, it was suggested that promotion of its existence be improved. However, it was recognised that this could have resource implications as a result of an increased number of Triggers received and that how this could be balanced with the need for greater transparency should be explored.
- 8.10 Further to this, Members also fully supported views outlined in the ASB: A Living Nightmare report that:
- ASB must not be perceived as a 'low level' crime by partners, including the police. ASB is a significant crime with a significant detrimental effect on its victims and surrounding areas and should be considered as a priority across all agencies as it can lead to criminal behavior;
 - Victims should be able to attend resolution meetings;
 - Resolution meetings should be chaired by an independent person, avoiding the impression that Councils and the police are 'marking their own homework'; and
 - The 101 police line is not effective.
- 8.11 Members learned from the report that the cumulative effect of ASB is often not taken into account, resulting in those handling ASB complaints failing to appreciate the scale of the impact on victims. The reporting of ASB was also often problematic with victims being passed from one agency to another and lengthy often unanswered calls to the 101 police phone line. In light of the, Members suggested that a more streamlined approach was needed for professionals to report incidents of ASB, to avoid unnecessary personal information having to be relayed and delay any action being undertaken.

9. PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO RESPOND TO ASB

- 9.1 Further to receiving confirmation of the various routes through which ASB could be reported, the Committee gained a clear understanding of the way services are structured across agencies. The Committee was reminded of the creation of an Integrated Community Safety Team and the clear commitment to dealing with community safety issues across partners through the co-location of resources/representatives from the Council, Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire Brigade and the Cleveland Victim Care and Advice Service (VCAS). Members welcomed evidence from each of the partners responsible for responding to ASB in Hartlepool.

The Integrated Community Safety Team

- 9.2 Hartlepool Borough Council - Of particular interest to the Committee was the structure, role and activities of the Integrated Community Safety Team (**Appendix 3**). Members

discovered that the Hartlepool Borough Council contribution to the team consists of 28 Officers (including 2 ASB Officers, 1 Victim Support Officer and 8 Civil Enforcement Officers) pending recruitment. In relation to the Civil Enforcement Officers, concern was expressed regarding the split of their role and the potential impact of activities around parking enforcement on their ability to respond to ASB matters.

9.3 Members strongly supported the ground-breaking nature of extended partnership working and the ethos of the model, in aiming to improve information sharing / joint working, sharing resources and providing a co-ordinated approach to Community Safety. Equally, support was expressed for the team’s operational model through the provision of complaints triage, a pro-active intelligence led problem solving approach and the use of a ‘THRIVE’ assessment which asks the following in dealing with any ASB report:

- Threat (what is the threat?)
- Harm (who / what is at risk?)
- Risk (how likely is it to happen?)
- Investigation (is there a need?)
- Vulnerability (is anyone a repeat victim?)
- Engagement (is it a big issue for the community?)

9.4 In understanding of the effectiveness of the Integrated Team, Members gained an understanding of the range of tools and powers available (detailed in Table 4), in conjunction with the team’s activities and successes.

Table 4 – Tools	Enforcement Powers
i) Education / publicity campaigns (including ASBAD Days); ii) Engagement / diversion activities (including the SORTED Programme where schools identify young people of concern); iii) Referrals into support services (particularly for younger offenders); iv) Warnings; and v) Acceptable Behaviour Agreements used before enforcement (including fixed penalty notices, premise closure orders / criminal behaviour orders).	vi) Community Protection Notices; vii) Fixed Penalty and Penalty Charge Notices; viii) Civil Injunctions; ix) Premise Closure Orders; x) Possession Orders (Council tenants only); xi) Criminal Behaviour Orders; xii) Criminal Offences; and xiii) Powers of partners.

9.5 The Committee considered examples of interventions carried out by the Integrated Community Safety Team and was impressed by the activities and achievements, outlined below, in dealing with the instances of ASB:

- Crime prevention support for businesses;
- Victims provided with victim support and crime prevention assistance (homes target hardened);
- Formal warnings issued, Acceptable Behaviour Agreements signed;
- Restorative Justice carried out;
- Fire Starter Intervention Courses attended;
- Days of action, ‘Report It’ publicity campaign;
- CCTV cameras installed;
- Multiple drugs warrants issued and five drug dens closed; and
- Premises Closure Orders

- 9.6 Members commended all those involved in the activities of the Integrated Team (across all partners), with particular reference to:-
- i) The success of operations across the town, however, there was concern regarding the displacement of ASB into neighbouring areas which could decline rapidly if action was not taken. The Committee was reassured that the team had already started to go into the areas into which activity had been displaced and were in the process of gaining the support and confidence of residents to report. The intention is to begin to continue to target perpetrators of ASB;
 - ii) The continuation and reinstatement of the use of CCTV as a preventative and evidential measure to combat ASB; and
 - iii) Education undertaken with children and young people in schools through the:
 - The ASBAD Programme (aimed at Year 8 pupils). As a clear example of good practice, and something to be built upon, Members were disappointed to find that a number of schools had withdrawn from the programme. Whilst the pressure on curriculum time was recognised, Members felt strongly that this was a significant loss in preventing ASB and it was suggested that ways of encouraging secondary school buy-in to the ASBAD programme needed to be explored; and
 - The Crucial Crew (aimed at primary schools to raise awareness of the right choices around safety, including drugs and alcohol and the internet). Members were pleased to learn that every Year 6 pupil from all 31 primary schools in Hartlepool were invited to attend with the potential involve between 1,200 and 1,350 annually. Members learned that the programme is completely self-funded through donations and that each primary school was asked to donate £2 per pupil attending the programme for transport. Whilst disappointingly only two-thirds of all primary schools made the suggested donation, Members were encouraged that future sources of funding continued to be explored and that previous funding had been provided by Northern Power Grid and Thirteen Housing Group.
- 9.7 Members were of the view that whilst the focus of these programme is on the education of children and young people, the education of adults in terms of the impact of ASB must also be a priority. This could include opportunities to speak to adults and young people as part of existing local authority, and partner provided, engagement and activity programmes (e.g. free swims and holiday hunger).
- 9.8 Members were assured that through the new integrated team future issues could be dealt with more promptly across partners, in a way that could not have happened before. However, concern was expressed regarding the capacity of the team to deal with levels of ASB going forward, given that there were now only two dedicated ASB officers, compared to six (as of five years ago). Members felt this could be more of an issue if the perceived level of under reporting was correct and if the activities of the Integrated Team to encourage reporting was successful. Members were, however, assured that whilst activities would not be sustainable with any reduction in staffing levels, the team was currently working well on its existing establishment.
- 9.9 Cleveland Police - The Committee at its meeting on the 5th September 2019 received evidence from Cleveland Police regarding its activities, as part of the Integrated Team, in responding to ASB in Hartlepool. As summarised in **Table 4**.

- 9.10 With reference to the structure of the Integrated Team, Members welcomed indications that Cleveland Police allocated 25 Officers to the Neighbourhood Policing Team. However, concerns were reiterated regarding the impact of the perceived lack of police presence on the streets of Hartlepool and the detrimental effect the perceived reduction in PCSO's had on communities across the town. In response to these concerns, the Committee was delighted to learn that the phased return of PCSO's was ongoing, with the aim of providing one in each Ward. It was evident to Members that an increase in the number and visibility of Police Officers and PCSO's Officers patrolling in local areas would benefit communities and provide reassurance. However, issues were identified regarding wasted Police time by attending court cases which could often be adjourned or delayed. It was felt that the situation had been exasperated by the loss of satellite units and it was suggested that the Committee's concerns be raised with the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 9.11 Looking in more detail at specific actions and outcomes, Members commended Police on the successful use of dispersal and closure orders in resolving recent incidents of ASB in Seaton Carew. Emphasis was also placed on the primary importance of engagement as a course of action and that enforcement is only part of the process to deal with the issue and attention was drawn to the historic success of practices such as Police and / or PCSO attendance at residents' meetings in raising their profile and promote confidence in reporting.
- 9.12 The Committee welcomed input from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) at the meeting on the 9th January 2020 and were made aware of the success of the Victim Care and Support Service (VCAS), co-commissioned with Durham's Police and Crime Commissioner. The Committee noted with interest that for the Hartlepool area, the VCAS had supported 59 victims of ASB (between 1 April 2019 and 31 December 2019). The age range of these victims being 13-95 years with pre-existing vulnerabilities (e.g. isolation and disability) often contributing to them falling victim to ASB. With this in mind, Members highlighted the importance of identifying such vulnerable individuals as part of effective prevention measures.
- 9.13 The Committee welcomed PCC' s commitment to neighbourhood policing and in particular the provision of funding for the provision across Cleveland of:
- Three School Liaison PCSO Officers and noted that this was in addition to PCSO allocated to Hartlepool (each of which is assigned to a school). Emphasis was placed on the importance of co-ordinating the activities of both sets of PCSO's with the potential for the School Liaison PCSO's to provide additional education and engagement activities for Hartlepool young people. It was, however, recognised that access around the school curriculum was an issue and support was expressed for the PCC's attempts to increase the programme; and
 - A Targeted Outreach Scheme in each local authority area, as detailed later in the report (Section 19.11). There were, however, concerns that despite a recent extension of funding by the PCC, future funding for this scheme was due to cease. Members felt strongly that the PCC should be lobbied to continue this funding going forward.
- 9.14 Building on the issues raised from a police perspective, Members reiterated concern that:

- The perception was that Police do not see ASB as a priority and that this made people feel there was no point in reporting. An assurance was welcomed from the PCC that ASB was given priority through his office, as a wider community and multi-agency issue. There was, however, concern that the use of the 'THRIVE' assessment prevented ASB from being an operational priority. Members reiterated the essential need for ASB to be seen as a serious crime and responded to accordingly by all partners;
- Whilst the statutory requirements for publicity of the community trigger were being fulfilled it was clear that awareness of it and how to access it is not widely known. It was highlighted that the new Police single point of contact reporting system failed to reference the Trigger and it was suggested that it be updated accordingly; and
- With the issue of tight resources across all partners, individuals must take a level of responsibility for their own actions. Attention was drawn to police data which showed high levels of opportunistic crime, especially in terms of car crime. This was contributed to by the fact that 8 / 9 out of 10 cars are left unlocked, with a need for owners to take responsibility for securing their own vehicles and removing valuables as preventative measures. Members also supported the view that parents need to take some responsibility for the actions of their children, and there was surprise that no actions currently exist to respond to breaches of Parenting Orders, however, indications were welcomed that this position could change with the development of community protection notices with enforceable conditions.

9.15 Cleveland Fire Brigade - The Committee at its meeting on the 5th September 2019 considered Cleveland Fire Brigade regarding its activities, as part of the Integrated Team, in responding to ASB in Hartlepool.

9.16 Members learned that ASB Crime & Policing Act 2014 provided the Fire Brigade with its powers to deal with deliberate fire-setting, as an agreed form of ASB. In gaining an understanding of the national position, the Committee found that Cleveland has the worst rate of Arson in England with 53 per 10,000 population (2017-18) compared to the National Average was 15 per 10,000 population. This had further increased in 2018-19 to 65 per 10,000 population.

9.17 When comparing the position in Hartlepool and across the wider region, Members learned that:-

i) Across Hartlepool:

- The Manor House and De Bruce Wards are deliberate fire hotspots. The location of these hotspots influenced by the presence of communal open and recreational areas; and
- In 2018-19 arson accounted for 84.9% (3656) of the total fires (4302) attended by the Cleveland Fire Brigade and shockingly those in Hartlepool (627) represented 17% of that total figure. This in turn represented a 51% increase in incidents since 2013/14 with a resulting direct economic cost to Hartlepool of £2.9m¹⁰. Conversely, on a more positive note, evidence showed that vehicle fires have decreased by 7%, to 27.

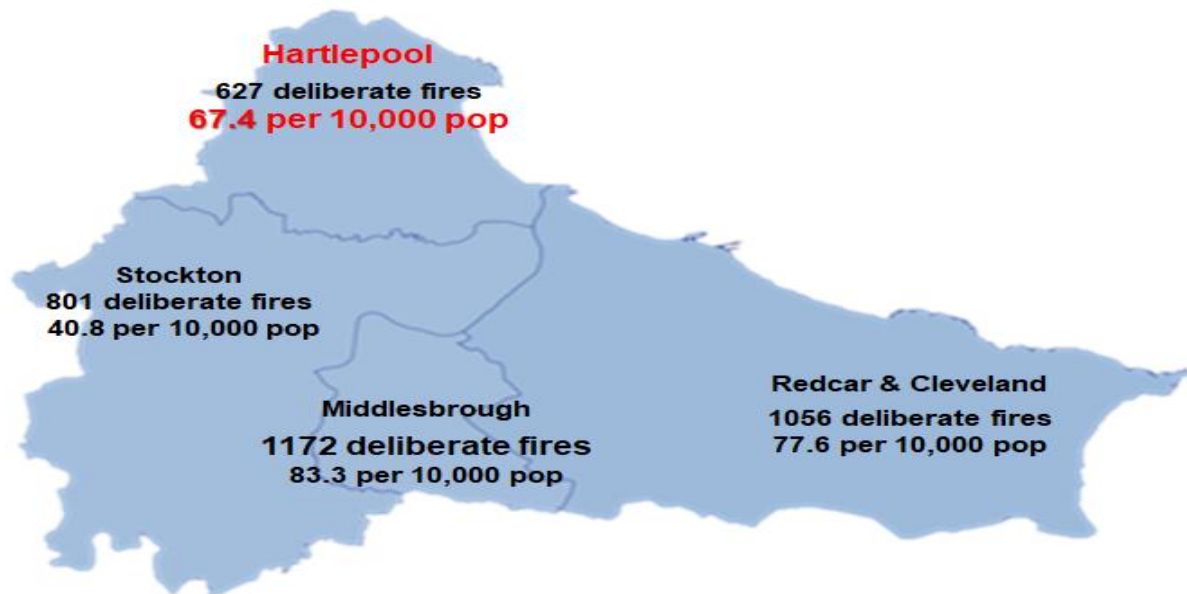
ii) Across Cleveland and the Tees Valley:

- Concerns regarding the level of deliberate fires in Hartlepool were supported by data that showed a rate of 67.4 fires per 10,000 population. It was highlighted that whilst this was slightly above the Cleveland average of 65, Hartlepool has

¹⁰ Home Office calculations

- the second lowest level of deliberate fires in the Tees Valley as shown in Map 1; and
- The issue of deliberate fires is a Tees Valley issue with both Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland experiencing higher levels than Hartlepool. All Tees Valley Boroughs are well above the National Average rate of 15 per 10,000 population.

Map 1 – Tees Valley Deliberate Fire Data



- 9.18 In relation to under reporting, Members were surprised to learn that Fire Brigade arson figures were not included in the wider figures for ASB. Members felt strongly that such data should be included in order to give a true overall picture and drew attention to the potential benefit of all partner bodies respective data sets being combined with that of the expert witness (as detailed in Section 8). The resulting combined data being essential in the planning of prevention and intervention activities.
- 9.19 The Committee welcomed indications that violence to Fire Brigade staff is not really an issue in Hartlepool, with only 2 in 2018/19. The Committee was, however, open in its condemnation of any such actions against members of any the emergency services.
- 9.20 Whilst the Fire Brigade has no powers to reduce ASB, support was expressed for the collaborative work being undertaken by them with partners to maximise the use of powers under the 2014 Act¹¹. Members also commended them on the success of their community engagement activities in engaging with vulnerable residents who may be indirectly susceptible to ASB and involvement in initiatives such as the Fix-My-Street¹² scheme, one of the aims of which was to enable and empower local people to remove the potential for arson and improve community pride.
- 9.21 Members queried if the Brigade’s education programme still included visits to schools and whilst confirmation was welcomed that this did still occur, concern was expressed that problems in accessing secondary schools are also experienced by the Fire Brigade. On this basis, whilst curriculum pressures are recognised, it was felt that work was needed to explore how secondary schools could be encourage to participate in ASB preventative education programmes across all partners.

¹¹ ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014

¹² https://www.fixmystreet.com/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIk6T8rN3_4wIVBbDtCh3mjwLxEAAAYASAAEgLIPfD_BwE

- 9.22 Think Family Outcome Framework (Troubled Families Project) – The Committee learned that the project provides direct support from Early Help, Children’s Social Care, Youth Justice Service and Integrated Community Safety Team, with an mandate to improve the outcomes for a total of 1000 families by March 2020.
- 9.23 Members learned that families are specifically selected to be part of the Programme because of their multiple and complex needs, demonstrating two or more of the following headline problems:
- Parents or children involved in crime and ASB;
 - Children who have not been attending school regularly;
 - Children of all ages who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan;
 - Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness;
 - Families affected by domestic violence and abuse (including stalking, honour based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage); and
 - Parents and children with a range of health problems.
- 9.24 Members learned that as of 31 December 2019, the target of 1000 had been exceeded with 1324 families, 267 were included within Category 1) above. Of these 267, 225 were related to ASB. Members were very pleased to note that the target of supporting 1000 families had been surpassed at 31 December 2019 by 324, with all these families having achieved significant and sustained progress and/or continuous employment. It was evident to Members that a key element of reducing ASB across the town was to take a more holistic approach involving the whole family, especially where families and young people were identified as being on the periphery of committing incidents of ASB.
- 9.25 North East Ambulance Service - The Committee at its meeting on the 20th January 2020 considered evidence from the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) in relation to issues they experience around ASB, specifically violence and aggression towards its staff and how they were being addressed and staff supported.
- 9.26 Members were dismayed to hear that NEAS staff had reported 1430 incidents across the over the past year, 113 (9%) in Hartlepool, with around 10% of these had escalate to physical assault. Of these 75 assault cases had been progressed, with 60 ending with some form of sanction against the offender. Members were not surprised to find that the majority of incidents centred on alcohol and drug misuse and/or mental health and that males aged 30-40 were the primary culprits. However, there was surprise that events most often occurred in people’s own homes on an evening and that the night-time economy was not a major factor.
- 9.27 In responding to issues of ASB, NEAS had introduced body cameras on a trial basis. The benefits of the cameras, however, became quickly evident in terms of the de-escalation of events, boosting staff moral and reducing general sickness levels. The trial had since been made permanent, with the full cooperation of staff and Trade Unions, and was seen as an example of best practice across other ambulance areas.
- 9.28 Following on from similar information from the Cleveland Fire Brigade, Members reiterated their dismay that emergency service staff were being subject to such behaviour and were somewhat sad that they were having to resort to the use of body cameras to protect themselves.

10. RENTED ACCOMMODATION AND ASB

- 10.1 During the course of the investigation, it became clear to the Committee that the association between ASB and rented accommodation is a significant issue for residents. Whilst it was recognised that many good landlords had properties in Hartlepool, the Committee was interested to discuss the problems experienced with landlords across the social and private sector.
- 10.2 Thirteen Housing Group - Members welcomed input from the Thirteen Housing Group as the town's largest social housing provider and noted that since April 2019, there had been 206 low level ASB incidents, 106 high level ASB incidents, 65 domestic abuse incidents and 108 support incidents, i.e. property condition complaints, noise and arrears issues, received. Also, that 41% of tenants had indicated that they had reported incidents of ASB to Thirteen with only 33% reporting to the Police.
- 10.3 Members noted with interest the development of a new Triage Team to consider every complaint or piece of intelligence in relation to ASB, prior to it being forwarded to the appropriate Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, Tenancy Enforcement Co-ordinator or Tenancy Support Co-ordinator. They were also encouraged to find the following examples of good practice:
- Colocation with Police;
 - DAHA accreditation (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance);
 - Diversionary activities;
 - Enforcement and support; and
 - 2 FTE Wardens.
- 10.4 With the aim of increasing the reporting of ASB, Members were interested to learn that Thirteen had undertaken a pilot scheme in conjunction with Crimestoppers in the Hemlington area of Middlesbrough. This involved the promotion of Crimestoppers through door knocking, leaflets, advertising at bus stops and through social media. In addition to the pilot scheme, Thirteen had developed an 'app' to enable residents to report incidents of ASB through an app on their mobile including abuse and violence; animal nuisance; damage; graffiti, substance misuse and many more. Members were keen to learn the outcome of the pilot scheme and how it operated along with an evaluation of the use of the app and whether the reporting of ASB had increased at a future meeting of the Committee.
- 10.5 Private Sector Landlords - The Committee questioned if there was any link between the problems with ASB and absent private landlords. Members commented that there needed to be a greater coordination of approach against such landlords and parliament must look at ways of penalising them financially if they did not take action to address problems caused by their tenants. Assurances were given that fourteen premises closure orders had been issued against private residences and in all but two cases the landlords were working with the team to address the issues. Encouragingly it appeared that most admitted they could not deal with the problems on their own and needed support and that the closures helped them regain control of their properties. A small minority of problem landlords did, however, exist and the Committee welcomed the refresh of the Housing Strategy to include measures to assist in dealing with them.
- 10.6 Members commented that in areas with high numbers of privately rented homes, finding ways of engaging and supporting landlords, alongside enforcement, is essential

in helping them tackle ASB created by their tenants. The Community Safety Team Leader stated that they did work with private landlords and it was becoming more widely known that action could be taken against them in Hartlepool (including Closure Orders that would prevent them from earning rent from properties) and the team was seeing more landlords willing to engage much sooner.

10.7 Members were keen to seek the views of private sector landlords and it was suggested that an additional survey be developed by the Private Sector Housing Team. This survey was forwarded direct to private sector landlords between 22 October and 1 November 2019 and a response rate of 62 (20%) responses were received. The results of the survey identified a number of key issues for landlords:

- Turnover of tenants which ultimately leads to what can be long term empty properties and run down and boarded up properties;
- The number of tenants who are victims of ASB was higher than the number of tenants being the perpetrators of it;
- The highest issue of ASB caused by tenants was deliberate damage to the property; and
- Nearly 35% of landlords who had responded indicated that finding new tenants was problematic.

10.8 Members were encouraged to find that nearly 58% of landlords are aware that the Council can provide impartial advice and guidance to support landlords and nearly 16% of landlords had used this service. In addition to this, 96% of landlords have a robust written tenancy agreement for every tenancy and 94% of landlords ensure that their tenants are aware of their responsibilities and legal obligations with regards to conducting their tenancy.

11. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

11.1 As part of the investigation the Committee carried out an extensive consultation and engagement exercise over a period of months during the 2019/20 municipal year. Members were keen for residents across all demographics to have the opportunity to contribute to the investigation. With this in mind, the views and experiences of a wide variety of partner groups / organisations, residents, young people and representatives from vulnerable communities were gathered. In obtaining the evidence, the Committee widely publicised its meetings, extending an open invitation to any individual or body to participate along with targeted invitations to some groups and individuals. In addition to this, a variety of informal community engagement was undertaken in a number of locations across the town. Further details and outcomes from the community engagement events are outlined in Sections 11 to 14.

11.2 Drop-In Sessions at North, Central and South Community Hubs with local residents - The drop-in sessions were held on separate days at a time to maximise drop-ins in light of the expected footfall in the Hubs and were attended by Members, where they were able, to canvas the views of residents in an informal setting. Members were pleased to speak to a number of residents from different areas of the town. In addition to the drop-in sessions, copies of the town-wide survey were available within the Hubs for residents to complete and put in a box within the Hub. The main issues raised as part of the informal engagement with residents in the Hubs were:

- The number of children hanging around the local neighbourhoods playing ball games, riding bikes and generally causing a nuisance which inevitably lead to ASB;
- The cost of contacting the Police via the 101 telephone number was high, especially when put on hold; and
- ASB not taken seriously when reported.

11.3 Drop-in Sessions with residents at Hartfields Retirement Village, Laurel Gardens Extra Care Home and Albany Court Sheltered Housing - Members of the Committee visited Hartfields Retirement Village, Laurel Gardens Extra Care Home and Albany Court Sheltered Housing on separate dates to seek the views of the residents. The session at Albany Court Sheltered Housing was well attended and Members were encouraged to note that ASB was not a significant problem for them and that the residents felt safe within the sheltered housing complex. Unfortunately, due to the non-attendance of residents in Hartfields Retirement Village and Laurel Gardens Extra Care Home, Members were unable to seek the views of the residents in person. However, surveys were hand delivered to each property at all three locations and responses received will be included within the overall town-wide survey results.

11.4 The main issues raised as part of the informal engagement with residents at the above housing complexes were:

- Young people playing and causing a nuisance in and around the grounds of the complex, including knocking on residents' windows; and
- The residents reassured Members that they felt safe within their home environment.

11.5 Workshop with representatives from Residents' Groups and Associations from across the town - Residents' Groups and Associations were identified by Ward Councillors across the whole town and representatives from each Group and Association were invited to an informal workshop with Members of the Committee in the Civic Centre. Members welcomed a number of representatives from a wide range of Residents' Groups and Associations. It was evident to Members from the discussions that the perception of ASB varied across different areas of the Town. In addition to attending the workshop, an email with a link to the town-wide survey was forwarded to the representatives in attendance to disseminate to other members of their Groups and Associations. Any responses received will be included within the overall town-wide survey results.

11.6 The main issues raised as part of the informal engagement with representatives from Residents' Groups and Associations from across the town were:

- Some areas in the town were affected significantly by the impact of drug dealing, discarded needles, drug and alcohol abuse and deliberate fires;
- There were concerns expressed that the issue of fly-tipping was occurring regularly and this was mainly on the outskirts of the town;
- In relation to young people specifically, the issue of teenagers hanging around parks and offensive and bad language was referred to as well as social media bullying;
- Noise nuisance and littering were issues in some areas along with people illegally riding motorbikes and quad bikes; and
- In the more rural areas, poaching and lamping were an issues that effected residents.

- 11.7 Workshop with representatives from minority communities of interest or heritage at the Asylum Seekers Refuge Group - In view of the importance of engaging with all demographics of the local community, Members were made to feel very welcome at one of the weekly meetings of the Asylum Seekers Refuge Group which was very well attended by adults and families. There were residents in attendance who were at various stages of seeking asylum and were able to inform Members of issues around ASB that was affecting their lives.
- 11.8 The main issues raised as part of the informal engagement with representatives at the Asylum Seekers Refuge Group were:
- One of the main issues highlighted by the attendees at this Group is the homes they were placed into upon arrival to the town. Members noted with concern that a lot of the asylum seekers were provided with housing in areas that already had a reputation for high levels of ASB and criminal activity;
 - Some attendees indicated they would welcome more support to integrate within the local community; and
 - The importance of multi-agency partnership working was emphasised and included the Police, Integrated Community Safety Team, Crime Prevention Officer and Health Visitors.
- 11.9 Workshop with the Children in Care Council and the Youth Council - Members were delighted that representatives from the Children in Care Council and the Youth Council were very keen to engage with the Committee in relation to ASB in the town. Representatives from the Children in Care Council and the Young Council were invited to an informal session with Members of the Committee in the Civic Centre. Members were pleased to note that this was well attended with young people from a number of secondary schools in the town who had strong views about ASB, who causes it and potential solutions. The young people involved were invited to develop a survey with a view to seeking the views of other young people on ASB across the town and to present their findings to the Committee at a later date.
- 11.10 The main issues identified as ASB as part of the informal engagement with representatives of the Children in Care Council and the Youth Council were:
- Any actions that make people feel threatened, including foul language, fighting and knife crime;
 - From an environmental perspective, the young people identified littering, polluting the environment and deliberate fires as ASB;
 - Bullying via social media was also highlighted as an issue for young people;
 - Unstable home lives and fighting within the home can impact on children and young people as they may develop negative perceptions and a lack of respect for the Police;
 - The young people were concerned that adults often perceive that a young person is 'up to no good' by the type of clothes they are wearing, i.e. hoodies;
 - Racism was also identified as a type of ASB as well as a hate crime; and
 - Not a lot for children and young people to do, such as organised play activities and/or events within and involving their local community.
- 11.11 Workshop with young people involved with West View, Kilmarnock, Wharton Trust and Belle Vue Youth Clubs - Members of the Committee recognised the importance of engaging with young people in conversations and therefore arranged to attend the

West View Advice and Resource Centre where representatives from the West View, Kilmarnock, Wharton Trust and Belle Vue Youth Clubs were in attendance along with Youth Workers. The attendees were invited to inform Members of their views, perceptions and experiences of ASB across the town. Members were encouraged to hear the views of the young people as well as the youth workers.

11.12 The main issues identified as part of the discussions with the young people from the youth clubs across the town were:

- It was evident to Members that the issues raised were very similar to those identified by the Children and Care Council and the Youth Council at the above workshop adding graffiti, egging windows, dog fouling and theft and vandalism;
- The young people acknowledged that groups of teenagers hanging around local neighbourhoods could seem like intimidating behaviour to some people;
- One of the main issues that the young people considered impacted on the level of ASB in particular areas was the abuse of drugs and alcohol and the dealing of drugs; and
- It was identified by the young people that in some families, older generations did not necessarily act as good role models for the younger members of the family.

11.13 Interviews with residents who have experienced and reported ASB - Members recognised the benefits of speaking with individuals who had experienced and reported ASB and with support from the Integrated Community Safety Team, residents kindly agreed to meet with Members on an individual and confidential basis. The residents were very open and honest in their engagement with Members and spoke very highly about the support they had received from the Integrated Community Safety Team.

11.14 The main issues identified by the individual residents who had experienced and reported ASB in their separate local areas were:

- The local area had declined significantly over the previous 10 years and one of the major contributing factors to this was the increasing number of rental properties with a high turnover of tenants resulting in a transient population with no community responsibility;
- There were a significant number of local tenants who were involved in drugs and alcohol abuse, as well as drug dealing;
- There appeared to be a lack of empathy and understanding of the impact that the different types of ASB had on the local community;
- It was the view of the residents that a reduction in the level of neighbourhood policing had contributed to the increasing levels of ASB and criminal activity in their local areas;
- Due to the decline in the local area and subsequent reduction in the value of their property, some residents were unable to sell their property and move to better area or more suitable accommodation; and
- The residents were unanimous in their praise for the Integrated Community Safety Team who had supported them and put things in place to deal a number of specific issues that had affected the residents.

11.15 Workshops with representatives from Hartlepool's Taxi Drivers - Representatives from Hartlepool Taxi Drivers were invited to attend a workshop with Members of the Committee with a view to gaining an understanding from their perspective of ASB and the impact of this on them. A number of representatives attended the workshop and

Members were encouraged to hear a number of suggestions of ways of dealing with ASB, including the public's perception of the Police.

11.16 The main two issues identified by the representatives from Hartlepool taxi drivers were:

- The night-time economy was a particular difficult time for taxi drivers as local drinking establishments would eject people who were worse for wear through excess consumption of alcohol and they would inevitably look for a taxi. Often, these revellers became aggressive as they were annoyed at being ejected from the pub or club; and
- Incidents of ASB for taxi-drivers was increasing from children and young people throwing stones at taxis to people under the influence of drugs or alcohol looking for taxis late at night.

11.17 Events attended by Members of the Committee - Members welcomed the opportunity to attend the following events with Council Officers across the town to gain an understanding of how ASB was dealt with from an operational perspective:

- Enforcement Officer Patrol; and
- Community Safety Office visit.

11.18 Belle Vue Youth Outreach Team - During a visit to the Belle Vue Centre, it was evident to Members that this was a very well utilised Centre for all age ranges, but for young people in particular. There were various activities undertaken within the Centre, including the Youth Club. Members welcomed the insight provided by the members of the Patrol and were pleased to take up the offer of joining them on a patrol of the local area around the Belle Vue Centre. In addition to the Patrol, Members welcomed feedback from youth workers on the SORTED Programme that was undertaken in conjunction with the Integrated Community Safety Team with young people to guide them to make positive life choices.

11.19 The SORTED Programme involves young people exploring the virtual world and how to keep safe on line, the risks teens face in modern society, what issues are important to young people and the values they hold along with weapon related crime and the risks and consequences of carrying weapons. Members were pleased to note that the feedback from the young people was generally positive with the overall behaviour of the young people changing in a positive way as the 8-week programme progressed.

11.20 The main issues identified by the representatives from the Belle Vue Outreach Team were:

- Members learned from the Team that there had been a noticeable reduction in a Police/Police Community Support Officer presence in the local neighbourhood;
- Due to their experience and knowledge of the local area, the Team had a significant amount of local intelligence that they shared with the Integrated Community Safety Team on a regular basis; and
- The SORTED Programme had a positive effect on the overall behaviour of the young people who attended.

11.21 Ride Along Scheme with Cleveland Police - Cleveland Police extended an invitation to participate in the Ride Along Scheme, which involved a Member going along with Police Officers on a vehicle patrol. A Member participated in the Scheme on a Friday

evening and although it was an uneventful evening, which was unusual according to the Police Officers, the operational experience obtained contributed to the Committees overall understanding of police activities and ASB experiences.

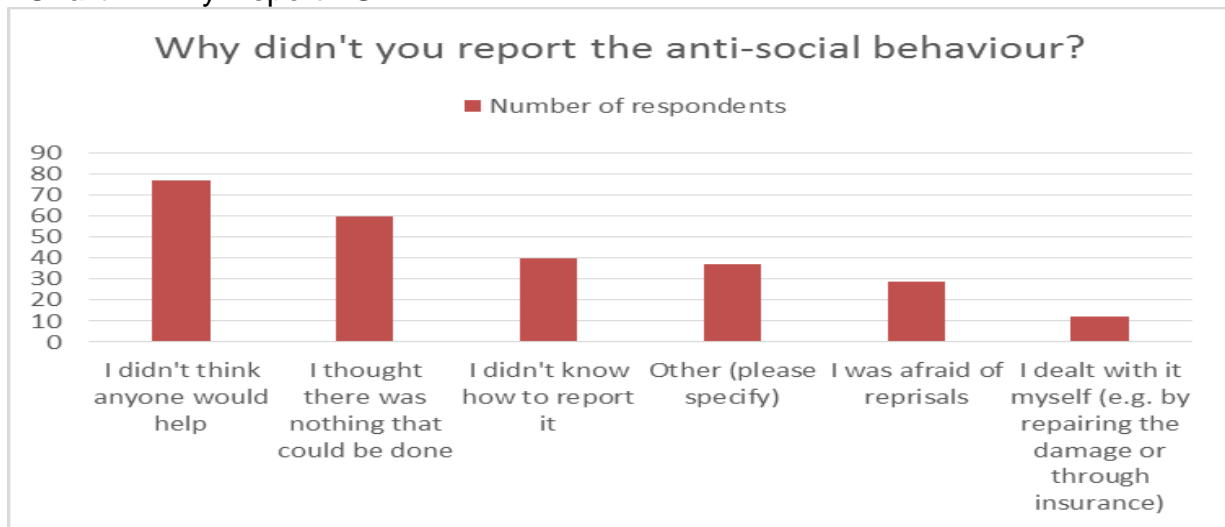
12. TOWNWIDE SURVEY WITH RESIDENTS

- 12.1 The Committee had agreed that as part of the extensive engagement programme, a town wide survey be undertaken to seek residents' opinions and experiences of ASB with the option of completing the survey either electronically or on paper. This was carried out between 28 October and 8 December 2019.
- 12.2 In evaluating the results of the survey, the Committee recognised that all responders may not have completed all questions or may have ticked more than one response. Therefore the figure across questions did not always correlate as people were more likely to complete the survey if they had negative comments to add. With this disclaimer, Member learned that the level of response was very good with 379 residents responding, of which 270 (71%) had experienced ASB in the previous six months. Members acknowledged that only 6.2% of the surveys returned were from people aged under 25, and a further survey was developed and undertaken by the Youth Council to enable this demographic to input to the investigation. The results of this survey are detailed in Section 13.
- 12.3 Members noted that the majority of responses to the survey had been received from the TS25 and TS26 postcode, however, it became apparent that these postcodes were represented in almost every Ward across Hartlepool. This demonstrated that ASB is a town wide issue and supported Dr Hunter's comments (as in Section 8) that going forward the focus of activities should not solely be based on current prevalence data. Other factor needed to be taken into consideration.
- 12.4 Members were pleased to note that with the assistance of Elwick Parish Council, surveys were delivered to the more rural communities on the outskirts of the Town, however the response from the more rural postcodes was the lowest.
- 12.5 The results of the survey showed that the top ten issues experienced were:
- Rubbish/litter lying around (158 respondents)
 - Groups hanging around in the street or other public place (150 respondents)
 - Rude and abusive behaviour from Children (126 respondents)
 - Begging (111 respondents)
 - Nuisance off-road bikes (109 respondents)
 - Vandalism (106 respondents)
 - People drinking or taking drugs (101 respondents)
 - People dealing drugs (92 respondents)
 - Run down / boarded up properties (84 respondents)
 - Rude and abusive behaviour from Adults (77 respondents)
- 12.6 In addition, a hate crime or incident had been experienced by 14 respondents in the past 6 months with two of the most commonly identified issues within the 'something else' category being dog fouling and people cycling dangerously.

12.7 The following sections provide further detail from the extensive town wide survey undertaken, however please note the disclaimer in paragraph 12.2 in relation to the responses received.

12.8 **Reporting** - Members noted that 162 respondents who had experienced ASB had not reported it compared to 97 who had. The respondents who had decided not to report the ASB they had experienced were asked why not. The two main reasons why they had not reported the behaviour was that the perception was that no-one would help (50%) and there was nothing that could be done (39%). Members were concerned to learn that around 18% of respondents had not reported ASB as they were afraid of reprisals.

Chart 4: Why Report ASB



12.9 The survey indicated that respondents who indicated they had reported ASB, 67 (66%) most commonly reported ASB issues to Cleveland Police with 24 (23%) to their local Ward Councillor and 22 (21%) to the Integrated Community Safety Team. The most common method of reporting ASB was by telephone. For those who had not found it easy to report, the main difficulty was not knowing how to contact the people/agency they wished to report it to.

Chart 5: Difficulty in reporting ASB



12.10 The Committee were concerned to note that only 38% of respondents had indicated that they received a response the first time they reported ASB with 23% of respondents having to report it four or more times before it was responded to.

12.11 Members noted with interest the following table which shows the number of times incidents of ASB were reported, but were mindful that some of the reports were made to multiple places and therefore did not necessarily correlate with the number of people making those reports.

Table 5: Number of times incident of ASB reported

Who to:	Number of times reported:					Total number
	0	1	2	3	4+	
Police	32.8%	12.1%	12.1%	13.8%	29.3%	58
HCST	30.4%	8.7%	13.0%	4.3%	43.5%	23
Ward Councillor	15.0%	10.0%	20.0%	10.0%	45.0%	20
Everyone Else	41.2%	14.7%	14.7%	14.7%	14.7%	34
Totals						135

0 = responded to on first report, 1= re-reported once, 2 = re-reported twice, 3 = re-reported three times, 4 = re-reported four times plus

12.12 The Committee also found that the majority of residents had indicated that after reporting ASB, the behaviour had either stayed the same (56%) or it had worsened (14%).

12.13 There were a number of comments within the 'other' category of reasons for not reporting ASB but the most common theme across these comments was that respondents wanted an easier way to report ASB as it happens, particularly out of hours. In addition, it was suggested that the further development of electronic ways of reporting ASB be explored including an online portal or app to be available to residents alongside the more traditional reporting mechanisms. It was evident to the Committee that further promotion of the ways of reporting ASB and who to was needed across the whole town.

12.14 Support - The Committee acknowledged the different type of support that was available to people reporting ASB across the town when they made their report or at any time during the process. However, Members were disappointed to note that 71% of all respondents had indicated that they had not been offered support with only 25% indicating that they had been offered support. A further breakdown on an organisational basis is included in the table below against who the report had been made to.

Table 6: Support Offered

	Offered support	Not offered support	Didn't know/could not remember
Police	14% (9)	73% (47)	13% (8)
HCST	14% (3)	73% (16) *The number of referrals from HCST is much higher than these figures would suggest.	13% (3)
Ward Councillors	5% (1)	91% (20)	13% (1)
Everyone Else	8% (3)	81% (29)	11% (4)

Table 7: Type of Support Offered

	Victim Support			Fire Safety Visit			Crime Prevention		
	Offered	Not Offered	Would have used	Offered	Not Offered	Would have used	Offered	Not Offered	Would have used
Police	4	15	2	2	12	2	6	14	5
HCST	2	5	1	2	5	0	3	5	0
Ward Councillors	0	6	2	0	6	1	1	5	1
Everyone Else	0	7	2	1	5	1	1	7	1

12.15 The Committee noted that the majority of respondents appeared not to have been offered any support regardless of who they reported the issues to. However, few respondents said they would have used any of the services if they had been offered to them. Members were concerned that 3 of the 6 types of support offered would not have been chosen, even if they were offered and these were referrals to MIND, the Samaritans or Harbour. As a result of this, Members considered whether the types of support currently offered were the most appropriate and whether there was any other type of support that could be offered. It was also suggested that there should be better promotion and resourcing of the services available to support victims of ASB.

12.16 Whilst it was noted that there had been no referrals to Harbour, Members were interested to note that the data that Harbour holds suggested that referrals were made. Of the most useful types of support provided to victims of ASB, Members were informed that the fitting of security equipment and the victim support service was found to be helpful along with the communication with the Council's Victim Support Officer and the Community Police Support Officers who become involved.

12.17 Of the types of support that were used by the respondents, the Police and Integrated Community Safety Team were the most likely to offer Victim Support, Fire Safety or Crime Prevention. In addition, Members found that Victim Support and Crime Prevention were most likely to be offered through the Police.

12.18 Members welcomed the fact that some of the respondents who had utilised a support service had found it beneficial for the following reasons:

- Fitting of security equipment was extremely useful;
- Victim Support was found to be helpful and kept in regular contact; and
- Respondents felt listened to by the PCSO, that the issue had been dealt with promptly and that the PCSO had been reassuring and very informative.

12.19 Members noted that of the respondents who had utilised a support service, only 3 had not found it to be useful. The reasons being:

- A sticker for front door that tells callers not to knock if they are 'cold callers' however that doesn't stop them;
- It is like trying to teach a duck to suck eggs. Lock my doors, secure my windows. The sheet was actually insulting that you feel you have to tell people that; and
- Lack of funding.

12.20 Satisfaction - In relation to the service received overall, 45% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, 26% satisfied or very satisfied and 29% remaining neutral. The highest levels of dissatisfaction were around not being kept informed about what has happened along with the length of time it took to deal with the problem once reported. However, Members were pleased to note that of the responses that were received, 91% of all responders considered that Officers were polite and courteous when contacting them.

12.21 Of the respondents who had indicated they were dissatisfied with the service, the following broad categories were referenced:-

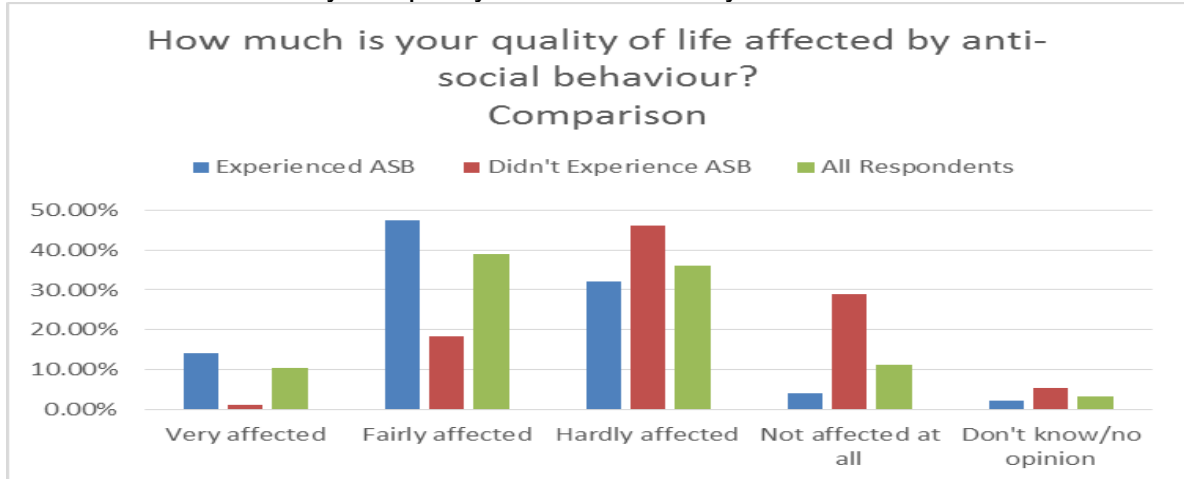
- It was a long time before something happened/nothing happened (14 responders);
- Not given enough/any information (11 responders - including 4 who said they had not had updates on their case and 6 who had not been informed about the Community Trigger);
- It is a never-ending problem (6 responders);
- Not enough support provided (4 responders);
- Passed around different agencies (2 responders);
- Information/evidence not acted on or lost (2 responders);
- Couldn't speak to an officer (2 responders); and
- Other (12 responders).

12.22 One of the key areas highlighted was that the professional agencies were not always keeping the victims of ASB informed of any actions being considered and/or undertaken. Members noted that was more likely to be an issue when the ASB being investigated was affecting a particular area such as a group of streets and/or shopping parades, rather than one individual family and ways of keeping local residents and shop owners updated with ongoing activities should be explored further.

12.23 Members were concerned to learn that from the evidence presented, the majority of responders, 91%, had indicated that they had not had the Community Trigger process explained to them, with only 12% responders commenting that they had been made aware of this process at the time of reporting. Whilst it was noted by Members that the Community Trigger process was included on the Council's website, it was recognised that this was the minimum requirement for promoting the Community Trigger process and suggested that ways of expanding the promotion of this process be explored.

12.24 Perception of ASB as a problem - In relation to the perception of ASB, 72% of respondents felt that there was either a fairly big or very big problem with ASB, compared to 23% who felt that there was either not a very big problem or no problem at all. The Committee noted with concern that 50% of all respondents indicated that their life was fairly or very affected by ASB with only 11% indicating their life was not affected at all. The Committee also found that 46% of respondents felt that the Police, Council and other agencies were not dealing with ASB in their local area effectively with 23% agreeing or strongly agreeing that agencies were dealing with the problem.

Chart 6: How much is your quality of life affected by ASB

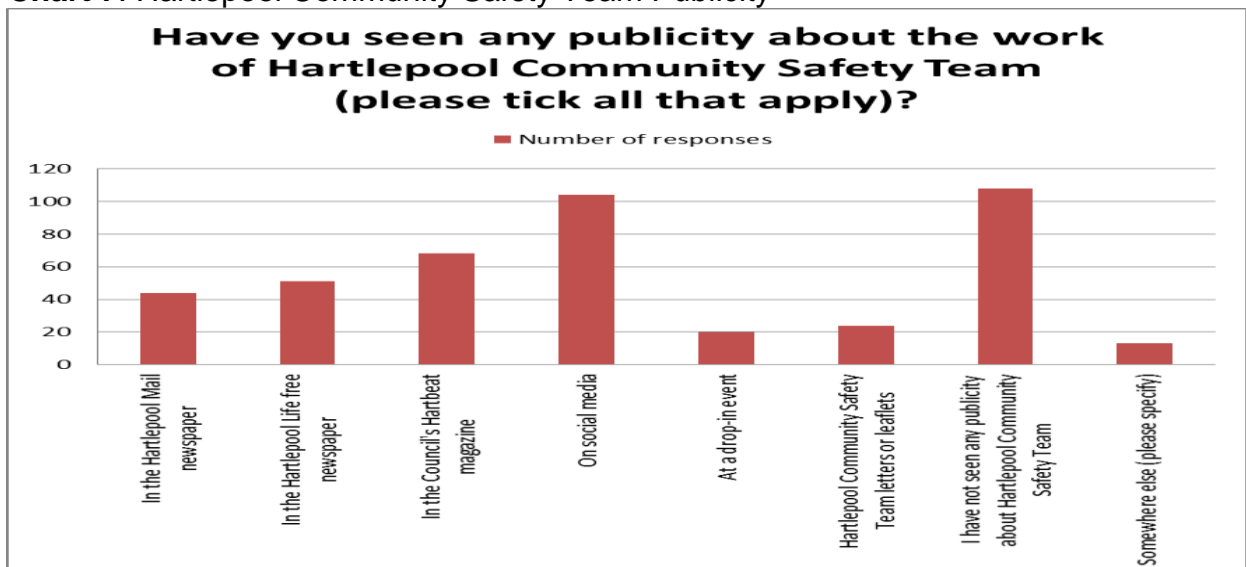


12.25 Suggested Solutions - Members were interested to note the comments received from respondents in relation to potential solutions to tackle the problem of ASB. It was recognised by Members that the involvement of the community across all age groups was imperative to reinvigorating a sense of local community and empowerment. However, the Committee acknowledged that resources were limited in view of the ongoing austerity measures being faced by all local authorities and partners. The types of solutions suggested by responders to the survey can be categorised as follows:

- More staff/greater police presence;
- There is nothing that can be done;
- Stricter punishments/more effective deterrents;
- Agencies taking a proactive/preventative approach;
- Take effective action against perpetrators (including parents and landlords);
- More funding for services; and
- Provide somewhere for teens to go.

12.26 Promotion - Members were encouraged to note that the Council and its partners have undertaken to improve public confidence in the reporting of ASB and the work being done to tackle it through publicity around the Integrated Community Safety Team. Most respondents had seen some kind of publicity about the Team as noted below.

Chart 7: Hartlepool Community Safety Team Publicity



- 12.27 The Integrated Community Safety Team was launched on 26 February 2019 at a Face the Public Event, during which residents were able to put questions to senior representatives of key organisations that make up the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, including Cleveland Police, Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Fire Authority, Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Clinical Commissioning Group, the Probation Service and Cleveland's Police and Crime Commissioner. The event included a workshop which enabled residents to highlight the issues that most affected them.
- 12.28 Since the launch of the team in February 2019, there have been 19 press releases and numerous social media campaigns to highlight specific initiatives and successes that has been implemented by the Team.
- 12.29 Members were informed that there had been a number of successful enforcement activities across partners undertaken in recent months to improve local areas from the effects of ASB, including premises closure orders. Members were keen to see this positive action promoted widely as it was hoped that this would instil confidence in residents in reporting future incidents. However, it was acknowledged by Members that this would need to be continued and expanded upon in recognition of the subsequent displacement of ASB.
- 12.30 In addition to the above, Members considered they had a significant role in supporting residents who were the victims of ASB through the mechanisms of reporting incidents and providing them with support. With this in mind, Members were keen to see more regular communications between the Integrated Community Safety Team and ward councillors, especially on issues within their own specific Wards.
- 12.31 Police and Crime Commissioner Response to Town Wide Survey - The Committee sought the views of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on the results of the town-wide survey. The PCC was concerned at the proportion of people choosing not to report ASB, particularly given the marked reduction in reports received last year which has suggested to agencies that ASB is decreasing. Members were pleased to note that the introduction of online reporting to the Police which is an option for non-emergency incidents will encourage more reports, especially given the feedback regarding long waiting times when reporting via telephone. It was suggested by the PCC that the Council number for reporting ASB should be promoted more widely within local communities. It was hoped that the reinvigoration of Neighbourhood Policing will lead to enhanced problem solving / intelligence gathering activity within localities to tackle ASB and other community issues.
- 12.32 The PCC noted that the consultation demonstrates the impact of ongoing ASB on victims and this was recognised by the extension of the Victim Care and Advice contract to cover victims of ASB as well as crime. The Committee were informed that in response to a recently consultation on the Victims Code of Practice, the PCC had responded that guidelines should be changed to ensure that ASB is managed in the same manner as crime from a victim's perspective. In relation to the Community Trigger, discussions were ongoing between the PCC and the Victims and Witness Group, however this has yet to lead to any direct activity within organisations.

13. SURVEY OF YOUNG PEOPLE

- 13.1 As a result of the workshop undertaken with the Children in Care Council and the Youth Council, Members asked the young people representatives to develop and undertake a survey of young people to gain their perception, experiences and views on ASB. Members of the Youth Council carried out several consultation sessions in various locations including the youth centres across Hartlepool. This survey specifically targeted young people who gave their responses there and then via a tablet or completed a paper copy of the survey. In total 56 responses were received.
- 13.2 Members were delighted to welcome a representative from the Youth Council to a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee to present the findings of the survey which showed that 75% of respondents had experienced at least one type of ASB compared to 25% who had not experienced any ASB. It was noted with interest that the two main behaviours referenced as the biggest problem in their local area were rubbish and littering followed, people dealing drugs and people drinking/being drunk in the street. In addition, both the town-wide survey and the survey of young people scored rude/abusive behaviour from children and young people highly (see **Appendix 4**).
- 13.3 The results indicated that 80% of the young people who responded considered the ASB in their part of the town to be worse than other areas. The main reasons are as follows:
- Because of people drinking/taking drugs/dealing drugs - 10
 - Other - 10
 - Kids growing up in rough areas – 6
 - Don't know – 4
 - Because it is near a school/shop – 3
 - Because I see it more in this area – 3
 - There are more rude people in town
- 13.4 Members were interested to note that the reasons why the young people who responded considered that ASB was lower in their local area are as follows:
- It is not as bad as other areas – 4
 - We have security – 2
 - No one goes outside – 1
 - Because there are lots of elderly – 1
 - Since someone came into school and told us not to start fires they don't do it anymore – 1
- 13.5 In relation to tackling ASB across the Town, Members were encouraged that the young people who responded had made several suggestions on how to tackle the problem of ASB. It was interesting that the suggestions were markedly different to the public survey with the young people focussing on practical steps such as diversionary activities, education and making perpetrators put things right. The responses in the public survey concentrated more on the deterrent side of more police and harsher punishments with only 2 responses to the town-wide survey suggesting providing somewhere for young people to go.
- 13.6 Members' attention was drawn to the comments of the respondents who felt overwhelmingly that young people are often blamed for the ASB in Hartlepool. It was interesting to note that whilst during a lot of the discussions on this topic, the conversations often centred on young people being the main perpetrators of ASB. However, evidence provided by the Annual Safer ASB Hartlepool Partnership Strategic

Assessment reiterated that two thirds of all reported ASB incidents are carried out by adults. Respondents were asked what could be done to change this perception with suggestions detailed as follows:

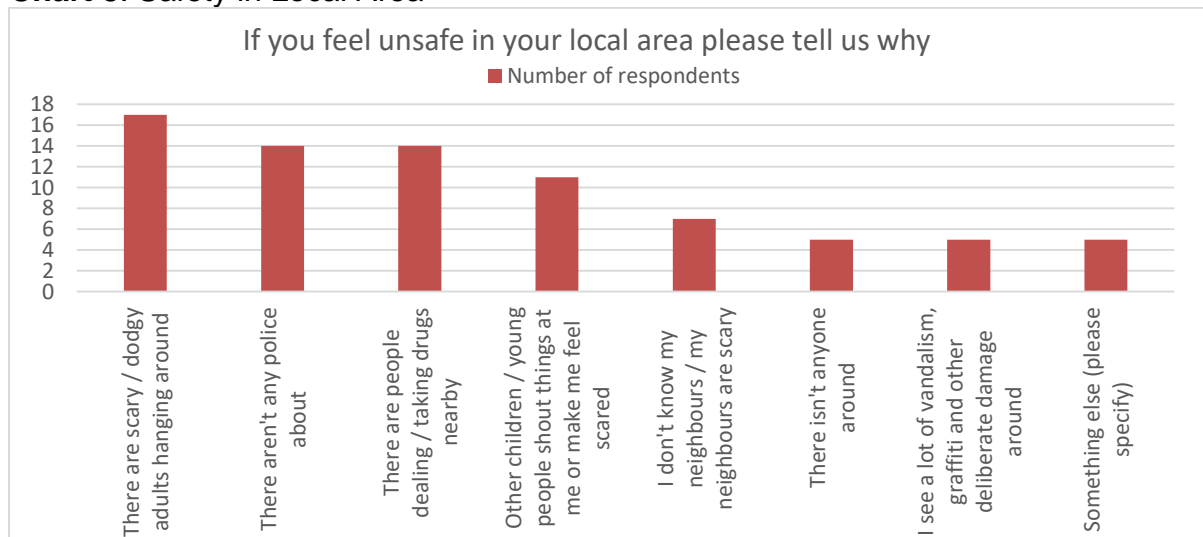
- Show evidence of who really is to blame - 11
- Show young people in a good light/doing something positive – 10
- Other - 5
- Stop blaming kids – 4
- More understanding of what ASB is – 3
- Don't know – 3
- Get to know the young people – 2

13.7 The results of the young people's survey had identified that 75% of the responders were of the opinion that the under 20's age group was the most anti-social age group. Members were interested in the contrast of this opinion compared to the comments noted above where young people felt that they were often unfairly blamed for the ASB across the town. It was clear to Members that there was a discrepancy in these statistics which may be a result of the difference in perception and definition of ASB between children and young people and adults. Members suggested that this issue be explored further to enable a clearer picture of the perception of ASB across the generations.

13.8 A number of the young people highlighted to Members that they had attended the ASBAD and Crucial Crew programmes which is referred to in Section 9.7.

13.9 Members were pleased to note that 64% of young people questioned felt safe in their local area although acknowledged that this figure could be higher. The most common reason given for feeling unsafe is due to scary or dodgy adults hanging around with people taking or dealing drugs also highlighted.

Chart 8: Safety in Local Area



13.10 Based upon the information obtained in relation to children and young people the Committee considered that there is a need for:-

- i) Increased awareness in terms of:
 - The true impact of ASB on vulnerable residents.
 - The youth offer across the town (including organised play opportunities, activities across the seasons, events and community work).

- ii) Sponsorship for children and young people from deprived communities to join sporting and community groups.
- iii) Improved communication between the professional agencies involved in dealing with ASB incidents in relation to any action being considered and/or taken with the people who were the victims of the incidents.
- iv) Amnesty boxes to be provided to enable the public to report incidents of ASB anonymously.
- v) Improved communication with all professional agencies involved in dealing with ASB and local retail outlets/shopping centres as these can be the main areas where ASB is occurring, especially involving young people.
- vi) Increased intervention and prevention support for families and young people who are identified as being on the periphery of committing incidents of ASB.

13.11 It was also clear to the Committee that the definition of what constitutes ASB is significantly influenced by individual perceptions and this is equally apparent across age groups, as demonstrated by consultations results. In addition to this, it is important to appreciate that young people are also real victims of ASB and that they share concerns about rubbish and litter as the biggest ASB problem in Hartlepool and levels of drug dealing and drug taking in the town.

13.12 Members acknowledged that both young people and adults have a perception that young people are one of the main contributors to ASB in Hartlepool. However, this is likely to be due to the difference in the perception of what constitutes ASB. The young people feel that more should be done to show young people in a positive light, given that the Annual Safer Hartlepool Strategic Assessment identifies that two thirds of all reported ASB incidents was carried out by adults.

13.13 Furthermore, it had been shown that a marked difference exists in how the two groups think that ASB should be tackled with the young people advocating personal responsibility by putting right the harm they had caused, whilst adults feel the authorities should be doing more through proactive preventative work with harsher punishments. This generational change was an interesting shift and one that could influence intervention and prevention in the future.

14. CONCLUSIONS

14.1 The Audit and Governance Committee concluded that:-

a) In terms of **perceptions** of ASB:-

- i) A wide range of issues encompass the term Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). However, the identification of a true definition is problematic as each individuals perception is subjective in terms of what is, or is not, acceptable behaviour. This is further compounded by the absence of a clear distinction between anti-social and criminal behaviour, with the severity of an act a significant factor in its categorisation (i.e. some low-level crimes are identified as ASB and vice versa).

- ii) ASB appears to be treated as a 'low level' crime by the police. However, the strength of feeling demonstrated throughout the investigation, alongside the significant effect on victims and its role as a potential precursor to criminal behavior, means that it must be considered as a priority across all agencies.
 - iii) Contradictions exist between the perceived prevalence of ASB and actual reported incidents, with:
 - Under reporting a real issue and a disparity in the true picture across Hartlepool that hampers the development of an effective action plan and the focusing of available resources (including police and other support services) on areas of real need.
 - A perception that young people are the primary source of ASB, despite evidence showing that it is instigated across, all age groups, with two thirds of all reported incidents in fact carried out by adults over the age of 18. Young people feel unfairly blamed for ASB while they are simply doing things young people do.
 - Significant differences in perceptions of what constitutes ASB and how it should be tackled. Whilst young people tend to advocate personal responsibility, by putting right the harm they had caused, adults tend to feel the authorities should be doing more through proactive preventative work with harsher punishments. This generational change was an interesting shift and one that could influence intervention and prevention in the future.
 - iv) There was a lack of neighbourhood policing with a knock on effect on community confidence in terms of safety and incident reporting. Although, assurances were welcomed from the PCC and Chief Constable that the number of police and PCSO is set increase.
 - v) ASB occurs across all Wards to varying degrees and it not restricted to areas of private rented accommodation or higher level deprivation.
 - vi) The issue of ASB in private rented accommodation is recognised as a significant issue, especially through an often transient population where it is difficult to engage with both tenants and/or landlords. It is often difficult for landlords to engage the tenants regarding ASB and a pilot to address this is ongoing, that subject to evaluation could be rolled out to other areas, including Hartlepool.
- b) In terms of **partnership working**:-
- i) The establishment of the Integrated Community Safety Team has been very effective, with:
 - All those involved to be commended on their success in bringing partner agencies together to deliver enforcement and education activity within the resources available;
 - Assurances are welcomed that existing levels of activity are sustainable within the current staffing establishment. However, any reduction in establishment levels would have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the Team;
 - The activities of the Police, and Targeted Outreach Team and Youth Offending teams are essential to the effectiveness of ASB prevention and enforcement activities; and

- The need to ensure that the enforcement responsibilities of the Integrated Community Safety Team are balanced and do not have a negative impact on the ability of the Team to respond to ASB as a priority.
- ii) Despite a recent extension of funding by the PCC, future funding for the Targeted Outreach Team was due to cease and Members felt strongly that the PCC should be lobbied to continue this funding going forward.
 - iii) Partnership working outside the Integrated Community Safety Team, is equally important with considerable value in the examples of inter-agency working demonstrated by the fire brigade and other organisations who gain access to properties through their day to day duties.
 - iv) It is evident that Elected Members are not being utilised to their full capacity in terms of the value that could add to the work of the Integrated Team and the ASB prevention / intervention process. To facilitate this:
 - Members need to be fully trained in terms of the sources of advice and support available, formal routes of reporting through the Contact Centre and criteria / potential use of the Community Trigger; and
 - The role of Members as part of the mechanism for reporting and supporting resident's needs to be better publicised.
 - v) It is disgusting that emergency services are subject to ASB, and have been forced to resort to the wearing of bodycams, however, indications that this is not a significant problem for either the Police or Fire brigade in Hartlepool is encouraging.
 - vi) Approaches to communication and intelligence sharing, need to be reviewed to ascertain if they are still fit for purpose, especially in relation to:
 - Council departments, schools, VCS to provide a more holistic approach to ASB;
 - Organisations, especially retailers across the town; and
 - Residents and Communities.
 - vii) There are concerns regarding the implications of the loss of Police satellite units in terms of the time wasted by police whilst waiting to attend court.
- c) In terms of **reporting and satisfaction**:-
- i) Cost, uncertainty as to what and where to report ASB, a lack of confidence in responses / actions and fear of potential reprisals all act as deterrents to reporting.
 - ii) Awareness and understanding of reporting mechanisms is limited, requiring improved clarity and the demonstration of effective outcomes if confidence was to be increased and reporting encouraged. However, the development of online reporting and apps, including the Fix-My-Street scheme, is welcomed with the proviso that they are effectively promoted and provided alongside more traditional reporting mechanisms.

- iii) It is worrying that the main reason given for none reporting of ASB are the perception that no-one would help and that there is nothing that can be done and fear of reprisals. Even when reported, less than half received a response first time and felt that ASB either stayed the same or got worse¹³.
 - iv) Members were keen to learn the outcome of the development of ways to increase the reporting of ASB through Thirteen's pilot scheme along with an evaluation of the use of the app at a future meeting of the Committee with a view to potential roll out to non-Thirteen customers.
 - v) Further development of the option to report anti-social behaviour online, use of electronic apps alongside more innovative ways for older people to report anti-social behaviour be explored and that a single point of contact be created for the reporting of anti-social behaviour incidents.
 - vi) Overall satisfaction with ASB interventions is generally low, with the highest level of dissatisfaction around not being kept informed about what is happening and the length of time taken to deal with problems once reported. Ways of improving this position needed to be explored.
 - vii) On a positive note the majority of those who responded to the survey considered Officers to be polite and courteous, with residents impressed by the activities and achievements of the integrated team.
- d) In terms of **support and promotion**:-
- i) A range of different types of support are available to those reporting ASB, however, it appears that the majority were not been offered support, and even when offered up to 50% do not access it¹⁴. The subsequent issue being whether the package of support is fit for purpose or needs to be reviewed to better fit the needs of victims.
 - ii) There is strong support for the use of all available enforcement measures across all aspects of ASB and the need to more effectively promote them.
 - iii) Pre-existing vulnerabilities (e.g. isolation and disability) can be a contributory factor in ASB and it is important to identify vulnerable individuals to effectively target preventative measures. The VCAS was an excellent example of this through the provision of effectiveness of its community engagement activities in engaging with vulnerable residents.
 - iv) The factors that lead to homelessness, and challenges presented, are recognised. However, there is support for the enforcement action taken and initiatives out in place to encourage donations to foodbanks rather than direct to the homeless as a means of deterring begging.
 - v) A considerable amount of work / interventions are undertaken across partners, however, there is an absence of communication with Members in relation to issues within their individual wards to enable them to be involved in developing solutions.

¹³ Source - Survey undertaken as part of the ASB Investigation.

¹⁴ Source - Survey undertaken as part of the ASB Investigation.

vi) A range of successful elements of enforcement activity has been undertaken with a positive impact on local communities and this needs to be better promoted. It should be continued and expanded upon in recognition of the subsequent displacement of the ASB.

e) In terms of the **Community Trigger**:-

i) Whilst the statutory requirements for publicity of the community trigger were being fulfilled it was clear that awareness of the Community Trigger, and the criteria / process for its enactment, is limited across Elected Members and residents alike.

ii) Responsibility for the implementation of the Community Trigger rests with the Local Authority, and whilst it is referenced on Hartlepool Borough Council's web site, further promotion of it is required. This includes the need for it to be referenced on the new Police single point of contact reporting system.

iii) It was recognised that increased take-up of the Community Trigger could have resource implications and how this could be balanced with the need for greater transparency needs to be explored.

f) In terms of **potential solutions**:-

i) There is a marked difference in potential solutions for dealing with ASB between young people and adults, young people tending to focus on practical steps such as diversionary activities, education and making perpetrators put things right. Conversely, the adult focus tending to be on a more deterrent / punishment based approach.

ii) Ways of addressing ASB need to be found by working 'with' communities across all age groups, rather than doing it 'to' them, with the potential of a campaign to 'Take Back Neighbourhoods' and promote pride in local community through social responsibility. As part of this, there would be a real benefit in working collaboratively with young people on the development of focused prevention and intervention activities.

iii) The provision of organised play activities / facilities in communities has can have a positive impact on ASB prevention, however, these facilities are not available across all wards and those that exist are not adequately promoted.

iv) In terms of the focusing of ASB prevention and intervention activities, the collection of accurate data is essential to effectively focus resources. However, it has become evidence that respective data sets from all bodies is not currently combined into one usable data resource. In addition to this, the focus of activities should not be based solely on prevalence data, other factors should also be considered.

v) ASB is an adult responsibility and parents need to take responsibility for the activities and actions of their children.

g) In terms of **education and engagement**:-

- i) Ensuring that there is a true understanding of the impact of ASB on the emotional and physical health and wellbeing of the population is essential to changing behaviour and the education of adults and children and young people must be a priority. This could include opportunities to speak to adults and young people as part of existing local authority, and partner provided, engagement and activity programmes (e.g. free swims and holiday hunger).
- ii) The following areas of excellent preventative work exist for schools across all primary and secondary schools:
 - ASBAD Programme – aimed at secondary Year 8 pupils; and
 - Crucial Crew – aimed at primary Year 6 pupils.
- iii) Crucial Crew is a self-funding initiative which relies on donations from outside organisations and participating schools for transporting pupils, however, Members were disappointed that around a third of primary schools did not contribute.
- iv) Problems are experienced by all partners in accessing secondary schools due to curriculum pressures and how schools could be better encouraged to participate in ASB preventative education programmes (i.e. the ASBAD programme) needs to be explored.
- v) It is important to dispel the myth that young people are the primary instigators of ASB and provide role models for all elements of the community.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Audit and Governance Committee has taken evidence from a wide range of sources and is clear in its overall support for the activities of the Integrated Community Safety Team. The Committee's key recommendations are as outlined over the page.

a) **Perceptions of ASB**:-

- i) That in response to concerns regarding under reporting of ASB in Hartlepool:
 - Work be undertaken with Nottingham Trent University and partner organisations (including Police, Fire Brigade and RSL) to explore the overlaying of data, including Office for National Statistics, risk factors and identified characteristics, to highlight areas of unreported ASB and plan the future focus of resources; and
 - Based on the area identified following the overlay of data, a focused exercise be undertaken to promote reporting.
- ii) That as part of the overlaying of data referenced in (i) above, the Audit and Governance Committee receive, as part of its 2020/21 Work Programme, a further report on the correlation between areas with significant levels of rented accommodation and ASB.

iii) That options for the involvement of young people in Hartlepool (potentially through the Youth Council and Children in Care Council) in the development of the below be explored:

- A promotional campaign to redress the perception that young people are the primary source of ASB.
- A young person focused approach to preventing and responding to ASB.
- Improved communication with young people about the impact of ASB and the diversionary activities that are available.'

b) Partnership Working:-

i) That in terms of the Integrated Community Safety Team:

- The Team be commended on their success in bringing agencies together in a ground-breaking partnership arrangement to deliver enforcement and education activity within the resources available; and
- Existing levels of staffing be maintained to ensure the sustainability of current activities and that a review of the current enforcement responsibilities be undertaken to ensure that the Team's enforcement responsibilities are balanced and have no negative impact on its ability to respond to ASB as a priority.

ii) That the Cleveland Fire Brigade be commended on the value of their inter-agency working, in terms of ongoing home visits as a useful tool for the identification of vulnerable individuals.

iii) That the Audit and Governance Committee receive, as part of its 2020/21 Work Programme, a further report on the development of relationships between both primary and secondary schools and older people/residential homes.

iv) That in terms of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership partners, that:

- The partners commit and sign a pledge to prioritise anti-social behaviour as a significant crime and record / respond to it accordingly;
- An anti-social behaviour update be included as an annual item on SHP agenda to raise the profile of anti-social behaviour and enable all partners to feedback any issues and/or areas of good practice in dealing with anti-social behaviour;
- That enforcement action be expanded and the resulting issues of displacement of ASB be monitored and reported to the SHP; and
- A Member Champion for anti-social behaviour be appointed and appointed to sit on the Safer Hartlepool Partnership to demonstrate the Council's commitment to dealing with anti-social behaviour.

v) That links between the Police, the Targeted Outreach Team and Youth Offending Team be strengthened along with improved communication between Council departments, schools, voluntary and community sector to provide a more effective and holistic approach to anti-social behaviour.

vi) That the PCC be lobbied to identify continued funding for the Target Outreach Team.

vii) That approaches to communication and intelligence sharing between Council departments, schools, VCS and outside organisations (especially retailers across the town) be reviewed to improve help promote confidence and awareness.

viii) That in relation to Cleveland Police activities:

- Concerns regarding the loss of Police satellite units and the subsequent wasted police time attending court be raised with the Cleveland Police and OPCC; and
- The Audit and Governance Committee receive, as part of its 2020/21 Work Programme, a further report on the implementation of promised increases in neighbourhood Police and PCSO numbers in Hartlepool.

c) Reporting and Satisfaction

i) That the outcome of the Thirteen's pilot scheme to increase the reporting of ASB, and online app, be evaluated and its potential roll out to non-Thirteen customers explored.

ii) That the development of further options for the reporting of anti-social behaviour be explored alongside more traditional reporting mechanisms, including:

- Online and use of electronic apps (including the Fix-My-Street scheme);
- More innovative ways for older people to report anti-social behaviour; and
- A potential single point of contact.

iii) That issues relating to the need for multiple reports / contacts before action is taken by partners be explored to ascertain if there is a demonstrable issue and identify ways of addressing potential problems.

iv) That a review be undertaken to identify ways to improve:

- Satisfaction levels with anti-social behaviour interventions; and
- Keep victims (including individual residents, groups of residents and shop owners) informed of progress throughout the process for dealing with any reported incidents.

d) Support and Promotion

i) That a town wide campaign be undertaken advertising prevention / enforcement activities, successes and outcomes, with the aim of promoting and encouraging reporting and improved communication with victims of ASB.

ii) That the Council number for reporting ASB be promoted more widely within local communities to help reinvigorate Neighbourhood Policing, leading to enhanced problem solving activity within localities to tackle ASB and other community issues.

iii) That in 6 months' time the Audit and Governance Committee receive, as part of its 2020/21 Work Programme, a further report on the continuation/replacement of the Think Family Programme (Troubled Families) and its activities in relation to ASB.

iv) That in light of issues with awareness and take up of support services for victims of ASB, the package of services be evaluated to ascertain if it is fit for purpose and whether alternative support mechanisms need to be identified which better fits the needs of victims.

v) That in relation to the **Community Trigger**:

- Whilst it is referenced on Hartlepool Borough Council's web site, further promotion be undertaken, including the need for it to be referenced on the new Police single point of contact reporting system;
- The potential implications of increased promotion of the Community Trigger on the workload of the Integrated Community Safety Team be evaluated and responded to accordingly; and
- The outcome of discussions between the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and the Victims and Witness Group on the implementation of the Community Trigger be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

vi) That Elected Members are not being utilised to their full capacity in terms of the value that could add to the work of the Integrated Team and the ASB prevention / intervention process. To facilitate this:

- A full training programme to be provided covering the sources of advice and support available, formal routes of reporting through the Contact Centre and criteria / potential use of the Community Trigger;
- A publicist campaign need to be undertaken to promote the role of Members as part of the mechanism for reporting of ASB and supporting residents; and
- Regular briefings/communications be provided for Ward Councillors on ASB issues in their own Ward.

e) Solutions

- i) Mirroring arrangement with schools, the potential to have a named PCSO contact for all residential/care homes be explored.
- ii) That ways of addressing ASB be found by working 'with' communities across all age groups, rather than doing it 'to' them, including the development of a campaign to 'Take Back Neighbourhoods' and promote pride in local community through social responsibility and collaborative working.
- iii) In recognition of the value of organised play activities/facilities in communities across Hartlepool, as an alternative to ASB, a review of activities/facilities be undertaken and their location publicised.

f) Education and Engagement

- i) That in terms of the excellent work being undertaken as part of the ASBAD and Crucial Crew programmes:
 - All schools across the town be encouraged (via Head Teachers, Chairs of Governors and PHSE Lead Officers to participate in the ASBAD / Crucial Crew Education Programme; and
 - The future funding of ASBAD/Crucial Crew Education Programmes be reviewed to assist in their sustainability going forward.
- ii) That anti-social behaviour prevention / intervention be promoted as part of existing local authority, and partner provided, engagement and activity programmes (e.g. free swims and holiday hunger).

- iii) That the identification of role models (such as local celebrities) to take part in ASB education and prevention activities be explored.
- iv) That as part of a wider ASB programme of engagement, all primary and secondary schools across Hartlepool be encouraged to commit to an agreed schedule of activities involving the Police, Fire, NEAS and local authority.
- v) That a campaign be undertaken to dispel the myth that young people are the primary instigators of ASB.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

Hartlepool Borough Council:

Integrated Community Safety Team
North, Central and South Hubs
Private Sector Housing Team
Public Protection

External Representatives:

Nottingham Trent University
Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner
Cleveland Police
Cleveland Fire Authority
North East Ambulance Service
Thirteen Housing Group
Private Sector Landlords
Children in Care Council
Hartlepool Youth Council
Residents of Laurel Gardens, Albany Court and Hartfields
West View Project/Kilmarnock Youth Group/Wharton Trust Youth Group/Belle Vue Youth Group
Belle Vue Youth Outreach Team
Asylum Seeker Group
Hartlepool Residents' Groups and Associations
Joseph Rowntree Trust

**COUNCILLOR GERARD HALL
CHAIR OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

March 2020

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

Nottingham Trent University Report
Survey of young people undertaken by the Youth Council – November-December 2019

The following Terms of Reference for the investigation are proposed:-

- (a) To establish an understanding of:
 - Actions or activities that constitute anti-social behaviour; and
 - How anti-social behaviour is categorised in Hartlepool.
- (b) To gain an understanding of:
 - The type, prevalence, cost and impact of anti-social behaviour on individuals and communities across Hartlepool (Inc. clarification of the demographic groups and ages from which those responsible for, and subject to, anti-social behaviour belong);
 - The reasons for anti-social behaviour (Inc. drugs and alcohol and grooming into illegal activity); and
 - Anti-social behaviour trends in Hartlepool, Tees Valley and nationally, and the changing factors (Inc. social and economic) that have influenced them in Hartlepool.
- (c) To compare Hartlepool anti-social behaviour data and performance with other local, regional and peer Local Authorities.
- (d) To ascertain the powers available to the local authority and its partners to curb anti-social behaviour and the various stages of progressing action.
- (e) To consider the services provided across partner organisations and challenges facing the provision of services (now and in the future).
- (f) To explore anti-social behaviour reporting processes and in doing so gain an understanding of the:
 - Challenges / deterrents to reporting; and
 - Support provided to residents in submitting complaints in often difficult situations.
- (g) To explore examples of good practice / successes by local authorities, partners and other bodies (statutory and voluntary) in curbing anti- social behaviour:
 - In Hartlepool; and
 - Across the Country (to be identified following attendance at the Conference referenced in Section 7).
- (h) To consider expert evidence and research / previous reports:
 - Hartlepool Borough Council – Overview and Scrutiny Investigation into Anti-Social Behaviour (2004); and
 - Nottingham Trent University – Anti-Social Behaviour: Living a Nightmare;
- (i) To seek the views of the following in terms of current anti-social behaviour issues and how services could be better provided within the resources available*:
 - Partner organisations and bodies (statutory and voluntary sector); and
 - Residents (individuals and associations across age groups and vulnerable / minority communities).

**Utilising survey(s) and feedback from attendance at key groups / bodies). This to also include consideration of the outcomes of previous survey to prevent the duplication of activities.*

- (j) To gain an understanding of the impact of current and future budget pressures on the way in which services to prevent or respond to anti-social behaviour are provided in Hartlepool;
- (k) To explore how services to prevent and respond to anti-social behaviour could be provided in the future, giving due regard to:
 - Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the way in which the service is currently provided;
 - Raising awareness and addressing perceptions; and
 - If / how the service could be better provided within the resources available in the current economic climate.

Areas of Enquiry/Sources of Evidence

- (a) Evidence from the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Community Safety Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board;
- (b) Evidence from the Chairs of Committees (Neighbourhood Services Committee, Children's Services Committee and Adult Services Committee);
- (c) Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council Directors (Public Health, Children's Services,
- (d) Evidence from representatives from partner organisations – Statutory and Voluntary and Community Sector (Inc. Cleveland Police, Criminal Justice System Probation, Fire Brigade and the North East Ambulance Service);
- (e) Evidence from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland;
- (f) Evidence from local Housing provider Thirteen Housing Group;
- (g) Evidence and presentation from Dr James Hunter, Nottingham Trent University including the publication - Anti-Social Behaviour: Living a Nightmare - Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales;
- (h) Member attendance at Local Government Association Conference;
- (i) Member attendance at the following events across Hartlepool:
 - Enforcement Officer Patrol;
 - Day of Action – Oxford Road;
 - Youth Outreach Team Patrol;
 - Premise Closure Operation;
 - Ride Along Scheme with Cleveland Police; and
 - Community Safety Office visit.
- (j) Appropriate Champions (Hartlepool Borough Council);
- (k) Ward Councillors; and

The following sources of evidenced were referenced during the investigation:

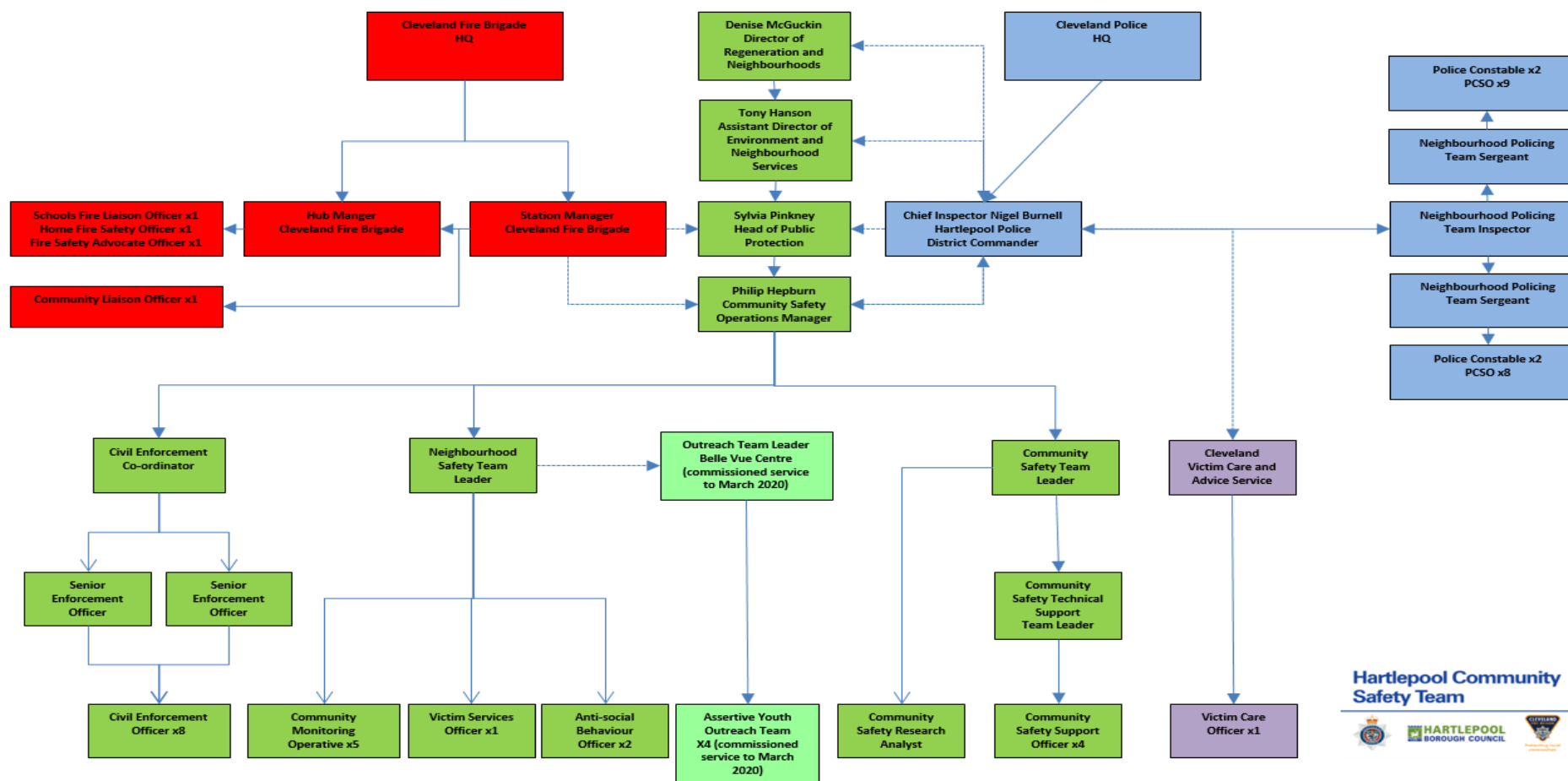
- (a) Anti-Social Behaviour: Living a Nightmare - Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales (<https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/victcomm2-prod-storage-119w3o4kq2z48/uploads/2019/04/ASB-report.pdf>);
- (b) Hartlepool Borough Council – Overview and Scrutiny Investigation into Anti-Social Behaviour (2004) ([Anti Social Behaviour | Hartlepool Borough Council](#));
- (c) Community Safety Partnership - Community Safety Plan 2017 – 2020 (Year 3) [Agendas, reports and minutes | Hartlepool Borough Council](#).

Appendix 2

DRUG / SUBSTANCE MISUSE & DEALING	Taking Drugs
	Sniffing Volatile Substances
	Discarding Needles / Drug Paraphernalia
	Drugs Den / Drinking Den / Cultivation
	Presence Of Dealers Or Users
STREET DRINKING	Street Drinking
BEGGING	Begging
PROSTITUTION	Soliciting
	Cards In Phone Boxes
	Discarded Condoms
KERB CRAWLING	Loitering
	Pestering Residents
SEXUAL ACTS	Inappropriate Sexual Conduct
	Indecent Exposure
	Rape
	Child Abuse
ABANDONED CARS	Abandoned Cars
VEHICLE RELATED NUISANCE & INAPPROPRIATE VEHICLE USE	Inconvenient / Illegal Parking
	Car Repairs On The Street / In Gardens
	Setting Vehicles Alight
	Joyriding
	Racing Cars
	Off-Road Motorcycling
	Cycling / Skateboarding In Pedestrian Areas / Footpaths
NOISE	Noisy Neighbours
	Noisy Cars / Motorbikes
	Loud Music
	Alarms (Persistent Ringing / Malfunction)
	Noise From Pubs / Clubs
	Noise From Business / Industry
ROWDY BEHAVIOUR	Shouting & Swearing
	Fighting
	Drunken Behaviour
	Hooliganism / Loutish Behaviour
NUISANCE BEHAVIOUR	Urinating / Defecating In Public
	Setting Fires (not directed at specific persons or property)
	Inappropriate Use Of Fireworks
	Throwing Missiles
	Climbing On Buildings
	Impeding Access To Communal Areas
	Games In Restricted / Inappropriate Areas
	Misuse Of Air Guns
Letting Down Tyres	
HOAX CALLS	False Calls To Emergency Services
ANIMAL RELATED PROBLEMS	Uncontrolled Animals

INTIMIDATION / HARASSMENT	Murder
	Groups Or Individuals Making Threats
	Verbal Abuse
	Bullying
	Following People
	Pestering People
	Voyeurism
	Sending Nasty / Offensive Letters
	Obscene / Nuisance Phone Calls
	Menacing Gestures
	Domestic Violence
	Physical Violence
	Stalking
CRIMINAL DAMAGE / VANDALISM	Graffiti
	Damage To Bus Shelters
	Damage To Phone Kiosks
	Damage To Street Furniture
	Damage To Buildings / Vehicles
	Damage To Trees / Plants / Hedges
LITTER / RUBBISH	Dropping Litter
	Dumping Rubbish
	Fly-Tipping
	Fly-Posting
HATE INCIDENT	Race, Ethnicity and Nationality
	Sexual Orientation
	Gender Identity
	Religion, Faith or Belief
	Disability
	Mate Crime
	Alternative subcultures
CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR	Criminal Behaviour
	Fraud
	Theft
	Robbery
	TFMV
	Burglary
	Repeat Burglary

Hartlepool Community Safety Team Structure



BIGGEST BEHAVIOUR PROBLEM IN LOCAL AREA

Appendix 4

