

FORCE RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED BY POLICE AUTHORITY NEIGHBOURHOOD PANELS IN C DIVISION

INTRODUCTION

1. This report seeks to inform Members of the Consultation and Partnership Committee about the Humberside Police response to community concerns raised by the Police Authority Neighbourhood Panels (PANels) in C Division and the actions taken as a consequence of these concerns.
2. The key local issues raised by the community at PANels were;
 - Powers of Police Community Support Officers;
 - Anti-Social Behaviour; and,
 - Force Amalgamation.
3. A presentation about PCSOs is on the Agenda for this Meeting. The issues surrounding police force restructuring are more appropriate for discussion at Police Authority meetings. This report seeks to outline what staff in C Division are doing to tackle anti-social behaviour and to give examples of success. It will also outline how effective Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) have been as a tool to assist in this area.

INFORMATION

4. There has been a 47% reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour and public disorder in C Division, compared with the same reporting period of October – March last year (8595 compared with 4538).
5. The Division continues to improve working practices and strengthen partnerships in order to tackle anti social behaviour. Since the restructure of the Division (as reported to the March Consultation and Partnership Committee Meeting), Neighbourhood Teams have primary responsibility for tackling anti social behaviour, although Incident Response Teams and the Volume Crime Team do have a role to play.
6. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) takes many forms, such as graffiti, abandoned vehicles, nuisance by vehicles, damage to street furniture and disorderly behaviour caused by those under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Neighbourhood Teams tackle all these issues in partnership with many other agencies and the public.
7. Although the new style of Neighbourhood Policing is very much in its infancy, much work has been done to implement the Neighbourhood Policing Model

across C Division. 22 neighbourhood officers will manage 22 neighbourhood Teams. 102 special constables have been allocated to these teams and over the next 2 years, 77 PCSOs will join them (there are currently 19 PCSOs deployed in the Division).

8. The neighbourhood teams are split into 5 cluster areas, each of which is managed by an Inspector and one or two Sergeants. Over the next few months neighbourhood police officers will engage with the public to set up action groups which will identify problems and priorities for the area.
9. Many very effective partnerships have been set up within the neighbourhood areas to tackle anti social behaviour; these include partnerships with the East Riding County Council (ERYC) ASBO officers, schools, the Youth Service, licensees, the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, HANWAG and drugs agencies.
10. Neighbourhood officers work very closely with the ASBO officers employed by ERYC. There are plans to co-locate these officers to work at neighbourhood team bases in the near future.
11. The Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment (SARA) problem-solving method is the method the Division has chosen to tackle anti-social behaviour. The Division has already drawn up new protocols that clearly outline to all staff how the model works. Joint training is taking place with East Riding Safer Neighbourhoods and HANWAG to develop the skills of neighbourhood police officers, PCSOs and special constables in the area of problem-solving.
12. There are currently 41 ASBOs in existence across the East Riding. All ASBOs were obtained by joint working between local police officers and ERYC ASBO officers, the majority were obtained on conviction and the remainder on civil application by our Legal Services Department. All details of ASBOs are well publicised and the public is encouraged to report any breaches. This helps to generally reduce the fear of crime.
13. The greatest area of anti-social behaviour in C Division involves groups of youths who congregate in public spaces and cause concern to residents, often increasing the residents' fear of crime.
14. Once youths are identified as being responsible for committing anti-social behaviour, a neighbourhood Inspector will write to the parents or guardians of individuals, outlining their behaviour and seeking the parents or guardians co-operation in assisting the police to end the anti-social behaviour. If the behaviour continues, the individual is invited to the police station with his or her parents and spoken to by a Neighbourhood and Anti Social Behaviour officer. Consideration is given to drawing up an ASB Contract, which would be signed by the child and their parent or guardian. Although not legally binding, once a contract is broken, work commences to gather evidence for an ASBO.
15. A large proportion of youths spoken to by their parents/ guardians cease to cause a nuisance. Of those that continue, most are deterred by ASB contracts and the fear of an ASBO. Although only appropriate for the minority, ASBOs

are effective in reducing anti-social behaviour. The most effective part of the ASBOs are the increased sentencing powers because breaches are dealt with as a criminal offence, and offenders often receive custodial sentences.

16. Both Bridlington and Hornsea are currently experiencing problems with large groups of youths congregating in the town centres and adversely affecting the quality of life of residents and holiday makers. Section 30 Dispersal Orders have been obtained for both areas. The police will have the power to disperse any groups and arrest those who return to the area within 24 hours. Ring leaders will be identified and evidence gathered for ASB contracts and ASBOs. In Bridlington a test purchase operation to identify off licence outlets that sell alcohol to underage children will run alongside the Section 30 Order.
17. In Hornsea, neighbourhood police officers are working closely with local schools, youth services, HAND (Holderness against Night Time Disorder), local councillors, ERYC Safer Neighbourhoods, the Environment Agency, the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service and local businesses. Several youths have signed ASB contracts and one ASBO is already in force.
18. Neighbourhood officers in Hornsea are also working closely with Hornsea Young People and Community Together (HYPACT) to look at improving facilities for young people in the area. An under 18s disco has been set up on a Friday evening as a result of consultation. Funding is being sought to renew the CCTV system and work is being undertaken with the ERYC to improve street lighting.
19. Within the last few week local residents have reported anti-social behaviour by large groups of 50–60 youths who have been gathering on a playing field in Willerby. Neighbourhood police officers, PCSOs and special constables are policing the area robustly, confiscating alcohol and taking action against licensing offences and issuing fixed penalty notices for disorder. Many parents/ guardians have received letters. Local off- licences have been visited and work is ongoing with ERYC regarding 'no drinking zone' signs. An ASBO has been obtained for one of the main ring leaders and posters have been distributed outlining this. Youth outreach workers will assist and try to engage with individuals. The Parks Department is securing access gates in the evening and repairing fences where appropriate. Already there has been a reduction in the number of youths continuing to congregate and local officers are confident the problem will soon be resolved.
20. The initiatives outlined above are only a few examples of the excellent work being carried out in partnership across the East Riding to reduce anti-social behaviour. There are examples of effective ASBOs in place in all areas of the Division. However, the threat of an ASBO is often as much as a deterrent to individuals as the order itself. While ASBOs do not always change the mindset of individuals, the fact that they may commit a criminal offence once the ASBO is breached means that custodial sentences can be issued to prevent continued anti-social behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

22. It is recommended that Members of the Consultation and Partnership Committee:
- i) Discuss the content of the Report; and
 - ii) Continue to refer matters of operational policing to the Chief Constable for appropriate action.

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