



**Performance & Finance Select
Committee
14th April 2010**

**Report from the Director of
Policy & Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected: ALL

Effectively Curbing Anti-Social Behaviour in Brent

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides an overview of Anti-Social Behaviour in Brent.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the committee note and comment on the report and presentation.

3.0 Detail

3.1 This brief overview report will be augmented by a presentation to the committee.

3.2 Antisocial behaviour covers a whole raft of issues that affect individuals, communities and households. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is in fact virtually any intimidating or threatening activity that scares you or damages quality of life. Anti-social behaviour doesn't just make life unpleasant. It holds back the regeneration of disadvantaged areas and creates an environment where more serious crime can take hold.

3.3 People involved in ASB, where their behaviour is not effectively addressed as youngsters overwhelmingly go on to commit further criminal acts. Some research indicates where youngsters commit repeat ASB before their 17th birthday may up to 80% more likely to be in prison by their 21st.

3.4 Examples of ASB include:

- rowdy, noisy behaviour
- 'yobbish' behaviour
- vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting
- dealing or buying drugs on the street
- fly-tipping rubbish
- aggressive begging
- street drinking
- setting off fireworks late at night

The Legislative Framework

- 3.5 During the past 12 years the Government has introduced rafts of legislation and dedicated significant resources aimed at tackling the problem of ASB.
- 3.6 In addressing concerns around ASB, the importance of effective partnership working has been recognised by Government and local agencies alike (for example in the creation of statutory partnerships such as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in 1998) with the focus on a three pronged approach to tackling it - prevention, intervention and enforcement.
- 3.7 Brent pre-empted the 1998 crime and Disorder Act having set up some years earlier the Crime Prevention Strategy Group that now fulfils the statutory functions required of CDRPs. This Group chaired by the Chief Executive of the Local Authority with the Borough Police Commander as vice Chair.
- 3.8 CDRPs are encouraged to:
- Use all the tools and powers effectively, especially those to tackle breaches
 - Promote local service standards to the public for ASB
 - Keep communities regularly updated on collective action being undertaken locally on ASB
 - Ensure effective links between neighbourhood Policing teams and Neighbourhood Management teams to resolve ASB.

The Scale of the Problem

- 3.9 In human terms the scale of the problem has sadly been thrown into stark relief the death of Fiona Pilkington this threw the spotlight on shortcomings in how authorities respond to cases where vulnerable people are constantly tormented by jobs.
- 3.10 She committed suicide and killed her severely disabled 18-year-old daughter Francecca after gangs kept them prisoners in their home in Barwell, near Hinckley in Leicestershire.
- 3.11 David Askew, who had learning difficulties died, after years of abuse from local youngsters, described by one Police Officer as nothing short of "bear baiting"

- 3.12 A snapshot survey by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found officers did not turn up to almost one in four (23%) anti-social behaviour complaints and as a result almost all those victims were unhappy with police.
- 3.13 Researchers also found that one in five repeat victims classed themselves as disabled in some way.
- 3.14 Around 3.6 million reports of antisocial behaviour were made in 2008-9, compared with 4.6 million crimes, but officials believe the true figure could be twice as high.

Establishing the Cost of Antisocial Behaviour

- 3.15 It is easy to see that given the breadth of behaviour covered that many different council departments and agencies are involved in solving problems that arise and preventing it. This makes costing each case and prevention work extremely complex.

Useful information of national trends can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/dpr26.pdf>

- 3.16 The following table provides an insight into the raft of agencies and officers involved in this area of work in Brent.

All groups and departments, people involved in delivering solutions.

Organisation	Department	Team
	Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and democratic services • Communication • Member services • Neighbourhood Working
Brent Council	Env and Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health (animal health, noise etc) • Building Control • Health Safety and Licensing • Parks • Planning • Sports • Streetcare • Trading Standards
	Children and Families	<p>Social Care Division</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care planning and children in need • Youth offending Service • Placements • Youth Service • Connexions • Alternative Education
		<p>Strategy and partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated services
		<p>Access and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers • Duty and assessment teams

		Care management and review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers
	Housing and Community Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Housing Services unit • Enforcement team (HMO Licensing) • Grants/contracts – empty property team
	Brent Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical services • Supporting people • ASB Team • Technical services(graffiti) • Supporting people
		Community Care Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs and Alcohol Team • Mental Health Team • Vulnerable adults
Brent Police/Courts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Neighbourhood Teams • Borough Intelligence Unit • Crown Prosecution Service • Community Protection Unit • Community Safety Team • CENTRE – provide reports to them
RSL's		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stadium • PCHA • ASRA • London and Quadrant • Innis Free – Genny most of the top 10
CRI (Drug Support Agency)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach team
Victim Support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main and specialist team
Courts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magistrates & Crown
Fire Service British transport police Transport For London Neighbouring boroughs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arson

Increasing Effectiveness and Streamlining Costs

- 3.17 Clearly, with this disparate there is an inevitability of overlapping and duplicate work being undertaken and there are opportunities to simplify and streamline the systems abound.
- 3.18 Work is currently being undertaken to do this and the initial findings will form part of the presentation to the Committee.
- 3.19 It was inevitable with new legislation that finding the most effective method of delivery would take time, however, there have been some eight rafts of new laws and about 380 policies and guidance notes affecting this area of work.

- 3.20 These factors have combined with a justifiable rise in public expectation, leading to a rather disjointed method of delivery that predominantly works extremely well but may not be cost effective.
- 3.21 The other danger of the current interagency system is that because it is based on overwhelmingly on people's personal relationships it could fall down as and when individuals move on.
- 3.22 The other key area where cost saving can be found is by reviewing internal procedures, because of the ever changing and newness legislation and policies agencies have developed byzantine tracking and recording practices. Now work is more established and partners have a number of legal cases as precedence this can be simplified, freeing staff to deal more swiftly and effectively with cases.
- 3.23 The ASB Team is one strand of the Community Safety Partnership Unit, this department coordinates the agencies involved in all aspects of Crime and Antisocial Behaviour. Developing skills in partner agencies and facilitating robust partnership working and being the link with regional central government are key functions of the Unit.
- 3.24 All staff work in the area of ASB, for example a Project Officer outside of the main ASB team works with Transport for London on a groundbreaking project to curb rowdy behaviour on buses and trains for journeys to and from school and college.
- 3.25 The core ASB team in Brent is made up of a Coordinator, two case work officers, two Police Constables (funded in full by the Metropolitan Police Service) and two support officers. This is broadly in line with comparable boroughs, except greater investment is made in having a very senior coordinator.
- 3.26 The team are based at Willesden Green Police Station and housed rent free, but IT and other support is funded by the Council.
- 3.27 The Basic cost to the Council is £184,000. Of this some £90,000 plus on costs comes from Council core funds with £94,000 being contributed from Partnership funding that comes from the Metropolitan Police Authority and the Home Office.
- 3.28 Looking solely at the at the Council ASB team each case closed costs approximately £650 this is however in reality the tip of the iceberg and the by the time of the presentation more reflective costings will be available.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 None

Background Papers

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