
MEETING	MICKLEGATE WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	3 NOVEMBER 2025
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS J BURTON AND CRAWSHAW
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS KILBANE

1. **MEETING TO DISCUSS ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IN THE LOCAL AREA**

Cllr J Crawshaw welcomed residents and the panel to the meeting and stated that this meeting is a non-political committee of City of York Council for residents of the Micklegate Ward. .

In attendance on the panel:

- Ward Councillors: Cllr J Crawshaw; Cllr J Burton
- Insp Jen Stockwell,
- PC Martyn Hind,
- PC Nicola Elliot, Youth Justice Service Police Officer
- Kate Bryan, YJS Victim Liaison Officer
- Paul Morrison, Neighbourhood Safety Manager, Safer York Partnership

In attendance in the room:

- Jess Ward, Inspire Youth Yorkshire (operates a mobile youth club on Wednesdays on the Green).
- Colin Smith, YACIO
- Scarcroft Allotment Site Secretaries
- Hospital Fields Allotments Site Secretary
- Friends of Rowntree Park

Cllr J Crawshaw recognised that the tensions resulting from recent acts of vandalism and arson have generated many intense emotions. Whilst it was acknowledged that some of the young people involved maybe known, he requested that no names were mentioned during the meeting. Any information

should be reported directly to the police who would then assess it and share it with relevant agencies including schools.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that whilst the councillors were aware of many incidents involving arson and damage to property, verbal abuse they may not be aware of all incidents. It was acknowledged that in the beginning of September there seemed to be an escalation in ASB including the burning of sheds and damage to property on allotments; the release of hens, damage to trees, bin fires. This also extended to Rowntree Park and possibly included a shed fire in Fulford.

Cllr J Crawshaw acknowledged that some allotment holders had lost or experienced damage to highly valued and personal items. However, Cllr J Crawshaw asked that it was also noted that some the young people had experienced difficult adverse life experiences, so discussions should be managed sensitively. The attacks of arson could present a threat to life especially to rough sleepers in the sheds.

Cllr J Crawshaw introduced the panel and opened the discussion about potential ways to address problems in relation to the recent spate of ASB on Scarcroft Allotments and around Scarcroft Green.

Cllr J Crawshaw acknowledged a lot of concern in the community – and so a lot of strong feelings but stressed that they were all taking this issue very seriously and there may be some things happening in the background that we are not able to discuss publicly.

Questions:

A resident questioned the panel to ask if the damage to sheds was considered less important than damage to cars.

Insp Stockwell stated that it was important to acknowledge that the damage to the sheds was considered an important offence and encouraged residents to call 999 if the event in occurring at that time, or 101 to report incidents retrospectively. If incidents are reported, even as ASB, then if the police have resources, they will be deployed to the area.

A resident spoke stating that they had had their back gate kicked in on South Parade/Blossom Street. Stated that the businesses in this area should have been invited as they

experience ASB. There appears to be pattern of younger children copying the ASB of the older children. The residents asked what can be done and what has been done? The resident also asked if more resources would be useful to tackle the problem.

Insp Stockwell stated that more resources would be very beneficial.

PC Elliot stated that the Youth Justice Service (YJS) have done intervention work with the young people involved in ASB, but there are experiencing new 'waves' of young people, so they are not necessarily the same people. Interventions try to teach empathy and encourage more productive engagement. They can be placed on an engagement order or engage voluntarily. The intervention programmes are around 10/15 weeks.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that following ASB on the little Knavesmire area some years ago they worked with Inspire Youth to deliver sessions to young people which was successful. Securing more funding is essential to do this work but the interventions worked. If young people engage with services, they are able to offer very specific interventions such as access to gyms as a means of deviation and avoid the criminal justice system.

Insp Stockwell stated that there was a big gap in youth provision. She had attended a meeting that morning to look at diversion activities. There is a further meeting on Friday with CYC to discuss youth provision with the aim of avoiding criminalisation.

The site secretary for Hospital Fields allotments detailed 5 separate incidents of break ins and thefts involving bolt cutters and arson. The police were aware of some of these incidents, but appeared not to be taking the information.

PC Elliot stated that they would speak to the resident afterwards to try to establish what had happened to the reports of ASB.

A resident spoke expressing concern about the urgency to deal with the issue of ASB. Many victims are elderly or unwell and it seems it is only by chance that someone has not been seriously harmed. The young people appear not to be aware of the impact of their behaviour. They questions if CYC has applied for any ASB injunctions and restrictions to be placed on the young people.

Paul Morrison stated that some ASB injunctions have been placed on young people, although this is generally for over 18s. Such measures also rely upon evidence.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that the young person needs to be identified and evidence gathered. He urged residents to report all information to the police so it can be used to gather more intelligence.

Resident and an allotment owner reported two attacks on their allotment which had been reported and logged. They asked if there was more allotment owners could do; how could the community be more present. They noted all the signs for the allotment are broken.

PC Hind stated that there is an Allotment Watch scheme but urged residents not to store petrol or butane gas in sheds. Wildlife cameras may be of benefit as there is no CCTV. He suggested that cutting down hedges would be useful so Police and residents can have a better view across the allotment plots as both a deterrent and when responding to reports of ASB. He stated that it is not safe for residents to challenge anyone on the allotments but they should report incidents via 999 if active or 101 if a retrospective event.

A resident stated that he had purchased a trail camera for £60 and offered to share the details of this with other allotment holders.

PC Hind stated that this would be useful to try to identify the young people and offered to work with allotment owners to look at vulnerable points and the owners should work together to ensure camera coverage.

A resident stated that they had high hedges for security. They expressed concern about some adult behaviour and had made complaints to the police and housing regarding drug use, fires and violence. They stated this had links to ASB in general within the neighbourhood and that is where the young people were learning their ASB behaviour.

PC Hind agreed that there needed to be a focus on adults too.

Paul Morrison stated that there were regular meetings with police, housing and social services and the Community Safety Hubs try to work/focus on a person and location basis. If the police are called to a home when violence has occurred, then an automatic referral is made to safeguarding for early intervention. Sometimes it may appear that things are not being done but things do happen, such as evictions.

Residents were urged to sign up to Community Messenger. **Cllr J Crawshaw** stated that the councillors do advocate to the council and police and try to ensure that information is shared appropriately. He said that where evictions from properties occur they always request they are then managed as sensitive lets.

A resident asked if snapchat or Whatsapp information is useful to the police. **PC Hind** stated that it was. They went on to comment that youths hang around Millthorpe School, and asked how worried should they be about arson and the general increase in crime in York.

Insp Stockwell acknowledged the fear of arson and stated that they are trying to engage more with the Fire Service to focus upon preventative work and acknowledged that this was a gap in working at the moment.

Again, residents were encouraged to report all concerns as the police need all evidence to support interventions.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that they were fortunate that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner lives within the ward and they do lobby them regularly. He stated that he had asked if the fire service could go into schools to deliver sessions and expressed concern regarding arson attacks, particularly in relation to the risk to rough sleepers in the allotment sheds.

PC Elliot noted that any young person convicted of arson gains a criminal record immediately and the fire service do run a very effective intervention programme when a arson conviction has been attained.

A Scarcroft Allotment holder stated that they had been a victim of a shed fire losing £1000 of valuables. They requested more proactive support to set up cameras in allotments.

PC Hind stated that the police could help with this giving strategic advice.

An allotment holder again offered to share information regarding the camera they had and stated that this could be discussed at the forthcoming committee meeting. The cost of cameras was discussed.

PC Elliot suggested that even signs saying CCTV was in operation could be a deterrent.

Cllr J Burton again reiterated the need to call 999 to report events happening now and 101 for retrospective events, but do not intervene. She also invited residents to report events to councillors. She noted that Arson is a red flag for further offences but also noted that there had been at least too incidents of flashing / dropping trousers and that this too was a significant red flag.

Colin Smith from YACIO (York Allotments Charitable Incorporated Organisation) stated that allotment owners may be reluctant to report events as there is a feeling that 'nothing happens' and questioned what was the threshold for charging a young person.

PC Elliot stated that there is a Youth Outcome Panel which is used to make decisions to determine the best intervention for a young person. This involves schools, mental health teams, social services and police. Local resolution is preferred to fines and the youth justice service can do victim work. With enough evidence they can be prosecuted as over 10 years is the age of criminal responsibility.

CCTV is good evidence to be presented in court as solicitors will use every loophole and conviction is based upon beyond reasonable doubt.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that the aim was to prevent ASB in the first place and sometimes there was a fine line between nuisance behaviour and criminal behaviour, but strong communities were essential to combat ASB.

A resident thanked the panel for all the work they were doing and asked how to manage any video evidence they collected.

PC Elliot stated that it was essential that young people should not be named on whataspp groups or evidence shared as this could compromise a potential prosecution. They advised residents with any video footage to call 101 who will send a link to upload the video. This is the most effective way to record the evidence. Likewise, the Police make contact residents via social media and other platforms to request any photo / video evidence they may have in relation to specific incidents.

A resident stated that she recently felt unsafe walking home and had recognised a youth involved in safeguarding incident, so questioned what interventions had been done with the youth. They also reported being a victim of car crime.

PC Elliot again urged the resident to report all incidents as it builds up a picture and a pattern of behaviour and to call 999 if feeling unsafe.

A resident stated that they had set up a whatsapp group and this had resulted in many single women feeling more safe as they share more information.

A resident raised the issue of ASB centred around the corner shop. This involved racist abuse and shop lifting and detailed an event whereby a young person sat outside the shop for two hours telling people the shop owner had 'touched him'. The reality was he had touched his shoulder as he asked him to leave the shop. The community really appreciated the shop and encouraged everyone to shop there, detailing how the owner gave out Christmas presents and was so well liked in the community.

PC Elliot again urged the shop owners to report all incidents.
Cllr J Crawshaw expressed gratitude to the shop owners.

A resident expressed concern that the arson attacks take the Fire Service away from serious incidents; often the fire service find it difficult to find the access points to the allotments. They requested that the police take a lead on the locating of cameras and requested funding.

Insp Stockwell and PC Elliot stated that they had no budget at all for such items and suggested a fund raising day/ event.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that ward funding could be available and could discuss with site secretaries (there was a specific process to access this funding). A request could also be made to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to potentially match this funding.

PC Hind stated that some companies do offer more specific security advice.

A resident stated that sharing information via 101 is not effective enough and it does not seem action is taken when events are reported and information appears to be dealt with by other police forces.

PC Elliot requested to speak with the resident after the meeting to address their concerns.

A resident spoke stating that she was an allotment holder and worked in the criminal justice system. They stated the threshold for prosecution was high, but the more evidence gathered the

better and community impact statements alongside individual impact statements could be useful. They requested more feedback regarding outcomes of interventions and prosecutions. **K Bryan** stated that the youth justice service does keep victims updated.

A resident raised concern regarding school exclusions and described 'low level juvenile terrorism' and questioned why schools were not at the meeting.

Cllr J Crawshaw stated that schools had been invited and Millthorpe's vice principle was due to attend but was unable to at the last minute. It was acknowledged that school exclusions were not helpful.

PC Elliot/ K Bryn stated that work is being done alongside the schools. If a young person is arrested, the school is notified but there is also a lack of resources in schools and long term interventions are needed. It was acknowledged that schools are good at sharing information.

Cllr J Crawshaw thanked participants and closed the meeting.

Actions:

Residents to purchase cameras and seek police advice on where to locate them on allotments.

Cllrs to work with site secretaries to explore / apply for ward funding for cameras.

PC Hind, Ward Cllrs and Allotment Site Secretaries to arrange a "site security" walk-about to look at ways of improving security and deterrence.

, Chair

[The meeting started at Time Not Specified and finished at Time Not Specified].