



Report to the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Update on the work of the Safer York Partnership Alcohol, Violence & Night Time Economy (AVANTE) Task Group 22 September 2015

Summary

1. This is the annual report of the work of the AVANTE Task Group. AVANTE is one of a number of multi-agency thematic problem-solving groups that form part of the Safer York Partnership delivery structure.

Background

2. This is the third annual update on the work of the AVANTE Task Group which was established in 2013.
3. Membership of the group consists of representatives from: City of York Council, North Yorkshire Police, University of York, University of York St. John, Lifeline, Street Angels and Pub Watch

Work Update

The following are the main initiatives discussed by the AVANTE group:

Alcohol Diversion Programme. This programme has now been running for over 12 months. As of July 2015, 130 referrals had been received. There has been no record of reoffending. Work is currently ongoing to source funding to continue this valuable programme.

Operation Safari. North Yorkshire Police continue this operation to tackle violence and theft in the night time economy.

Operation Erase. Much focus has been given to this area of work and a separate sub-group has been formed. A more detailed report has been produced, setting out work undertaken to date.

Alcohol Restriction Zone. In addition to the existing ARZ, a new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is being developed for the Groves area of the city to combat issues relating to street drinking. (PSPO's now replace ARZ's within the new ASB Tools and Powers legislation).

River Safety. A dedicated River Safety sub group with its own action plan was established in 2014 and continues to meet on a quarterly basis. Much capital improvement work has been undertaken to improve river safety and both universities have worked to promote river safety messages amongst students. A River Safety Guide for schools was produced, including links to resources available to promote this message. We are currently working towards adopting the Water Incident Database which will allow for more accurate multi-agency recording of river-related incidents and assist in planning future safety measures.

Pub Watch. Pub Watch is currently seeking to increase its membership and to adopt a new electronic intelligence sharing intranet system.

Nightsafe Scheme. The very successful Nightsafe scheme continues to operate. Working in a similar way to the Street Angels this scheme provides a pool of student volunteers who are deployed in the city centre on student nights and can assist in caring for those under the influence of alcohol and get individuals home safely. The Nightsafe scheme will be deployed during Freshers week.

Responsible Authorities under the Licensing Act 2003. Work has been undertaken to provide training to all the above organisations, including Public Health and Children's Safeguarding. This now means that all responsible authority representatives are aware of their responsibilities under the Licensing Act and can respond to Licensing applications in an informed way, giving a more robust response from a variety of partners.

New Psychoactive Substances ('Legal Highs'). A multi-agency sub group has been established to share information on the type and breadth of usage of NPS across the city and also where it may be being sold. To date, it does not appear that this is a problem in York, although there are pockets of usage amongst certain groups including the homeless community. The New Psychoactive Substances Bill is currently progressing through Parliament.

Sex Establishment Venue Licensing Policy

Consultation with the public on the above ended on the 5th August. Work will now be ongoing to draft a policy for York. The policy will set restrictions on number and locality of premises and will also ensure that any such venues operate safely in terms of their staff and customers by setting clear operating guidelines.

Street Angels

The Street Angels continue to provide an excellent support in the Night Time Economy.

Contact Details

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Background Papers: None

Annexes: None