

Update on the work of the AVANTE (Alcohol, Violence and Night Time Economy) and Operation Erase (Saturday daytime alcohol-related disorder) Task Groups.

Summary

1. This is the annual update on the work of the Operation Erase (Saturday daytime alcohol-related disorder) and AVANTE (Alcohol, Violence and Night-time Economy) Task Groups.

Background

2. The AVANTE Task Group was established in January 2013 and soon identified a specific trend of alcohol-related disorder on Saturday daytimes (roughly 11am – 10pm). A specific sub-group was established in June 2013 to address this particular problem and took the police operational name of Operation Erase.
3. Agencies represented across both task groups include: City of York Council, North Yorkshire Police, British Transport Police, University of York, University of York St. John, Lifeline, Street Angels, Pub Watch, Railway Station management, Train Operating Companies, Make it York and York Racecourse.

Work Update

4. Both the AVANTE and ERASE groups have continued to meet on a regular basis, delivering an established programme of initiatives, including:
 - Operation Safari (NYP led - violence and theft in the Night Time Economy).
 - Alcohol Diversion Programme.
 - Monitoring of the Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ)

- Pub Watch
- University of York Nightsafe scheme
- University of York St. John 'Plan Safe, Drink Safe, Home Safe' schemes.
- Street Angels
- River Safety – both universities offer student briefings.

5. Initiatives relating specifically to Operation Erase include:

- 'Had Enough? We Have Too' poster campaign.
- Multi-agency Days of Action from May – September.
- Intermittent temporary deployment of ticket barriers at York Station. Barriers are always deployed on Race days and where possible for the Days of Action.
- Deployment of 'Dry Trains' when routes and resources allow.
- Licensees Code of Conduct.
- Increased police presence

6. In February 2016 North Yorkshire Police commissioned a Crime Pattern Analysis report into alcohol-related crime, anti-social behaviour and Public, Safety and Welfare (PSW) occurrences reported in the York Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) area over the 2014 and 2015 periods. *See Annex 1 for map of CIZ.*

7. The summary of findings was as follows:

- The number of recorded occurrences within the CIZ decreased in 2015 compared with the previous year. Alcohol-related occurrences have decreased by 3% (-50 incidents).
- ASB continues to be the most prevalent occurrence type, however a decrease is also evident and this includes alcohol-related nuisance. ASB nuisance reports have decreased by 11% (-172 incidents). These reports include: begging and vagrancy, buskers, street urination, public order behaviour such as fighting or drunkenness and verbal abuse.
- Violence-related reports increased by 18 incidents in 2015. Alcohol-related violence also increased by 18. NB: Violent crime covers a wide spectrum from minor assaults, harassment and abuse that result in no physical harm to the victim through to incidents of wounding and murder.
- Theft-related offences have recorded notable decreases during 2015.

- The highest concentration of offences continues to be in areas of high footfall (Coney Street, Micklegate, Blake Street, Blossom Street and Clifford Street) These zones encompass a high concentration of licensed premises.
- The highest levels of reported occurrences are during the summer months of July and August, together with December.
- Calls for police service are at their highest on weekends; Saturday and Sunday. This is consistent across 2014 and 2015.
- Activity is highest between 1pm-6pm and midnight-4am. These periods incorporate the traditional Night Time Economy period as well as representing the trend of visiting revellers coming into the city late morning on Saturday through into early evening when they catch the last trains home.

8. Much of the low-level disorder conducted on Saturday daytimes does not fall within the realms of criminal behaviour and is therefore not recorded, but nonetheless has an impact upon peoples' perception of the city and their feelings of safety. North Yorkshire Police and British Transport Police have both recently conducted perception surveys. Results of the BTP survey are not likely to be available in time for the meeting. North Yorkshire Police, however, surveyed a sample of 148 city centre visitors. 93% of respondents felt that York was a safe city, 52% felt that York was not family friendly on a Saturday afternoon, 50% felt that partner agencies were working well together to make York safe on Saturdays and 94% felt that seeing a police presence in the city made them feel safer.

9. Anecdotally both the NYP and BTP feel that things are improving. Saturday day-time problems had initially focussed around visitors from the North-East, but both police forces state that these appear to have resolved through targeted campaigns and initiatives. Similar work is now underway, focussing on visitors from South Yorkshire and improvements are already been experienced. Implementation of the temporary ticket barriers should deter people travelling without a ticket and provides a valuable opportunity for engagement with people as they queue at the barrier. British Transport Police have experienced a 'marked decrease' in crimes and arrests on a Saturday.

Going Forward

10. It is important that a focus is retained on these issues. Both task groups will therefore continue to meet. A recent positive development has been the access to additional city centre patrolling resources in the form of

CYC Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers (NEOs) and BID Rangers. The BID Rangers are deployed on both Friday and Saturday evenings until midnight and the NEOs take part in the Days of Action. In addition, CYC are in the process of recruiting two full-time Licensing Enforcement Officers who will work evenings and weekends and whose duties will include visits to licensed premises to ensure they are complying with the Licensing Act 2003 and any additional licence conditions.

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Annex 1

