

Cabinet Member for Homes & Safer Communities to Community Safety Scrutiny. October 2014 update

I am updating the Committee on the work undertaken since July. Whilst this is a snap shot of the work undertaken by myself the City of York Council and its partners it gives an over view of the work that goes on.

I have included a lengthy report on the River Safety working being undertaken as I believe, and know that others do, regard the importance of the work due to the tragic incidents that have taken place this year

Safety

Safer York Partnership - In August concern was expressed that licensees were selling alcohol to those already drunk. Letters were sent, at my request, to all of those who hold licensees, that is shops, public houses, restaurants, hotels, clubs and hotels reminding managers and owners of their responsibilities and that the Council would seek formal review hearings of the licences of trouble-spots. The letter also urged licensees to invest in staff training as a number of national recent studies have shown that the majority of staff serving alcohol are unaware of their personal responsibilities and that they as individuals can be fined. Concern has been expressed from the licensed trade about 'pre-loading' and the role of supermarkets and this will be a future topic of the AVANTE group.

Work is being undertaken by the AVANTE and City Team, of which I am a member, is to work to address issues in the weekend and night-time economy and seek to move toward a mixed offer that is less reliant on heavy drinking. Sensible drinking is welcomed by all and through initiatives that are under way it is hoped that progress can be made.

It is pleasing to note that York Teaching Hospital A & E admissions for assault are on a downward trend including those related to Domestic Violence. However and it is believed mainly due to historic reporting sexual crime reporting is up in the North Yorks Police area.

New Anti Social behaviour legalisation came in to force on the 20th October 2014. This involves the repeal of 19 powers to 6 flexible ones and introduces a '*Community Trigger*' and '*Community Remedy*'. Criminal Behaviour Orders replace ASBO's, there are new Police Dispersal powers and issues around serial complainers

To see more about the work of SYP go to <http://www.saferyork.org.uk/>

The Hub – The bid to the Police Innovation Fund has been successful as it had supported funding from the City of York Council Delivery & Innovation Fund. Police are already based in the building, the bid will help increase the number of Enforcement Officers to 16 and agreements have been finalised on information sharing and systems.

AVANTE - First Quarter Monitoring figures noted that Violent Crime figures for the City were 'flat'. The report also noted that Violent Crime was down in the areas of Blake Street and Micklegate and that similar low levels were reported for the areas of Goodramgate and Swinegate. Our July meeting also received a report on alcohol admission at York Teaching Hospital A & E which showed an overall downward trend on admission related to alcohol. However those with alcohol related head injuries had risen as had ambulances with alcohol admissions.

Static Ambulance Unit - The static ambulance unit, based in St. Helen's Square on Friday and Saturday nights has proved to be a useful addition to the City Centre. Working in conjunction with the Street Angels bus, which is parked adjacent on a Saturday, early information shows many people have been helped. Monitoring information is being collected by Yorkshire Ambulance Service and I hope that we will have sight of this soon. It was noted at the AVANTE meeting that Street Angels were seeking more volunteers

Alcohol Diversion Programme – The programme began taking referrals on Monday 19th May with the first course starting on the 2nd June and is delivered by Lifeline with capacity for 10-15 people on each course. By mid August there had been 27 referrals. Of the 17 referrals by July, 5 did not engage with the programme.

Busking - Over the summer there have been a number of stories in the media with regard to Buskers in the City Centre with one of the issues raised concerning the previously issued permits. The permits had to be withdrawn as they were only 'voluntary' and provided no right to move performers on. The only law that can be enforced is a By-Law with regard to nuisance's buskers.

There are 'guidelines' which performers are asked to work to and the Council is pleased that York Buskers have set up their own organisation, who we are working with, to ensure they are an asset to the City

River Safety Campaign - A working Group has been set up and I, Council Officers, Julia Mulligan PCC and her Office and North Yorks Police have been meeting to discuss the issue. In September a joint

media briefing was held on the issue. Prior to the briefing I spent some time with Jackie Roberts and Steve Pearson, the parents of Megan and Tyler, and heard about their children and what they had been doing since their deaths.

The briefing contained the three powerful films made by the families of those who had lost their lives this year – these were funded by the Julia Mulligan, the Police Crime Commissioner

During my section of the briefing I outlined, as one of the partners, what the Council has is and will be doing to make the areas along the City's river banks safer for all who live, work and visit the City.

Earlier this year the Council commissioned RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) to produce an in-depth report around river safety and the final report was received by the City of York Council on the 5th September - the report suggested additional measures, to those already in place, to strengthen river safety in York.

I noted that as Cabinet Member for Homes and Safer Communities I would be bringing urgent recommendations forward, which happened at October's Cabinet meeting, to release funds to support the delivery of the recommendations for rescue equipment and physical improvements. It was clear that the 'process of Council' would not delay the delivery of the work as I have asked officers to start the procurement process immediately.

Work to be undertaken:

Provision of rescue equipment

- There are currently 35 lifebelts on the Ouse and 14 on the Foss. All will be replaced with belts with floating ropes, and information on the use of life rings and raising the alarm will be completed by end of November 2014.
- Our Programme of inspections will be updated and implemented alongside upgrading life belts.

Physical improvements

RoSPA has recommended a standard design to edge protection. This will involve:

- The upgrading of Post and Chain fencing and edge protection along the Ouse at Wellington Row, the Blue Bridge area and Queen Staith by the end of December 2014. This and other edge protection schemes date from recommendations of the RoSPA report from 1990s. New fencing near Navigation Road, on the Foss, will be in by late November 2014.
- The City of York Council will survey and update existing grab rails and install new ones – especially on the canalised sections of the rivers between Lendal and Ouse Bridge and along sections of the Foss. Survey work will start this October and it is hoped that the work will be completed by Spring 2015 – this will depend on the weather and river levels allowing this work to take place
- Minor renovation works on handrails, painting and surfaces will be reviewed and refreshed and this is part of our ongoing work program.
- The Council is also in discussions with the Emergency Services to consider use of limited or permanent fixed emergency-only lighting for sections of the river near to and under Ouse.

Education and Campaigns

I think all are aware that information is key as is personal responsibility. RoSPA's report includes a recommendation on water safety campaigns, training on raising the alarm and education. A lot has and is already taken place

- From September York schools as part of the National Curriculum will include water safety and aquatic skills.
- During Drowning Prevention Week (21–29 June 2014) the City of York Council funded water safety lessons and awareness sessions with at the Energise Leisure Centre
- Across the City partnership work is taking place and I would like to highlight the ***Plan Safe, Drink Safe, Home Safe*** campaign. Launched in July this year it was developed by York St John University Students' Union and adopted by *City's River Safety Group*. The campaign aims to give people clear, practical advice on planning a great, safe night out and a safe journey home.

- The City of York Council advised University of York Student Union on its new NightSafe Service with trained Volunteer Students patrolling the City Centre and river side areas on Student Club nights.
- The new national campaign *Don't Drink and Drown* was launched by the Royal Lifesaving Society on the 2nd October at University of York in Fresher's Week, warning students to steer clear of open water when under the influence of alcohol.
- Training will be given to Door Security staff, Street Angels and others working/volunteering near the river banks, in how to deploy life belts, to ask for Fire and Rescue when dialling 999 and how to raise alarm.

Finally RoSPA recommended an approach of Leadership and Co-ordination. The report recommended that a board level-agreed water safety policy and strategy is developed and reviewed – this will held by Safer York Partnership members who include CYC, NYPF, NYFS. The report also recommended setting up a River Safety Group – this multi agency groups was established earlier this year and is additional to CYC's existing emergency planning service.

York Domestic Violence Strategy Board - A decision was taken at the July Board that whilst the York board would sign up to the North Yorkshire Strategy, due to cross boundary issues and concerns, that York would have its own strategy as many issues relating to York had not either historically or currently recognised or addressed.

There is a view by members of the Board that a number of issues relating to the Boards work as not recognised because this is York - Forced Marriage is one of these. It was reported that both Imams in York support the campaign against Forced Marriage, but it was also noted that this could happened in all communities including Christian and those of no faith

Work goes on to support 'White Ribbon in the City. Reclaim the night is planned for the 22nd November. The 25th November is the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Officer involved with running White Ribbon is looking to run session on the issue with men.

North Yorkshire and City of York Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) – <http://www.turntobridgehouse.org/> I previously reported that I would discuss with the Police and Crime Commissioner how the service could be further promoted and expanded. The PCC agrees over the importance of this service and is now looking to how to take it forward.

At my request that details of the SARC have been placed on the Safer York Partnership and Adult Safeguarding websites.

Section 136 Suite & Triage Service – In October I signed the MOU for the new Street Triage Scheme set up by the Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, North Yorkshire Police and the NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), with funding from North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council.

The service will cost about £200,000 a year and will see York-based mental health professionals monitor police radios and join officers at incidents where they feel they can be of use. Around 100 people have been taken into the Section 136 Suite 'place of safety' at Bootham since its launch in February 2014 but it has been recognised by partners said this may not always be the best solution, and that each case should be considered separately.

The scheme has been run in Leeds and it has found that a lot of people can be assessed and treated where they are or in their own homes and so not needing to go the Section 136 Suite.

Evening with North Yorks Police – I spent a lat shift in July with the night team patrolling York City Centre from 10am to 3pm. The centre was quiet on the night with the age range of those out older than the perception and was in the range of 30's to 60's. I was present at one arrest in The Groves after an incident in the centre – at the perpetrators home – and attended the booking in at the Custody Suite at Fulford Police Station.

The Police had a good relationship with all those they spoke to and those out seemed to welcome there presence. I will be going out again with the night shift during December to see the challenges the festive season brings

Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) – I have had a number of meetings with Julia Mulligan and attended a number of workshops with her, her staff, Police Officers and staff and City of York Council Officers with

regard to the weekend and night time economy. The workshops have been based on work that the PCC commissioned and will be the basis of a City Safety Summit.

The Police Crime Panel received the final draft of the Police Crime Plan 2013-2016 at its October meeting and discussed the decision not to replace Newby Wisk.

I have expressed my concerns to the PCC with regard to Hate Crime. I believe that constant media on the City's Gypsy Roma & Traveller and Show People communities is resulting in the breakdown of community cohesion and will overly affect women and children - we plan to speak further on this.

Public Protection

Decision taken this last quarter include:

Food Service Plan 2014-15 – which informed on the service plans for food law enforcement and health and safety law which are produced on an annual basis in response to national requirements.

EU Service Directive - Tacit Authorisation (Cabinet Member for Homes & Safer Communities) – this is so the Council can implement the requirements of the EU Service Directive which require agreement to a list of permissions, licences and consents where tacit authorisations should be disappplied. The Directive assumes that all permissions licences and consents will have a pre-published determination period, where an application is not determined within a timeframe it is granted by default - this is known as 'tacit authorisation'..

Sales of Age Restricted Products – this report is due in December and will look to inform on the work programme of action for the next 12 months undertaken by City of York Council Trading Standards team to prevent the illegal sales of age-restricted products. The report will set out its work in relation to:

- i) The Children and young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 in relation to cigarettes/tobacco.
- ii) The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 in relation to aerosol paint.

Trading Standards – The team have been busy in a number of areas. A recent study shows that 1 in 7 York smokers buys illegal cigarettes. It notes that whilst the illegal tobacco market has halved since 2010 a

survey of more than 1,200 smokers around Yorkshire has shown the trade is still a problem.

The West Yorkshire and York City Illicit Tobacco Study was carried out on behalf of City of York Council, along with Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield councils, and found about 17 % of smokers in the region buy illegal tobacco, including 14% in York, that found 36% of smokers have been offered illegal tobacco, and the illegal items make up about 11% of the region's total tobacco market.

The Trading Standards Team along with , North Yorkshire Police will continue to search shops around York to stamp out this trade where the profits are mainly linked to criminal activity. Searches are based on information from the public

Trading Standards have also had successful cases against two illegal tattooists and along with the Council Public Health team have put out strong messages about the risks by going to unregistered tattooists due to improper or unsanitary conditions which can carry high health risks in the short and long-term. Possible infections include staphylococci and streptococci bacteria which, in rare cases, cause invasive infections that can result in severe illness, septicaemia, amputation or death and, in particular, the risk of the transmission of blood-borne viruses like hepatitis B, C and HIV.”

Trading standards also launched an investigation after the closure of Yorkshire Asset Protection (YAP) which charged residents large fees to draw up and store their wills.

National E-Crime investigation team – has been continuing to seize goods. Recently they intercepted two large shipments of illegal goods bound for the UK which included make-up, nail glue, nail gels, eye shadows, lipsticks, and unsafe UV lamps

The team have also been working with Microsoft to help prevent its users falling for online scams which cost consumers £3.5 billion a year in the UK alone. Earlier this year the first successful prosecution of a UK defendant involved in the Microsoft cold-calling computer scam was made. The scam involved residents being phoned by fraudsters claiming to be from Microsoft and them being persuaded to paying for services because their computers were at risk

Food & Safety Unit - I am attending a number of visits with the team to better understand the challenges and workload that is undertaken. I will give a report back after completion.

Environmental Protection Unit - I went out with the team on a Friday night shift which coincided with the Beach Boys concert at the York Race Course – the team monitored noise levels from Dringhouses to see if there was compliance with agreed levels. The levels were within acceptance although if they had not had been Officers would have had the ability to ask for the volume to be reduced. Monitoring of the music nights has taken place since agreements on noise levels were put in place of the Madness concert a few years back

We visited a house where an alarm had gone off and the owner was away – the alarm like many such calls was not connected to a security company, and visited a residents home around midnight to hear the noise from the neighbouring house.

Registration and Celebration Services

The Council Registrars service has since 2005 been offering a 'Civil Funeral' for those who do not wish a religious service – this service is advertised with Funeral Directors. From a low base of 30 per year between 2005-2008 this rose to 250 in 2013 and this year the number is likely to be around 300.

Meetings – attended/attending relevant to the Portfolio - July 2014 to November 2014

City of York Domestic Violence Strategy Board – September, November 2014

Safer York Partnership Board – July, September 2014

AVANTE - July, October 2014

Police Crime Panel confirmation Hearing (Northallerton) July

Police Crime Panel (York) – July 2014

Police Crime Panel (Selby) – October 2014

PCP Complaints Sub Committee – June

West Yorkshire & York Tackling Illicit Tobacco for Better Health (Wakefield) – July 2014

Cabinet Office meeting on Serious and Organised Crime (Newton Aycliffe) – July 2014

City Safety Strategic Group (Julia Mulligan PCC) – September 11th & 19th 2014

PubWatch – November 2014

Meetings with

William Derby, York Race Course – July 2014
Cllr Ann Sinnott, Cambridge Council, York – August
Police Crime Commissioner Julia Mulligan – July, September 2014
Inspector Phil Cain – July, September, November 2014
Sarah Hill IDAS – July 2014

Visits

Triage Unit Section 136 Suite – October 2014
Night time City Centre Patrol with NYPF 9pm to 3am – July 2014
Environmental Protection Unit (late shift 8pm to 1am) – July 2014
North Yorkshire Police North Street Office – September 2014
Food & Safety Hygiene visits – November 2014

Media Interviews

- River safety – Radio York, Look North, Calender. September
- River Safety – Calendar July
- River Safety Press Briefing with Julia Mulligan PCC – September