

**Housing and Community Safety Policy &
Scrutiny Committee**

19 April 2021

Report of Director of Economy and Place

Safer York Partnership Bi-Annual Report

Summary

1. This report is the bi-annual performance report for Safer York Partnership. In September 2020, the Chair Sharon Houlden stood down as she was due to leave her role as Director of Housing Health and Adult Social Care with City of York Council. Superintendent Lindsey Butterfield was voted as Chair. At the meeting, the Board reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference and agreed that the frequency of meetings should move to twice yearly. This was in acknowledgement that the Board function is to provide a strategic oversight of the delivery of the Community Safety Strategy and delivery of that strategy sits within the remit of a number of key delivery groups operating either exclusively to the City or as part of a collaborative approach to key Community Safety themes with North Yorkshire.
2. This paper covers the period October 2020 – March 2021.
3. **City Centre Crime and Anti-social behaviour**
 - 3.1 Over the summer months York enjoyed a return to shops and hospitality venues being open as lockdown restrictions were lifted. When the tiered system was announced, York was allocated Tier 2 due to the fact that infection rates had considerably lowered. This meant that whilst shops and hospitality remained open over the Christmas Period, alcohol sales were only permitted with substantial food purchases and only those from the same household were allowed to mix. This restriction in groups impacted on the usual pattern of alcohol related anti-social behaviour over the Christmas period as numbers of visitors to the city were much lower resulting in fewer incidents.
 - 3.2 Rising infection rates in the city moved York from Tier 2 to Tier 3 from 30th December restricting household mixing to only those within the

same household, prohibiting overnight stays and closing hospitality with the exception of takeaway services.

- 3.3 Following the Government funding of just under £80k, the Council has provided 6 x 'Covid Support Marshalls' (through Work With York) to help ensure compliance with social distancing, face coverings and the various other obligations under the Coronavirus legislation. The funding ran to the end of February 2021, but by off-setting other Public Protection costs against the grant we have been able to provide the Marshalls to the end of March. 4. The Covid Support Marshalls provide a visible presence throughout the whole city to help support (both the public and businesses) with compliance. They work Tuesday – Sunday 12pm – 6pm (with an earlier start at 11:00am on Saturdays). On Thursday to Saturday night there is currently an additional evening shift 4:15pm to 23:45pm which is subject to change. The current shift patterns are show in Appendix 1. The total cost of this shift pattern is £2.1K per week.
- 3.4 They take a 'friendly ambassador' approach to obtaining compliance, it is not an enforcement role. The Marshalls will approach people not distancing etc. in the street, at parks/woods or in queues at premises/bus stops/taxi ranks etc. and politely ask people to space out etc. The Marshalls do not have 'powers' to require people to take action, rather they help people to make an appropriate choice which ensures compliance.
- 3.5 The Marshalls also hand out face coverings and hand sanitiser to people who require them. They have also been picking up discarded face coverings.
- 3.6 Although it is not an enforcement role, where there are obvious breaches of regulations in premises such as people in groups larger than is permitted, they will raise these matters with the business concerned 'there and then'. They will also raise this with the appropriate enforcement authority e.g. police, environmental health for further advice/action as appropriate. For example, they have reported house parties to the police during the peak of the outbreak in York which resulted in fixed penalty tickets being issued.
- 3.7 A summary of the Covid Support Marshall's work to date is shown in the table below. At the end of the conversation with anyone they engage with, the Covid support Marshalls always ask whether the person 'is happy' with what's been said and keep a record of the response. As can

be seen, the overwhelming majority of people they interact with are 'happy'.

	Number of businesses interacted with	Number of groups interacted with	Number of people given PPE (face coverings, sanitiser)	Number of face coverings collected	% of people happy with service?
December 2020	528	401	104	489	98.9%
January 2021	125	249	39	282	97.8%
February 2021	80	316	10	186	98.8%
Totals	733	966	153	957	98.7%

- 3.7 The officers are also tasked to carry out observations for enforcement officers in response to complaints received etc.
- 3.8 The Community Safety Team worked in partnership with Public Protection, Make It York, York BID and York Minster to discourage the usual public gathering at York Minster on New Years Eve and to ensure that the City remained safe over the Christmas Period and contributed to the collective work to reduce the infection rate. The Minster silenced the bells for the first time and the festive lights in Duncombe Place were switched off. Whilst a small group gathered, social distancing was maintained and there were no incidents of concern.
- 3.4 From 5th January, York has been subject to a National lockdown. With the exception of essential shops and takeaway food outlets, the city has largely been closed. This has naturally kept crime and anti-social behaviour to a minimum
- 3.5 Since the announcement of the Government's Roadmap for Recovery, work is underway to work with key stakeholders to ensure that as the city opens up again, it remains a safe place. Safer York Partnership are leading on the community safety element of this work.

4. **Counter Terrorism: Protect, Prepare, Prevent**

4.1 **Protect and Prepare**

The Counter Terrorism Task Group has continued to meet and developed a new action plan for 2021. Because much of the work involves engagement with the business community and key stakeholders, progress has been limited and the new action plan recognises this and includes actions directed at taking forward work within the constraints of lockdown, restrictions and social distancing.

4.2 The Protect Duty is part of the Government's commitment to improving protective security and preparedness at public spaces. Consultation on the duty began on Friday 25th February and will last for a period of 18 weeks. The duty draws on lessons learnt from previous terrorist attacks that have taken place in the UK>

4.3 **Prevent**

Channel Panel has continued to meet monthly. Referrals have remained steady with around 3-4 live cases under discussion. All partners have remained fully engaged with the virtual meeting process.

5. **Domestic Abuse**

5.1 Fortnightly tactical meetings take place between Chief Inspector Safeguarding, North Yorkshire Police, the Office of the Police Fire & Crime Commissioner and Community Safety leads for City of York and North Yorkshire County Council. These meetings have been taking place since the first National Lockdown in March 2020 and allow a multiagency focus on commissioned services, Domestic Abuse data, resourcing and communications. The group closely monitor the number of incidents and crimes over each fortnightly period and have tracked this alongside the key dates when restrictions have been applied and lifted, bank holidays and other key events which historically impact on domestic abuse figures.

5.2 The Domestic Abuse Bill comes into force this year and will put in place a four part statutory framework for the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation and provide clarity over governance and accountability. The Bill places a duty on each tier one local authority in England (county and unitary authorities) to appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, which it will consult as it performs certain specified functions. These are to:

- Assess the need for accommodation based domestic abuse support for all victims in their area, including those who require cross border support
- Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment
- Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning/ de-commissioning decisions)
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy
- Report back to central government
- Require local authorities to have regard to statutory guidance in exercising their functions
- Require tier two councils (district and borough councils) to co-operate with the lead authority, so far as is reasonable practicable.

The new duty will cover the provision of support to victims and their children residing in:

- Refuge accommodation
- Specialist safe accommodation
- Dispersed accommodation
- Sanctuary schemes
- Move-on/ second stage accommodation.

Domestic abuse support will include:

- Advocacy support- development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services (e.g. GPs, social workers, welfare benefit providers)
- Domestic abuse prevention advice- support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to remain safe (including online) and to prevent re-victimisation
- Specialist support for victims with protected characteristics and/or complex needs, for example, interpreters, faith services, mental health advice and support, drugs and alcohol advice and support, and immigration advice

- Children's support- including play therapy and child advocacy
- Housing related support- providing housing related advice and support e.g. securing a permanent home and advice on how to live safely and independently
- Counselling and therapy for both adults and children.

6. **High Risk Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Community Safety Hub has supported North Yorkshire Police in enforcing the COVID regulations by sending letters to residents who have been reported to the police for breaches. The police officers working within the hub review the anti-social behaviour incidents daily from the previous 24 hours including COVID breaches and liaise with the Council staff within the Hub, Public Protection and the Neighbourhood Policing Teams to ensure that high risk incidents are addressed through a multi-agency approach.

- 6.1 The closure and then limitation of the court service has meant that more holistic and innovative problem solving solutions have been required to tackle some of the issues which are impacting most significantly on communities across the city. This has led to the establishment of a number of multi-agency problem solving groups to focus on these issues and undertake actions to bring about solutions where enforcement cannot be applied.
- 6.2 Working collectively with colleagues from Adult Safeguarding, Housing, Ward Councillors and Local Area Co-Ordinators as well as external agencies such as North Yorkshire Police and Probation, the Community Safety Hub led on tackling ongoing anti-social behaviour from several addresses in one particular ward of the city, which were having a major impact on local residents' lives. The group gave increased support both for victims and perpetrators increased visibility in the street and used targeted moves to tackle the problems. This resulted in a large reduction in the number of incidents being reported.
- 6.3 Through the Daily COVID meeting with North Yorkshire Police, an address was highlighted as being a place where lots of people were gathering and causing issues and breaching Covid guidelines. A joint visit was carried out between the Hub and NYP and the resident was warned about his future conduct. In agreement with the tenant a notice was put on his door to advise that people should not be attending. A multi-agency meeting has been set up to look at increasing support for the tenant.

6.4 **Neighbourhood Enforcement**

- 20 Community Protection Notices (for various anti-social behaviour offences) and 1 notice have been issued by the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team.
- 2 simple cautions were issued and accepted for Dog Micro-Chipping.
- 171 warning letters, 7 abatement notices and 1 simple caution were issued for Domestic Noise.
- 31 notices were served for domestic waste presentation.
- 2 warning letter were issued for duty of care in respect of waste, 24 notices were served requiring production of waste carriers license, 7 fixed penalty notices were issued for non-production of a licence and 1 simple caution was issued.
- 15 warning letters, 5 fixed penalty notices and 2 cautions have been issued for fly tipping.
- 1 warning letter has been issued for littering.
- 4 simple cautions and 1 prosecution has been issued for street urination.
- 3 separate unauthorised encampments have been dealt with by use of direction to leave notices.

6.5 Noise from a council tenant holding parties was ended after 2 years of sufferance, through the service of an Abatement Notice. The case officer successfully gathered evidence through recording equipment and complainant's phone recordings.

6.6 A repeatedly straying dog was effectively dealt with through the Community Protection Notice route, working alongside the Housing Management Officer and carrying out repeat visits to the family. Cautions were also accepted to avoid court proceedings for failing to microchip their dogs correctly.

6.7 A Joint visit with North Yorkshire Police to the Clifton Caravan Park led to the investigation of commercial waste disposal offences by a city centre barber who accepted a £300 Fixed Penalty Notice. Work continues to monitor the site and identify those responsible for fly tipping.

- 6.8 Travellers camped on Bootham Stray paid a £300 Fixed Penalty Notice for a waste duty of care offence as part of a wider investigation into fly tipping on the land during their stay.
- 6.9 The team received information from North Yorkshire Police regarding a man who had verbally abused officers in the City Centre between lockdowns. The same man subsequently went on to be seen by Council CCTV littering and urinating in public. He was prosecuted and fined in excess of £500 for urinating in public and littering.
- 6.10 A City Centre business was suspected of disposing of commercial waste disguised as domestic rubbish, therefore failing in their duty of care and avoiding charges. Working with city centre cleansing teams, officers warned businesses in the area. Problems continued and evidence gathered proving the origin of the waste. A fixed penalty was served on the business and the area is now clear.
- 6.11 In addition to enforcement action a number of alternative solutions have also been used:

Use of an Undertaking

- An Undertaking as used in relation to a dog attack, where the injured dog required surgery and on-going treatment for infection control. Enquiries revealed the attacking dog lived at a premise nearby. The owner of the dog was contacted and agreed to pay the vet fees and signed an undertaking: to secure his property so the dog could not escape his control that the dog should be on a short lead and that it should be muzzled when in public. Both parties were happy with the intervention.

Use of Restorative Justice

- A referral to the Restorative Justice Service was made in respect of an ongoing complaint of 5 years involving dogs barking and fouling (having being left in the garden). The dog owner had been prosecuted twice for breaching the noise abatement notice, received a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) to keep the dogs in check, rehomed 2 dogs (one by choice, one by the CBO) and was served a Community Protection Notice for fouling issues. Due to neither of the prosecutions seemingly having any effect in deterring the behaviour, the backlog of cases in court and issues continuing, the only remaining sanction would have been the removal of the remaining dogs/banning from keeping dogs. The officer therefore felt it was worth referring the case to the Restorative Justice service. This was

done and the Restorative Justice service have recently fed back that they have almost reached an agreement in this case, potentially saving the owner from losing her dogs and another costly court case.

Use of Mediation

- A referral has recently been made to the mediation service in the case of two young neighbours, one who felt the music her neighbour played was too loud. A noise abatement notice was served to the perpetrator and both parties then reached an informal agreement to address the issue. However, unfortunately this arrangement broke down. Both parties have now agreed to start mediation and the level of complaints has already reduced.

6.12 A Senior Ways to Wellbeing Practitioner has joined the Community Safety Team from York CVS and has been assisting with cases where the victim and/or perpetrator has multiple complex needs by signposting them to support services which may not otherwise have been available through mainstream provision.

6.13 Over the coming months Anti-social Behaviour Team (Police and CYC officers) will be trained in Strength Based Conversations to provide them with additional tools to assist them in tackling complex cases. This will form part of an approach based on early intervention and prevention where the team will become involved in cases at an earlier stage and will work with partners to develop a holistic multi-agency problem solving approach.

7. **Serious Organised Crime**

7.1 The Serious Organised Crime Board and the Disruption Panel (Tactical group) for York and North Yorkshire have continued to meet, working to ensure that all key partners are focused on disrupting the most prolific and serious offenders and groups operating within the city and county.

7.2 Fortnightly intelligence meetings taken place between the Community Safety Hub Officers, Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Police Intelligence Unit focused primarily on County Lines activity and addresses and nominal of note. This group links closely with the Multi Agency Child Exploitation and Missing meetings to ensure that where young people are involved with those engaged in serious organised crime all concerns, including the safeguarding of those young people are being addressed through a multi-agency approach.

- 7.3 The Modern Slavery Partnership for York and North Yorkshire continues to meet quarterly. Activity has been limited due to the position with lockdown and a number of businesses which may be involved in modern slavery being closed.

Council Plan

11. The Community Safety Strategy links to the following priorities within the Council Plan 2019-23.

- **Safe communities and culture for all**

Implications

12. In producing this report the following implications have been considered:

- **Financial** – none identified
- **Human Resources (HR)** – none identified
- **Equalities** – none identified
- **Legal** Safer York Partnership is a statutory partnership identified within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- **Crime and Disorder** - Safer York Partnership supports the Council's discharge of its crime and disorder duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- **Information Technology (IT)** - none identified
- **Property** – none identified
- **Other**

No other implications identified

Risk Management

13. There are no identified risks relevant to this report.

Conclusions

14. The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced a clear role for Overview and Scrutiny Committees in overseeing the work of Community Safety

Partnerships and their constituent partners. Under the council's scrutiny arrangements bi-annual performance reports from Safer York Partnership are presented to the Scrutiny and Policy Committee.

Recommendation

15. Members are asked to note and comment on the contents of this report.

Reason

16. To update Members on the performance of the Safer York Partnership.

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Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

Community Safety Strategy 2017-20

Abbreviations

CYC- City of York Council
NYP- North Yorkshire Police
BID- Business Improvement District
MIY- Make it York
ASB- Anti-Social Behaviour

MARAC- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
NEO- Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer
NYCC- North Yorkshire County Council
NFU- National Farmers Union
PSPO- Public Space Protection Orders