

A BRIEF EVALUATION OF THE YORK ASB HUB

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***Progress on recommendations added by
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This brief evaluation took place during September to December 2014 when the ASB Hub had been running for just 4-6 months. It necessarily focuses on early issues – with a view to informing both the next stage for the Hub and the longer evaluation which will take place over the next year and report in March 2016.

The Hub has been received positively by the majority of staff and other departments and agencies associated with its work, and there is generally a shared vision for the Hub revolving around better services for victims and a more holistic approach to dealing with ASB within the City. There is also evidence that the Hub is already making a difference to how the partner agencies deal with ASB, particularly in relation to information sharing and appropriate responses. The main goals of the initial stages of the Hub have been realised and there is strong evidence of commitment and support for the Hub to continue. There is also evidence that the Hub could provide the basis for best practice in dealing with ASB across North Yorkshire.

Positive messages

- Respondents clearly felt that the co-location of agencies within the Hub had significantly improved the quality and speed of information sharing which had led to earlier, more appropriate and effective interventions.
- Hub members felt they were starting to see results even in long term, intractable cases.
- Both ASB police and housing officers felt that they benefited from joint visits and had gained knowledge and perspective on managing ASB from working with one other.
- The systematic daily overview of ASB cases across the city was particularly appreciated by senior management who felt they had a better understanding of the nature and patterns of ASB cases.
- The introduction of the weekly interagency meeting was viewed as a highly successful initiative improving the efficiency and effectiveness of responses.
- The reallocation of responsibility for ASB to the Hub had allowed Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) to focus on crime.

- Whilst there were still some teething problems there was general consensus between frontline staff and management about what these problems were and an understanding of what was required going forward.

Barriers to success

- The lack of an adequate IT system created cumbersome and time-consuming data inputting which drew officers away from casework.
- Communication between ASB Hub police officers and wider police force was not satisfactory for either party leading to confusion about where responsibilities for managing ASB cases lay.
- The implementation of the Hub, and efforts at staff engagement by senior management has not reduced uncertainty or anxiety among some staff about their roles or future.
- Frontline staff felt under-managed and desired closer specialist supervision and support. There was also a lack of administrative support.
- The accommodation in West Offices is inadequate and inappropriate and had led to concerns about a lack of confidentiality when dealing with sensitive material.
- Many interviewees identified poor connections with mental health services as a significant gap in developing an effective response to ASB cases.
- The overlap between ASB and crime led to some confusion about responsibilities and limitations of remit amongst frontline staff.

Recommendations

- That better accommodation is allocated to the Hub which is for Hub staff only and which allows for conversations and data to be shared without risk of breaches of confidentiality.

Update – As part of the review of accommodation within West Offices alternative locations for the ASB Hub are being considered that would address the perceived confidentiality issues

- That if such a room is not available, a confidentiality agreement for non-Hub staff members sharing accommodation should be developed.

Update – Dependant on above

- That better communication channels are developed between the Hub and the wider police force which can lead to a greater understanding about ownership of cases.

Update – A meeting has taken place between the ASB Hub, CYC staff and SNT's to further develop communication channels. This included discussions on regular problem solving workshops so teams can build an understanding of each others roles

- That systems for feeding in local knowledge from SNTs officers should be established which can lead to better recording of good quality information and a greater understanding of the role of the Hub.

Update – It has been agreed that Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers will attend the daily SNT briefings to ensure information is shared.

- That an ASB Hub flag should be included on NICHE.

Update – ASB flag has been included on NICHE

- That a mental health link worker and a victims' link worker be recruited to the Hub.

Update - A mental health link worker has been procured through the Together York project and final contracts are being put in place. The worker is to start in the Hub March 2015. We are working with the PCC to establish a victim support link for ASB cases.

- That consideration is given to the development of a single reporting function directly connecting complainants to the Hub.

Update - This has been discussed by the partners and whilst a single reporting number sounds attractive, current NYP and CYC reporting methods would not be able to support the introduction of this at this time. There are also concerns that this may lead victims to inadvertently ring the single number instead of 999 where emergencies occur. This recommendation will not be implemented but will be kept under review.