



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment and Councillor Andrea Kay, Chair of the Tackling Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group	Cabinet	11 January 2023

Tackling Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group – Final Report

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To report the work of the Tackling Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group to the Cabinet.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1** To protect residents and to strive for lower levels of youth anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the community.
- 2.2** To make succinct recommendations to Cabinet on what more the council can do to help reduce youth ASB in Wyre.

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet considers the report and recommendations (attached in Appendix 1) arising from the Tackling Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group which are as follows:

- 3.1** That the council continues to develop closer working relationships with organisations such as schools across Wyre to communicate the council's role with youth ASB. The council working with the Community Safety Partnership and other relevant agencies should approach schools, particularly high schools, to engage with them about what assistance they may need and what the council can offer regarding tackling youth ASB in the community.
- 3.2** That the council make enquires with external organisations to consider running and financing a revival of a project where the high schools across Wyre, including pupil referral units, create drama productions on key community safety topics such as youth ASB. The task group propose that

the council could assist with the productions such as the offering of Marine Hall as a venue to host the productions. There should also be consideration by the organisation running the project to work alongside the council, the Police and Lancashire County Council to identify topics for the productions.

- 3.3** That the council consider the formation of a Wyre Council Youth Forum to give a voice to young people to provide feedback, thoughts and ideas on issues that matter the most to them and support and influence tackling key areas such as youth ASB. The Wyre's Youth Mayor should have a key role in the Youth Forum. The task group suggest that the council investigates other avenues in which a Youth Forum could be supported.
- 3.4** That the council to continue to work with external partners to support diversionary activities such as the boxing project in Fleetwood and to consider expanding such projects for a more universal appeal.
- 3.5** That the council's promotion of how residents can report incidents of ASB be continued.
- 3.6** That the council replicate the work of Garstang Town Council in providing councillors with a guide on reporting ASB to relevant authorities and how to share this information with local residents. The group also suggested a future pre-council briefing slot be scheduled on this topic.
- 3.7** That, after considering the evidence provided, it be recommended that CCTV is vital to the infrastructure and safety of the borough. The Task Group agrees that public CCTV is a vital community asset, which provides reassurance, deterrence and response. Further to this, it is recommended that work continue to look into upgrading the existing CCTV. Additionally, it is recommended that the feasibility of additional options to enhance the CCTV across Wyre such as re-deployable cameras and/or providing Ring Doorbell cameras for identified victims of youth ASB be explored.
- 3.8** That the implementation of the recommendations agreed by Cabinet be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee after 12 months.

4. Background

- 4.1** Following their annual community safety themed meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to commission a task group to review youth ASB in the community. The first meeting was held on 30 March 2022.
- 4.2** The committee found that a potential risk of reviewing ASB was that the remit might become too broad and the size of the project would limit the quality of the work. For their review to have an impact, members realised it needed to be focused and meaningful. For that reason, following

assistance from officers, they decided to commission a task group to focus on youth ASB only.

4.3 The group's review aims were:

1. To understand the causes and scale of youth ASB in Wyre and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the increase in incidents.
2. To explore the impact of youth anti-social behaviour on:
 - The community
 - Council owned assets
 - The Police
 - Businesses, and
 - Community groups.
3. To review the council's current ASB policies and procedures.
4. To assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms for how the authority responds to and deals with ASB, including the community trigger.
5. To examine the effectiveness of multi-agency partnership working such as the Community Safety Partnership, in so far as it affects youth ASB.
6. To make succinct recommendations to Cabinet on what more the council can do to help reduce youth ASB in Wyre.

4.4 The review was carried out over seven meetings held on 30 March 2022, 21 April 2022, 25 May 2022, 12 July 2022, 2 August 2022, 3 October 2022 and 20 October 2022. The review group heard evidence from the following expert advisors:

- Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder
- Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety
- Manager of Environmental Protection and Community Safety
- Health Partnerships and Early Action Officer
- Police Inspector
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
- Team Leader Targeted Youth Support
- Senior Manager Early Help (LCC)
- Lead Youth Worker at Preesall Youthy
- Education Lead Lancashire Violence Reduction Network

4.5 The Chair and Vice Chair of the group were invited to an outreach session with the police to walk through the main crime hot spot areas in Poulton-le-Fylde, and they provided feedback to the rest of the members.

4.6 The group also consulted with the local high schools in Wyre regarding whether and how they address youth ASB in the community. Unfortunately, the response rate was relatively low. Out of the schools contacted, Millfield, St Aidans and Fleetwood High responded. The group also invited each of the schools to attend a meeting of the task group, however, none responded to the invitation.

- 4.7** The group additionally produced a survey regarding youth ASB in the community for parish/town councils and Wyre Borough councillors. The Democratic Services Officer distributed the online version of the survey.
- 4.8** This review added specific value as it identified areas of strategic focus to assist the council to achieve its corporate objective (as set out in the Business Plan). The conclusion and recommendations identified in the report are intended to better the health, wellbeing and life opportunities of residents. Additionally, specifically targeting youth ASB aims to support the council in its ambition to raise the aspirations of young people.
- 4.9** The report attached at Appendix 1 provides a summary of evidence the group gathered and this evidence has been analysed to formulate several conclusions and recommendations.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** The task group were clear that not all young people in Wyre commit ASB offences, and that it would be unfair to assume that they do. It is only a small minority and most young people do not intend to engage in ASB.
- 5.2** The group's research highlighted the vast number of organisations that all work towards tackling youth ASB therefore they identified that there was no one solution to tackling youth ASB meaning the close working relationship with external partners was important to maintain.
- 5.3** The group noted the significant cost to council assets as a result of youth ASB, therefore a strong stance by the council to reduce these types of activities would hopefully reduce these costs in the future.
- 5.4** The council and its relevant stakeholders should be congratulated on its problem-solving, holistic approach to tackling youth ASB through its agencies such as the Youth ASB Panel and the Community Safety Partnership. However, it was noted that 50 per cent of the Health Partnerships and Early Action Officer's role is spent on youth ASB and the Manager of Environmental Protection and Community Safety is spending much more time on youth ASB, owing to the pandemic, than what was desirable as they have many other additional responsibilities. They also explained to the group that their roles were wide ranging and varied. Therefore, Cabinet must consider resourcing, staffing levels and workloads to address youth ASB.
- 5.5** The group was impressed by the recent successful £10,000 bid to the Police and Crime Commissioner Office allocated for bespoke diversional activities and suggest that this money, alongside further bids, could be used to fund proposals suggested by the task group.
- 5.6** The group recognised the ongoing work by the council to engage with schools in Wyre. However, as a task group they found it difficult to

engage with the high schools. . Members acknowledged that the council might also feel these difficulties generally, as they were not the responsible authority for schools. During the group's consultation with the eight high schools in Wyre, Fleetwood High responded that a simple guide on what services are available and who to contact if the school was concerned about a student would be beneficial. The health and wellbeing of young people in Wyre is a council priority and the group has identified that the council may benefit from better engagement with schools will help get across key messages and highlight to schools what Wyre Council can offer, in particular youth ASB support in the community.

- 5.7** The group believed that developing young people's thinking and education about the harms and effects of ASB is integral to their development.
- 5.8** The group noted in their early stages the benefits of the Northern Beat Project. This was a Lancashire County Council funded project, where topics such as criminal exploitation, drugs and ASB were identified and the drama departments in the high schools across Lancashire were asked to produce short drama productions about these topics. For the schools that took part, their final productions were shown at a selected venue and were judged and a winner was announced. The group believed that the purpose of this project was to communicate to pupils problems in society in an engaging way that young people can relate to. The high schools across Wyre, including pupil referral units, should have the opportunity to participate. The group suggested "Wyre Beat" as a potential name. The group believed that a recommendation on the reintroduction of a scheme such as the 'Northern Beat Project' would assist with the council's ambition to raise the aspirations of young people as stated in the business plan.
- 5.9** The group acknowledged that the council can only work within their existing resources and owing to staffing and financial restraints, the council may struggle to commit to running this project. Therefore, the group believed that the council should make enquires with external organisations to run a project for the high schools in Wyre. Grant-funding opportunities via the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office or Central Government grants should also be considered to assist the revival of the project. The group's interview with Police Inspector Wyatt suggested that Wyre Police would be supportive of such a project. For example, assisting with the identification of topics for the productions and offering the Police Cadets to help during the final production. The project should be a joint venture with multiple agencies including Lancashire County Council's Children and Family Wellbeing Service and Lancashire Constabulary.
- 5.10** The group commended the creation of the Youth Mayor roles by Wyre Council and Lancashire County Council to assist Wyre Council in identifying the needs of young people and what is important to them. They agreed with the values around providing opportunities for young

people to get involved in local decision making and to feed into and tailor services to meet the needs of young people in Wyre. However, they found that more should be done to allow young people a voice in the democratic process at the council and the Youth Mayor should be integral to that.

- 5.11** The group suggested the introduction of a Youth Forum would be a great opportunity to build on young people's opportunities to be at the heart of decision making at Wyre, especially regarding decisions that affect them. The group found that a recommendation on increasing the role of the Youth Mayor and the development of a Youth Forum would assist with the council's ambition to raise the aspirations of young people. Not only would this provide a great voice for young people, but it will also foster a greater knowledge of local democracy and promote the idea of democratic participation at a local level.
- 5.12** The group understood that there are other matters to consider specifically resourcing and staffing. During their evidence gathering stage, the group found that currently the Health Partnerships and Early Action Officer would not have the capacity to take on this task. Therefore, consideration would be needed about reasonable administration support for meetings, including looking into the possibility for holding meetings virtually. Another thing to consider would be establishing the forum's main responsibilities, procedure rules, governance arrangements, the remit of the forum, membership, quorum, Chairpersonship, meetings etc.
- 5.13** Several of the group's expert witnesses praised the boxing project in Fleetwood as it provides young people with an opportunity to change their behaviour. They explained that support and funding would be required to continue the project in the long term. The task group believed the continuation of the Targeted Youth Support and Wyre Council joint boxing project for young people identified through the Youth ASB Panel is very important when tackling youth ASB. This diversional activity included a boxing training session alongside educational activities on topics such as criminal exploitation. The group received a case study from the Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety about a young person from Fleetwood who was enrolled in the boxing project and as a result, they found a reduction in incidents of ASB and a change in their behaviour. The group identified that boxing is a specific sport that not all young people who require diversionary activities would wish to take part in. Therefore, the group thought that consideration should be given for other sports and activities when providing future projects.
- 5.14** The group understood the robust process of referral to the Youth ASB Panel. Once a child is identified, the panel create a bespoke package of diversional activities in accordance with their individual needs. They believed that reacting to the individual needs of young people was a positive step forward and this approach should continue to be supported.

- 5.16** The group identified the importance of individuals recording and reporting incidents and this is the best way for the relevant partners to investigate and tackle ASB. The council must continue to spread this message. Reporting, particularly in those areas where ASB has been identified as more frequent, assists with building trust with residents and for them to feel as if something will be done about it. Members felt that the form to report ASB on the Wyre website should be as accessible as possible and easy to navigate for residents to find. The group's survey results solidified this argument as it found that even though 60.6 per cent of respondents suggested ward/town/parish councillors receive one to three complaints from residents about youth ASB each month, only 9.1 per cent of those respondents stated they often contact Wyre Council or the Police to raise concerns over youth ASB.
- 5.17** At the group's final meeting, the task group were informed that a Parish Councillor for Garstang Town Council had drafted a detailed document of guidance for both the Garstang Town Council and members of the public on how is best to deal with and report ASB as well as support those affected by or victims of ASB. Members agree that guidance, such as the one produced for Garstang Town Council, should be adopted for Wyre Councillors. The group believed this would be a productive way to provide the most accurate information to residents who are victims of ASB. The group suggested a pre-council briefing slot by officers on the reporting of ASB for councillors should be considered.
- 5.18** The task group also supported the necessary upgrades to the CCTV across the borough from analogue to digital. This upgrade would be an effective way to combat ASB and other crimes.
- 5.19** The group were introduced to a pilot scheme that was rolled out by Blackpool Council to provide victims of Domestic Abuse with a free Ring Doorbell, with installation. The committee saw this as a positive scheme and thought it could be adopted by the council and extended to victims who have continuous youth ASB against them. The group acknowledge for a scheme like this, legal and GDPR factors, alongside the fitting arrangements of the Ring Doorbells must be explored before implementation.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report. However, it is noted that several recommendations such as the introduction of school productions, Wyre Council Youth Forum, diversionary activities, CCTV upgrades and Ring Video Doorbell scheme are likely to have associated costs not specified in the report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report. However, should the recommendation to introduce a Ring Video Doorbell scheme be approved, additional research into the legal and GDPR factors will be required.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	✓
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

Appendix 1 – District Enforcement Pilot Task Group report – Final.