

**Performance and Resources Scrutiny Meeting Programme 2021****Police and Crime Plan Priority Deep Dive Reporting****Report to: The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex**

<b>Deep Dive Title:</b>	<b>Police and Crime Plan Priority Deep Dive: Crack down on Anti-Social Behaviour</b>
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**1.0 Purpose of Report**

This report provides a deep-dive assessment of the key deliveries, performance and future work to deliver the Police and Crime Plan in relation to the 'crack down of anti-social behaviour' (ASB). It sets out long term trends, resource investment, partnership working, best practice, future challenges and opportunities. The previous submission (18<sup>th</sup> June 2019) reported on the work completed during 2016/19. This submission reports on work completed from the previous paper to the current date and future development on ASB.

## **2.0 Executive Summary**

'Crack down on anti-social behaviour' is a key priority in the Police Fire Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Police and Crime Plan. This report outlines the achievements made against that priority. As with the previous deep dive paper, there continues to be focused effort in providing additional activity across the county in order to deliver a proactive and robust approach to anti-social behaviour.

### **Key Headlines:**

- Covid and the introduction of three national lock downs / tier systems has significantly changed the landscape of ASB since March 2020.
- Recorded ASB was falling in Essex from 2016 to 2020, however the rate of decrease from 2016 to March 2020 has plateaued during the pandemic. This is due to a high number of reported Covid breaches being recorded as ASB incidents.
- The number of incidents attended by Essex Police for traditional (non-Covid) ASB has fallen, although Unlicensed Music Events (UME) have increased throughout the height of the pandemic. This is owing to clear Covid legislation enacted by parliament to control public gatherings, leading to recorded police engagement and enforcement.
- 56% of ASB incidents in Essex continue to be attended by police. Incidents are assessed using THRIVE and either identified as not requiring attendance or passed to partners to review. This process is currently under review.
- Community Policing Teams, the Rural Engagement Team and the establishment of Community Safety Engagement Officers together with the Business Crime Unit, support the response to ASB in Essex.
- The introduction of Op Talla (our operational response to Covid) / Op Silver Dawn (response to Unlicensed Music Events) Command Structures have led to targeted patrols preventing and reducing traditional ASB incidents.
- The introduction of the Single Online Home website (SOH) and the ability for members of the public to report ASB online, has increased our response and effectiveness.
- Q4 2019/20 survey results indicate that over half (55%) agree Essex Police are dealing with crime and ASB, the same as Q3 (joint second highest result). With only 23% of people thinking that crime and ASB has become more of a problem, the third lowest (best) quarterly result. This coincides with the decrease in recorded crime seen in Essex.
- 38% of *victims* (20% for non-victims) think crime and ASB have become more of a problem. They are also less likely to think EP are dealing with Crime and ASB locally (45% compared to 57%). Although the victims' rate is improving, there remains a gap with non-victims above.
- A new ASB Oversight Board is now chaired by the ACC Local Policing to provide both governance and increased focus on ASB across the county.
- A new Superintendent post has been created on the Local Policing Support Unit that provides strategic focus on Hate Crime, ASB, violence abuse and intimidation against women and girls and CT Prevent.

### **Definition and volume:**

Force Procedure A1001 'Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour' is currently under review along with a refreshed approach to ASB is being undertaken under the guidance of a new Hate Crime and ASB Superintendent based on the Local Policing Support Unit. Operation Somerton has also been instigated up to look in detail into how we record, monitor and investigate all types of ASB, with specific focus on ASB-P [personal] and subsequent victims of ASB-P crimes. This review and an increased focus on ASB across the county through will continue to tackle ASB; a known precursor to hate crime and rising community tensions. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 (ASBCP 2014) definition of ASB is:

- a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person;
- b) *Only where an injunction is to be applied for by housing provider, local authority or police:* conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; or
- c) Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person – *where 'housing-related' means directly or indirectly relating to the housing management functions of a housing provider or local authority.*

Whilst there are many legal definitions of ASB, our communities would probably define it as a spectrum of misbehaviours from those that are, in their minds, too minor to merit intervention by the authorities to those that are so serious as to demand a criminal prosecution. The challenge for agencies is defining how and where to draw the boundaries between ASB and minor incivilities at one end of the spectrum and ASB and serious crime at the other end. The Government revised its statutory guidance to frontline professionals in order to emphasise that they should not be used to target 'behaviour that is neither unlawful nor antisocial'.

National Standards for Incident Recording (NSIR) defines an incident as '*a single distinct event or occurrence which disturbs an individuals, groups or community's quality of life or causes them concern*'.

The NSIR definition that must be adhered to for recording incidents, can at times, cause incidents to be recorded as ASB where the behaviour would not necessarily reach the definition of ASB provided by legislation causing levels of reported ASB to appear inflated.

In March 2020 41,256 incidents were recorded by Essex Police compared to March 2016 (pre Police and Crime Plan) where 52,750 incidents were recorded - a difference of - 21.8%. (pre Covid)

Following this period of decline there was a significant increase of 46% in the 12 months up to March 2021. This is a result of Covid legislation and the introduction of social restrictions that were recorded as ASB - Covid breaches.

### **3.0 Recommendations:**

The Board is requested to note the contents of the report and make comment.

### **Resources:**

The primary responsibility for managing ASB within Essex Police sits with Community Policing Teams (CPTs). They are currently supported by 2 (full time equivalent) ASB

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Officers who cover the whole of the Essex policing area. They are managed by the Youth Justice and ASB Manager based in Local Policing Support Unit. (LPSU)

LPSU have created a comprehensive Delivery Plan for the ASB officers with strategic aims and objectives based on the 4P template. The strategic objectives being:

- **Objective 1.** Providing a greater focus on the impact of anti-social behaviour on victims and their needs.
- **Objective 2.** Utilising data to target resources and for preventative methods to be adopted to protect communities.
- **Objective 3.** Ensuring officers are equipped with the knowledge and tools to be proactive when dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- **Objective 4.** Collaborative Working - working together to ensure the best outcomes for victims.
- **Objective 5.** Using communication both internally and externally to combat anti-social behaviour.

The Delivery Plan provides guidance to the ASB officers and partners in respect of priorities in which the ASB officers are measured. Future investment in ASB resourcing is currently under review as part of force uplift programme funds.

The following resources have already been realised through some of this funding and has made a positive impact on the identification and focus on ASB within the county.

- Introduction of 20 Community Safety Engagement Officers
- Introduction of the Business Crime Team and Fraud Coordinators consisting of one sergeant, two constables and three fraud coordinators. (1 Sgt, 2 Pcs & 3 Fraud Coordinators)
- Increase of Children and Young Peoples Officers from 13 to 33.
- Increase in the Rural Engagement Team from 1 Sergeant and 3 Constables to 2 Sergeants and 10 Constables.
- Maintained the second largest Special Constabulary with a projected increase of 9% visible hours on last year to approximately 81,000 hours delivered by over 500 Specials.
- Delivered 15 Watch Schemes with reach to 215k members.
- Maintained largest UK Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) with 44 accredited organisations and 478 accredited individuals.
- Successful response to emerging national trend of unlicensed music events (UME) throughout the Summer (Operation Silver Dawn).
- Youth Justice Team Essex offering support to complete SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assess) when the perpetrators are children.

### **Powers and partnership:**

The primary enforcement tools for managing ASB are provided by the provisions of the [Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#), in particular Community Protection Warnings and Notices (CPWs/CPNs), Civil Injunctions, Dispersal Powers and Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs). It is recognised in national research that responding to ASB effectively requires collaborative working between the police, councils and other relevant agencies to determine the most appropriate response. The introduction of Community Safety Hubs and closer working practices between Essex Police and community safety partners is a key component of this work.

### **Policy and procedure:**

Essex Police has a detailed ASB procedure which sets out the minimum standards expected when recording, attending and investigating incidents of ASB and identifies types of ASB that will always be responded to, including incidents involving:

- Vulnerability
- Repeat locations
- Identifiable offenders
- Repeat victims

The procedure is currently under review along with a refreshed approach to ASB is being undertaken under the guidance of a new Hate Crime and ASB Superintendent based on the Local Policing Support Unit. Where risk and / or vulnerability is identified, officers will be dispatched to attend the incident. The procedure requires officers to engage with the victim and complete an initial ASB risk assessment to identify the risk level present, (standard, medium or high Risk).

### **4.0 Deep Dive**

The objective is to keep our communities safe across the whole of Essex, reducing the disruption and distress anti-social behaviour causes people. The following are the pledges aligned to the PFCC priorities for ASB so that anti-social behaviour is effectively tackled by police and partners:

#### **4.1 Tackle anti-social behaviour to prevent longer-term and more serious crime**

Responding to reports of anti-social behaviour and conducting preventative patrols and activities are the main priorities of the Community Policing Teams who are now assisted by the recently introduced Community Safety Engagement Officers (CSEOs).

The Community Safety Engagement Officers are newly established police officer posts supported by the Force Growth Programme for 2020/21 and were introduced to districts in 2 stages (June and October 2020). CSEOs are based within Community Safety Hubs and are embedded in the Community Policing structure. Their role is to engage with local communities; to work with partners to tackle problems identified and adopting a longer-term problem-solving approach. This role will further improve the public perception of the police's understanding of local issues and how well informed the public feel.

The Community Policing Teams are divided into geographical areas with each area based across the ten policing districts of the county. This has had a positive impact on identification of hot spots, repeat locations, victims and offenders providing a better service for the public. Additionally, this has allowed for more focused and increased patrols and this, together with working in partnership towards a problem-solving approach to antisocial behaviour, is having a positive impact.

The increase in resources has enabled greater emphasis in dealing with both the short-term solutions and for officers to concentrate on longer term partnership solutions. Potential future investment would also allow for a more proactive and targeted approach to anti-social behaviour, looking at a locally based preventative approach in order to achieve long term commitment to communities in tackling their problems. The pandemic lockdowns saw face to face services paused or replaced with online alternatives. This, and school closures reduced initiatives with young people.

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As restrictions lifted, work now continues with partners to develop programmes in hot spots areas. Combined initiatives tackling the increased use of Nitrous Oxide cannisters by outreach workers and police officers has been one such example. Educational input and social media campaigns have tackled the use of the cannisters and has been used as an example of anti-social behaviour to help see implementation of a district wide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

There has also been the introduction of joint patrols with schoolteachers and outreach workers at key seasonal times, identifying offenders and looking at longer term problem solving/ education as well as immediate improvement in anti-social behaviour issues. This involves working with partners, including youth workers, community safety partnerships and schools to address the underlying conditions at the root of the problem. The expected impact would be a reduction in ASB, improved public confidence and stronger partnership working.

For longer term problem solving, SPOCs are allocated to work with partner agencies to resolve issues which can in some instances take several months. A Community Safety Engagement Officer will attend ASB case reviews with partner agencies as the police representative.

The most significant factor of 2020 has been the impact of the pandemic and has impacted on the progress with key initiatives. The larger groups of youths have led, to increased reporting of ASB. However, these reports have provided police and council with information and intelligence which has helped to define problem areas for targeted patrols which has deterred anti-social behaviour and enabled SARA to be completed. The introduction of policy to allow the use of social media to show communities where we are policing has increased confidence leading to better engagement which has also assisted with defining problem areas.

The expectation is that through continued strong, agile, and responsive partnership action in relation to ASB that we will continue to reduce problems in the county and provide an enhanced service to the community.

### **Case Studies**

#### **West**

The Thurrock Town Centre Team identified a significant issue with ASB and criminal damage in the area, including the destruction of the CCTV and lighting. Through daily patrols, interacting with residents and members of the public, close partner working with the local authority and the Business Crime Team, the Town Centre Team have identified the group responsible for causing the majority of the issues.

Success was achieved using a partnership approach which included joint patrols with the Thurrock Council Enforcement Team, regular TEAMS meetings with Council ASB and Housing Officers. Joint visits were made to the parade with a bespoke police operation to set out the objectives. Specialist Police units provided additional patrols to boost the time spent with feet on the ground and deter those who would be disruptive in the area. The partnership working enabled Thurrock Council to successfully apply for a Notice of Seeking Possession to be issued to the tenants causing ASB. This has resulted in local community and victim satisfaction being high, positive feedback has been received by the team including one store manager who said *'I'm starting to see my old customers come in again, they're telling me they feel good about coming back to the shop.'*

## South

Joint police operations were launched following a series of offences/ASB in an area by a named gang. The area was suffering from ASB related issues; drug use, assaults, damage and noise complaints from the residents and vented on social media, resulting in the local MP contacting Essex Police with his concerns. In order to tackle this the Community Police Team secured additional funding and deployed the team in the area every day. Police engaged with the residents and gathered intelligence including from former associates of those believed responsible. Problem solving analysis was conducted on the main suspects along with profiling of the other four members of the gang. The data collected included highlighting who the key players were - a hierarchy, their vehicles, places frequented etc. The work continues with successes having been made resulting in members of the gang being sentenced to imprisonment, on remand or subject to community orders with prohibitive conditions. The Police Children and Young Persons officer has also been attending the addresses of all young persons linked to these nominals as part of the operation to engage and educate them to change their negative behaviour and disassociation from these nominals.

## North

Chelmsford Community Policing Town Team and Essex Police Anti-Social Behaviour Officers have worked together to tackle repeated reports of Anti-Social Behaviour at an address close to the town centre. Complaints had been received from neighbours living close to the property that numerous people were coming to the address at all hours of the day and night as well as drug dealing and drug use occurring on the premises.

Serious incidents of disorder involving knife point robberies and violence had been reported at the address and residents reported being afraid to go out into the communal areas. Police have attended the address on numerous occasions and other drug users have been found inside the property.

Problem solving SARA process confirmed the address had been "cuckooed" (where a vulnerable person allows their premises to be used in return for the supply of drugs). After completing complex partnership working and ensuring safeguarding of the tenant, a Closure Order Application was presented to the courts and this resulted in the issue of a 3-month full Closure Order on the address. This provided the local community with instant respite from the harrowing anti-social and criminal behaviour occurring at the address and has enabled residents to live without these fears. The tenant, now safeguarded, can reside without further incidents occurring at the property.

### **4.2 Target repeat and high harm anti-social behaviour through the continued development of Community Safety Hubs to include Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Community Safety Officers, licensing, Housing and Environmental Health in every policing district.**

#### **Community Safety Hubs (CSH)**

Effective multi-agency working enhances the services that agencies can deliver, particularly regarding ASB. The Community Safety Hubs (CSH) project has brought key partners together across the county with the intention of:

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- Improving community safety
- Reducing crime and disorder
- Improving victim satisfaction and support

All the following hubs are co-located:

- Tendring
- Colchester
- Chelmsford and Maldon
- Braintree and Uttlesford
- Southend
- Castlepoint and Rochford
- Basildon (previously not co-located.)
- Epping Forest and Brentwood.

The updated position from the Deep Dive Report August 2019 regarding the hubs is as follows:

- Harlow Policing district have a strong ambition to be co-located. Harlow Council are currently undertaking an Estates review (post-COVID) but the relationship between the hub and Police is very good with daily interaction, dialogue and ongoing joint operations.
- Thurrock hub and police have not yet co-located although it is planned that this will occur post Covid-19 restrictions. The planned location remains under refurbishment and it is intended that Essex Police will have access to agile working within the hub and CCTV centre once work has been completed.

### **Community Safety Engagement Officers**

With the CSEOs in post since June 2020, they have established a good working relationship with the Community Safety Hubs and their agency partners. Monthly newsletters have been circulated to partners, neighbourhood watches and via social media introducing the officers and their roles. A 'Victim's Voice' survey has been introduced which gives victims of crime the opportunity to comment on the service provided and how the service might be improved. A virtual tour of a police station for the social media channels is in the process of production and is hoped to be completed for circulation early in the New Year.

The CSEOs have been heavily involved in the community since being in post especially in response to the pandemic and this has involved them assisting at food banks and running a Christmas initiative to provide children with gifts who might not otherwise receive one. The role is multifaceted engaging with Licencing and Environmental Health in operations which require a police input. They have strong links with housing associations assisting in closure orders, injunctions and eviction notices which are linked to antisocial behaviour.

CSEO's have been a vital link between police and partners – they have taken the lead in publicising our activity on social media and local newsletters. Local engagement has increased significantly which has been reflected in the latest public perception survey results. Whilst their face to face engagement opportunities have reduced, officers have maximised social media opportunities on Facebook & Twitter. Future plans are for the CSEOs to co locate for part of their week at the Community Safety Hubs.



It is recognised that crime and anti-social behaviour can have a significant influence on local businesses in high streets and shopping centres. Retailers are the heart of our local communities and with trends of offending increasing such as theft, criminal damage, and anti-social behaviour, the community often pays the price in increased costs of goods, higher insurance premiums and potential loss of investment by businesses in the local area.

Tackling and preventing crime and anti-social behaviour is a priority for Essex Police and the Business Crime Unit, established in February 2020. Working with the Community Safety Partnership, its aim is for all businesses across the county to feel safe without the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour which is committed by a minority or individuals.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and its causes can be very complex and requires strong local partnership arrangements. Partnership working and the effective use of resources is vital for identifying and responding appropriately to business concerns. Improving and developing a consistent way of monitoring, reporting and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour can improve the partnership understanding of local problems, help to prevent offences from being committed and get better outcomes for businesses regardless of the agency they report to.

Essex Police Business Crime Unit has developed five crime and anti-social behaviour objectives that will ensure Community and Town Teams are working intelligently together to support businesses and provide for safe and attractive high streets to prosper. Part of their drive to reduce crime and ASB will be to use legislation under the Police and Crime Act 2014 with the issue of Community Protection Warnings, Community Protection Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders.

Criminal Behaviour Orders are preventative orders with restrictions that are imposed in a bid to stop persistent offenders committing further offences. When used alongside DRP Orders (Drug Rehabilitation Requirements) there is evidence that the desired effects of reducing offending, protecting victims and reducing the demand on police time and resourcing is met.

The Business Crime Unit has taken the lead in the process of applications on several persistent offenders attributed to thefts across the county. The Business Crime Unit have taken nine prolific offenders to court and obtained Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO), six of which were taken out in 2020. These nine offenders jointly contributed to 62 offences in September and October 2020 reducing to 6 offences over November and December 2020. This showed a 90% reduction in offending.

#### **4.3 Make greater use of Restorative Justice (RJ) to help put right the harm caused by anti-social behaviour, making clear to perpetrators the effect their behaviour has on individuals and communities.**

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a process which gives victims, involved in a crime or conflict, the opportunity to meet or communicate with those who have offended against them in a safe way. Victims are given the chance to explain to an offender the impact a crime has had on them, ask questions and seek an apology.

Restorative Justice can be effective in showing the perpetrator the real impact of their actions by putting a face to their crime. It also gives the victim and/or family the opportunity to tell the offender how they feel about what has happened, ask for an apology or explanation and get answers to their questions.

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The victim may also be offered an opportunity to help decide what activity the offender can do to repair some of the damage done. It may help those who have committed crimes or anti-social behaviour reintegrate back into society and reduce reoffending.

Findings from the Ministry of Justice on the benefits of restorative justice identified a 14% reduction in re-offending and importantly, an 85% satisfaction rate for victims. It estimates that it can lead to £9 saved to the criminal justice system for every £1 spent on RJ.

Local data from the Essex Mediation and Restorative Justice Hub confirms a 29% reduction in re-offending, 93% participation satisfaction with 78% reporting a positive impact. All parties referred to the services confirmed they would refer again (100% success)

The Essex Restorative and Mediation Service is based within the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and maintains close links with all police departments providing a single point of contact for officers to seek advice and guidance about referrals made or proposed.

The Restorative Justice Hub have been working with councils, police officers and other local representatives resolving concerns of the community in the form of a 'Restorative Circle Meeting'. This involves creating and disseminating guidance documents on how to recognise and discuss suitable RJ/mediation cases, together with promoting more case studies on their website and to partners specifically on the ASB cases and community projects. This performs the function of a library of successful interventions that can be referred to and adopted.

The Essex Restorative and Mediation Service have been helping a local company together with pupils from a nearby school come together to help understand the impact of ASB and criminal damage can have.

The Service was contacted by the company after police visited the factory to offer crime prevention advice following concerns the company had raised regarding criminal and antisocial behaviour that had been taking place. Greenhouses and crops had been damaged and there were concerns that people entering the premises may injure themselves as well as damaging the business.

The school agreed to take part in the process and after careful planning, the volunteers and staff from the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service delivered workshops to more than 200 Year 10 students over the course of two days last Autumn.

The pupils learnt:

- How Restorative Justice works and how it can be put into practice
- Conflict resolution skills
- Victim awareness and how to identify different perspectives

In total more than 200 pupils, five teachers, eight restorative justice practitioners, two police officers and three of the company employees took part in the programme. Facilitating these types of projects will help the education of young people in a preventative way to reduce incidents of ASB and to understand the impact anti-social behaviour.

Feedback from restorative justice interventions included:

- *“I found it very helpful. I was able to express my problem to very nice, understanding and sympathetic facilitators. My upstairs neighbour is very quiet now. It has been a success” – mediation participant*
- *“It was really good to be heard and understood, but you also helped us understand the other party better” mediation participant*
- *“Just a huge thank you for everything and for making it all so easy and helping me through it. Your service was brilliant” – victim*
- *“Friendly staff who met with us, really willing to help. Really good organisation. Thank you for your help and patience” – victim*
- *“You did the best. Thank you for your support and help! God bless you! Keep going like this” – victim*

**4.4 Improve the response of police and partners to anti-social behaviour by listening to local communities and drawing on evidence to increase public confidence**

A report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *Anti-Social Behaviour Strategies: Finding a Balance* (2005), identified some valuable lessons on how to successfully respond to patterns of ASB. These included clear analysis of the problems, search for solutions, management of local action on ASB and the handling of public opinion.

Working in partnership is key to achieving an increase in public confidence but agencies can only go so far in developing and supporting systems of informal social control and *imposing* solutions is no solution at all. We therefore must acknowledge that developing or recovering social capital in some communities may be a delicate and slow process involving sustained commitment and long-term investment from both agencies and communities.

Not only will agencies have different ASB tools and powers, but our responses may need to be long term and at times, require solutions beyond short term engagement or enforcement.

The Community Policing Teams together with the Community Safety Engagement Officers listen to the needs of the local community regarding their concerns around crime and anti-social behaviour. Against the backdrop of the pandemic they have continued to work with partners to engage with the community and increase public confidence. The Public Satisfaction Surveys indicate that more people feel better informed about what is happening in the county and that Essex Police understand key community issues. The following is an update from each of the three Local Policing Areas:

**North**

The North of the county has continued its growth and development with additional resources to serve the community. A concentration on partnership work with Independent Advisory Groups (IAG) continue with a focus on service. Structured activities have been taking place with the Community Safety Partnerships especially regarding Operation Luscombe which focuses on tackling the effects of ASB which are linked to homelessness through the creation of an intervention hub.

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The hub seeks to offer support and engagement from the partnership agencies and minimising enforcement tactics. This approach resulted in 28 homeless persons being housed.

They continue to work with Community 360 who continue to be a valuable resource providing access to a range of non-government organisations that support activities, providing opportunities to support vulnerable people and the wider community through regular telephone contact and befriending. The delivery of food parcels, and their community development work inspired local people to step forward and develop long term sustainable improvements in their own communities.

With the first wave of BLM protests in the summer, officers made early contact with local organisers who now sit on the IAG in Colchester providing a voice for our younger generation. Work continues to develop with them and the Centre for Human Rights at University of Essex with concepts to strengthen relationships with young people.

Across the North of the county, the Public Perception Survey results evidence that the public have confidence in local policing ability and that ASB and crime is being dealt with by Essex Police - both are above the national average. In relation to whether crime and ASB have become more of a problem in their area within the last 12 months, a slight increase was shown apart from Colchester where the perception had decreased.

### **South**

Officers in the South of the county are continuing with developing their portfolio of CSEOs giving them a more focussed responsibility in engaging with victims and presenting the findings of the Victim Survey which has been slightly delayed due to the pandemic.

Methods of communication with the public have changed and adapted with a better use of technology being used by all members of the community, this saw a considerable increase during the lockdown periods. The Listen, Act and Tell Model of public engagement continues to be reviewed as the landscape changes. A more localised engagement is planned with the publication of Together Magazine and a quarterly report in the Evening Echo and the introduction of evening sessions of Coffee with Cops.

Priority has been given to reaching out to the public in districts without any front counter service, by utilising other methods such as town halls, community centres and council offices to meet the community.

In order to improve public confidence, high visibility patrols using liveried vehicles in key locations together with officers on foot patrols in hot spot areas are deployed. There is also an offender management focus across the district bringing perpetrators to justice.

Other projects designed to increase engagement are a Virtual Tour with different departments giving an overview of their roles, a Community Open Day together with the establishment of a School Headteachers Group. The establishment of IAGs is also a priority in some areas with the formation of a Youth IAG together with the introduction of police officer surgeries in Castle Point council offices. This will provide for a walk-in opportunity for residents to discuss issues and will allow for good partnership visibility.

There has been a continual reduction shown in the Public Perception Survey in relation to whether the public feel that crime and ASB have become more of a problem with ASB figures continuing to decrease over time.

## West

The West of the county has seen increases in the Public Perception Survey questions showing satisfaction for policing across this policing area. The CSEOs who are now in post continue to build relationships with existing and new communities and organisations to promote public confidence and community engagement. They also have responsibility to update social media and newsletters which became a vital conduit for which to update during the pandemic and is still a useful tool now to keep the public informed. They liaise with the IAGs in order to keep communities updated and informed of current police practices, crime trends together with crime prevention.

Informing the public what action is being taken within their community by police has been key within the pandemic. This has included enhanced partnership working with existing and new partners and promoting them within posts on social media. Once Covid-19 measures have been eased, more work will be completed with the community by CSEOs with support from the CPT, face to face, in line with government guidance.

Good connections are being made with local business within town centres by Town Centre Teams and the Business Crime Unit thereby accommodating any problems they are experiencing. Using an evidence-based approach to policing by reviewing incidents and deploying officers to patrol those locations, will reassure residents and identify short and long-term solutions to anti-social behaviour.

New projects for the future include street meets in areas which are known to have anti-social behaviour problems; pop-up stalls in high footfall locations together with the smaller shopping areas; online surveys on Facebook and Twitter and Feedback Panels.

### **4.5 Support the community spirit shown throughout the Covid-19 crisis to strengthen communities, tackle ASB and ensure criminals have no place to thrive.**

Since the outbreak of Covid-19 communities have strengthened with neighbours connecting and looking out for one another more than usual. Solidarity is felt in communities and many people have stepped forward as formal volunteers. The response to coronavirus has demonstrated the contribution that communities make to public health and that community life is essential for health and wellbeing.

Operation Talla is the Essex Police response to the Covid 19 Crisis. Targeted patrols coupled with engagement from the community policing teams and regular updates on social media have contributed to letting the community know we are there to support them. Officers have been working alongside the Covid-19 Ambassadors who are funded by the local councils to ensure the anti-social behaviour hotspots are regularly patrolled and those living in those areas have engagement by officers on a regular basis.

The Community Policing Teams together with Community Safety Engagement Officers have maintained their links with the communities via social media together with socially distanced opportunities for the public to meet with officers where this has been possible.

As a result of Covid-19 they have worked more closely with agency partners in the local authority, licensing and environmental health as a result of breaches of the government regulations. A joint approach to challenging issues in relation to licensed premises resulted in Essex being the first county to issue a 'Covid-19 Direction' to a licensed premises together with the high-profile joint closure of a gym which became subject of regional news interest.

In addition, with the increase in 'Mansion Parties', a collaborative approach was adopted with the council by formulating a joint communicative approach; the issuing of Community Protection Warnings and the application for closure orders which lead to successful resolutions.

Whilst the first lockdown saw a significant reduction in crime, with ever changing legislation and the need for this to be policed, resourcing was directed to this area of business. An Operation Talla car was deployed on each policing shift which was directed to reports of breaches of the restrictions both reported direct to police and via the council. In some areas, joint patrols have taken place with the local authority to educate members of the public together with enforcement of Covid-19 breaches where this has been required.

The Four E approach - Engage, Explain, Encourage, Enforce - and associated social media campaigns throughout the first lockdown was supported by communities and provided awareness that officers were policing the regulations and providing guidance. With patrols of retail and licenced premises, this sent the message that the police were policing to keep everyone safe which increased community confidence. With increased engagement and visibility, both face to face and social media, this generated further information and an awareness of issues for police to address.

The continued presence in key locations, high footfall areas alongside continual discussion with key partners has assisted in keeping the public informed. CPT officers have been involved in meetings with key community groups, IAG and wider partners. They have provided a presence in vulnerable locations, provided support at foodbanks and soup kitchens and ensured appropriate referrals for homeless persons and others in more deprived community groups.

The engagement with the community has continued despite Covid-19 in different formats to ensure social distancing with opportunities to meet with officers. Events including Street Beats and Coffee with Cops has continued throughout the pandemic.

**4.6 Improve engagement and communication between the police and local communities so the public have confidence that the police understand and act on local issues, and the public have access to advice on crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.**

In August 2019, the force moved to the National Single Online Home (SOH) system which enables a variety of incidents and crimes to be reported online. In 2020, 'Live Chat' and online reporting of ASB was included.

Live Chat is an online facility via the Single Online Home (SOH) Essex Police website which allows the public to interact with the Force Control Room (FCR) without needing to call 101, the public being able to engage with an FCR Contact Handler via the use of a written "chat box" in real time.

There were 10,730 Live Chat conversations between 28th April and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, averaging 43 interactions per day that would otherwise have been via the 101 system.

Live Chat has seen 3,535 interactions in Quarter 3 of 2020, a decrease of 1,464 on the previous quarter, this may be the result of an increase in Covid-19 breaches being reported via 101 and the increase in demand that is historically seen in the Summer months (Quarter 2).

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Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour generate a significant amount of the demand received by the FCR Call Handling section.

To enhance the public's ability to submit such reports, with the secondary aim of reducing 101 demand, the facility to report a variety of ASB incidents via the Single Online Home Essex Police website was subject to a "soft" launch on 24th May 2020.

Between 24th May and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 there were 1,975 ASB reports generated by this system, averaging 8.9 incidents per day that would otherwise have required a report via 101.

There were 733 reports generated in Quarter 3 of 2020, a decrease of 177 on the previous quarter. This decrease may be due to an increase in e-mail reports of COVID-19 breaches which were being dealt with by the Quality of Service Team.

The Contact Management Command, which encompasses both the FCR and the Resolution Centre is now working with the Essex Police Media department to more widely advertise the Live Chat and ASB reporting facility.

Essex Police Media and Communications Team have continued to listen to Essex residents to understand their needs and concerns and enable information to be delivered to help people, keep them safe and help catch criminals. The Public Satisfaction Surveys indicate that more people feel better informed about what is happening in the county and that Essex Police understand key community issues.

The percentage of residents that agreed Essex Police understand local issues rose by 22% from 58% (Q1 2020/21) to 80% (Q1 2020/21).

The percentage of residents that felt informed on what's happening rose by 14% from 39% (Q1 2019/20) to 53% (Q1 2020/21).

The following were communicated to the public in order to raise awareness of Essex Police activity in response to the pandemic and the recruitment of the newly formed Community Safety Engagement Officers:

### Operation Talla - Essex Police response to Covid-19

The Media and Communication Team have issued:

- Support and coverage of Clap for Carers
- Utilised retired Police Dog Baloo to assist with children to understand the restrictions and updated messaging for new guidance
- Delivered #StaySafeEssex messaging in support of public health
- Resulted in over 3,400,000 engagements on main Facebook page

### Community Safety Engagement Officers (CSEO)

This role has further improved the public perception of the police's understanding of local issues and how well informed the public feel. They are community based and will forge longstanding relationships with partners and the community they serve.

The officers are reaching out to different community groups and building up knowledge and intelligence of the problems that the community are facing.

The public perception of how Essex Police are understanding of local issues combined with the communication and engagement with the public, has translated to an improved performance in public satisfaction of the police service. The percentage of residents that think the police are doing a good or excellent job in their area rose by 16% from 65% (Q1 2019/20) to 81% (Q1 2020/21).

## **5.0 Performance**

The key performance indicators for ASB are;

1. A reduction in the number of all anti-social behaviour incidents.
2. An increase in public confidence that policing responses to anti-social behaviour is improving (survey).

### **5.1 A reduction in the number of all ASB incidents**

All police forces record incidents of ASB in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). It is imperative that our records accurately reflect the nature of the ASB and splits it into the three nationally recognised categories of:

1. Environmental
2. Nuisance
3. Personal

As already described within this report, the necessity to work in partnership with other agencies who have a duty to investigate patterns of anti-social behaviour cannot be under-estimated. Each agency will have their own tools and powers that enhance the services we offer victims.

Whilst local authorities are likely to take the lead in environmental issues and we may lead on high risk personal harm, we must acknowledge that crime and anti-social behaviour are not exclusive, and our approach therefore must successfully target both.

Data confirms that around 56% of ASB incidents are attended by officers and this has been consistent since 2016 (between 50-56%). Police attendance can often be seen as the highest level of service but we can achieve so much via telephone contacts, identifying the real issues and which agency we may need to refer the problem to, this work starts in the control room and therefore our training focus in 2021 will include our first points of contact as well as operational officers. Ensuring the right agency attends is as important as attendance itself.

The introduction of our Community Safety Engagement Officers has brought about an increase in victim and community engagement. Opportunities for our communities to share their increased confidence or ongoing fear of crime will lead to further improvements in our response to providing what neighbourhoods want and need.

Alongside our own engagement, the ASB case review (community trigger) provides victims of persistent anti-social behaviour the ability to request a formal case review that must be conducted within strict timeframes. At the point of reporting, force control room staff were not fully aware of this service, therefore additional training is required.



In the past 12 months, 33 community triggers were investigated (3 local authorities did not respond to request for data so may be higher). The highest reporting was in Thurrock who received 10 requests. This does not suggest that Thurrock suffer higher levels of dissatisfaction and could suggest they are better at advertising this service.

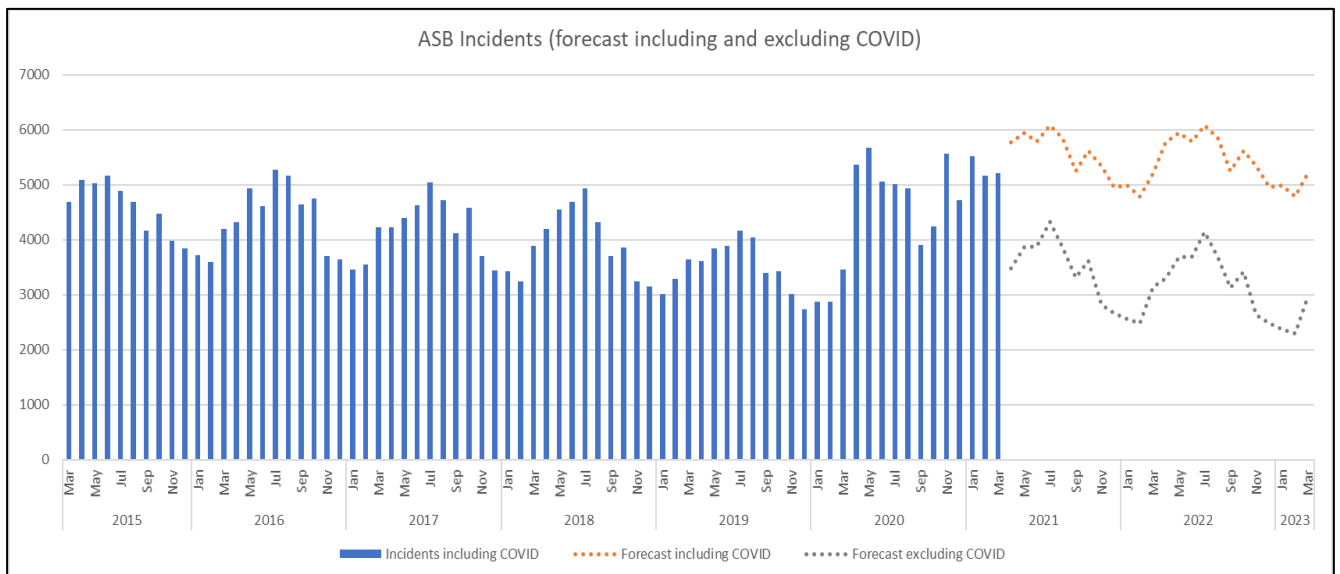
The Community Remedy menu agreed by the Chief Constable and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is now embedded and ensures restorative justice and other services are explained to victims of ASB to enable them to have a say in the outcome of the behaviour affecting them and feel confident in our policing responses. Victims of persistent and targeted ASB can feel powerless and these services go some way to redressing the balance.

In 2016, 14.9% of all reported ASB was personal, this compares with only 6.7% in 2020. It is acknowledged however that the recording of ASB-P is currently under review and that Essex Police need to undertake further training and procedure changes to ensure that ASB-P is being effectively recorded. Early work under Operation Somerton indicates that ASB-P numbers should be much higher in light of victims being identified. The use of THRIVE at point of call along with the ASB risk assessment ensures we correctly respond whatever the category, however the way we close incidents and record their ASB categorisation will be subject to change going forward.

Whilst the improvement in crime recording is welcomed, we must also ensure that any patterns of personal and targeted behaviour towards victims is identified and not treated as 'one-off' crimes. The population of ASB perpetrators certainly overlaps extensively with the population that provides the criminal courts with their staple diet. The value of using ASB legislation to target crime is well documented. We know this from successful Criminal Behaviour Orders that have been obtained in the courts to address patterns of crime, not just patterns of ASB.

### **ASB Deep Dive Data Update**

The below chart shows the number of ASB incidents recorded to March 2021 and a forecast including and excluding the COVID call types.



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Incidents	Date	Including COVID	Excluding COVID
Actual	12 M March 2021	60391	44995
Forecast	12 M March 2022	65603	40022
Forecast	12 M March 2023	65602	37780
Difference between 2021 and 2023	% Difference	9%	-16%
	# difference	5211	-7215

The forecast for the number of ASB incidents reported by 2023 including COVID is an increase of 5,211 (9% increase) incidents per year compared to 12 months to March 2021. When excluding the COVID breach data, the forecast is a decline of 7,215 (16% decrease) incidents per year.

The table below shows the change in ASB volumes from 12 months to March 2016 to 12 months to March 2021.

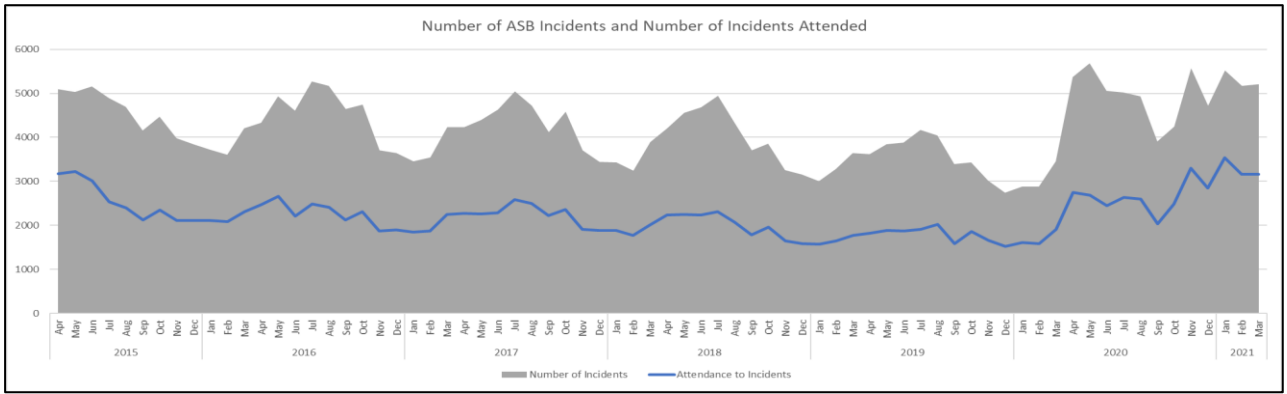
Date	Number of ASB Incidents	# diff	% diff
12 M March 2016	52837		
12 M March 2017	52264	-573	-1%
12 M March 2018	49430	-2834	-5%
12 M March 2019	46612	-2818	-6%
12 M March 2020	41365	-5247	-11%
12 M March 2021	60391	19026	46%

Looking at 12 months to March 2016 there were 52,837 incidents reported. Every year to March 2020, there was a decrease year on year in the number of incidents and ASB volumes were declining. By March 2020 there were 41,365 incidents reported, this is a 21.7% decrease compared to March 2016.

Following this period of decline there was a significant increase of 46% in the 12 months to March 2021. This is a result of COVID and the introduction of social restrictions that were recorded as COVID breaches.

The chart and table below show the number of ASB incidents reported and the number of incidents attended.

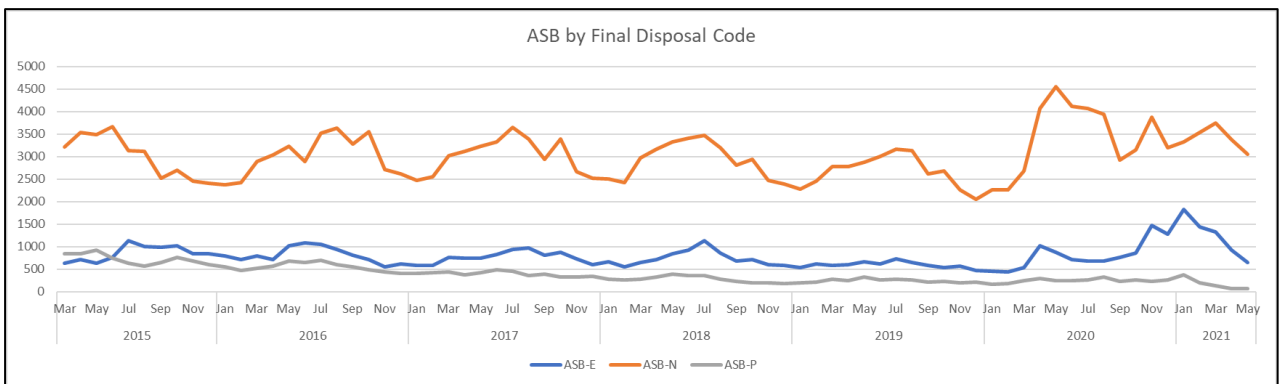
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Date	Number of ASB Incidents	Number of ASB Attendance	% Attended
12 M March 2016	52837	29511	56%
12 M March 2017	52264	26409	51%
12 M March 2018	49430	25974	53%
12 M March 2019	46612	23092	50%
12 M March 2020	41365	21251	51%
12 M March 2021	60391	33644	56%

The proportion of ASB incidents that are attended has not significantly changed from 12 months to March 2016 and has remained between 50% and 56% every year. Although incident volumes increased by 46% in 2021, the proportion of incidents attended remained at 56% suggesting that an increase in demand does not result in a change in the proportion of incidents attended. This indicates that attendance to incidents is based on the nature of the calls rather than capacity to attend.

The table and chart below show ASB broken down by category and the proportion of ASB that is Personal, Environmental and Nuisance. The breakdown of categories is based on the final disposal code recorded.



Date	Personal	Environmental	Nuisance
12 M March 2016	15%	19%	66%
12 M March 2017	12%	18%	70%
12 M March 2018	9%	18%	73%
12 M March 2019	7%	19%	74%

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12 M March 2020	7%	16%	77%
12 M March 2021	5%	21%	74%

The largest ASB category is Nuisance which has been increasing as a proportion since March 2016 from 66% to 74% of all incidents in 2021. Environmental ASB has also increased from 19% in March 2016 to 21% of all incidents in 2021. Personal ASB has declined from 15% in March 2016 to 5% in 2021. This decline in Personal ASB can be attributed to a decline in several call types: Nuisance Neighbour, Threats and Dispute Civil. Nuisance Neighbour calls have been declining each year and declined by 88% (981 incidents) from March 2016 to March 2021. Threats and Dispute Civil declined by 93% (496 incidents) and 96% (370 incidents) respectively from 2016 vs 2021.

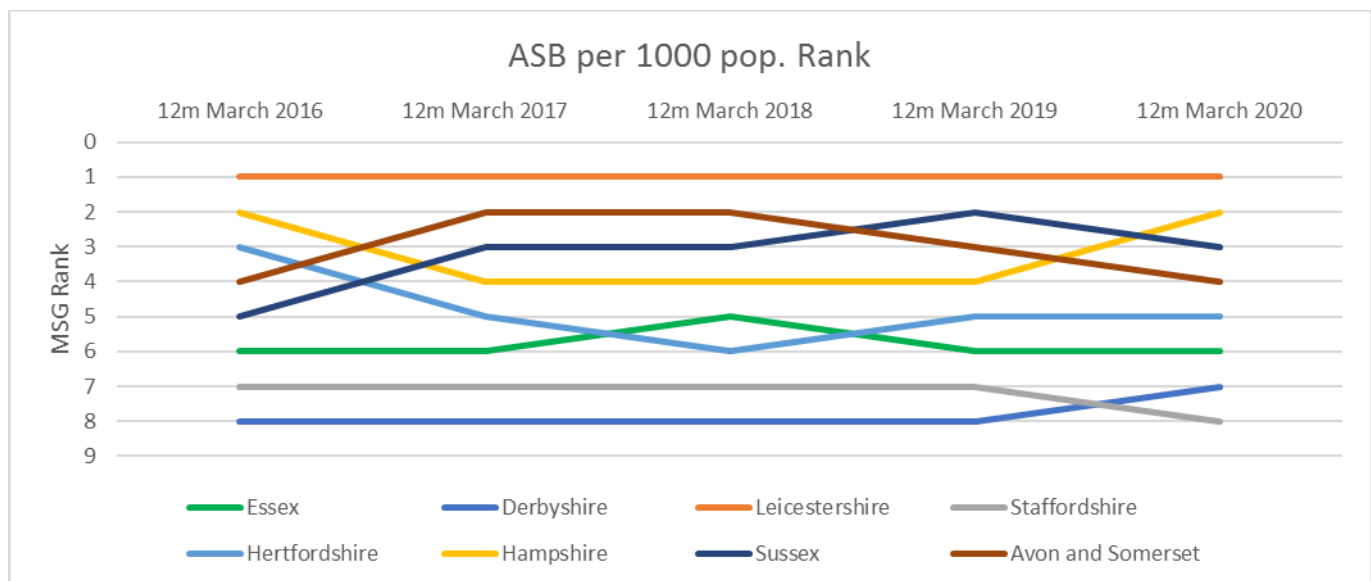
Whilst ASB Personal is recorded at a much lower level to other types, the review referred to above by the Essex Police Audit team has identified errors in recording by ASB type and it is likely that ASB Nuisance is in fact much lower and ASB Personal will be significantly higher than the data above.

Future work in respect of this research will ensure improved accuracy but as stated above, attending incidents of ASB that identifies risk and harm has not been affected by the audit findings.

**ASB MSG Positions**

The chart above shows ASB incidents in our MSG by years<sup>1</sup>. Overall ASB has fallen in the last two years, with all Forces seeing a reduction since 12m March 2016.

The chart below shows the MSG Rank where one is the best (lowest) and eight the worst (highest) based on incidents per 1000 population. Essex has remained sixth apart from in 12m March 2018 when it moved up to fifth, when Hertfordshire dipped to sixth.



The table below shows ASB category breakdown. In all years 'Nuisance' was the largest category. Early work under Op Somerton indicates that ASB-P numbers should be higher

<sup>11</sup> MSG data is only available at Force level up to March 2020.

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yet due to the way we close incidents and record their ASB categorisation a change in procedure will lead to more accurate recording (and subsequent increase) in ASB-P

ASB Breakdown % prop.	Personal	Nuisance	Environmental
12m March 2016	14.9	65.7	19.4
12m March 2017	12.0	70.0	18.0
12m March 2018	8.6	73.1	18.4
12m March 2019	6.7	74.4	18.8
12m March 2020	6.7	76.8	16.5

## 5.2 An increase in public confidence that policing responses to anti-social behaviour is improving (survey).

Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) Perception of ASB

The tables below are based on the CSEW Perception of ASB questions. These are annual reports and provide the most up to date data at this time.

% Perception	Year Ending 31/03/16	Year Ending 31/03/17	Year Ending 31/03/18	Year Ending 31/03/19	Year Ending 31/03/20	% pt. Diff. from 2016
ASB Perception - Total	8.5%	11.1%	11.0%	3.3%	4.3%	-4.2%
ASB Perception - abandoned or burnt out cars	3.1%	3.1%	1.1%	0.6%	0.9%	-2.1%
ASB Perception - people using or dealing drugs	23.0%	26.6%	27.5%	14.8%	17.7%	-5.4%
ASB Perception - people being drunk or rowdy	17.2%	15.2%	23.9%	7.6%	9.4%	-7.8%
ASB Perception - noisy neighbours	10.4%	6.9%	12.1%	4.3%	8.9%	-1.6%
ASB Perception - litter or rubbish	27.3%	25.1%	27.3%	23.6%	18.3%	-9.0%
ASB Perception - teenagers hanging around	15.4%	14.6%	21.7%	13.4%	8.2%	-7.2%
ASB Perception - vandalism and graffiti	12.7%	18.4%	16.3%	11.8%	9.3%	-3.4%
Adults experienced or witnessed ASB	27.0%	31.8%	34.8%	36.6%	40.9%	13.9%

The table above shows eight out of nine areas have seen a decrease in perception of ASB compared to 2016, with 'Total' seeing a 4.2%-point reduction to 4.3%. The only area that has seen an increase is 'Adults experienced or witnessed ASB' which has risen by 13.9% points to 40.9%.

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iQuanta MSG Positions	Year Ending 31/03/16	Year Ending 31/03/17	Year Ending 31/03/18	Year Ending 31/03/19	Year Ending 31/03/20	# Diff. from 2016
ASB Perception - Total	4	7	8	1	4	0
ASB Perception - abandoned or burnt out cars	7	5	3	1	2	5
ASB Perception - people using or dealing drugs	6	6	7	2	4	2
ASB Perception - people being drunk or rowdy	8	5	8	1	4	4
ASB Perception - noisy neighbours	5	2	7	1	7	-2
ASB Perception - litter or rubbish	5	1	5	4	2	3
ASB Perception - teenagers hanging around	6	6	8	5	2	4
ASB Perception - vandalism and graffiti	4	7	8	6	3	1
Adults experienced or witnessed ASB	4	4	6	3	4	0

*Green better than MSG average, red worse than MSG average, black same as MSG average*

The table above shows the MSG rank where one is the best (lowest) and eight the worst (highest). Out of the nine areas two have remained the same compared to 2016 ('Total' and 'Experienced or witnessed ASB'), one fell two ranks from five to seven (Noisy neighbours) and six have improved.

National Rankings	Year Ending 31/03/16	Year Ending 31/03/17	Year Ending 31/03/18	Year Ending 31/03/19	Year Ending 31/03/20	# Diff. from 2016
ASB Perception - Total	19	35	32	6	16	3
ASB Perception - abandoned or burnt out cars	32	29	13	5	13	19
ASB Perception - people using or dealing drugs	23	31	32	15	16	7
ASB Perception - people being drunk or rowdy	25	23	41	7	15	10
ASB Perception - noisy neighbours	27	17	36	4	32	-5
ASB Perception - litter or rubbish	21	13	21	16	6	15
ASB Perception - teenagers hanging around	24	25	36	27	8	16
ASB Perception - vandalism and graffiti	16	35	31	25	16	0
Adults experienced or witnessed ASB	19	27	31	19	27	-8

*Ranked nationally out of 42 forces (the Metropolitan & City police are combined for these measures)*

The above shows significant increase in all areas aside from two.

### Confidence and Satisfaction Survey

The table below is from the Confidence and Satisfaction Survey (internal) that started in April 2017. 'Dealing with ASB' decreased in 2018, and 2019 before increasing back to the previous level of 69%.

Confidence and Satisfaction Survey	6m Sept 2017	12m Sept 2018	12m Sept 2019	12m Sept 2020
Q8a To what extent do you agree or disagree that Essex Police and the organisations they work with are: Dealing with ASB	69%	67%	63%	69%

### **6.0 Future Work/Development, Expected Outcome and Actions for Improvement**

Since the previous Deep Dive report was prepared (2019), there have been no changes to legislation or internal ASB procedures but there is now significant activity in this area

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that will see this position change in the next six months. Bespoke training sessions have been facilitated by the ASB team for staff and officers on FLEX training dates for all LPT as first responders is being considered and an improvement plan has been created by the ASB Superintendent that lists 30 actions that the force will be undertaking in the next 6 to 12 months to ensure that ASB receives significant focus.

Essex Police have recently submitted a bid to the home office Science, Technology Analytical and Research [STAR] fund for an academically led analytical mapping tool to proactively highlight where ASB is most likely to occur and how a collective partnership approach could be best adopted. This work is being done in partnership with Essex County Fire & Rescue service and will see benefits for both organisations and wider partners if successful.

ASB officers have undertaken refresher training in Data Protection information sharing and to this end have developed and published an Information Sharing Agreement with 16 social housing partners who we regularly share data with.

Training has focused on the use of enforcement tools and the preparation of court applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders. Improving the wording of conditions used within Community Protection Notices (CPN) was an identified need and therefore the focus of current and future training.

Whilst there was consideration to refer every CPN to the ASB officers prior to it being administered, there was little to no evidence to show this was necessary and continued professional development for officers has been the current response.

Patterns of anti-social behaviour remains one of the largest concerns for the communities of Essex and therefore we recognise the importance of achieving high levels of problem solving and community satisfaction. Our future training sessions will continue to focus on the necessity to carefully analyse patterns of behaviour before we decide upon the most successful and evidence-based response. Research tells us the most likely solutions lie in a strong partnership approach that seeks to engage communities, not just enforce them.

Our Youth Justice Team are now embedded and working closely with partners across youth justice, education and their colleagues within the organisation. Their role enables them to analyse the 'bigger picture' where some young people may be committing both criminal and anti-social behaviour but remain vulnerable themselves. Their role allows them to offer specialist advice to officers and support an early help diversionary approach to the right agency.

Having a shared definition of ASB to inform approaches to and the parameters around the issues to be tackled at a local level is an area to develop along with a shared understanding of the underlying factors to inform responses (SARA). Strong coordination between future projects in developing strategies and taking action and strong integration of ASB work within neighbourhood renewal strategies may also bring about a reduction in future levels of ASB.

The next 12 months will focus on:

- Op Somerton and the accurate recording of ASB-P
- Keep listening / keep caring
- Responding to the Covid challenge and removal of restrictions
- Building on our partnerships
- Focus on the Community Trigger (ensure victims are informed)

- Improving accurate recording and risk assessment

## **7.0 Risks/Mitigation**

Risk Register URN 2556 is a new risk that has been created to ensure strategic focus on the key area of policing:

*"[Risk to] Force processes of dealing with ASB reported crimes/incidents and the consistent identification, recording and investigation of ASB across the county".*

To mitigate this risk – four additional mitigating actions have been set as part of the ongoing drive to improve the forces response to ASB. These are:

### Mitigating action ID: 5936

Op Somerton - Creation of team under the direction of Ch/Supt Tom Simons [Silver] to review and assess ASB incidents over the last year for recording compliance (specifically around the closing classification of ASB-P)

### Mitigating action ID: 5937

Review of ASB Procedure and re-write to ensure it is fit for purpose. New procedure to be tested by operational working group prior to publication.

### Mitigating action ID: 5938

Training and CPD/updates to be given to CPT's, FCR and Resolution Centre in relation to changes to the new ASB Procedures and recording/investigation processes.

### Mitigating action: 5939

Media [Internal & external] comms to be provided regarding changes to procedure and ongoing progress that Essex Police are making regarding recording, investigation and prevention of ASB. This is to be found on a new Hate Crime and ASB hub located on the intranet (mitigating action includes external messaging too)

## **8.0 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications**

No implications

## **9.0 Health and Safety Implications**

None



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