



## Report of Councillor David Smith Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Engagement and Regulatory Services

June 2023

### **Community Safety**

#### ***Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Hate Crime***

Our Social behaviour team continue to offer a comprehensive service to the residents of West Northants, together with our Police colleagues and external partners.

We managed to obtain an amendment to a Criminal Behaviour Order, through the Magistrates Court, on an individual who has been causing issues in both Northampton Town and Daventry. The area where he is excluded from certain behaviours is now County wide for Northamptonshire.

Since March the ASB Team have issued 3 Community Protection Warning Letters, 6 Community Protection Notices 4 Criminal Behaviour Orders, an extension to an Interim Criminal Behaviour Order and a Cuckooing Injunction.

The ASB team are leading on the Multi Agency response to the ASB week of action 3 July-9 July, targeting specific areas and delivering targeted interventions to educate and reduce ASB. The week will include engagement activity and a communications plan working with 'Resolve' ASB charity and partners, using all our available social media channels.

#### ***Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Violence***

Through the delivery of our Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy we continue to develop a holistic and strategic response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, together with the subsequent DA duty funding which is now confirmed up to 2025.

Training to support staff in identifying domestic abuse victims, assess risks and refer appropriately continues with housing teams.

Work is being undertaken to allow true partnership working; with domestic abuse being recognised as one of Northamptonshire Children's Trust's priorities, there is collaboration to ensure the Domestic Abuse Strategy supports the Trust and vice versa within the action plan. Partners are meeting regularly to focus on specific issues that create barriers to victim survivors accessing support and safe accommodation. Schemes designed to specifically remove or reduce barriers are in progress, including the issue of insecure immigration status and emergency funds. The recent introduction of the Serious Violence Duty allows further scope for the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence strategy and relevant crossover is being recognised.

We continue to explore new ways to improve the service we offer to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence within West Northamptonshire. We are having regular discussions with DLUHC, the Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office, other Local Authorities, and service

providers to share and support ideas and change. Ideas and proposals are shared with the domestic abuse and sexual violence board which continues to meet bi-monthly and has oversight of progress and ensures accountability.

Planning for this year's 16 Days of Activism campaign will start in June, aiming to reach further and have even greater impact in 2023.

### ***Knife Crime***

We have worked closely with police and other partners to support the community during the critical response period. 12 months since the Knife Angel visited the county was marked with a social media campaign and a Knife Angel Legacy Service followed by candlelight vigil. Father Coss was joined by Cheri Curran, mother of a teenager fatally stabbed in St David's in 2018 who gave a very moving speech. Youth providers supported the Legacy event with the Free2Talk bus on Abington Street the Friday and Saturday 19 & 20 May supported by The Lowdown, Clubs for Young People and Aquarius resulting in some very good conversations with young people and parents. The Team supported police colleagues during Op Sceptre Week of Action with community engagement, Neighbourhood Alert sign-ups and knife amnesties. A knife Amnesty bin has been installed in St David's and arrangements are being made for another in Northampton and one in Daventry. Off the Streets have also installed 2 on the East (Thorplands and Blackthorn). The bins are emptied by the local Neighbourhood Police team. Another critical bleed training session has been arranged for the end of July

### ***Safer Roads***

The Roads Joint Action Group is a multi-agency tasking meeting which includes partners from the Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Police Safer Roads Team, West Northamptonshire Highways, Highways England, Kier and Fire and Rescue.

The group addresses issues on the roads throughout West Northamptonshire. Some items are long-term (the application for an injunction against car cruising, the review of at-grade junctions along the A43) while others are adopted and discharged at the same meeting, often being resolved between referral and the meeting taking place.

During 2022 JAG considered 31 new items

- Of these 8 were not adopted
- During the year 27 items were discharged
- At the close of the December meeting, there were 15 items ongoing

### ***Neighbourhood Working***

Safer Streets Bellinge & Blackthorn - Awaiting installation date for the upgraded LED lighting in 7 underpasses in and around Blackthorn. Six CCTV cameras have been purchased for Bellinge & Blackthorn awaiting the end of the BT embargo for the fibre upgrade. Youth provision has started in Bellinge targeting those not in education and includes a parent drop-in session.

Safer Streets 4 – Town Centre; A Public Spaces Protection Order was approved, and gates installed to restrict access to Francis Jetty. 26 new lanterns, have been installed across an estate adjacent to the busy evening economy, alongside the removal of shrubbery to improve visibility. These works were identified and prioritised following partnership working with Northampton Partnership Homes and Northants Police. Works to improve lighting around the town centre taxi ranks are now scheduled, and orders have been placed for two new CCTV columns in St Giles and Newlands Car Park. An evening audit of lighting in the town centre was completed in May to provide recommendations for remaining funding.

The Northampton Town Centre Task Group was re-established in April and is meeting on a six weekly basis to discuss and resolve Town Centre issues. Two task and Finish Groups have been set up from this to explore ways to address historic issues in 'Emporium Way' and an area by Greyfriars known as 'Rat Island' as well as providing a place to review the town wide PSPO and discuss other projects.

Working with regulatory services on a pilot project to tackle bins on highways and associated litter/fly tipping. Feedback on areas and issues captured through Castle multi-agency meeting and pilot area identified.

Electrical works begun for 4 CCTV cameras being installed to the exterior of NIA school building funded by Safer Streets Lite. Cameras due to be fully installed early June.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> May, the first St George Neighbourhood Partnership group was held in the Guildhall; this will look to continue to grow and build over the coming months until it is fully established with agreed aims and objectives, that benefits the residents within the St George area.

## **Community Engagement**

West Northamptonshire Council has been supporting the newly formed trustee board for Southbrook Community Centre, Daventry with advice and guidance to help set them up with the Charity Commission and become fully constituted to open the centre back up from closing since the pandemic. In partnership with Food for Thought Charity they opened their first Community Larder in July. Every week the centre sees over 70 residents. The community larder continues to increase its membership and now opens in the evening. Working in partnership with Futures Housing they also now have a clothes swap shop open to everyone in the community.

West Northamptonshire Council has been working in partnership with Northamptonshire General Practice Alliance in helping to set up Happy Cafés in Daventry and Moulton. Focussing on low level mental health and wellbeing and based on scientific research the Ten Keys to Happier Living are explored through the Action for Happiness social movement. Talks have also been held with multiple partners and faith groups in Towcester to identify gaps and opportunities for service provision.

Support given to Police colleagues during week of activities for Operation Sceptre (knife crime) including Beat Bus in Kingsthorpe, engagement on the University Campus where 56 meaningful engagements were recorded over the morning and hundreds of free personal safety items and information leaflets were given out to students and staff. In Kings Heath, working with NPH and other services we have been offering dropping sessions around financial advice. These sessions have allowed us to engage further to understand the wants and needs of the community, which will help us structure our summer engagement plans

We now have almost 100 Warm Welcoming Spaces that are making a difference to vulnerable residents in West Northamptonshire. January seen a high-level analysis in

reporting from those who had been successful in applying for the grant funding, and case studies with key themes of vulnerable families using libraries to keep warm especially after school, and positive outcomes with children becoming involved with library activities. Vulnerable elderly people were not only using the spaces but opening up to volunteers regarding areas of need, signposting and more is provided. Engaging with the community also seen Councillors using spaces to speak to hard-to-reach residents to listen to their concerns and act accordingly. Mental Health has had many referrals and is prevalent at most spaces.

## **Community Development**

### ***Well Northants***

The aim of Well Northants is to bring people together, to empower communities to become more resilient and connected which we know, can make a huge difference to a person's wellbeing. Community Development workers are active in Kings Heath, St David's (Kingsthorpe), Blackthorn and Southbrook in Daventry. The focus of work in these communities continues to be engagement about "what makes you well" and delivering actions and activities in local action plans, based on locally identified priorities. In early May we worked together with partners to deliver a culture mapping Kiosk in Kingsheath, this community engagement event saw the local community mapping out current and aspirational cultural activities.

We have a series of engagement events scheduled for May - August in Southbrook this will take is through a process of engagement, prioritising and asset building with the community. There has been lots of engagement and community activity in Southbrook over the last few years and the Well Northants projects will build upon and add value to that work.

In March 2023 the team successfully delivered community grant funding supporting over 20 projects using a participatory budgeting approach. Communities were invited to come along and hear about projects, voting for which ones they would like to see delivered in their local community.

Quoted from the evaluation:

"Amazing to see the community coming together to support each other – THANK YOU!!"

"I feel more part of community and curious about all the things that are happening. I now have information to share with people who complain that nothing happens/no-one cares!"

We also have a community development worker that works with specific communities who experience significant health inequalities. They are Sex Workers and Gypsy, Romany, Traveller (GRT) communities. To reach out, engage with sex workers and understand health and wellbeing needs we have been trialling a "safe space". This space gives people the opportunity to come along and be valued for who they are, not judged for what they do. The community are helping with the development of a harm reduction toolkit and have developed a survey which will be used to gather insight.

Engagement with the GRT community is slow to progress but continuing, focus is now on delivering a health needs assessment and coproduction of an awareness raising initiative (of GRT culture, challenging discrimination etc.)

### ***School Engagement***

Planning has begun for our Young Citizens Scheme in 2023/24; the scheme promotes healthy, safe and strong individuals and communities. Participants become better citizens, are

safer in their schools and communities, online and on the roads; are better equipped to make choices and understand the consequences of their actions; better informed of how to react in an emergency and have a better understanding of and relationship with the range of agencies which operate in West Northants.

Not all schools are able to attend Young Citizens, so we commissioned Amplitude Media to produce a series of animations which cover this range of subjects. The project has been launched to schools, youth groups and professionals working with young people. Feedback from partners has resulted in additional modules being considered.

### ***Community Forums***

The Diverse forum has been working to support the police and fire recruitment by helping them connect better with the diverse community across West Northants. Recently, the forum has helped connect further community groups across the west, allowing groups to support each other and event develop events and projects together. The forum is also being used to discuss issues around the rising trend of Knife crime; highlighting what community leaders can do to help support public services that are looking to tackle this issue.

Youth Forum - 13 new young people signed up to join the Youth Forum; 7 of these are from schools in Daventry or South Northants. The Youth Forum induction took place on 5 April where they got to know each other and long-term members, received some training and discussed and voted on their 'youth priorities' for this year's action plan; Sexual Health and Sex Education, and Substance Misuse (drugs/alcohol/vaping). The group then created some actions around these. At the May meeting the young people took part in a public health consultation giving their feedback on the Local Plan. They also worked with Delapre Abbey to look at their engagement plans and how they can best include and provide spaces for young people to enjoy.

LGBTQ & Allies Forum - Northampton Pride - Over 75 stall applications received for Northampton Pride, on Saturday 8 July, and a full programme of stage and street entertainment is now organised. Promotional materials being released for 1<sup>st</sup> June to coincide with Pride Month.

We have also delivered two virtual LGBTQ inclusive education learning sessions under the LGBTQ Partnership; The first on 23 February with a focus on SEND young people, and the second delivered by Lowdown with a focus on LGBTQ young people's mental health and wellbeing on 25 April. One final session is now being promoted to education staff for Trans-inclusion in June.

### ***Community Events***

***International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia*** held on 17 May, at the Guildhall with speakers and a minute of noise, followed by information stands and refreshments.

***International Women's Day*** – Biggest IWD event to date with the maximum number of stands and 2 free workshops – one for women starting their own business and the second to encourage young girls into STEM subjects – both were well received. Kier supported the day

by sponsoring the Special Recognition Inspirational Woman Award and are keen to encourage more women to consider careers with them.

## Resettlement Schemes

### *Homes for Ukraine*

We have now seen closer to 800 Ukrainians arriving across West Northants, and still maintain around 500 residing in West Northants, although some of these have now moved on from sponsor accommodation and into the Private Rented accommodation.

The hubs continue to support hosts and guests in local communities, and we are finding that engagement is generally increasing. The team use the hubs as a point of contact to help people meet with each other and also to engage with other services and with prospective hosts.

Day	Time	Location
Monday	2pm – 4pm	Moulton Community Centre NN3 7AX – 5 <sup>th</sup> June <i>Russian speaking Support Worker normally available at this Hub</i>
Tuesday	2pm – 4pm	East Hunsbury Library NN4 0RZ – 6 <sup>th</sup> June
		Brackley Library NN13 6AJ <i>English lessons available every week 1pm -3pm</i>
Wednesday	10am – 12 noon	Daventry Methodist Church, NN11 4FB – 31 <sup>st</sup> May
		Woodford Halse Library, NN11 3RL – 7 <sup>th</sup> June
Thursday	2pm – 4pm	Towcester Library NN12 6AD <i>Russian speaking Support Worker normally available at this Hub</i>
Friday	1pm – 3pm	Brixworth Library NN6 9DS
	10.am – 12 noon	Emmanuel Church, Weston Favell N3 8JR <i>Russian speaking Support Worker normally available at this Hub</i>

We continue to visit every household at the six and twelve-month mark, to ensure that the guests are still resident, there are no safeguarding concerns, and any issues can be addressed.

### *Afghan Bridging Hotels and Resettlement*

Since the announcement in Parliament that all bridging accommodation would be closing, the residents have received Notice to Quit by the end of August. There are currently 178 Afghans across our two bridging hotels.

We continue to assist families to secure their own accommodation.

We now have fulfilled 5 of our pledged properties, with another 2-3 underway currently.

### *Asylum Contingency Hotels*

We continue to regularly engage with the organisations that are providing the support for those in both hotels currently in West Northants. Regular review meetings are taking place with our partners around emerging issues and concerns.

## **Community Funding**

A single website has been set up following the approval of our new Grants Framework by Cabinet in April - [Community Funding Grants | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk) detailing the grants available across West Northants.

The funding round opening dates for the community grant include:

- Round 1: 30 May 2023 – Community Funding Panel: 8 August 2023
- Round 2: 23 August 2023 – Community Funding Panel: 24 October 2023
- Round 3: 8 November 2023 – Community Funding Panel: 24 January 2024

The first Public Health & Wellbeing grant: respiratory disease and other long-term conditions in Local Area Partnership N4, has opened.

## **CCTV**

The CCTV system has continued its valuable work deterring and detecting criminal activity. The tender for the CCTV Monitoring contract resulted in the incumbent provider, Enigma, being successful.

The West Northamptonshire team recently won Enigma's national team of the year award, recognising the excellent work it does. Recent contributions from the monitoring team have been supporting emergency services with the evacuations and pedestrian and vehicle controls following reports of an unexploded bomb on a Horsemarket development site and the gathering of evidence and data after the fatal stabbing in Kingsthorpe.

Councillor David Smith

**Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Engagement and Regulatory Services**