



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

30th November 2023

COMMUNITY SAFETY & ENGAGEMENT

Safer Communities

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

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

We are monitoring an individual on a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO), as well as enforcing any breaches of the others now in place, we have two CBOs on persons under 18 which is testament to the hard work put in by the ASB case manager and is being used as an example of good practice by other interested parties.

Since June the ASB Team have issued 10 Community Protection Warning Letters, 3 Community Protection Notices.

The ASB team are leading the tasking meetings and multi-agency response to Op Fragment which is a targeted Police Operation on Southbrook in Daventry to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime.

Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Violence

We continue to progress the delivery of our Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, with formal commissioning of accommodation services commencing shortly. This process will be completed in partnership between the CSP and housing colleagues with the focus being on delivering our duties under the Act.

The Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office visited West Northants on 6th November. Our Regional Lead was able to meet with key partners to understand the local offer and structure. Feedback reported that there is a tremendous passion for domestic abuse locally and partners were clearly committed to achieving the best outcomes for victims in West Northamptonshire. West Northamptonshire has been selected as one of twenty Local Authorities taking part in a National Evaluation of domestic abuse support in safe accommodation. The evaluation is intended to provide insight for DLUHC and other stakeholders, including local authorities, and to provide evidence on what best meets the needs of victims.

We have awarded NDAS a one off grant to employ three term time children's domestic abuse workers and a team leader. This means that children's waiting lists can re-open after being closed for a year.

We continue to progress the working group to support domestic abuse victims with insecure immigration status, and we hope to bring a proposal to the domestic abuse and sexual violence board at an extraordinary meeting shortly. as well as exploring how best to seek the voice of the victim in shaping services and influencing strategy.

There is a significant focus on sexual violence with partnership work being carried out to link the domestic abuse and sexual violence strategy, with the statutory requirements under the Serious Violence Duty. We aim to work collaboratively to pool expertise and resources to agree and map interventions and programmes that will reduce sexual violence.

16 Days of Activism aimed at preventing Violence Against Women and Girls is upon us, starting with the Reclaim the Night march. This year, with the support of partners, we are reaching wider and further with stands in children's centres, libraries and community centres in both rural and urban settings. We are working with the University, Northampton College and the Daventry Teen clinic to name just a few, as well as a full and comprehensive social media campaign.

Serious Violence and Knife Crime

As part of the implementation of the serious violence duty a Partnership Communications and Marketing Officer has come into post, to join the Partnership Serious Violence Reduction Coordinator. Both roles are being hosted by West Northants Council.

The Schools Contextual Safeguarding Forum has now been taken over by the Serious Violence Reduction Co-ordinator. One meeting for the Northampton schools and another for the Daventry and South Northants locality schools, these meetings have seen good engagement from the schools.

The Youth Violence funding, £94,000 (jointly funded by West Northants Council and the OPFCC) has now been awarded to 11 organisations delivering 10 different projects across the West. The SVR Co-ordinator will be making contact and visiting each project, to monitor the delivery of the intended outcomes.

Support was given to the Police County Lines Development Officer during County Lines Intensification Week raising awareness about county lines and signs a child maybe being exploited and how to report. This was done in Northampton at the train station with staff and commuters, banks and independent mobile phone shops. In total over 600 leaflets and 600 cards were given out. In addition 10 banks, 15 mobile phone shops and the food concessions on the Market were visited to raise awareness and give information leaflets to staff. All were very receptive and welcomed the information. Arrangements are being made for a further Week of Action across the West later in the year.

Serious Violence Community & Partner Event was held at the Guildhall on 7 November.

Public Spaces Protection Orders

A number of PSPOs are due for renewal:

- Consultation has taken place on the Northampton town wide PSPO, with strong support for the amendments and renewal; the new Order will be considered by Cabinet in December.
- Consultation has also taken place for the renewal of the Daventry-wide PSPO.
- Consultation on the proposed Emporium Way PSPO ended in October with a majority positive response and the report was brought to cabinet for decision on 14 November.

- Additionally, three Northampton town centre based PSPO renewals are in progress: Marble Arch, Jeyes Jetty and Dunster Street. Decisions as to whether or not to renew each of the orders will also be made in November.

Neighbourhood Working

Safer Streets Bellinge & Blackthorn - Awaiting installation date for the upgraded LED lighting in 7 underpasses in and around Blackthorn. Awaiting BT to undertake the fibre upgrade works so 3 CCTV cameras can be installed in Bellinge and 3 in Blackthorn. Youth provision work in Bellinge has now finished. There were some excellent successes. Due to the slow start and mainly outreach sessions to start, the funding saved on venue hire was used to 'reward' the young people by giving an afternoon out to eat and watch a basketball match in which Andre Arisol, who they had already met at a youth event, was playing. This has resulted in some highly motivated young people.

Safer Streets – Town Centre; Final projects under Safer Streets 4 are now complete. This includes installation of 2 new CCTV cameras in hotspot crime and ASB areas, one camera upgrade to support late night surveillance, improvements to taxi rank lighting and repositioning of a streetlamp, lighting enhancements through Becket's Park on the Safer Route and the installation of a series of bollard covers promoting safety campaigns and services such as the Safer Nights Out Van.

Safer Streets Kings Heath- New CCTV Camera has now been installed with two others being upgraded in the area. All cameras are now connected to the CCTV control room in the town centre. The new camera covers the flats facing the park on the North Oval. This area has been a long-term hot spot for crime and anti-social behaviour over the years and didn't have CCTV coverage.

Purple Flag submission completed following a small working group set up and review and input from the wider Town Centre Task Group. The Purple Flag overnight assessment takes place on 10 November, including a tour of the centre and presentations on the work done to make Northampton's town centre a safe and vibrant place.

In September, the Castle community First multi agency group agreed to submit an application for funding to improve planters off the Wellingborough Rd which attract street drinking and other ASB and Crime. The funding was granted in November and quotes are being sought for the works.

In Daventry we have been working with Northants Police, Futures Housing and Daventry Town Council to improve the look and feel of the Southbrook area, with a community clean-up recently completed. Funding has been agreed for improvements to lighting of subways linking the Southbrook to the town centre and for the installation of an additional CCTV camera on Hood Road. Plans are being drawn up for bike barriers to address concerns around use of electric cycles on the footpath which runs past the school.

Stronger Communities

Southbrook Community Centre, Daventry - West Northamptonshire Council continues to support the trustee board with advice and guidance in carrying out their aims and objectives. Their Community Food Larder has just celebrated its first birthday and every week continues to see over 70 residents. West Northants Customer Services also attend regularly along with welfare and debt advice advisors.

The VCSE lead has approached the Chief Officer at Daventry Town Council to help secure funding for the community centre in its role in improving community connection and cohesion and in pursuit of the anti-poverty strategy on Southbrook. The board are also exploring the possibility of running 4 community events a year where all the VCSE organisations can show case what they are doing and look at better ways to work together. This is in support of the LAP priorities within this area. Southbrook is also running a youth club. A Community Garden Club has started and operates every Sunday at 12pm, this is open to all residents who can plant flowers, get involved with craft activities, all ages and experience are welcome. At present they are also running a community campaign to help provide a better environment for all users by sponsoring a chair to either dedicate to a person, a business or community organisation to refurbish the centre's assets.

Welcoming Spaces

Following the much-used warm spaces initiative that launched in West Northamptonshire last winter, West Northamptonshire Council are looking to partner with community and voluntary organisations to launch them again as part of a partnership approach to offer welcoming spaces in communities.

The welcoming spaces aim to tackle loneliness and social isolation by providing residents with a local place to go where they can meet new people, socialise, and access support services whilst being in the warm, and all within reach of where they live. Each of the spaces will choose what they wish to offer, from cups of tea to knit and natters or board game activities for example. The last programme saw 96 community and voluntary partners sign up to be a warm space, which saw over 52,932 attendees visit between January to March 2023 putting a spotlight on how important this support is for residents.

Since the call out went to partners we have had 76 re-register for the Welcoming Spaces Online Directory, all of which has received the comms toolkit for promotional purposes.

The launch of the Welcoming Spaces Grant Funding has received 17 applications and 11 approved so far.

Towcester Library in the Rural East pilot of prevention and wellbeing has a 6-month pilot of WNC Employment Service & Community Law drop-in sessions and will be reviewed March 2024.

The Community Training Partnership courses are continually promoted to Staff and Volunteers across all Welcoming Spaces. Also, Mental Health First Aid courses / Suicide Prevention courses promoted to Staff and Volunteers across Welcoming Spaces.

WNC Steering Group up and running with 34 partners to drive wrap around support provision. There will also be further WNC communications on Welcoming Spaces Online Directory/Grant Funding alongside the Winter Wellbeing Campaign in November 2023.

Outreach engagement - in conversations with WNC Adult Social Care Team, WNC Customer Services, WNC Public Health Checks/Flu & Covid Vaccinations, GP Social Prescribers, Northants Fire & Rescue, Northamptonshire MIND, Northants Police, NHFT IAPT Talking Therapies, Northants ACRE, Northants Age UK.

Extension of Chatty Cafe Scheme to reduce isolation and loneliness - 25 out of 50 have been registered so far, in partnership with Action for Happiness.

30,000 Cost of Living Support Cards to be purchased and distributed to frontline organisations as per last year, to include NHFT's 24-hour mental health number due to the high amount of referrals of mental health last year.

The Community Development Team will also support the roll out of the WS programme across all LAPS.

Well Northants

Work continues as planned in the well communities, Community Development workers are active in Kings Heath, St David's (Kingsthorpe), Blackthorn and Southbrook in Daventry. And also with inclusion groups (sex workers and Gypsy Romany Travellers).

We have also successfully recruited a new Community Development worker who will join us in mid-November to work in Semilong and Briar Hill.

Following on from the additional engagement that we reported last quarter all locality areas have now got a detailed action plan in place, based on needs and opportunities identified by the local community.

Our work is moving towards delivery and some examples are below, a successful partnership with colleagues in adult learning has enabled us to deliver creative wellbeing sessions, building on and strengthening community assets:

Kings Heath - together with the wellbeing walk group. The group collected items from nature as they walked and used then to create collage. The group meet for coffee after their walk this provides the ideal opportunity for being creative and developing strong friendships that will sustain the group in the longer term.



St Davids - creative craft session have been held in Bradlaugh barn on Friday term times since September. Attendance was slow to start but is growing weekly and is drawing people together and becoming the purpose for the visit to Bradlaugh barn.

Community development workers have been attending LAP meetings in their areas to ensure community insight.

School Engagement

Young Citizens 2023/24 is underway and the first events took place on 18th and 19th October 2023, with 320 pupils from schools across the rural parts of West Northants attending workshops at Yardley Chase Cadet Centre; the second series of events will take place on the 6th and 7th February 2024 at the Deco Theatre in Northampton. The Northampton event has

now been able to expand its capacity to double the number of students that can attend. The event in Northampton will now be hosting over 700 students across two days. 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. The events have been set to support both the Hate Crime Awareness Week and the Internet safety week; with both subjects playing a key part in the events.

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 added, with further ones being considered: Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) has been added as a subject, following the work commissioned by the county school's challenge.

Working with WNC Youth Forum, projects to support school engagement have been developed in partnership with both NGAGE and Re-solve. The aim is to develop a new, adaptable and interactive workshop for both primary and secondary schools. We are currently working with some schools including Weston Favell and Sponne to test the new workshops so far. The long-term aim is to not only develop an effective workshop, but to also add substance misuse as a workshop to the animation programme.

University Student Safety Talks

Through September and October The Community Safety Team supported four University Safety talk events. Each event hosted several sessions for new residential students to teach them about safety on and off campus. The team hosted a stand at the events offering free personal safety items and advice.

Community Forums

The Diverse Forum - has been working to support the police and local partners to further raise awareness around issues relating to hate crime; the communication and planning helped support the work the police delivered during the awareness week. Support around employment continues through projects being driven by Diversiti UK; they have a new project that looks to help diverse community groups work on their skills regarding job applications and interviews. The forum also helps to continue to support flag raising events, along with providing connections between new and existing groups across the west, as they look to branch out and grow.

Youth Forum – On Sunday 17 September, the youth forum took part in Heritage Open Days by providing short tours at the Guildhall. Once again, they received excellent feedback from visitors who took their tours.

Youth Summit – took place on 10th of November, the forum members took part in Youth summit and delivered a workshop to other young people who attended the event. The workshop theme was around substance misuse and supporting development work that has been mentioned previously with NGAGE and Re-Solve. Feedback of the event will be provided during the December Forum

The annual UK Parliament Week activity led by our Youth Forum took place on 23 November this year. The 'Cake and Debate' event saw local MP, Police representative and Youth Work expert join in a panel Q&A on the topic of Serious Violence. Young people from across Northamptonshire were invited to attend the event and submit their questions.

The Women's Forum – arrangements are already underway for next year's International Women's Day and Kier are keen to be involved and sponsor one of the Inspirational Women awards again. The first Women's Business Networking meeting, held jointly with the Business and IP Centre Northamptonshire was well attended with 25 attendees either in person or on Teams.

The Daventry & Disabled & Proud Support Group continue to meet monthly with 40+ people attending the Saxon Suite at Daventry Leisure Centre. Partnering with Daventry Leisure Centre who has provided the room hire for free in the first 6 months. Christmas event happening on the 20 December in the sports hall with a wide variety of promotional stand holders.

The Disabled Peoples Forum took place on the 27 October and included discussions on the Interim Bus Policy/Disabled People's Bus Pass, International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPWD) event, Julia Smith talked about the revised WNC Local Offer website, a service for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. EKFB, the principal contractor for HS2 collaboration prospects was represented by Victoria Hingley offering support for community engagement, especially in schools.

The LGBTQ & Allies Forum have joined up with the North Northants LGBTQ forum for a joint social meeting in November, ahead of Xmas, giving members a chance to network and make new connections. The forum are also busy planning the annual World AIDs Day civic event on 1 December, taking place in the Guildhall Courtyard. The event will see the return of Northampton Integrated Sexual Health Clinic offering free testing services, and the option to pick up a Red ribbon from National AIDs Trust for a small donation.

Community Events

International Men's Day (IMD)-Male Role Model Awards took place on 17th of November, at the museum WNC hosted its annual Male Role Model Awards as part of IMD.

World AIDS Day 1 December, the civic event will take place in the Guildhall Courtyard followed by refreshments and free testing service by Northampton Integrated Sexual Health team.

International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPWD) event on Friday 1st December 1-3pm at Fernie Fields Sport & Social Club, Fernie Field, Moulton will include Adapt Ability – Ava Loughton presenting the Omeo wheelchair including videos of day to day activities, Born 2 Perform performances and speeches about living with a disability, organisation promo stands by Sport4Fitness, Northamptonshire Mind, and Moulton Leisure Centre's Hydrotherapy session. There will be refreshments, representation from Paul Meadows of SEND 4 Dad and Gary Spratt living with a disability. In the lead up to the event we will be promoting WNC Disability Forum, making a pledge/awareness campaigns and promotion of Derngate accessibility programmes/events.

Resettlement Schemes

Homes for Ukraine

There are currently around 450 people living in a mix of hosted and independent living accommodation across West Northamptonshire.

We are paying a £200 uplift per month to the thank you payment from November to March inclusive, to help with increased energy payments over the winter, following the success of last year's additional payments to support sponsors.

Afghan Resettlement

We have several families in temporary accommodation while we get properties ready for them and help them to secure settled accommodation. The resettlement team continues to support these families during the next step of their lives in the UK and West Northants. As of w/c 8th Nov, we have assistance from a former resident of one of our hotels, acting as part of the government's national *Afghan Taskforce*, to speak with some of the families where we are seeing some resistance, and we need more cooperation.

Asylum

We have seen one contingency hotel (Westone Manor) close recently and the government has announced a closure programme over the coming months, to include a second contingency hotel in our area by the end of November. We have asked our Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP) to stand up a multi-agency partner meeting prior to the closing and we are liaising with the Parish Council to make sure that those people working in the hotel have the latest updates. We are expecting those eligible to have their claims assessed under the streamlined process to start coming through now on a more regular basis, so we are looking at planning how we manage this – this is a national priority.

Voluntary and Community Sector and Grants

Two community funding grant schemes have recently closed:

- **Youth Violence & Knife Crime Grants:** in partnership with the Northamptonshire Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) we have awarded over £94K to mitigate violence and knife crime in West Northants; and
- **Creation Of New Volunteering Opportunities Through Social Action Projects:** funded via the UKSPF, we have awarded over £10K in the first round to increase the numbers of volunteers in community or voluntary organisations within West Northants. A second funding round is planned later in the year.

The project to commission Welfare and Information Advice Services, linking with the work being undertaken by the Debt and Money Advice Transformation Project, is ongoing. An options appraisal has been drafted and discussed with key internal stakeholders and a timeline has been established with the Procurement Team. Ahead of commencing any procurement process we are engaging with current service providers to discuss current provision, any gaps in delivery and the future outlook of the service.

In addition to the above there are also two other workstreams to mention one being Community Transport provision across West Northamptonshire and the other looking at Local Infrastructure Contract commissioning. Both projects are progressing well with some very useful internal and external stakeholder engagement events have taken place in recent months. We are aiming and proactively working towards an April 2024 implementation date for these workstreams. As you will see from the above-mentioned community grants scheme our focus has now turned towards community transport inclusive of UKSPF and Rural England Fund monies. In the

coming weeks, we will be revisiting our Local infrastructure partners to update them on the progress we have made in regard to our internal stakeholder scoping sessions around understanding our priority areas and how we would like our Local Infrastructure Organisations to operate/priorities moving forwards. At this session we will also be looking to gain some first thought feedback from partners as to whether our suggestions we are proposing are viable and/or realistic for them to achieve. Of course, further engagement sessions will take place with our local infrastructure partners over the coming months.

REGULATORY SERVICES

Building Control

The two Assistant Building Control Officers in the team have now commenced their professional training and have begun carrying out site visits. The team are also working through the implications of recent changes in legislation. These changes, which bring forward the recommendations of the Hackett report, include the creation of a central Building Safety Regulator who will deal with building control in higher –risk buildings. In addition there are changes to processes and the introduction of some new enforcement tools.

Health Protection

The team are working hard to carry out food hygiene inspections of businesses in the area. They have held some focus days when the whole team have come together to carry out coordinated visits in different parts of the area.

Environmental Protection

The team are working hard to make progress with in dealing with air quality. The air quality sensors which were funded by the DEFRA grant have been deployed. The integration with the traffic management system is now live and the team are reviewing the air quality measurements to establish at what criteria traffic management changes will be made. We have also agreed the use of the existing highways variable message signs (VMS) network that can be used to give messages to vehicle users and the wider public and are discussing what messages will be used and when.

Environmental Crime

MSc Students from the University of Northampton have worked with the team to consider some of the key challenges caused by fly-tipping. The students undertook research into attitudes and cultural influences on fly-tipping and produced some useful findings which will be used to inform future communications from the team.

Consultation is taking place on proposals for a policy to restrict the times that waste bins and bags can be presented for collection in Northampton town centre. This consultation will inform the development of the policy which will be brought to Cabinet in Spring 2024.

The monitored CCTV cameras are starting to yield some useful information and the team are also working with colleagues to examine how permanent town centre CCTV can be used to assist in evidence gathering.

Trading Standards

Colleagues from the trading standards team have been working closely with public health, education, waste and communications colleagues to progress a number of work streams on vapes.

A joint response has been submitted to the Government consultation creating a smokefree generation. The consultation closes 6th December, we would encourage all elected members to take part in consultation by providing a response.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping>

Vaping Summit - a multi-agency vaping summit will take place on 5 February, further details will be communicated closer to the time.

The team continue to carry out test purchasing which is providing useful insights into the extent of underage sales of vapes across the area. They have also completed a number of seizures of illegal vapes in joint operations with the police.

Work continues to deal with a number of farm animal welfare cases.

Great work instigated by one of our Trading Standards apprentices resulted in the national recall of unsafe Halloween ghost characters.

Licensing

The licensing committee will meet again in January 2024 to consider the plans for the new West Northants Taxi Policy.

Councillor David Smith

Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Engagement and Regulatory Services