

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO HEALTH, WELLBEING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUITNY COMMITTEE**

**27 NOVEMBER 2023**

**Report Title:** Newcastle Town Centre – Community Safety Partnership

**Submitted by:** Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery

**Portfolios:** Community Safety and Wellbeing

**Ward(s) affected:** Town

<p><b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b></p> <p>To provide the committee with an overview of work that has been delivered by the Community Safety Partnership in line with the Community Safety Strategic Assessment and Priorities for 2023-2024.</p>	<p><b><u>Key Decision</u></b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p><b>That Committee:-</b></p> <p>1. Receive the report.</p>	
<p><b><u>Reasons</u></b></p> <p>To update the Committee on the ongoing Community Safety Partnership work around Newcastle Town Centre.</p>	

**1. Background**

1.1 The Council, Staffordshire Police, and other agencies work collaboratively under the umbrella of the Community Safety Partnership to identify and address community safety issues across the Borough.

1.2 Like many other towns and cities across the UK, Newcastle town centre experiences issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour which can have a negative impact on community perceptions of the town. To address this, a number of initiatives are in progress which are being jointly planned and delivered by the Council, the Police and other Community Safety Partnership agencies.

- 1.3 This report focuses on the initiatives which are in place or planned, to tackle community safety and anti-social behaviour in the town centre specifically. There are other initiatives in progress to tackle other related elements such as serious crime, homelessness and vulnerability which are not covered in this report.
- 1.4 The Council has set up a new team, the Mobile Multi-Functional Team (MMF) which brings together a cohort of staff who deal with various community safety, environment enforcement and neighbourhood issues across the Borough. The team has a significant focus and presence in the town centre, and works closely with the police and other partners to carry out prevention, enforcement and clean up operations.

## 2. Issues

- 2.1 Newcastle is a vibrant market town with a bustling night time economy. The town centre has been identified as a hotspot location for ASB and Precision Policing in the Community Safety Strategic Assessment carried out by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The issues in the town centre are not unique to Newcastle and are replicated in other town and city centres across the County and the UK.

## 3. Statistics

- 3.1 The following table provided by Staffordshire Police as of November 2023, illustrates data for Newcastle town centre. Although there are minor increases in serious violence (6%) and theft from motor vehicle (3%), there are notable decreases in all other areas including crime and anti-social behaviour, from 2022.

Crime	-3%
ASB	-10%
Burglary Commercial *more town specific than residential.	-12%
Robbery	-18%
Serious Violence	6%
Other Violence	-20%
Theft of Motor Vehicle	-10%
Theft from Motor Vehicle	3%
Possession of weapons	-5%

- 3.2 Across the Borough, the Council and the Police have served 47 Community Protection Warnings and 26 Community Protection Notices (24 and 16 in Newcastle Town Centre respectively). These interventions are designed to target particular individuals who have been engaging in ASB and have proved to be a successful tool in this regard. Work is continuing to gather evidence, in conjunction with town centre businesses, to build evidence to allow this approach to be used to tackle further individuals.

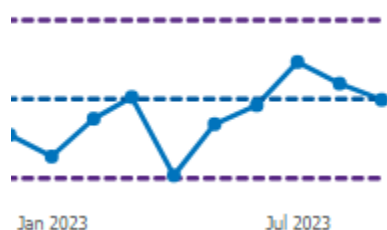
## 4 Projects

4.1 There are a number of projects and initiatives in progress to address issues in Newcastle Town Centre:

- **Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)** – The town centre PSPO was made in January 2023. This order defines a suite of prohibitions in order to address problematic behaviour in and around the town centre. Non-compliance with the PSPO results in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £100. See attached appendix A.

Training has been completed across all Neighbourhood Policing Teams in Newcastle to be able to enforce this and the MMF team also have the power to take enforcement action. A joint approach has been agreed whereby the police and the MMF team will work together to regularly enforce the PSPO.

- **Safer Nights** – this is a police led operation in relation to the Night Time Economy (NTE). This runs on Friday and Saturday evenings. Briefing commences at 22.00 and the team are out on the ground at 22.30 – 02.30. This includes 1 Police Sergeant and 6 Police Constables. Activities involved include: high visual profile and engagement, walk through venue checks and toilet checks, licencing checks, CCTV, Door Staff details, occasional drug swipe tests, taxi checks, PSPO and ASB enforcement where required.
- **Operation Saltmine** – Funded by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) this operation involved the deployment of 2 dedicated police officers to conduct patrols in and around the town centre (identified as part of Precision Policing) on hotspot days for a period of 6 weeks. The funding has since been continued until the end of March 2024. In addition to deploying additional resources through overtime, the police are working with Cambridge University to ensure the tactics deployed are the best available through 'Evidenced Based Policing' and can contribute to organisational learning in solving ASB problems in the future. There have been 43 shifts so far this year on Operation Saltmine with a combination of PC's and PCSO's. Tactics have involved, Arrest, Stop Search, PSPO enforcement, 'Hot Spot Policing', Community engagement.



The above shows the ASB trend line in Newcastle Town Centre. The centre line is the Local Policing Team (LPT) average. ASB is below average for the area until the summer holiday period where a seasonal spike is expected. Although it should be noted that this spike has been much smaller this summer than previous years.

In April 2023 Newcastle Town Centre reached the lowest limit for ASB which has not been achieved since before 2021.

- **Safe Space** – Launched in March 2022 and funded through the PFCC the safe space was opened on the Ironmarket to provide help and support to women and girls during the night time economy. The project is run in partnership with Newcastle Business Improvement District (BID). The space is open from 9pm-2am on Fridays and is staffed by volunteers.
- **Street Medics** – Funded as part of Safer Streets Round 4, the project deploys street medics in the town centre from 9pm- 2am on key Friday and Saturday nights throughout the year. The medics act as a triage to reduce the demand on A&E services.
- **Safer Streets Round 4 (SSR4)** – the Council has been hugely successful in being one of the chosen recipients of SSR4, and as part of this project the following initiatives have been completed or are nearing completion.

CCTV – implementation of additional CCTV cameras in and around the town centre to cover remaining “blind spots”.

Environmental Works – a number of trees in the town centre have been pruned to improve CCTV coverage.

Gating – gating installation and improvements at alleyways across the town centre.

Education Package – package being developed as part of SSR4 with the Personal Social Health and Economic (PSHE) Co-ordinators. The package is to be shared with partners for delivery in educational establishments.

ASB campaign material – ASB campaign material has been designed by the PFCC and the artwork has been distributed across Staffordshire for local Community Safety Partnerships to promote in their localities.

- **Community Foundation Funding** – provided by the PFCC this has funded the following projects:

Installation of gating at Beattie Avenue

Purchase of 3 x knife bins to be used in partnership with Staffordshire Police for Knife Amnesty.

- **Precision Policing** – this is an analytical report created to understand Staffordshire Police hotspots for vulnerability and crime. This aims to ensure that there is a more long term and partnership focused approach to resolving issues. The purpose of this model is to look at the wider social and economic issues and not just crime. This ensures that all partners understand the specific threats to the community in hotspot areas so all agencies are tailoring efforts in the same way. Newcastle Town Centre was selected for issues such as ASB, Serious Acquisitive Crime, Violence & Weapons and Drugs. This is why a number of tailored activity and supporting meeting structures are in place to ensure that this is coordinated between partners.

- **Security Marshalls** – this project was launched in December 2021 and funded as part of the ‘Welcome Back Fund’ post Covid. The scheme included 2 marshalls to patrol the town centre, both to assist people in observing covid guidelines and also to engage with individuals or groups involved in ASB. The project was extended until November 2023 through additional funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Newcastle BID and this function is now being absorbed into the Council’s Mobile Multi-Functional Team.
- **Partnership Drop In** – this is held in the Safe Space on the third Thursday of each month. Hosted by Newcastle BID, the Council and Staffordshire Police, it is a drop in for businesses and members of the public to discuss issues in and around the town centre.
- **Weekly Enforcement Meeting** – partnership meeting with the police and the Council to discuss key individuals causing problems in the town centre and agree a joint approach to appropriate interventions.

4.2 The above initiatives, alongside other ongoing police and partner agency work, have resulted in the following outcomes in Newcastle town centre:

- Reduction in ASB by 10%.
- Reduction in reported crime by 3%
- Increase in engagement with the community and businesses
- Increase in CCTV cameras in and around the town centre – providing a vital tool in terms of collation of evidence for crime and ASB.
- Improved partnership working and co-ordination of intelligence and resources to tackle crime and ASB

## 5 **Recommendation**

5.1 That the Committee receive the report.

## 6 **Reasons**

6.1 To provide an update to Committee on the Community Safety Partnership work around Newcastle Town Centre.

## 7 **Options Considered**

7.1 The Community Safety Partnership structure enables a range of options to be considered to address specific issues, and appropriate interventions agreed between partners.

## 8 **Legal and Statutory Implications**

8.1 The Council, the police and other agencies in the Community Safety Partnership have a range of powers and duties available to enable appropriate interventions and enforcement action.

## **9 Equality Impact Assessment**

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been updated in relation to enforcement activities undertaken by the Council.

## **10 Financial and Resource Implications**

10.1 There are no additional financial or resource implications directly relating to this report.

## **11 Major Risks & Mitigation**

11.1 Without the Community Safety Partnership, there would be limited resource and capacity to deal with crime and ASB.

11.2 There would therefore be a risk of an increase in crime and ASB across the Borough, and in the town centre in particular.

11.3 Lack of funding could result in no delivery of some community safety projects that assist with reducing vulnerability and early intervention projects for low level asb. The Community Safety Partnership pools resources and enables targeted funding bids to be made for identified priority projects.

## **12 UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

12.1 The proposal contributes towards the following UNSDGs:



12.2 This project contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals above as follows:

- Good health and well being – this projects will help to support the well being of residents at this location who have suffered from anti-social behaviour and crime
- Peace, justice and strong institutions – it will help to bring those who cause ASB to justice by assisting the Police and preventing these locations from experiencing Crime and ASB.

## **13 Key Decision Information**

13.1 Not applicable.

## **14 Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

14.1 None.

**15 List of Appendices**

**15.1** Appendix A: Public Space Protection Order Newcastle Town Centre.

**16 Background Papers**

**16.1** None