

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAMS' REPORT TO HEALTH, WELLBEING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 MARCH 2025

Report Title: Newcastle Town Centre – Community Safety Partnership

Submitted by: Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery

Portfolios: Community Safety and Wellbeing

Ward(s) affected: Town

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide the Committee with an overview of work that has been delivered by the Community Safety Partnership in Newcastle Town Centre line with the Community Safety Strategic Assessment and Priorities for 2024-2025.	
<u>Recommendation</u>	
That Committee:-	
1. Receive the report and note the successful outcomes achieved in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the work in progress to continue to tackle identified priority issues.	
<u>Reasons</u>	
To update the Committee on the ongoing Community Safety Partnership work around Newcastle Town Centre.	

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 Newcastle 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's Neighbourhood Delivery team brings together a cohort of staff who deal with various community safety, environmental 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 and chart provided by Staffordshire Police as of February 2025, illustrates data for Newcastle town centre showing a trend of reducing incidences across all types of offences, compared to 2023/24:

	Previous 12 Months 06/02/23 - 05/02/24	Current 12 Months 06/02/24 - 05/02/25	% Change
Crime	8532	7588	-11.1%
ASB	1913	1757	-8.2%
Business Burg	104	101	-2.9%
Serious Violence	148	149	0.7%
Theft of Motor Vehicle	136	151	11.0%
Theft	1420	1392	-1.97%

- Incidents managed through daily police briefing (DMM) where all crime reviewed.
- Further scrutiny via threat and grip meetings where crime reviewed and allocated and any named offenders considered.
- Weekly performance reviews where crime levels and scrutiny of officers 'work in tray' is reviewed.
- Problem profiles raised for hotspot locations

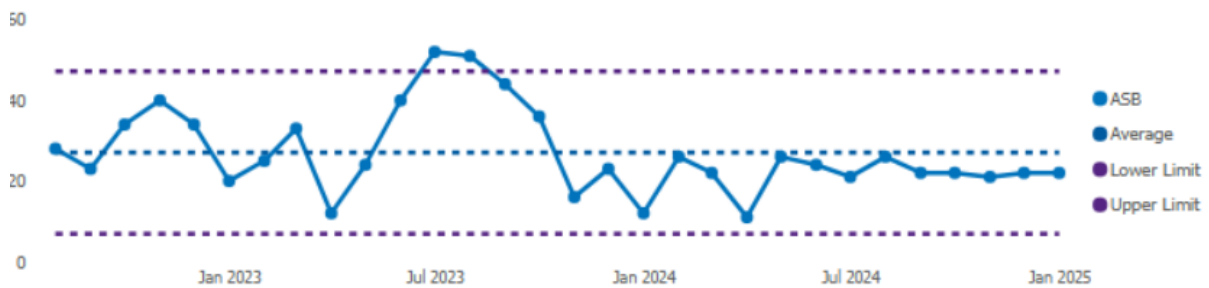
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- Community Safety Partnership focus is in line with priority areas, agreed via data collated in POWER BI

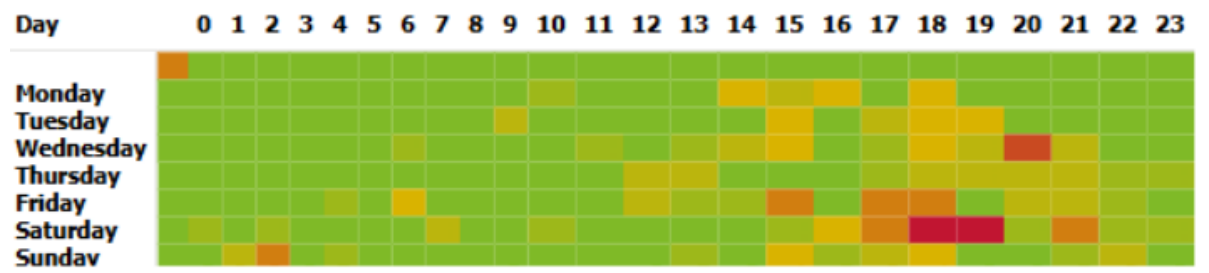
3.2 There is a 8.2% reduction in anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported incidents for the town in the last 12 months (this is a further decrease from 2023/24). The below chart shows the current trend. The heat map as shown in section 3.2.2 highlights key times for ASB in the town centre.

3.2.1

ASB SPC Chart



3.2.2



Recent problem profile raised which includes;

- Dedicated patrols between 1400-1700hrs when issues have been experienced
- Database created for persons dealt with by police and enforcement taken - letter to parents/ acceptable behaviour contracts/ arrest / dispersal notice
- Consideration for diversion tactics through requests/intelligence from the BID and Council
- SECTION 35 dispersal authorised by Chief Inspector that allows police to remove persons from the town for 48 hrs - this is a dynamic power that needs to be used only when police have had intelligence to suggest there will be issues. It is not a cover all 24/7 and is only authorised for designated time and spaces.

3.3 Across the Borough, the Council and the Police have served 50 Community Protection Warnings and 21 Community Protection Notices (27 CPWs and 12 CPNs)

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specifically for the Newcastle town centre.) 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 cases to allow this approach to be used to tackle further individuals.

4 Current Activities/Operations

4.1 There are a number of activities and operations 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. All Neighbourhood Policing Teams in Newcastle are able to enforce this and the Neighbourhood Delivery team also have the power to take enforcement action. A joint approach has been agreed whereby the police and the Neighbourhood Delivery team 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 – 03.00. This includes 1 Police Sergeant and 9 Police Officers. 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.
- **Town Centre Policing strategy** – the neighbourhood team consists of 1 x Sergeant, 3 x Police Officers and 3 x PCSO. The Proactive team also consists of 1 x Sergeant and 4 x Police Officers. This team will focus on the Precision Policing Areas which consists of Newcastle Town Centre but will include covert patrols.
- **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 space is open from 9pm-2am on Fridays and is staffed by volunteers.
- **Street Medics** – initially funded as part of Safer Streets Round 4, and now funded via ASB funding from PFCC until 31st March 2025, 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.
- **CCTV** – the Council has a comprehensive CCTV system covering Newcastle town centre, including the subway routes around the ring road. CCTV is monitored 24/7 at the monitoring station in Stoke, and identified serious incidents are reported immediately to the police for response where appropriate.

Additional CCTV cameras are in the progress of being installed on privately owned buildings around the town centre and the new Castle Car Park to cover remaining “blind spots”, and wayleave agreements have been finalised to facilitate this (Ironmarket, Stubbs Street, Midway, Vue Cinema). A number of trees in the town centre have also been pruned to improve CCTV coverage.

- **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.
- **Joint Operations Group (JOG)**
Bi-monthly partnership meeting, chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, to review intelligence and target multi-agency interventions, and to allocate funding to projects which tackle ASB in communities.
- **Community Wardens** – this project was launched in June 2024 and funded by PFCC. The scheme includes 2 wardens (from a company called Red Snapper) to patrol the town centre and engage with individuals or groups involved in ASB. The project is funded until until 31st March 2025.
- **Partnership Drop In** – this is held in the Safe Space on the third Thursday of each month. Hosted by 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.
- **Problem Solving Meeting** – Bi weekly partnership problem solving meeting to address high demand issues across the Borough. The meeting looks for partnership solutions to reduce the demand on services and resolve the matter.
- **Injunctions** – This method is used to tackle persistent individual offenders in Newcastle-under-Lyme. An injunction has recently been successfully obtained against an individual who has been causing problems, which has in effect banned them from the town centre for 2 years.
- **Week/Day of Action (Civic Pride in Newcastle)** – joint initiative between the Police, Borough Council, Aspire, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service,

Staffordshire County Council and other partners to provide visible presence in communities and reassure/assist residents/businesses. Week of action held 28 October – 1 November 2024 under the banner of Civic Pride in Newcastle which co-ordinated a number of partners and initiatives to engage with the community and provide diversionary opportunities for young people. This will be repeated in October 2025.

- **Joint Operations with Trading Standards and Immigration –**

The CSP liaise with Trading Standards and Immigration and is planning another joint operation in 2025 to emulate the success of the previous operation where quantities of illicit goods were seized.

4.2 The Newcastle Partnership Board, which meets on a bi-monthly basis, provides the governance structure for community safety in the Borough, and reports to the County-wide Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy Group, hosted by Staffordshire County Council. The above initiatives, alongside other ongoing police and partner agency work, have resulted in the following outcomes in Newcastle town centre:

- Further reduction in ASB by an additional 8.2%.
- Reduction in reported crime by 11.1%
- 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

The success of these initiatives has resulted in the Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy Group, chaired by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCC) Office, inviting Newcastle Borough Council and the Newcastle Local Policing Team to present a “deep dive” report on the partnership approach in the town centre at the March 2025 meeting. The PFCC provide Commissioners Community Safety Fund (formerly LDF) funds to Borough and District Councils each year to tackle priority issues identified in the Strategic Assessment (a refresh of this assessment has recently been issued) and the Council has submitted a proposal to the PFCC for 2025/26 for funds to deliver appropriate interventions.

5 Recommendation

5.1 That the Committee receives the report and note the successful outcomes achieved in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the work in progress to continue to tackle identified priority issues.

6 Reasons

6.1 To provide an update to the 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

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

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

6.3 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 None.

16 Background Papers

16.1 None