

City of Lincoln Council tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

**BEST INNOVATIVE
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SOLUTION**

CIEH
EXCELLENCE
AWARDS 2019



INTRODUCTION

City of Lincoln Council is working in collaboration with partners to collectively address the issue of on street Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and associated issues. The team aims to significantly reduce the incidence of ASB, aggressive begging and substance misuse on the streets of Lincoln. The team is tasked with not only dealing with the symptomatic ASB but also addressing the deep-rooted issues that lead a person to engage in street ASB. This is focused around addiction and mental health support. The ethos of the team is a support first approach, aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of the individuals and their communities.

Brief and objectives

The Lincoln intervention team is a project that has been running since October 2018. The team consists of four members of staff as follows:

- a team coordinator
- a mental health outreach nurse
- an Addaction outreach worker
- an Anti-Social Behaviour outreach worker.

The team is a partnership comprised of staff from the City of Lincoln Council, Lincoln Business Improvement Group, Addaction and Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. The increased drug use of the on-street community has proven to be a symptom of complex issues including addiction, mental health and homelessness combined with other vulnerability factors. The team aims to provide a holistic response to the complex needs of individuals, which includes building a rapport with the on-street community through daily outreach as well as providing support and assistance across a range of issues.

Rationale

The team was set up in response to rising community tension as a consequence of increased street drug use and anti-social behaviour. This was affecting the business community in Lincoln city centre, as well as residents and visitors to the area.

Strategy

While the team has a focus on reducing ASB, this is often achieved by looking beyond the behaviour exhibited, for example a persistent beggar in the city centre may be begging because they are not in receipt of benefits in which case arranging their benefits and accompanying and supporting them to do this may resolve the issue, or it may be that someone is using illegal drugs in the street because they are trying to manage a complex mental health illness which could be addressed by our mental health nurse who can make appointments with a GP to review medication or refer them into other mental health services.

The team also works with several other services including Neighbourhood nursing teams, the local Shelter, Police, Probation and social care. In addressing issues holistically, the team aims to sustainably reduce ASB, which helps both the individual and the wider community thus increasing and building community resilience and tolerance, the feeling of safety within the city and reducing community tension. The on-street community are one of society's most vulnerable groups who suffer some of the poorest health (both physical and mental) as well as addiction and other complex issues. They often come from incredibly deprived backgrounds and continue to live in deprivation. The reduction of outreach services and cuts to frontline services has hit this group the hardest, due to their complex issues and mistrust of services, this makes them an incredibly difficult to engage group, additionally many mainstream services are inflexible and barriers (either perceived or real) prevent engagement.



Additionally, due to preconceptions about this group, communities are often unwilling or do not know how to support them leading to further social isolation and community tension. By having a team providing assertive outreach, who are able to provide the bridge between the individual and the community taking a holistic, firm but fair and consistent approach, it is hoped that this will lead to a sustainable reduction in ASB leading to a safer city, an improved quality of life for the individual and a stronger community network.

Implementation

The communities in the area including the businesses, residents and visitors have been surveyed to understand the issues they face and several engagements have also been undertaken with local stakeholder groups. The businesses within the city have been surveyed monthly over the summer period to closely monitor issues and to ensure that the voices of those affected are captured. This is also measured against quantitative data such as incident reports. The city's tenants panel is also surveyed about the issues regularly. The individuals at the heart of the project have been spoken to by the independent charity, Development Plus, who were commissioned by City of Lincoln Council to capture the voices of those who are either homeless or who are engaging in on-street activities. The research has provided an insight into how they ended up on the streets, the services they would like and the services they use. This will shape the team and other services that connect in the future. Direct feedback from individuals worked with is also planned to be obtained and kept under review. Other services are also brought together regularly to discuss operational workings and to understand how we can better connect to each other's services in a seamless and accessible way that works for this client group. As progress is made, this will be fed back to community groups and stakeholders so they understand how to help people and are kept informed and able to influence progress, deal with challenges and plan for the future.

Budget and cost-effectiveness

The project is currently funded until December 2020 and the cost breakdown is as follows: £10,000 is funded by the Business Improvement Group towards the Project coordinator City of Lincoln Council provided as Antisocial Behaviour Outreach Officer. The team Mental Health nurse is funded in full by the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner at a cost of £50,000. City of Lincoln council funds £60,000 to cover the Addiction Worker, a contribution towards the team coordinator and other expenses.

Measurement and evaluation

In the first six months, the team achieved the following:

- Working with 103 different individuals since the start of the project in October 2018 and logging more than 614 actions on the case management system.
- 29 individuals have received in-depth support for substance misuse and five have entered treatment where previously they were not engaging with services.
- 39 individuals have received in-depth support for mental health-related issues and fourteen have engaged in a support plan or entered treatment.
- 40 written warnings about behaviour or substance misuse have been issued, ten legal notices have been served, four prosecutions have been completed and one Criminal Behaviour Order has been obtained.
- Work on a city centre injunction against persons unknown to provide additional powers to both the City Council and the Police when dealing with substance misuse in the city. The team are also working on obtaining an injunction against persons unknown who set up encampments or cause ASB in the area of the Usher Gallery.
- Assisting Legal Services officers with the service of notices to remove encampments from City Council Land.
- Assisting Lincolnshire Police to support vulnerable victims of County Lines mate crime across the city.