

## Case study

### Community Safety & Children's Services working together to address anti-social behaviour and child sexual exploitation

#### Description of initial problem

The Community Safety Casework Team (CSCT) received reports from Children's Services regarding a large number of identified young people attending an address in East Brighton. Associated to this property were allegations of crystal meth and heroin dealing by adults and children, adults providing young people with drugs and alcohol and a number of used needles within the property. Reports of sexual activity and sexual assault were also linked to the address.

Police had regularly attended the property over the previous twelve months. Following a domestic incident it had taken four police officers to restrain the female tenant. Residents and visitors were described as regularly being drunk in and around the property. There was Police intelligence that there were weapons at the property including a machete.

A neighbour reported that there are regularly about half-a-dozen teenagers in and out of the property, sometimes sitting on an old sofa in the street. There were reports of noise nuisance and young people running over cars. Neighbours also reported regular violent domestic incidents, including fighting in the street as well as threatening and abusive language.

#### What happened next

A multi-agency scoping strategy meeting took place, attended by Children's Services, Police and the CSCT. It was confirmed that two Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs) had been served on adults at the address regarding their contact with one named young person.

A number of Hate & ASB Risk Assessments (HARAs) were completed with neighbours to assess the risk and harm being caused, to collate details of recent reports of ASB and to confirm future reporting mechanisms. These assessments showed the behaviour was having a significant impact on a number of local residents.

The CSCT contacted the landlord of the property to establish their level of involvement and offer ongoing advice and guidance.

## **Case-management**

The CSCT met with Legal Services to discuss appropriate enforcement action. Consideration was given to a Closure Order application although all parties felt that the most proportionate response was to proceed by way of an Injunction under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This was with a view to address the child protection issues by prohibiting young people being at the property. Further ASB would be prohibited by specific terms in the Injunction. Statements from Children's Services, the CSCT and Police were drafted. Police also provided copies of their Single Combined Assessment of Risk Form (SCARF) relating to various visits to the address.

A letter drop was conducted in the local area informing residents of how to report ASB and contact the CSCT should they need to. As a result of the letter drop a number of other harmed local residents were identified. Individual action plans were developed with local residents to reduce the harm experienced and to confirm ongoing reporting mechanisms. Local residents were fearful of reprisals and as such anonymous statements were taken from them to support the Injunction application.

Following a court hearing an interim Injunction was granted against the tenant with terms to:

- prevent behaviour which is likely to cause nuisance, annoyance, alarm or distress;
- prevent the use of foul and abusive language;
- prevent threatening violence/verbal abuse and to
- prevent any person under the age of eighteen entering the property.

The last two terms had a power of arrest attached. Neighbours affected by the behaviour were updated and advised how to report breaches of the Injunction.

## **Post enforcement**

Following the interim Injunction hearing the CSCT assertively engaged with the tenant to support her to address her behaviour. Support was offered around benefit entitlement, substance misuse, and accessing housing support and legal advice. The tenant was subsequently allocated a worker from Brighton & Hove City Council's Benefit Cap Support Team.

Following a further court hearing a full Injunction was granted for twelve months with the same terms.

The CSCT continue to engage with the tenant alongside the Benefit Cap Support Team to offer support and ensure they understood the possible consequences of their involvement in further incidents of ASB or any incident that may be a breach of their Injunction.

The case remains open following one breach of the Injunction pending a court hearing to address this matter. The tenant was subsequently evicted from the address by their landlord. CSCT continue to assertively engage with this individual to ensure past behaviour is not repeated at any future address.

The six month period between the interim Injunction application and the tenant's eviction saw three reports of ASB, one of which was processed as a breach of the Injunction. This was a significant reduction in reported ASB. The three months leading up to our initial multi agency scoping meeting saw police attend the address on eight occasions.

### **Feedback and evaluation**

Excellent joint working and information sharing between Children's Services and the CSCT ensured children and local residents were protected from sexual exploitation, exposure to drugs and further ASB.

Brighton and Hove City Council's Principal Lawyer fed back to the CSCT that this was a ***“really good result and an excellent piece of coordinated work between Children's Services, Legal and the Community Safety Team, which hasn't just protected these children but will also protect other young people.”***

Brighton and Hove City Council's Community Safety Manager said **“By responding quickly and in partnership we have protected both children and the wider community from significant harm associated to the individual and her property”**