



## Practice Note 36

### Victim Impact and Perpetrator Vulnerability Procedure

**Contact Name:** Patrick Kelly

**Position Held:** ASBIT Manager

**Telephone:** 01294 314681

**Email:** [pkelly@north-ayrshire.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:pkelly@north-ayrshire.gsx.gov.uk)

**Address:** ASB/Community Safety Services, Unit 83, Third Avenue, Heatherhouse Industrial Estate, Irvine KA12 8HN

**Topic Areas:** Safety of Vulnerable Groups

### Project Background and Aims

In 2008, the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board published the findings of its Serious Case Review relating to a woman (Ms A) who killed herself and her teenage daughter as a response to her inability to cope with the ongoing harassment they were experiencing from local youths. The woman made 19 reports to the police between 1997 and 2006 and 13 incidents in 2007 about the harassment she and her daughter were experiencing.

A number of other local residents had also made complaints about local youths and the antisocial behaviour unit within the Council addressed the issue with warning letters. Furthermore, a joint agency response was implemented at to address the local levels of youth disorder. The specific vulnerability of Ms A and her learning disabled daughter in coping with repeated incidents of antisocial behaviour was not identified in time to prevent such a tragic outcome. Some people experience antisocial behaviour as a minor annoyance whilst, for others, the exact same behaviour can lead to a constant state of anxiety, fear and alarm. In this particular case, Ms A and her daughter experienced the latter.

The case of Ms A led the Antisocial Behaviour Investigation Team (ASBIT) in North Ayrshire ASBIT to review its processes for identifying vulnerable people and responding to antisocial behaviour. The work of ASBIT regularly brings its staff into contact with some of the most vulnerable individuals within local communities. Often such individuals will be struggling to cope with victimisation, harassment and general nuisance as a result of the antisocial behaviour of others. In other instances, some will be struggling with a myriad of problems such as mental health and

addiction issues that in turn leads them to display behaviours that, to others, appears antisocial.

As a result of this review, the Victim and Perpetrator Vulnerability Procedure was implemented in 2011. Victims of antisocial behaviour in North Ayrshire are provided with an assessment of need and ongoing support where there exist issues of vulnerability. Many perpetrators of antisocial behaviour can also have vulnerabilities and such behaviour can often be rooted in issues of mental health or long-term substance misuse, for example. Thus, ASBIT designed the Victim and Perpetrator Vulnerability Procedure to ensure that within the antisocial behaviour process there is a mechanism to identify and, where appropriate, support the most vulnerable people within local communities.

### Outcomes

National 8: 'We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk',  
 9: 'We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger', and  
 11: 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others'.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

All victim and suspect impact statements are recorded on the ASBIT database, whilst hard copies are retained as well. A review of the process will be carried out in 2012 and thereafter the process will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. Further information can be obtained from the ASBIT Manager.

### Activities

In the process of investigating and attempting to resolve a complaint of antisocial behaviour, the ASBIT investigators ordinarily interview at least one main victim and one suspect. During every such interview the investigator completes an impact statement form (see Appendices) which seeks information about particular areas of underlying vulnerability, with the consent of the individual.

The form includes signed consent to pass information to Social Services where appropriate. Areas of vulnerability include mental health issues, learning disability, addictions and whether someone was previously looked after accommodated as a young person. This form not only takes into account issues relating to the particular individual but will consider the vulnerabilities of anyone else who may be living in their household.

Once completed, if the impact statement form highlights any particular vulnerability, the ASBIT investigator completes a pro forma and sends, via e-mail, to the relevant Reception Services Team within Social Services.

When an ASBIT investigator has sent a pro forma to the Reception Services secure e-mail inbox, the admin for that team checks the CareFirst system to establish if the individual, or anyone within their household, has an allocated worker.

Where there is an allocated worker, the information from the pro forma is entered onto an Observation with a 'New Information Received' activity sent as high priority to the allocated worker. An e-mail is also sent to the relevant ASBIT investigator with contact details for the allocated worker. This allows the investigator the opportunity to link in directly with the allocated worker to plan any actions and/or support as appropriate.

In cases where there is not an allocated worker, the pro forma is opened up on CareFirst by the relevant Reception Services Team under the event heading 'ASB Impact' with an associated activity of 'New Referral Received'.

When a new 'ASB Impact' event is opened on the Reception Services Team Screen, the duty worker checks the system and examines all background information on the persons involved in the antisocial behaviour incident(s). This is a key part of the process; it is important to weigh up the current and previous vulnerability alongside the circumstances surrounding the antisocial behaviour issues — irrespective whether someone is victim or suspect — and how the current circumstances may be impacting on their wellbeing.

A decision has to be made whether or not the individual requires a home visit by Reception Services to assess further or, where the level of risk appears not as great, a standard letter should be sent.

In all cases a letter is sent to victims and perpetrators advising that Social Services have received information from ASBIT about the current situation. The letter invites them to telephone or make an appointment to see a Reception Services duty officer.

Professional judgement is utilised to decide who requires more than the standard letter and the team social worker or, in their absence, the Team Manager can be consulted at any time if the duty worker is unsure of the most appropriate way forward. Further information and/or clarification can be sought from the ASBIT investigator at any time.

If and when contact is made with an individual and/or their family referred via ASBIT an assessment of risk and need is also undertaken. Where an assessment identifies a role for long-term support from Social Services, the individual concerned is referred to the relevant functional team as per normal processes.

The ASBIT investigator is informed in cases where Reception Services require contact with the individual and/or their family, whether as a one-off meeting/visit or indeed an initial assessment leading to referral on to a functional team.

## Impact

This procedure has been devised and developed to augment current processes such as the multi-agency case conference system in order to ensure that vulnerable individuals are identified early and supported appropriately.

The procedure has improved upon the informal agreements that were previously in place. In doing so, linkages between ASBIT and Social Services have been consolidated. Whilst a formal review of the process is not due until 2012, anecdotal evidence suggests the procedure has improved upon previous system operations.

## Lessons Learnt and Sustainability

The changes in England and Wales following the high profile Leicester case led to a focus on repeat offending. In North Ayrshire, a different approach has been taken, with the onus on identifying vulnerable people and their ability to cope with the situation, rather than investigating the frequency and apparent seriousness of the complaint.

## Summary

The Victim and Perpetrator Vulnerability Procedure is utilised in North Ayrshire to identify and support people experiencing and committing antisocial behaviour. The system formalised partnership activities between the Antisocial Behaviour Investigation Team and Social Services.

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**Scottish Community Safety Network** is a company Limited by Guarantee Registered in Scotland, Company No:SC357649  
SCSN is Registered Scottish Charity No: SC040464

**Address:**

2 Hill Street Edinburgh EH2 3JZ,

**Tel No:** 0131 225 8700

**E-mail:** [info@scsn.org.uk](mailto:info@scsn.org.uk)

**Website:**

<http://www.communitysafetyscotland.org/>

**APPENDIX 1**  
**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES**  
**VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT (VIS)**

We all have to deal with stress in everyday life. Sometimes we cope very well, while at other times stress can have a severe effect on our personal relationships and physical and mental health.

Taking a few moments to complete this form will hopefully help us support you properly during this difficult time.

**Please note, providing a Victim Impact Statement is not compulsory.**

I understand and agree that in order to access support, ASBIT must exchange the information provided with partner agencies      YES       NO

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TEL NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

ASBIT CASE REF: \_\_\_\_\_ INVESTIGATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to provide a Victim Impact Statement?      YES       NO

Does anyone in your household have any mental health problems?      YES       NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have a history of mental health problems?      YES       NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Has anyone in your household been accommodated in care as a child?      YES       NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have a learning disability?

YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have any addiction issues?

YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have any involvement with Social Work?

YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being you are coping very well with the situation and 10 being not coping at all, where would you place yourself?

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Please provide comments on how the offending behaviour has affected you and your family:

VICTIM SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

INVESTIGATOR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 2  
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES  
ASB RISK FACTOR STATEMENT**

Taking a few moments to complete this form will hopefully help us support you properly during this difficult time.

**Please note that completing this form is not compulsory.**

I understand and agree that in order to access support, ASBIT must exchange the information provided with partner agencies YES  NO

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TEL NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

ASBIT CASE REF: \_\_\_\_\_ INVESTIGATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to provide an ASB Risk Factor Statement? YES  NO

Does anyone in your household have any mental health problems? YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have a history of mental health problems? YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Has anyone in your household been accommodated in care as a child? YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have a learning disability?

YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have any addiction issues?

YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

Does anyone in your household have any involvement with Social Work?

YES  NO

If yes, please provide comments:

On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being you are coping very well with the situation and 10 being not coping at all, where would you place yourself?

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Please provide comments on how the complaint has affected you and your family:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

INVESTIGATOR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_