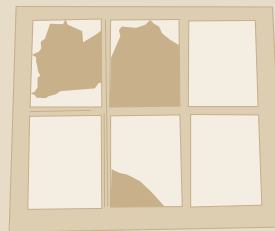


Anti-Social Behaviour Case Management in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets



From Possibility...

Located in London's East End, Tower Hamlets is home to a diverse and vibrant community. The Borough is rich in history and presents an exciting mix of old and new, a bustling community, unique in culture and character. Tower Hamlets takes its name from the historical association between the Tower of London and the hamlets that surround it.

The instantly recognisable 'U'-bend in the River Thames defines the southern boundary of the Borough. This is an area of spectacular regeneration with the pyramid-topped Canary Wharf Tower marking out the internationally renowned Docklands.

Tower Hamlets Council is committed to improving services for those who live and work in the borough and invited Ad Esse to assist them in embarking on a programme of Business Process Improvement (BPI).

Anti-Social Behaviour is a high-profile issue for Councils as can be seen in the Times 17 January 2006 where Barry Anderson, Chief Executive of Communities that Care said

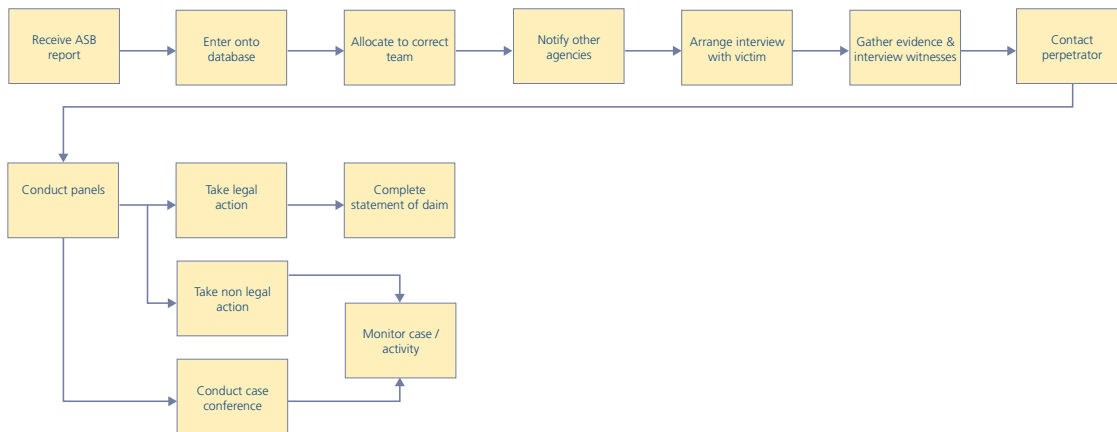
"Quick fixes aren't likely to prevent anti-social behaviour, but neighbourhoods can be transformed over time into safer and more cohesive communities".

If further confirmation of the importance of the issue were needed, consider for a moment the attention the government is giving to the Respect agenda. For these reasons, Ad Esse were asked to help complete a specific process improvement project, resulting in recommendations to improve Council responses to anti-social behaviour, and to develop an internal team who would be able to perpetuate the BPI programme across other council processes.

The importance of tackling anti-social behaviour in an effective and responsive way led Tower Hamlets to select the management of anti-social behaviour cases as the subject for this process improvement project.

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Below is the overall process map of how cases were managed within the Council; this shows the high-level activity; each step in this map is underpinned by many more activities which were analysed in detail throughout the project.



OUR APPROACH

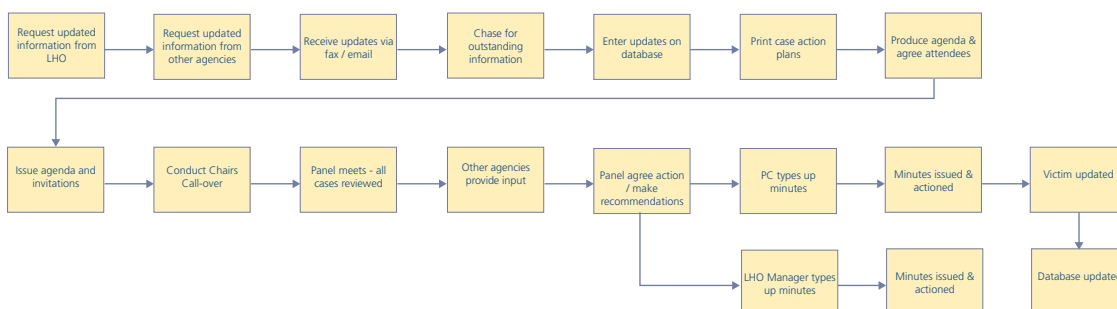
In order to support the actual team managing anti-social behaviour cases, and to develop an internal BPI resource for the Council, two sets of individuals attended our two-day modular BPI training programme to learn what BPI is and how it can bring about real improvement. The first team was selected to ensure it included a spread of people from across the ASB team as well as key partners (police and housing) who were involved in the processes under review. The internal BPI team were chosen from the Research and Scrutiny service area, part of whose role is to monitor and develop performance within the Council.

Our consultants then facilitated a number of workshops where:

- Customers and stakeholders of the above process were identified
- The as-is process was mapped
- Process performance data was identified, collected and analysed
- Current problems were identified
- Possible solutions were identified
- A new process was mapped
- Risks of implementation were analysed
- Implementation was planned
- Senior buy-in was secured

Throughout the workshops, the internal BPI team were able to build on existing facilitation skills by taking an active role in the sessions. Our consultants held de-brief sessions with the internal team members after each workshop to ensure learning was being transferred.

Individual process maps for each step in the process map above were created. The process map below shows the "as-is" map for "Conduct ASB panels". These panels were a series of multi-agency meetings held across the Borough which reviewed every ASB case, resulting in lengthy meetings and delays in case outcomes.



To Actuality...

MAKING IT REAL

Much of the initial work was producing process maps to define how the work currently gets done, and analysing the Case Management data. This highlighted different approaches and standards across the Borough. It was evident that the amount of work undertaken by the team did not always reflect the seriousness of the behaviour. This identified a need for a shared and transparent set of criteria for prioritising resources.

Through the workshops we were able to identify how the majority of Anti-Social Behaviour Cases are reported and identified anticipated outcomes. We focused our improvement efforts on maximising elements of the process which would deliver a clear outcome in terms of legal action, or other resolution for victims, and minimising those which related to administration and paperwork.

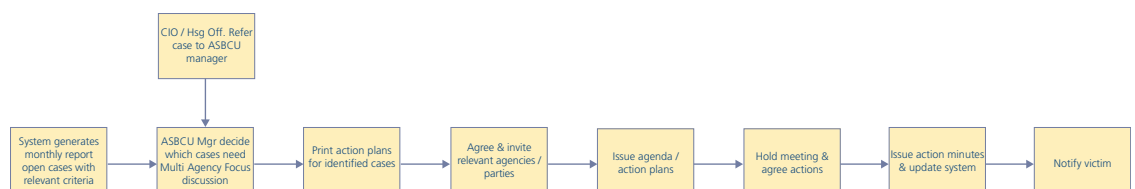
From the “as-is” process map and the data, we were able to:

- Identify activities that were duplicated, or did not add value, and agree to eliminate them
- Recognise that decisions about how a case was to be progressed, or resolved, needed to be taken earlier in the process and according to realistic and shared expectations of outcome – so, for example, a case with no evidence should be closed, and that decision effectively communicated
- Agree targets to reduce the average length of time it should take to reach an agreed outcome for a reported incident of anti-social behaviour

These findings provided clear opportunities for improving the time taken to achieve an outcome for anti-social behaviour reports (either ongoing monitoring, legal or non-legal action) by taking decisions early, and prioritising resources on cases where further activity is required.

With this information, and an agreement from the team that earlier decision making and proactive line management would underpin a new process, we began mapping an improved way of working.

Below is an example of one of the “new ways”. This process map illustrates the new activities underpinning the ASB panel work. Only exceptional cases and those meeting agreed criteria will be referred to the multi-agency panel, with the majority of cases now being moved forward swiftly by Case Investigation and Housing Officers.



A number of solutions and ideas were discussed and tested for viability before final agreement was reached. Once the new process was mapped, the team undertook a risk analysis and highlighted anything that might go wrong with the implementation of the new process. The actions that we agreed needed to be taken, to mitigate these risks, were then included in the implementation plan.

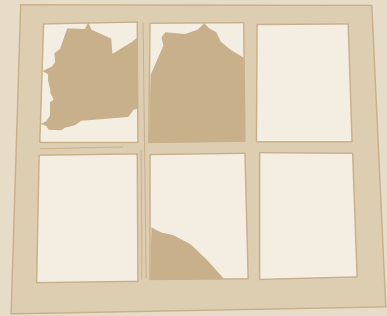
The final task was to identify the key measures of performance for the new process, to ensure that it performs as expected when implemented. We also identified a Process Owner to ensure that responsibility was taken for implementing the new process and making improvements.

Throughout the workshops the internal BPI team played an active part, by facilitating sessions and leading workgroups. This ensured they gained practical, hands-on experience of an improvement project. The understanding and transfer of skills was verified at the end of each session.



respect

ASBOs



SAFER COMMUNITIES

THE BENEFITS

BPI enables us to get underneath a way of working to understand how it can be improved, and for all players in a process to see how their part fits into the whole and links to outcomes. The key to making BPI effective is to engage those people involved in the process – from front-line staff to managers – because it is they who have the knowledge and the motivation to devise and deliver an improved process. The implementation plan provides a framework for making that happen.

In this case, the improvements identified will give line managers more accurate and timely information to use to manage both case loads and individual performance. This brings wider benefits as the team apply this learning to other aspects of their work. At the same time, the internal team will be able to use the BPI approach and techniques to improve other processes in the wider organisation

Crucially, the new process will enable the Tower Hamlets Partnership to serve its residents better by responding to ASB issues in a more effective, joined-up, consistent and transparent way. It will strengthen multi-agency working through a structured approach to communication and the sharing of information at an early stage. Clearer classification of reports means resources can be directed at those cases which are most serious.

Comments from participants

“An excellent piece of work and the recommendations are really good”

“Your approach and style are very commendable”

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FURTHER INFORMATION

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PHONE: +44 (0) 870 458 6162 EMAIL: seriousfun@ad-esse.com WEBSITE: www.ad-esse.com