

Community Remedy Consultation Results

Background

Following public consultation, Community Remedy became a key element of the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The aim of Community Remedy is to enable victims of low level crime and antisocial behaviour to have a greater say in how offenders should be held account for their actions.

A Community Remedy document is a list of appropriate actions that can be carried out by a person who has engaged in antisocial behaviour or committed an offence, admits to their involvement and is to be dealt with for that behaviour or offence without court proceedings.

Each local policing force must have a Community Remedy document for its area, informed by consultation and promoting public confidence in the out-of-court disposal process.

Police and Crime Commissioners are responsible for the ownership and reviewing of the document, in partnership with their Chief Constables.

In line with upcoming changes to Part 6 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and the codes of practice that will sit alongside this, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is undertaking a refresh of the Community Remedy document in Cleveland. To inform this refresh a public consultation was undertaken for seven weeks from 10th January to 28 February 2023. The consultation involved an online survey which was promoted through OPCC social media and communication channels together with promotion at a number of community engagement stalls in public locations across the Cleveland area.

Consultation Results

Overall 126 responses were received to the survey.

Respondents were asked how much they agreed with a range of options for Community Remedy with options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree:

- Restorative Justice
- Apology – verbal or written
- Acceptable Behaviour Contract

- Referral to a local rehabilitative, educational or diversionary activity to support an improvement in behaviour
- Personal/community reparation, i.e. repairing damage caused

Respondents were broadly supportive of all the suggested options, with the highest levels of support for reparation and referral to rehabilitative, educational or diversionary services and the lowest level of support for an apology, although support was still high for this option.

The full range of responses is detailed below:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Reparation	92	29	4	1
Referral to services	77	39	6	3
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	61	47	8	9
Restorative Justice	51	50	16	9
Apology	51	47	16	12

Respondents were given a free text option to suggest other Community Remedy options or to make general comments on the scheme.

For young offenders it was felt that it was important to involve parents both in terms of paying for any damage caused but also in terms of offering parenting support to help manage and challenge their children's behaviour.

Community reparation was seen as a very effective means of demonstrating the consequences of behaviour by ensuring offenders work in the community where they have caused the harm. Suggested areas of focus were litter picking, gardening work, tidying of community spaces and removal of fly tipped materials.

In terms of letters of apology it was felt that these needed to be well thought out and meaningful in order to ensure that the offender did not view this as an easy option.

In terms of referrals into support it was felt that access to employment should form a part of this option. Therapeutic work to understand the root causes of offending was also seen as key in this pathway.

Community mentoring was suggested as an additional option for offenders.

Giving victims a say in the outcome for the offender was seen as a positive way of empowering victims. Several respondents stated that they felt that victims of hate crime would particularly appreciate the opportunity to engage in the Community Remedy process.

There were some generalised comments that more police visibility and tougher enforcement activity around antisocial behaviour is needed in problematic areas.

It was noted that the finalised Community Remedy process should be transparent, with data available on how many offenders are dealt with using Community Remedy and of these how many complete their sanction.

Respondents were asked whether they felt that offenders should pay part or all of the costs associated with referrals into rehabilitative, educational or diversionary activity. Over 80% felt that offenders should make some monetary contribution where they could afford to. 43% felt that offenders should pay the full costs and 37.5% that they should make a partial contribution.

Demographics

Only 80 of the 126 participants chose to complete the demographic information section.

Of those who completed the demographic information 66.25% identified as female and 27.5% identified as male. One respondent identified as non binary, the remaining respondents chose not to say.

26.25% of those respondents who completed this section stated that they considered themselves to have a disability.

Respondents were primarily white British, with one mixed heritage respondent and one Asian respondent.

Whilst responses were spread across all age categories, close to half the respondents who completed the demographic information (47%) were aged between 55 and 74.