Promoting Positive Outcomes:
Working Together to Prevent Antisocial Behaviour in Scotland

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The Scottish Government, Edinburgh 2009
This Framework for tackling ASB in Scotland is about promoting positive outcomes: by preventing ASB before it occurs; by resolving ASB effectively at an early stage when it does occur; by agencies working together more effectively; by communities being more involved in developing sustainable local solutions; and by communicating positive, evidence-based messages about our people and places. Overall, it is about building on success and spreading good practice across Scotland.

By delivering positive outcomes, we will contribute directly to the single, overarching purpose of the Scottish Government - to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

The tools provided by the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 (‘the 2004 Act’) have clearly made a difference to the lives of people across Scotland: they empowered local agencies and communities to take a stand against ASB and provided those who had suffered in silence for too long with some much-needed respite. For that reason, we will not seek to repeal the legal measures. However, as our review has confirmed, there are opportunities to strengthen national policy and be smarter in the way we tackle the problem.
We need to:

1. focus more on prevention and early and effective intervention and move away from the narrow focus on enforcement;
2. address the causes of ASB, such as drink, drugs and deprivation, and not just the symptoms;
3. promote positive behaviour and the work of role-models and mentors, as well as punish bad behaviour in an appropriate, proportionate and timely manner;
4. create more choices and chances for people to succeed, thereby reducing the likelihood of them being involved in ASB;
5. work better together locally to meet the needs of individuals and communities by integrating services: sharing resources, information and outcomes;
6. involve communities more usefully in tackling ASB, empowering them and building their confidence through regular and meaningful dialogue;
7. offer a better service to victims by ensuring adequate support and information is available and by promoting restorative practices where appropriate;
8. encourage more balanced, evidence-based reporting and counter negative stereotypes and the demonisation of young people in the media;
9. communicate better as national and local partners to ensure policy-making and marketing activity is joined-up; and
10. judge the success of local agencies on the delivery of positive outcomes and not on how many times a particular enforcement measure is used.

As already mentioned, the Scottish Government has a unifying Purpose: to focus Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. Everything that the Government does or supports others in doing should contribute directly to this Purpose. Our success in delivering it will be assessed by reference to the Purpose Targets, which relate to growth, productivity, participation, population, solidarity, cohesion and sustainability.

Our Purpose, introduced by The Government Economic Strategy in November 2007, is underpinned by five strategic objectives - to make Scotland wealthier & fairer, smarter, healthier, safer & stronger, and greener. Tackling ASB can contribute to all five of these strategic objectives, but, clearly, the heart of our business lies in making our communities safer and stronger.

A safer and stronger Scotland for our families and communities will be a more successful Scotland. We want communities to thrive, becoming better, healthier places to live and work, contributing to a more economically-cohesive Scotland, higher rates of labour market participation and sustainable economic growth.

By making our communities safer and stronger for those who live there, we will also increase the attractiveness of Scotland as a place to live and work - drawing in talented new people and investment. This will improve our quality of life, create strong communities that we are proud and happy to be a part of, help to increase Scotland's population and allow us all to fulfil our potential.
The following three National Outcomes underpin our contribution to achieving a safer and stronger Scotland.

**NATIONAL OUTCOME 9:**
We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.

**NATIONAL OUTCOME 10:**
We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.

**NATIONAL OUTCOME 11:**
We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

This Framework is not about abandoning what went before but about being smarter in how we tackle the problem of antisocial behaviour. **The main change signalled by this Framework is a change in emphasis:**

- rather than focusing on tackling the symptoms of the problem, we should be focusing on addressing the causes of the problem through preventative work;
- rather than fighting philosophical battles in a polarised debate about needs vs deeds; victim vs offender; individual vs community; and prevention vs intervention, we should be working together better to achieve shared outcomes;
- rather than involving communities in an ad hoc and tokenistic fashion, we should be engaging them in a meaningful way in the development of national and local strategies and keeping them informed of progress; and
- rather than allowing scaremongering and negative stereotypes to go unchallenged, we should communicate better as partners to ensure positive, coordinated and evidence-based messages are shared with the public.

These, then, are the four pillars of this new Framework: **prevention, integration, engagement and communication.**
Executive summary

STRATEGIC AIM 1: Create more choices and chances.

A greater focus, politically, strategically and operationally should be placed on education, prevention and early intervention by developing resilience and creating more choices and chances for all, with the aim of diverting people away from being involved in ASB and from other behaviours likely to increase the risk of being involved in ASB, such as alcohol and drug misuse. ASB is most likely to occur in areas which suffer from multiple deprivation. Therefore, providing targeted opportunities and improved accessibility in education, employment and training, as well as in sport, culture and other “diversionary activities”, will improve the life chances of both potential perpetrators and victims and provide sustainable reductions in the level of ASB in our communities.

STRATEGIC AIM 2: Appropriate, proportionate and timely interventions

All approaches to tackling ASB, and particularly enforcement action, need to be appropriate, proportionate and timely, relative to the circumstances presented to local agencies at any specific time. In order to achieve sustainability, enforcement is dependent on support and education measures, introduced in tandem, which are tailored to meet the needs of both individuals and communities, with the aim of preventing future ASB and providing long-term solutions.

Strategic Aims

The following Strategic Aims were agreed by the review’s EAG under each of the four pillars of the review:

Prevention
Executive summary

**Integration**

**STRATEGIC AIM 1:** Better information sharing.
Integrated services require the effective sharing of information and intelligence which allows policy implementation and intervention to take place on an evidence- and intelligence-led basis.

**STRATEGIC AIM 2:** Better sharing of resources.
Integrated services require the flexible and effective use of staffing, finance and property, free from the constraints and limitations imposed by organisational and bureaucratic boundaries.

**STRATEGIC AIM 3:** Clear shared outcomes.
Integrated services require commitment to the achievement of agreed and common outcomes across all partner agencies and stakeholders.
Engagement

STRATEGIC AIM 1: Involving and empowering communities to address ASB.

To create a safer and stronger Scotland we need to ensure that community engagement (in relation to the ASB agenda) is carried out consistently and to the highest possible standard, to enable communities to be effectively involved and empowered at an early stage. This is vital because, when local people are actively engaged in tackling issues within their community, they can be empowered to help realise their community’s potential.

This can be achieved through earlier involvement in the planning of services to tackle ASB, continuous involvement in the identification of local problems and the opportunity to participate and influence local decision-making through local capacity building. These activities within Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) should be overseen by local elected members with a designated remit to ensure all community groups engage, particularly young people, victims, ASB offenders and other “hard-to-reach” groups.

STRATEGIC AIM 2: Partnership working for communities and with communities.

Effective multi-agency action at a local community level is the key to ensuring that a broad range of approaches can be deployed against ASB issues that have an emphasis on early intervention and prevention through community participation, mediation and reassurance activities. This is instead of resorting to enforcement measures as a first course of action as they do not always resolve underlying problems or can be more costly.

It is vital that CPPs engage local communities and deliver sustainable local solutions to local problems. These solutions should be informed by effective community engagement to ensure responses are appropriate and proportionate based on accurate information from communities. Therefore, all communities should be actively engaged by partner agencies through easily accessible means of community dialogue. Communities should feel a sense that their participation is welcome and that their concerns are taken seriously and acted upon. The outcomes of any action should be reported back to them.
**Communication**

**STRATEGIC AIM 1:** Counter negative stereotypes and promote positive role models.

National marketing campaigns should be focused on encouraging more balanced, evidence-based reporting on ASB with a particular emphasis on responsible reporting on young people’s involvement. Raising the profile and involvement of role models in people’s lives will offer opportunities for young people and adults who are involved or at risk of being involved in ASB to realise their potential and become more responsible citizens.

**STRATEGIC AIM 2:** Reassure the public.

National organisations and local agencies must engage meaningfully with the public to improve their understanding of the issues that affect people’s quality of life and sense of security. By working in partnership with local communities and communicating more regularly and effectively with them, public confidence in the effectiveness of local agencies tackling ASB will build and the fear of crime and disorder will reduce. The quality of communication during initial contact with victims and other community members is often the most crucial.

**STRATEGIC AIM 3:** Coordinate national and local communications.

National marketing campaigns need to be coordinated with local media and communication strategies. This will ensure a consistent message in respect of national and local priorities is given to communities, sufficient capacity can be made available locally to meet any increased demand for services and members of the public will become increasingly aware of their responsibilities in tackling ASB and how to access the services they need.

**National Actions and Local Recommendations**

A set of 25 National Actions and 25 Local Recommendations have been developed across this Framework to respond to the findings of the review of national policy. These were derived through a process of wide-ranging consultation and research and have been approved by the many partners of the review’s EAG, the National Community Safety Strategic Group, COSLA and Scottish Ministers.

National Actions refer to the things that the Scottish Government, COSLA and all of the national partners on the EAG believe are necessary and will work together to deliver in partnership. By delivering these actions together we will demonstrate the extent to which this is a shared vision and how much more we can achieve if we work together.
Local Recommendations are those things that the Scottish Government, COSLA and all of the national partners on the EAG believe should be delivered locally. We will work together to support local agencies to do this. Many progressive, forward-thinking agencies are already doing many of the things we are recommending.

We hope that all local agencies will seize the opportunity presented by these Local Recommendations and build them into their business planning processes, local strategies and Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs).

We do not underestimate the challenge that such a shift in strategic direction presents for local partners. Service delivery will need to change, as will partnership working, community engagement and communications activity. This will take time, effort and the redeployment of staff and resources. Results will not be realised overnight and the speed of progress will vary across the country depending on how well placed local agencies already are to deliver a prevention-focused, intelligence-led, partnership-based, community-driven and positively-communicated approach.

This Framework is not isolated in calling for a more prevention-focused approach. Other national social policy frameworks are already rebuilding the policy landscape in this regard and laying the groundwork for the delivery of this Framework. For example, the Early Years Framework has already signalled the need to move from intervening when a crisis has happened to providing the right support at the right time to prevent crisis situations developing in the first place. Specifically, it calls for resources already available in the system to be realigned to the prevention agenda.

This Framework is about promoting positive outcomes - through prevention, integration, engagement and communication. It recognises that most communities are good places to live and work but that too many, particularly those in our most deprived areas, still suffer as a result of ASB. It believes that we will not fix this problem until we realise that it is a symptom of much deeper issues, including drink, drugs and deprivation.

The key message of this Framework is that communities are best served by not having to experience ASB in the first place and as such prevention, through meaningful community engagement, should be the focus of local approaches. It is only by preventing problems before they occur or intervening early when they do that we will deliver long-term sustainable solutions for communities.

The media and political obsession with Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) has been unhelpful. While they are useful, they are only one tool in the box. Enforcement measures alone will not solve the deep-rooted problems that cause ASB and in some circumstances can be counterproductive. The focus on ASBOs has certainly fuelled the flames of the negative reporting and demonisation of young people that we seek to overcome.

The enforcement measures provided by the 2004 Act will remain available for use, but as part of a much more balanced approach. The change in emphasis, to place prevention and early and effective intervention at the heart of action to tackle ASB, marks a significant shift in policy: a shift away from a short-sighted approach of trying to use simple quick-fixes to solve deep-seated problems towards smarter solutions.
This Framework provides the springboard for action. It has been designed in a way that means it cannot be put on a shelf and forgotten about. An implementation plan will follow in summer 2009 to detail how the numerous commitments and recommendations made within these pages will be delivered. A report on progress will be presented to Parliament annually for the next three years.

The commitment and support of key national bodies such as COSLA, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA), and the Chief Fire Officers’ Association Scotland (CFOAS) means that local agencies will be encouraged and supported to change the way they tackle ASB. It will take longer for some to get there than others but we are committed to ensuring that all areas of Scotland benefit from this new approach.

Summary of National Actions

In implementing this Framework, the 25 National Actions identified will be delivered by the Scottish Government, COSLA and the other national partners represented on the review’s EAG across the four key pillars of this Framework – prevention, integration, engagement and communication (chapters 3 to 6 of the main report). These actions can be summarised in 10 ‘super actions’, set out below.

1. Legislation: The Scottish Government will consult with key stakeholders by the end of 2009 on amendments to the 2004 Act and related legislation which this review has identified as supporting local partners to achieve successful outcomes for communities. The changes will make it easier for local partners to interpret and exercise the law in a consistent, appropriate and proportionate manner.

2. Guidance: The Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners, will improve the shared guidance they provide to local partners. This will involve revising guidance on implementing the 2004 Act by early 2010 to create a coherent package of practice manuals; introducing new guidance by the end of 2009 on key areas of good practice, such as partnership working and the use of analysis; and establishing a series of National Policy Position Statements by the end of 2009 to provide clarity on key ASB issues.

3. Research: The Scottish Government, in consultation with COSLA and other national partners, will develop a programme of research by summer 2009, which will assist in the implementation of the outcomes of this review of national ASB policy. Research is likely to focus particularly on evaluating methods of early intervention, such as intensive family support and mediation, but is expected to also consider how to improve partnership working through the use of information sharing protocols and how best to engage with young people. It should also enable the impact of our new approach, in terms of its contribution to the achievement of desired outcomes, to be evaluated.

4. Funding: The Scottish Government will use the small amount of central ASB funding it retains to support specific initiatives and
provide practitioner support during 2009-10 and 2010-11. This coupled with CashBack for Communities monies will help to maximise the impact of mainstream funding under the Concordat. There will be a particular focus on delivering positive outcomes through, for example, the distribution of funds seized from criminals as part of the CashBack for Communities scheme. We will also directly fund a number of national bodies and practitioner networks to strengthen their capacity to support local agencies to tackle ASB across the country.

5. **Support:** The Scottish Government, in consultation with COSLA and other national and local partners, will, by autumn 2009, revamp central ASB practitioner support services to meet the changing needs of partners in the developing post-Concordat environment. This will involve reconfiguring the national ASB Coordinator role and further strengthening the Scottish Government’s central support team for community safety. Funding will also be provided for specific training for frontline officers, including in public reassurance work.

6. **Communication:** The Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners will develop, by early 2010, a shared national ASB communications strategy from which all marketing and communications activity will fall. The strategy, which will be overseen by a new Media and Communications Network, will support the development of proactive, positive campaigns aimed at promoting safer and stronger communities. Community engagement and public reassurance are key priorities for this Framework and to enhance work in these areas we will, by autumn 2009, produce dedicated ASB guides for members of the public and for young people.

7. **Consultation and engagement:** The Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners will consult widely on the implementation of this Framework, including on legislative changes, and will seek the views of the public, including young people, on issues of particular relevance to them. For example, we will consult the public on the development of guidelines for neighbour dispute resolution and, as necessary, on the development of community engagement activities.

8. **Good practice:** The Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners will, by the end of 2009, create a shared online database of good practice examples to encourage the replication of successful approaches across the country. There is already a wealth of good practice going on locally and ensuring that this is shared and adopted by agencies across the country is a key priority for this Framework.

9. **Pilot exercises:** The Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners will support a number of pilot exercises to test and demonstrate the effectiveness of the approaches endorsed by this Framework. In addition to a pilot of participatory budgeting, whereby local communities help to direct spending on ASB within their areas, we will work with a number of local agencies who, as early adopters of this Framework, will provide test-beds for its core principles.
10. Monitoring and reporting: The Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners will develop a new framework for collating and reporting local data on tackling ASB, which will be more outcome-focused and encompass work across the revised PIER spectrum. This framework will replace the previous six-monthly reporting regime and will bring together those data sets which best reflect local action to tackle ASB and support the development of partnership strategic assessments and the delivery of Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs).

The National Actions are supported by a set of 25 Local Recommendations, which the Scottish Government, COSLA and other national partners will encourage and support local agencies to deliver.