![wmpcc-logo[1]]() 

 

**The Restorative Justice Project:**

**Evaluation of Restorative Justice Conferences**

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**with Sophie Rowe, Lecturer**

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# Executive Summary

## Purpose

This report outlines the key findings of the evaluation of conferences held as part of the Restorative Justice Project that is funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and managed by the Birmingham Social Housing Partnership.

The purpose of the evaluation was to support the shaping of an RJ model and service delivery of RJ which is:

* Accessible to all victims across Birmingham;
* Victim-centred in its approach;
* Efficient;
* Scoped to grow and develop across the West Midlands;
* Designed to develop the Specialist Team and invest in leadership.

The evaluation was divided into two phases: Phase 1 identified and compared the costs of restorative justice conferences to the agencies involved. Phase 2 explored the experiences and perceptions of participants in the restorative justice conferences.

## Findings

* The **highest total cost** for the restorative justice approach of **£147,666** is well below the estimated cost for the standard approach to ASB cases of **£434,386**: making a saving of **£286,720.**
* Taking the lowest cost for the restorative justice approach, **£68,895**, the saving is **£365,491**, which works out close to £200,000 per year over the 22 months of the study.
* Restorative justice conferences are **quicker and more effective** ways of resolving ASB cases. On average, standard **ASB cases took** **117 days** whereas the **RJ cases took** **27 days**.
* Restorative justice conferences have had **positive results for the participants** in this research.
* Restorative justice is an **effective way of establishing communication** between neighbours in situations where relationships have broken down.
* There is very little evidence that parties have been more able to address issues themselves without intervention from their housing officers and police officers.
* The **main barriers to holding conferences** are: 1) **logistical**, relating to organising a conference; 2) **interpersonal** issues of the parties concerned; 3) participants’ **negative perceptions** of the restorative justice process.
* The **role of the facilitators is crucial** to the success of restorative justice cases. Facilitators must be passionate about the concept of restorative justice: this suggests that restorative justice cannot be implemented by all police officers or housing officers. This will have an impact on the scale of restorative justice.
* There was **some anxiety amongst participants** that restorative justice agreements are not legally binding and that the issue is not technically resolved.
* Participants were **very positive about the way the facilitators** had managed the conference. However, they were not always clear about what follow-up might be expected.
* Facilitators are **positive about the training** they have received but felt there was still development needed. However, the most important support is provided by others on the team and leadership given by the supervisors is regarded as pivotal.

## Recommendations

Despite the clear effectiveness and value for money identified by this evaluation, there are eight key recommendations for further development:

1. There is a need for **continuous, sustainable funding for the service**. The current project funding model is regarded as unsatisfactory as it does not allow for longer term planning.
2. Restorative justice cases are **best managed by a specialist team** rather than a wider group of police officers and housing officers.
3. Consideration should be given as to whether **more time is needed for conference participants to reflect** on the agreements reached.
4. As it is a developing service, it is clear that Specialist Team members are not always aware of **facilities that are available**. In particular, they need to be aware of the Birmingham Directory for free and appropriate venues provided by the City Council for customers and of translation services in the five key languages across the region where this is required.
5. **Clear signposting** is required to make conference participants aware of the support structure that is available to them.
6. Restorative justice needs to be **promoted consistently and sustainably** both to professionals and housing customers as an effective initiative to resolve disputes between neighbours. Current work to create and develop a restorative justice website, advertising and promotion through social media is too be encouraged to make the initiative accessible.
7. Consideration is needed of how to **develop the skill sets of facilitators**. In particular, there needs to be a focus on the Restorative Justice Competency Framework.
8. A **longer term evaluation strategy needs to be developed** in order to identify longer term impact on the participants. In particular, data needs to be collected in a way that will support fuller value for money analyses.

# 1.0 Introduction

This report outlines the key findings of the evaluation of conferences held as part of the Restorative Justice Project that has been funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and managed by the Birmingham Social Housing Partnership. The evaluation was conducted by a team from Birmingham City University, comprising the Social Research and Evaluation Unit and Sophie Rowe from the Department of Criminology.

## 1.1 Purpose

The aim of the evaluation was to explore whether across the partnership the RJ conference has resulted in:

* Repairing the harm caused by ASB
* Improving satisfaction for victims of ASB and residents
* Improve community safety by improving neighbour and community relations
* Further develop a new way of working for police and housing providers
* Reduce the number of repeat calls for service
* By reducing the demand for service, and avoiding legal remedies seek cost savings in service delivery

The evaluation had several key objectives:

First, the evaluation conducted a value for money analysis which

* Identified the costs of delivering a specialist Restorative Justice Service;
* Explored whether the intervention resulted in cost saving through factors such as reducing calls for service in future, not resorting to costly legal remedies, or considering the social return on investment.)

Second, the evaluation explored the effects of restorative justice conferences on victims and perpetrators. The evaluation explored

* how satisfied victims were with their outcomes and whether the intervention led to them feeling safer;
* whether the intervention developed the victims’ resilience and ability to deal with conflict and in the future.

Third, the evaluation would explore the role of restorative justice in tackling Community safety by

* Investigating the effect of RJ on community where restorative justice has been deployed to resolve an issue;
* Investigating and quantitying the sustainable outcomes which occurred as a  result a restorative justice intervention.

Fourth, the evaluation explored restorative practice by

* Assessing the effectiveness and cost of using restorative practises rather than conferences.

Finally, the evaluation explored the relative value of focusing RJ cases within a specialist team or integrating service provision into the wider arsenal of services.

## 1.2 Background

The Restorative Justice Project was originally developed by Midland Heart and West Midlands Police to address anti-social behaviour cases amongst social housing tenants. The programme was piloted between July and December 2014, encompassing Lozells and East Handsworth (Midland Heart, 2016).

The project was then funded by the West Midlands Office of the Police Crime Commissioner and the Pioneer Group to extend the project for a further 12 months. The partnership has grown and now (January 2017) includes Birmingham City Council, Bromford Housing, Family Optima, the Pioneer Group and Bournville Village Trust.

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a term that covers a wide range of practices and it is therefore necessary to be precise about our interpretation of the term. In the context of the Restorative Justice Project, it provides opportunities for those directly affected by anti-social behaviour - in both complex and straightforward disputes - as a victim (harmed) or perpetrator (harmer) or member of the wider community, to communicate and agree on how to deal with incidents and their consequences.

Anti-social behaviour cases are referred by West Midlands Police and partner housing associations to the Project Manager, who then allocates the case to a member of the Specialist Team. Once the case is referred to the Specialist Team, the harmed and harmer are both offered the opportunity to attend a Restorative Justice conference. If they agree, the Lead Facilitator arranges a conference but keeps the referrer informed with updates on how the restorative justice case is progressing. The Specialist Team is made up of Police Officers and Housing Officers who are trained specialists in restorative work. They co-ordinate and facilitate the whole case from start to finish, including preparation.

The process uses face-to-face conferences between the harmed, harmer and a Lead Facilitator, to ensure that the meetings are safe and managed appropriately for the victim (Midland Heart, 2016). Restorative justice conferences allow the harmed a chance to tell the harmer the real impact of the anti-social behaviour and to get answers to their questions. It also gives the harmer a chance to understand the impact of their actions. The focus of the conference is to explore emotional and at times physical or financial impact of behaviours and to determine solutions.

### 1.2.1 Police and Crime Plan 2017-20

While the Restorative Justice Project Evaluation was progressing, the PCC was finalising the latest version of the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan.  Under the section relating to supporting victims of crime, the PCC makes the following undertakings:

*I will develop a victim-focused Restorative Justice (RJ) strategy and service delivery model that will ensure that RJ is available to all victims of crime, at every stage of the criminal justice system and aims to put victims at the heart of Restorative Justice in the West Midlands.*

*I will increase the awareness of Restorative Justice accessibility, capacity and services available across the West Midlands.*

*I will explore local and regional best practice and keep abreast of new legislation, policies and updates to maximise the opportunities to use Restorative Justice across the West Midlands.*

*I will bring together voluntary and community sectors, alongside West Midlands Police, the CRC and Probation who also have a responsibility to deliver Restorative Justice.  In addition, it will give the criminal justice system an opportunity to reengage with our communities, victims of crime and offenders.*

## 1.3 Defining anti-social behaviour

The term ‘anti-social behaviour’ covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that daily affects people’s lives but that is not usually regarded as criminal. This type of behaviour is often referred to as ‘nuisance’, ‘disorder’ and ‘harassment’. According to the *Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003* and the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*, anti-social behaviour is defined as ‘behaviour by a person which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the person’.

Anti-social behaviour has been classified under three headings: ‘Personal’, ‘Nuisance’ and ‘Environmental’ by the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR) (National Policing Improvement Agency, 2011):

1. Personal: anti-social behaviour is perceived to be targeted at an individual or group rather than the community at large;
2. Nuisance: anti-social behaviour is causing trouble, annoyance or suffering to the community at large rather than an individual or group.
3. Environmental: The anti-social behaviour incident is not aimed at an individual or group but targets the wider environment, e.g., public spaces/buildings.

The Restorative Justice Project involved 869 cases, with the vast majority of cases being noise nuisance (see Table 1 below).

### Table 1: Types of anti-social behaviour cases identified in the RJ Project, 2015–2016

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Nuisance type** | **Primary cases** | ***% of total (N=869)*** | **Secondary cases** | ***% of total (N=869)*** |
| Alcohol related | 5 | *0.58* | 4 | *0.46* |
| Drugs / substance misuse / drug dealing | 9 | *1.04* | 6 | *0.69* |
| Garden nuisance | 6 | *0.69* | 1 | *0.12* |
| Hate related incidents (based on race, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, age, etc) | 4 | *0.46* | 2 | *0.23* |
| Litter / rubbish / fly-tipping | 9 | *1.04* | 4 | *0.46* |
| Misuse of communal areas / public space or loitering | 6 | *0.69* | 4 | *0.46* |
| Noise Nuisance | 406 | *46.72* | 79 | *9.09* |
| Nuisance from vehicles | 50 | *5.75* | 16 | *1.84* |
| Other | 47 | *5.41* | 33 | *3.80* |
| Pets and animal nuisance | 15 | *1.73* | 2 | *0.23* |
| Physical violence (other than alcohol related) | 32 | *3.68* | 1 | *0.12* |
| Prostitution / sexual acts / kerb crawling | 1 | *0.12* |   | *0.00* |
| Vandalism and damage to property | 9 | *1.04* | 5 | *0.58* |
| Verbal abuse / harassment / intimidation / threatening behaviour | 166 | *19.10* | 46 | *5.29* |
| Youths Congregating/Ball Games | 30 | *3.45* | 8 | *0.92* |
| Type not listed | 74 | *8.52* | NA |  |
| **Total** | **869** | ***100.00*** | **211** | ***24.28*** |

There were 406 cases where the main or ‘primary’ issue reported was of noise nuisance and 79 cases in which it was reported as an additional or ‘secondary’ issue. The next most common case was verbal abuse/harassment/intimidation/threatening behaviour. This was the primary issue in 166 cases and secondary in 46 cases. In 74 of the cases, the nuisance type is not listed.

The flowchart below (Figure 1) highlights the different routes an anti-social behaviour case may take.

### Figure 1: Anti-social behaviour cases



# 2.0 Methodology

The evaluation comprised two key phases. Phase 1 of the evaluation compared the costs of restorative justice conferences conducted as part of the Restorative Justice Project with standard approaches to resolving anti-social behaviour incidents. The key objectives of Phase 1 were to identify key costs of restorative justice conferences and to identify key costs of ‘standard’ anti-social approaches. Phase 2 of the evaluation explored experiences of restorative justice conferences so it was vital to engage directly with those who had experienced the process. Phase 2 also builds upon work conducted for Phase 1, which focused on time and financial costs to agencies of conducting conferences.

## 2.1 Phase 1: Financial and time costs of Restorative Justice Conferences

Phase 1 of the evaluation was developed to allow comparison of costs of the two approaches to anti-social behaviour. Using the costs of anti-social behaviour case management from the Restorative Justice Project and the standard response to anti-social behaviour, the research team have created a table to illustrate what monetary savings can be made as a result of the restorative justice intervention.

We follow the National Audit Office’s description of the concept of ‘value for money’: ‘identifying the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes’, using the key concerns of economy (spending less), efficiency (spending well) and effectiveness (spending wisely). This was based on quantitative data provided by the participating organisations. The aim of Phase 1 of the evaluation was therefore to compare the costs of restorative justice conferences conducted as part of the Restorative Justice Project with standard approaches to anti-social behaviour incidents.

### 2.1.1 Data used in the evaluation

The key information came from restorative justice and anti-social behaviour case records held by the partners. Two sets of data were collected. A range of data was provided by West Midlands Police and data was collected from the Restorative Justice Project partners.

The first set of data from the Police included the ‘restorative justice tracker’, which records all cases dealt with under the Project. This was up-to-date on 26th October 2016 and the first cases were logged on 1st January 2015. The second set of data was the spreadsheet of case records relating to ‘standard’ anti-social behaviour dated from January 2010 to December 2014. This was explored to provide comparison with the period covered by the Restorative Justice Project.

Records were provided that were most likely to have been referred to restorative justice if the Project had existed at that time. In addition, a short report was provided by the Police from December 2014 on the costs of restorative justice compared with the costs of standard anti-social behaviour cases which provided a basic standard model of anti-social behaviour case costs. This was based on a matched sample of 13 restorative justice and 13 anti-social behaviour cases.

The research team developed an open ended questionnaire that asked for details of time and financial costs for aspects of restorative justice cases and anti-social behaviour cases. The questionnaire was discussed with the sponsors and then delivered to key contacts in West Midlands Police and in the partner housing associations. Returns were received from West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council, Bournville Village Trust, Bromford Housing, Family Optima, Midland Heart and the Pioneer Group.

However, the data received was patchy for a number of reasons. First, not all housing associations were involved in the Restorative Justice Project as facilitators (and not represented on the Specialist Team); only the housing association partners were involved in seeking injunctions and re-possession orders against tenants; third, housing associations joined the partnership at different times during the project, so had varied experiences of it.

### 2.1.2 Costing Restorative Justice Conferences

The evaluation analyses the cost of Restorative Justice Conferences to Birmingham Social Housing Partnership and West Midlands Police, including staff costs directly allocated to the project for preparation time, attendance at conferences, and follow up work.

Staff pay has been calculated on the hourly wage of Police Officers, Police Community Support Offices, and Housing Officers involved in the project. Data collected indicated that preparation and follow up time for a restorative justice case varies due to the complexity of each case, therefore upper and lower limits were identified.

It is important to note that some Restorative Justice Conferences are conducted with another member of the Specialist Team as a Co-facilitator, this cost has been incorporated in the costings model by multiplying the hourly rates for conference attendance by two.

### 2.1.4 Exclusion criteria

Costs taken into account are only those of the agencies involved and not those of participants. Economic costings such as heating, desk space and meeting rooms have not been included in this evaluation as these are indirect costs. For example, the cost of room hire has not been included because the conferences are held in venues owned by the housing association partners. It should be noted that travel expenses of participants are not reimbursed as the conferences are held in venues that are deemed to be close enough to their homes

Training costs incurred have contributed to past cases and will continue to future cases, therefore these training costs have to take account of the number of cases that the trained personnel are likely to be involved in.

The training lasts for three days, which, for police officers, represents 28 working hours and 21 hours for housing officers. Table 2 below identifies the costs for individual staff to be trained in how to manage a restorative justice conference.

### Table 2: Training costs of Restorative Justice

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training costs**  | **Hours** | **Unit Cost** | **Total** |
| Training costs - Police officers | 28 | £22.29 | £624.12 |
| Training costs - Police Community Support Officers | 28 | £14.41 | £403.48 |
| Length of training for housing officers - Midland Heart | 21 | £17.40 | £365.40 |
| Length of training for housing officers – Pioneer Group | 21 | £17.40 | £365.40 |

## 2.2 Phase 2: Participants’ voices – experiences of Restorative Justice Conferences

The second part of the evaluation particularly addresses the third and fourth elements of the National Audit Office’s concept of value for money: ‘effectiveness’ and ‘Equity’, the latter which is most concerned with fairness and justice. This part of the study is a wider exploration of the experiences of residents, police and other professionals involved in Restorative Justice conferences. This was a qualitative piece of research based on interviews with participants.

The key concern of Phase 2 was how restorative justice conferences affected the lives of the parties involved. It explored whether conferences resolved issues for them; whether they empower tenants to address issues themselves more confidently and directly and the barriers that participants face in going through with conferences.

The research also investigated how conferences are managed and how effective they are as well as exploring the ways in which facilitators manage conferences to ensure that tenants feel empowered to address issues themselves. It was important to identify the training and support needs of facilitators to ensure that they manage cases effectively.

Participation in restorative justice depends on housing officers referring cases to RJ. It was important therefore to explore housing officers’ perceptions of the value of restorative justice and their experience of referring cases. It was also necessary to investigate the extent to which restorative justice is regarded as a key part of the arsenal of approaches to tackling ASB and low level crime.

The methodology of Phase 2 of the evaluation naturally took a qualitative approach in order to explore the issues facing the different groups involved in restorative justice conferences. Hence, interviews and focus groups were used to explore experiences of restorative justice conferences.

### 2.2.1 Sample for Phase 2

The key participants in Phase 2, as indicated above, were the tenants themselves (the so-called ‘harmed’ and ‘harmers’), the facilitators (members of the specialist team) and the housing officers who refer cases to restorative justice. Nineteen conference participants initially agreed to take part, of which, twelve were ‘harmed’ and seven were ‘harmers’; two specialist team supervisors, nine facilitators and six housing officers from the partner housing associations were interviewed.

However, of the 19 harmed and harmers who expressed willingness to take part in Phase 2 of the evaluation, only a proportion returned consent forms after repeated requests and, of these, not all were able to speak with researchers. This demonstrates the difficulties of engaging with tenants about their experiences of restorative justice conferences. Individuals who were said to be very positive about restorative justice were more willing to take part and were likely to have been harmed.

In total, eight conference participants were interviewed, each providing their experiences of restorative justice[[1]](#footnote-1). Each case is unique, combining very different personalities and situations. Whilst there are specific issues that are addressed by the individuals concerned, there are some commonalities. In order to highlight the uniqueness of the cases, they are outlined briefly in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Restorative Justice cases used in the evaluation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Identity* | *Harmed/**Harmer* | *Details of case* |
| Case 1 | Harmed | This was a case of noise nuisance. The interviewee felt that the conference had resolved the issue. The interviewee had been unaware of RJ before the case. The interviewee was positive about the experience of restorative justice and the conference and would recommend it for other issues.  |
| Case 2 | Harmed | This was a case of noise nuisance and verbal abuse. The interviewee was very positive about restorative justice because she had experienced a successful conference previously. In the most recent case, however, the other party (harmer) did not turn up to the conference and the situation between the parties had worsened.  |
| Case 3 | Harmed | This was a case of noise nuisance. Although she was satisfied with the conference itself and the support she received, she felt that the other party has not kept to their side of the agreement and she has pursued the case further. However, she is optimistic about restorative justice as an approach to other situations and with other people. |
| Case 4 | Harmed | In this case, which focused on verbal abuse, the interviewee was only moderately positive about the restorative justice conference although the conference had positive results. The interviewee does not feel that the issue has been resolved. The interviewee felt that restorative justice would be more effective in other situations.  |
| Case 5 | Harmer | This case provides a ‘harmer’s’ perspective. The case was about noise nuisance and the interviewee found the experience very positive because it made him aware of the effect his music had been having on his neighbour. The interviewee felt that both parties were supported well and that the outcome was positive and prevented the situation form getting far worse, possibly ending in his eviction. He would take part in a conference again. |
| Case 6 | Harmed | In this case, a mother took her son to restorative justice and was very positive about the result. The issue has been resolved and the ‘harmed’ now feels much safer and secure in her home. She was positive about the manner in which the case was managed and about the professionalism of the facilitator. She felt supported throughout.  |
| Case 7 | Harmed | This was a case of noise nuisance and verbal abuse which had been going on for five to six years. The interviewer found the conference itself a positive experience and the facilitators were fair to both parties. He was unaware of RJ prior to the case. The issue has been resolved but only partially. The interviewee would recommend restorative justice conferencing. |
| Case 8 | Harmed | This case addressed a low-level criminal offence involving racially aggravated malicious communications. The interviewee, who was the ‘harmed’, was unaware of restorative justice prior to the case. The interviewee felt that the conference was a positive experience because it resolved the issue without resorting to court action. He felt that RJ was a good way of resolving issues and felt empowered to address issues himself. |

The majority are interviews of ‘harmed’ and one of a ‘harmer’. The predominance of ‘harmed’ in the final sample was perhaps unsurprising. The cases referred to the restorative justice project were largely ones where there was a clear distinction between ‘harmed’ and ‘harmer’. Cases in which there is no acceptance of responsibility by the harmer are not generally referred to restorative justice.

### 2.2.2 Qualitative research design

Telephone interviews were conducted with the different parties in RJ conferences, commonly referred to as ‘harmed’ and ‘harmers’. This was the most effective way of reaching them as it required significant time investment for participants to be interviewed face-to-face and the research team wanted to have as little impact on participants’ normal routines as possible. Each person interviewed read and signed a consent form.

Focus groups and telephone interviews were conducted with Specialist Team members. Focus groups are a useful way of exploring shared experience and highlighting differences between different participants. Telephone interviews were the best way of engaging with individuals without having too much of an impact on their busy daily work schedules.

Telephone interviews were conducted with housing association representatives. These were selected on the basis of their role within their respective housing association and within the Restorative Justice Project.

The interview and focus group data has been analysed thematically. Key recurring themes, commonalities and experiences unique to individual participants have been identified.

# 3.0 Restorative Justice Conference Information

Between 1 January 2015 and 26 October 2016, 869 anti-social behaviour cases were referred to the Restorative Justice Project. Of these, 287 had resulted in a restorative justice conference. This group is the focus of this evaluation.

A face-to-face restorative group conference involves a facilitator, the offender and victim and their supporters (usually family members). Professionals, such as social workers, Youth Offending Teams (YOTS), probation, police or prison staff: representatives of the wider community may also be involved. These conferences follow a clear structure, with some facilitators choosing to follow a ‘script’ of set questions and may conclude with an agreement for further steps to be taken e.g. a form of reparation.

## 3.1 Facilitators

Conferences are led by individual facilitators (although in some cases by two facilitators) who are members of the Specialist Team. The Specialist Team is made up of staff from Midland Heart, the Pioneer Group and West Midlands Police. A staff member from the Pioneer Group is also involved in restorative justice cases as part of the Specialist Team but had not conducted a conference within the timeframe of this evaluation.

The facilitator manages the entire case from start to finish in order to build a trust relationship with the parties. The role encompasses all contact with parties in the case, administration and running the conference itself. This means that the majority of costs incurred relate to the facilitator (or co-facilitator). The costs of any other professionals attending the restorative conference are not included in this analysis, as there is no data on such additional attendance. Instead, it is assumed that one other person attends besides the facilitator; if the facilitator is from the police, then the costing assumes that someone from Midland Heart will also attend the conference and vice versa.

The majority (n=176) of the restorative justice conferences were facilitated by police officers or police community support officers (61.32%) and 111 were facilitated by Midland Heart employees (38.68%). Of the 15 conferences that had a co-facilitator, six were from the police and nine were from Midland Heart (Table 3).

### Table 3: Number of cases by lead case officer organisations

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Facilitators** | ***% of total (N=287)*** | **Co-facilitators** | ***% of total (N=287)*** |
| Midland Heart | 111 | *38.68* | 9 | *3.14* |
| PC | 36 | *12.54* | 3 | *1.05* |
| PCSO | 140 | *48.78* | 3 | *1.05* |
| **Total** | **287** | ***100*** | **15** | ***5.23*** |

*NB: no other partners had facilitated or co-facilitated an RJ conference by 26th October 2016.*

Some cases use a co-facilitator to: (a) provide support in more difficult cases where there is potential for danger to personnel; or (b) to provide an officer with experience of facilitating a conference. Where there was a co-facilitator, there was no clear pattern of partnership. Police Officers worked in collaboration with other Police Officers (4 cases) or with staff from Midland Heart (4 cases); Midland Heart staff worked with Police Officers (3 cases) or with other members of Midland Heart (5 cases) (see Table 4 below).

### Table 4: Facilitator and co-facilitator partnerships

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Facilitator** | **Co-facilitator** | ***Number of cases*** |
| Police | Midland Heart | *4* |
| Police | Police | *4* |
| Midland Heart | Police | *3* |
| Midland Heart | Midland Heart | *5* |

## 3.2 Referring agencies

The majority of conferences were the result of cases that were referred to the Specialist Team by West Midlands Police (n=150), Birmingham City Council (n=58) and Midland Heart (n=52). In addition, Estate Bloomsbury, Bromford Housing, Castle Vale Community Housing (Pioneer Group), Elim Housing, Family Optima and Nehemiah UCHA (and two agencies listed only as ‘other’) were also listed as referring agencies (Table 5).

### Table 5: Referring agency

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Referring agency** | **Cases** | ***% of total (N=287)*** |
| Birmingham City Council | 58 | *20.21* |
| Bromford Housing | 1 | *0.35* |
| Castle Vale Community Housing | 7 | *2.44* |
| Elim Housing | 1 | *0.35* |
| Estate Bloomsbury | 5 | *1.74* |
| Family Optima | 10 | *3.48* |
| Midland Heart | 52 | *18.12* |
| Nehemiah UCHA | 1 | *0.35* |
| OTHER | 2 | *0.70* |
| West Midlands Police | 150 | *52.26* |
| **Total** | **287** | ***100*** |

## 3.3 Geographical location of conferences

The majority of conferences (n=222) arose from cases in the West and Central police team areas of Birmingham (Table 6).

### Table 6: Geographical split

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Total** | ***% of total (N=287)*** |
| North | 64 | *22.30* |
| West and Central | 222 | *77.35* |
| No data recorded | 1 | *0.35* |
| **Total** | **287** | ***100*** |

## 3.4 Length of RJ cases

All the cases where a conference was held were recorded as ‘closed’ by 26th October 2016. The number of days taken by cases that resulted in a conference ranged from 0 to 246. The majority of cases were closed within 50 days. The largest proportion of cases (25.09%) were closed between 1 and 10 days (Table 7). Clearly this has a cost implication as longer cases will require more preparation and follow-up work. However, the vast majority of conferences result in much shorter cases than standard anti-social behaviour cases.

### Table 7: Length of RJ cases

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of days** | **Number of cases** | **% of total (N=287)** |
| 0 | 2 | 0.70 |
| 1 – 10 | 72 | 25.09 |
| 11 – 20 | 68 | 23.69 |
| 21 - 30 | 60 | 20.91 |
| 31 – 40 | 28 | 9.76 |
| 41 – 50 | 26 | 9.06 |
| 51 – 60 | 9 | 3.14 |
| 61 – 70 | 9 | 3.14 |
| 71 – 80 | 4 | 1.39 |
| 81 – 90 | 2 | 0.70 |
| 91 – 100 | 2 | 0.70 |
| 101 – 199 | 3 | 1.05 |
| 200 + | 2 | 0.70 |
| **Total** | **287** | **100** |

On average, cases that resulted in a conference took 26.85 days. The vast majority (89.21%) of cases took up to 50 days from opening to closure and the modal number of days was 7; 15 cases took seven days. Three cases took more than 100 days (105, 108, 121). Two cases took more than 200 days at 239 and 246 days respectively, indicating that these were clearly outliers and possibly much more complex cases.

## 3.5 Conference outcomes

The Restorative Justice Case Tracker records the outcomes of the cases where conferences have been held and the results can be seen in Table 8 below. The largest proportion of cases (93.73%) closed with both parties satisfied with the result. Only eight conferences did not result in the parties being satisfied. Of these, it was the harmed party that was not satisfied with the result. In addition, in ten cases, the outcome was not recorded.

Overall, therefore, it can be argued that the conferences have largely been successful in resolving anti-social behaviour cases.

### Table 8: Case outcome

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Satisfied or not satisfied?** | **N** | ***% of total (N=287)*** |
| RJ case closed: both parties satisfied after conference | 269 | *93.73* |
| RJ case closed: BOTH HARMED and HARMER NOT satisfied after conference | 2 | *0.70* |
| RJ case closed: HARMED NOT satisfied after conference | 5 | *1.74* |
| RJ case closed: HARMER NOT satisfied after conference | 1 | *0.35* |
| No data available | 10 | *3.48* |
| **Total** | **287** | ***100*** |

## 3.6 Repeat calls

An indication of success of a conference is whether there have been repeat calls from the property following the completion of a case. Unfortunately, it is difficult to identify where repeat calls have been logged.

There were 74 cases where data could be found (see Table 9 below). In 62 of these cases the number of calls after a conference was fewer than had occurred before hand, while in 6 cases there had been an increase. As 269 of the 287 cases supposedly resulted in a situation in which all parties were satisfied with the outcome, this suggests that some people do not comply with the agreement.

Ideally there would be no repeat calls if the situation had been resolved satisfactorily for all parties. One cannot, however, infer from the data that the other 213 cases did not have any repeat calls, as the data is not available to confirm that.

### Table 9: Repeat calls after the case for sample of 74 where data available

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of repeat calls** | **Number of cases** | ***% of total (N=74)*** |
| Increase in calls | 6 | *8.11* |
| Same number of calls | 6 | *8.11* |
| Reduction by one | 35 | *47.30* |
| Reduction by two | 13 | *17.57* |
| Reduction by three | 3 | *4.05* |
| Reduction by four | 8 | *10.81* |
| Reduction by five | 1 | *1.35* |
| Reduction by seven | 1 | *1.35* |
| Reduction by nine | 1 | *1.35* |
| **Total** | **74** | ***100*** |

It is acknowledged that there are some challenges when examining repeat calls to service. For example, some ‘personal’ cases of anti-social behaviour (where action is directed at particular individuals) may have been resolved by either of the parties moving away, a resolution that is not sustainable as the issue may then affect someone else. Furthermore, cases of anti-social behaviour that are ‘environmental’ may not appear to be resolved as new tenants move in and record the same behaviour. The desired outcome is that neighbours resolve the issues between them.

# 4.0 Phase 1: Costs of Restorative Justice Conferencing

This section outlines the key costs of conferences as part of the Restorative Justice Project. An average restorative justice conference includes Preparation, including visits to harmed and harmers; attendance at the conference; follow-up with both parties. These are the basic costs around which the costing model has been developed.

## 4.1 Preparation of conferences

Communications with colleagues from the police and housing agencies involved in the Restorative Justice Project indicate that the amount of time dedicated to cases varies enormously. Estimates provided for the length of time required for preparation have ranged from one to 30 hours (this last estimate included ten hours for visiting the parties in their own homes and for computational purposes is regarded as an unusual outlier).

The variation that can exist between cases can be huge. A colleague from Midland Heart observed that the shortest preparation time was between four and five hours whereas in the longest case she had worked on, preparation time was about 15 hours. Table 10 below highlights the costs of preparation for a Restorative Justice Conference. In each case, upper and lower costs have been provided. Five hours is given as the lower amount of time spent and 15 the highest, following information provided by the above informant.

### Table 10: Costs for preparation of a restorative justice conference

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Staff member** | **Hours (lower)**  | **Hours (upper)** | **Unit Cost** | **Total (lower)** | **Total (upper)** |
| Police Officer | 5 | 15 | £22.29 | £111.45 | £334.35 |
| Police Community Support Officer | 5 | 15 | £14.41 | £72.05 | £216.15 |
| Midland Heart staff | 5 | 15 | £17.40 | £87.00 | £261.00 |
| Pioneer Group staff | 5 | 15 | £17.40 | £87.00 | £261.00 |

## 4.2 Attendance at a conference

It is generally agreed by colleagues in the Partnership and on the Specialist Team that a conference would not be longer than two hours. On this basis, Table 11 below shows the costs for a facilitator attending a restorative justice conference.

### Table 11: Costs for attendance at a restorative justice conference

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Staff member** | **Hours** | **Unit Cost** | **Total** |
| Police Officer | 2 | £22.29 | £44.58 |
| Police Community Support Officer | 2 | £14.41 | £28.82 |
| Midland Heart staff | 2 | £17.40 | £34.80 |
| Pioneer Group staff | 2 | £17.40 | £34.80 |

## 4.3 Conference follow-up

The length of time taken by facilitators to undertake conference follow-up varies according to the complexity of the case. Respondents have provided a range of widely varying timescales for this activity. Estimates range from one to seven hours. The costs for a facilitator of following-up a restorative justice conference are provided in Table 12 below.

### Table 12: Costs for follow-up from an RJ conference

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Staff member** | **Hours (lower)** | **Hours (upper)** | **Unit Cost** | **Total (lower)** | **Total (upper)** |
| Police Officer | 1 | 7 | £22.29 | £22.29 | £156.03 |
| Police Community Support Officer | 1 | 7 | £14.41 | £14.41 | £100.87 |
| Midland Heart staff | 1 | 7 | £17.40 | £17.40 | £121.80 |
| Pioneer Group staff | 1 | 7 | £17.40 | £17.40 | £121.80 |

## 4.4 Modelling Restorative Justice Costs

The lowest, highest and average cost for the preparation, attendance and follow-up at the restorative justice conference is based on Tables 8, 9 and 10, for one person (see Table 13 below). To this has to be added the cost of training staff to manage a restorative justice conference (see Table 2 above).

However, there is a diminishing cost per trained staff depending on the number of cases they are involved in. This is difficult to assess because there is no data on the number of cases a trained person takes on. Assuming, conservatively, that training is valid for 10 cases, then the costs above would need to be increased.

### Table 13: Costs per person for restorative justice conference

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Hours** | **PC** | **PCSO** | **Midland Heart** |
| Preparation | 5 | £111.45 | £72.05 | £87.00 |
| 10 | £222.90 | £144.10 | £174.00 |
| 15 | £334.35 | £216.15 | £261.00 |
| Attendance | 2 | £44.58 | £28.82 | £34.80 |
| Follow up | 1 | £22.29 | £14.41 | £17.40 |
| 4 | £91.60 | £57.64 | £69.60 |
| 7 | £156.03 | £100.87 | £121.80 |
| Total | Lowest | £178.32 | £115.28 | £139.20 |
|   | Median | £356.64 | £230.56 | £278.40 |
|   | Highest | £534.96 | £345.84 | £417.60 |
| **Total + training costs per case, assuming training costs are spread over 10 cases** | **Lowest** | **£240.72** | **£155.58** | **£175.70** |
| **Median** | **£419.04** | **£270.86** | **£314.90** |
| **Highest** | **£597.36** | **£386.14** | **£454.10** |

We could model a total costing for all 287 restorative justice cases given the data and the extent of involvement of police officers, police community support officers and Midland Heart staff[[2]](#footnote-2). We note that 15 cases had joint facilitators.

The model assumes that the co-facilitator attended the conference and therefore the cost was increased but that preparation and follow-up was split between the co-facilitators so no extra costs were incurred. Given that the model assumes two professionals in attendance at the conference, the co-facilitation is subsumed within that computation.

The following is the total cost for three scenarios in which all 287 cases had (1) minimum preparation and follow up; (2) median preparation and follow up; (3) maximum preparation and follow up (see Tables 14, 15 and 16 below).

### Table 14: Estimated cost of restorative justice conferences: lowest cost parameters

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PC** | **PCSO** | **MH** | **Total** |
| Number of facilitations | 36 | 140 | 111 | 287 |
| Total lowest cost per case (£) | £240.72 | £155.58 | £175.70 |   |
| Total cost for all cases (£) | £8,665.92 | £21,781.20 | £19,502.70 | £49,971.78 |
| Attendance cost of other professional\* (£) | £44.58 | £28.82 | £34.80 |   |
| Total additional extra professional cost (£) | £8,734.80 | £5,115.60 | £5,072.32 | £18,922.72 |
| Grand total lowest cost (£) | £17,400.72 | £26,896.80 | £24,575.02 | £68,894.50 |

*\*This is another member of the Specialist Team to complement the facilitator, who may in some cases be a co-facilitator. The highest cost of a PC has been used here to complement a Midland Heart facilitator*

### Table 15: Estimated cost of restorative justice conferences: median cost parameters

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PC** | **PCSO** | **MH** | **Total** |
| No of facilitations | 36 | 140 | 111 | 287 |
| Total median cost per case (£) | £419.04 | £270.86 | £314.90 |   |
| Total cost for all cases (£) | £15,085.44 | £37,920.40 | £34,953.90 | £88,047.58 |
| Co-facilitator attendance cost (£) | £44.58 | £28.82 | £34.80 |   |
| Total additional extra professional cost\* (£) | £8,734.80 | £5,115.60 | £7,846.08 | £21,696.48 |
| Grand total median cost (£) | £23,820.24 | £43,036.00 | £42,799.98 | £109,744.06 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

*\*This is another member of the Specialist Team to complement the facilitator, who may in some cases be a co-facilitator. The highest cost of a PC has been used here to complement a Midland Heart facilitator*

### Table 16: Estimated cost of 287 restorative justice conferences: highest cost parameters

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PC** | **PCSO** | **MH** | **Total** |
| No of facilitations | 36 | 140 | 111 | 287 |
| Total highest cost per case (£) | £597.36 | £386.14 | £454.10 |   |
| Total cost for all cases (£) | £21,504.96 | £54,059.60 | £50,405.10 | £125,969.66 |
| Co-facilitator attendance cost (£) | £44.58 | £28.82 | £34.80 |   |
| Total additional extra professional cost\* (£) | £8,734.80 | £5,115.60 | £7,846.08 | £21,696.48 |
| Grand total highest cost (£) | £30,239.76 | £59,175.20 | £58,251.18 | £147,666.14 |

*\*This is another member of the Specialist Team to complement the facilitator, who may in some cases be a co-facilitator. The highest cost of a PC has been used here to complement a Midland Heart facilitator*

## 4.5 Costs of ‘Standard’ anti-social behaviour cases prior to January 2014

In this section, we explore the potential costs of anti-social behaviour cases. The dataset covers the period 2010 to 2016 in which there were 897 cases recorded. On average, there were 179 cases per year (see Table 17 below).

### Table 17: Number of cases

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of cases** |
| 2010 | 64 |
| 2011 | 66 |
| 2012 | 171 |
| 2013 | 346 |
| 2014 | 250 |
| **Total** | **897** |

## 4.5.1 Anti-social behaviour costs

The cost attributed to West Midland Police anti-social behaviour cases has been provided by New Economy Unit Cost Database from March 2015 (New Economy, 2015) (see Table 18 below).

### Table 18: Costs attributed to anti-social behaviour cases

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Unit cost** |
| Initial unit cost of ASB investigation | £500.00 |
| Additional call  | £35.00 |
| Warning Letter  | £66.00 |
| Anti-Social Behaviour Contract  | £230.00 |
| Multi agency meetings | £300.00 |
| Warrant – assumed additional call (£35) multiplied by number of officers involved  | £35.00 |
| Arrest – detained | £593.00 |
| Arrest - with no further action | £285.00 |

## 4.5.2 Injunctions and repossession

Where cases of anti-social behaviour result in legal interventions, there are a range of costs to be taken into account. For housing associations, the following costs were highlighted. Correspondents highlighted that costs often varied according to complexity of individual cases (see Table 19 below).

### Table 19: Costs of Injunctions and repossessions resulting from anti-social behaviour cases

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Lower cost** | **Upper cost** |
| *Cost of seeking an injunction*  |   |   |
| Issue fee | NA | £255.00 |
| Solicitors’ fees | £1,700.00 | £3,000.00 |
|   |   |   |
| *Cost of re-possession* |   |   |
| Notice seeking possession (NSP) | £15.00 | £150.00 |
| Solicitors fees drafting NSP | £47.50 | £345.00 |
| Possession fee | NA | £2,500.00 |
|   |   |   |
| *Additional costs of professionals* |   |   |
| Psychiatric reports | £700.00 | £2,000.00 |
| Environmental health Officer reports | £350.00 | £500.00 |
| Witness summons | NA | £50.00 |
| Conduct fees | £33.50 | £64.00 |

## 4.5.3 Additional costs

A respondent referred to costs relating to specialised equipment that is sometimes required as a result of anti-social behaviour cases (see Table 20 below).

### Table 20: Costs of additional equipment resulting from ASB cases

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Cost** |
| Protech surveillance equipment | £550 |
| Noise monitoring equipment - purchase | £5,000 |
| Noise monitoring equipment - annual maintenance | £500.00 |

## 4.6 Comparison of restorative justice conference and pre-2014 anti-social behaviour cases

The data provided by the West Midlands police for a matched sample of 13 completed cases, separated the cases into high, medium and low complexity. The highest, lowest, and mean cost of each group is shown in Table 21 below.

### Table 21: Cost of anti-social behaviour cases by complexity

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Complexity** | **Lowest** | **Highest** | **Mean** | **Mean cost of RJ** | **RJ as proportion of mean ASB cost** |
| High | £807 | £4,435 | £2,787.75 | £129.06 | 0.046 |
| Medium | £500 | £1,350 | £987.20 | £199.38 | 0.202 |
| Low | £535 | £1,141 | £897.25 | £115.82 | 0.129 |
| ***All*** | ***£500*** | ***£4,435*** | ***£1,513.54*** | ***£152.04*** | ***0.1*** |

The matched costs for the 13 completed cases showed that the cost for the restorative justice approach was much cheaper. The mean cost for the high complexity cases was £129 just 5% of the cost of the equivalent 2014 anti-social behaviour costs. The medium cases, at an average of £199 for restorative justice, are about 20% of the anti-social behaviour costs. The low complexity cases, at £103 on average were 13% of the anti-social behaviour costs. Overall for the thirteen completed cases, the restorative justice approach was just one tenth of the cost of the cost of the previous anti-social behaviour approach.

This is a small sample and no more detailed on a larger group of anti-social behaviour cases is currently available. However, we could scale up from these costs albeit bearing in mind they are based on a very small number of costed anti-social behaviour cases, which may be a biased sample.

In the 22 months from 1 January 2015, 869 anti-social behaviour cases were referred to the Restorative Justice Project. Of these, 287, as detailed above, resulted in a restorative justice conference. Assuming that these 287 were not just the simplest cases but a random sample of all anti-social behaviour cases, it would be possible to make some comparisons with the costed anti-social behaviour sample. As there was no other cost data for the standard anti-social behaviour approach available the results of the sample of 13 have been extrapolated to enable comparison with restorative justice total cost.

Comparing these costs with those in Tables 14–16 above, this shows that even the highest total cost for the restorative justice approach of £147,666 (see Table 16 above) is well below the estimated cost (for a roughly equal number of high, medium and low complexity cases), viz. £434,386 for the standard approach: making a saving of £286,720 (see Table 22 below).

### Table 22: Cost of a total of 287 anti-social behaviour cases, by complexity, based on extrapolation from the sample of 13 cases (to nearest £)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Complexity** | **Mean cost (£)** |
| High | £800,084 |
| Medium | £283,326 |
| Low | £257,510 |
| ***All*** | ***£434,386*** |

Taking the lowest cost for the restorative justice approach, £68,895 (see Table 14 above), the saving is £365,491, which works out close to £200,000 per year over the 22 months of the study.

## 4.6.1 Length of cases

Most anti-social behaviour cases are not resolved and remain on the records for some time. As can be seen in Table 23 below, which shows all cases in 2012, anti-social behaviour cases vary hugely in their length. Almost two thirds of cases (n=108, 64%) lasted up to 100 days and only 27% resolved within a month (30 days). The average length of time taken for anti-social behaviour cases is 117 days. In comparison with the restorative justice conferences, where 70% cases were resolved within 30 days, standard anti-social behaviour cases take much longer to reach a conclusion.

### Table 23: Length RJ and ASB cases

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of days** | **RJ Conferences, 2014-16** | **ASB cases, 2012** |
| **Number of cases** | **% of total (N=287)** | **Number of cases** | **% of total (N=171)** |
| 0 | 2 | 0.70 | 5 | 2.92 |
| 1 to 10 | 72 | 25.09 | 13 | 7.60 |
| 11 to 20 | 68 | 23.69 | 11 | 6.43 |
| 21 to 30 | 60 | 20.91 | 17 | 9.94 |
| 31 to 40 | 28 | 9.76 | 9 | 5.26 |
| 41 to 50 | 26 | 9.06 | 10 | 5.85 |
| 51 to 60 | 9 | 3.14 | 11 | 6.43 |
| 61 to 70 | 9 | 3.14 | 8 | 4.68 |
| 71 to 80 | 4 | 1.39 | 6 | 3.51 |
| 81 to 90 | 2 | 0.70 | 11 | 6.43 |
| 91 to 100 | 2 | 0.70 | 8 | 4.68 |
| 101 to 200 | 3 | 1.05 | 31 | 18.13 |
| 201 to 300 | 2 | 0.70 | 13 | 7.60 |
| 301 to 400 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 6.43 |
| 401 to 500 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1.17 |
| 500 to 600 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2.34 |
| 900 + | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.58 |
| **Total** | **287** | **100.00** | **171** | **100.00** |

One ASB case lasted for over 900 days but this is clearly an exception. Indeed, this case was referred to Restorative Justice and was resolved after a conference.

It might be that as cases are cheaper and quicker using restorative justice, that more cases may be taken on, which would increase total costs but better serve the community.

# 5.0 Phase 2: Participants’ voices – experiences of Restorative Justice Conferences

There are a wide range of themes that emerge from the interview and focus group data. The key broad issues strongly relate to understanding of restorative justice, outcomes of the conferences, barriers to holding conferences, importance of the facilitator’s role and promotion of restorative justice.

## 5.1 Awareness of RJ amongst tenants

Most conference participants in this study observed that they were unaware of restorative justice before they were referred. One participant noted that ‘I wasn’t expecting anything, as I hadn’t heard of RJ before they referred my case’ (Harmed, Case 7). This lack of awareness resulted in some uncertainty and nervousness about what to expect. One participant reflected:

*We’d never been to one before. We wondered what we were letting ourselves in for. A lot of people don’t really know about it. (Harmed, Case 1)*

There is some evidence that tenants are put off engaging in restorative justice from the start because they are not aware of or do not understand the concept. In some cases, this is an initial reaction which can change with more information and explanation. However, in some cases, views are entrenched and individuals are unwilling to change:

*Some people don’t grasp what a conference is or means. You try to give them a chance to digest what it means in scenarios like these. You try not to pressurise them. Some will change their mind if you give them time (after initially refusing a conference). It’s about building a rapport and trust. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

*People are often prejudiced against RJ from the start. The name ‘Restorative Justice’ puts some people off. The response is often to say ‘I don’t want any mediation’ but we always say that it can be useful*. *(Housing Association representative)*

## 5.2 Positive impact of RJ conferences

In general, tenants participating in this study have been positive about the use of restorative justice conferences as a way of addressing their particular situations. Two of the interviewees who were ‘harmed’ (Case 2 and Case 6) were very positive about their experience:

*It’s been a wonderful process. Very positive. (Harmed, Case 2)*

*It’s been absolutely great. The conference is a great middle ground, a bridge. (Harmed, Case 6)*

For a ‘harmer’, too, the conference had proved to be a positive experience. Indeed, the participant in Case 5 felt the conference may have helped avert serious action against him. Asked if the restorative justice process was useful, the interviewee responded:

*Yes, absolutely satisfied… Yes, definitely. If it hadn’t have happened then the other process would have been possibly eviction. (Harmer, Case 5)*

One case, in which restorative justice was used to address low level criminal activity, helped to provide both closure to the victim and understanding of the impact of the harm for the offender. The interviewee reflected:

*I felt that I had received justice. Facing the person who committed the act face-to-face and knowing that there had been police involvement/ an arrest procedure. It was also justifying that the harmed was involved in witnessing the harmer’s wrongdoing being explained to them. I felt that it was a good learning experience for the other party. (Harmed, Case 8)*

In this case, the interviewee felt that the conference had been a good learning experience for him as the ‘harmer’. In Case 5, where the participant was a harmer, this was also true. The restorative justice approach had revealed to the ‘harmer’ the impact of his behaviour on the neighbour:

*I thought it was okay to play my music but I was completely oblivious to the effect it was having on my neighbour. Now I know. (Harmer, Case 5)*

## 5.3 Less positive experiences of RJ conferences

However, in two of the cases in this evaluation, the parties were not fully satisfied with the results. This was because the issue was not resolved in the view of the participants. The participant in Case 4 said that she has ‘still got problems. I do all I can to avoid issues with her.’ The participant in Case 3 said:

*I’m not satisfied - the other party started causing the same issues (loud noise) straight after the conference. (Harmed, Case 3)*

In these cases, the participants felt that restorative justice was not the best approach in their particular cases:

*Under different circumstances, i.e. with a more reasonable person, I would go through it again. (Harmed, Case 3)*

*For different situations it might be more useful. (Harmed, Case 4)*

It was clear from Case 4 that, whilst the participant was not positive about the restorative justice process, it was recognised on reflection that conferences help relieve tensions and issues between neighbours:

*Having the [restorative justice] meeting did help in my mental health – I was afraid just walking to school; I walked a different route every day just so I wouldn’t see her. (Harmed, Case 4)*

The issues discussed in the conferences are not usually solved completely. An element of the problem remains. For example, one party felt that the issues had been solved:

*Well, about ninety percent but it’s not so much of a problem now. As I say, you always expect some noise in flats like these. (Harmed, Case 1)*

In addition to such issues facing resolution of cases of anti-social behaviour, some tenants are thought by facilitators to use accusations of anti-social behaviour as a method of justifying the need for a move:

*Sometimes, there is an ulterior motive like wanting a house move. You often see this with ASB with customers from the housing side. People don’t want their case to be resolved if this is the case. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

## 5.4 RJ conferencing as empowerment?

However, there was mixed evidence from the interviews with tenants relating to the issue of whether they felt empowered to address anti-social behaviour issues in the future. Several tenants clearly felt that restorative justice had been a good way of engaging with neighbours in a dispute:

*It was much better than contacting the police every time. It’s better than shouting at each other. (Harmed, Case 2)*

*[The issue] was largely a misunderstanding that got a bit out of hand and we needed to talk to each other. (Harmed, Case 1)*

*It’s a great chance to talk to the other person in a formal way, getting your point across without being interrupted. You can give your answer to things they have thought about you. It’s good because you can do it calmly: normally you might just get angry. (Harmed,* Case 6*)*

For the participant in Case 5, a ‘harmer’, although restorative justice was useful, he felt that he was already able to address issues by talking with neighbours. For him, restorative justice was a good way of helping less confident individuals to resolve issues with neighbours:

*I would have happily have spoken to someone myself prior to the conference as I am not easily frightened. However, if I was a timid person I would use RJ again to try and resolve it. (Harmer, Case 5)*

For the housing associations, restorative justice is one way of helping tenants to develop their own skills in solving issues between themselves and their neighbours. For one housing officer, conferences had:

*definitely [empowered tenants]. It’s a platform with the right support and assistance we have been able to get them to self-help. (Housing officer)*

Another housing officer felt that restorative justice had ‘empower[ed] in terms of dealing with issues themselves’. She went on to highlight the approach that her housing association takes to supporting tenants through cases:

*The tenants get a lot of support from us and it helps them to address future issues as communication is a core issue. We have good links with the RJ team. We use their questions to get people thinking in a different way. When we did the training we got a sheet of questions to get people to communicate better. (Housing officer)*

## 5.5 Improvement of communications between neighbours

Conferences do seem to improve communications between neighbours. At best, a conference can be an opportunity for neighbours to improve their relationship. At worst, neighbours are able to be civil with each other. One interviewee (Harmed, Case 2), who was positive about restorative justice, observed that ‘we were able to share our points of view honestly and we’re now best of friends!’ Another interviewee (Harmer, Case 4), who was less positive about her experience, reflected that ‘well, I never expected to be best of friends… but at least we’ve stopped shouting at each other. At least we’re civil to each other.’

The use of the phrase ‘best of friends’ in both these cases reflects a wider issue that the Restorative Justice Project is fundamentally about managing relationships between individuals rather than a way of addressing more serious criminal activity. Indeed, as one housing association representative observed, ‘most RJ cases are about lifestyle clashes.’

Some of the participants highlighted that the conference had been an opportunity to express their feelings without interruption. This also meant, in two of the cases (Case 3 and Case 4), that the other party ‘told lies about me’ and in Case 2, ‘someone had wound the other party up with some stories about me that were untrue’.

## 5.6 Managing harmers and harmed

Interviewees frequently referred to ‘victims’ and ‘offenders’ or ‘harmed’ and ‘harmer’. For parties interviewed, there was a clear feeling that they were either a victim or an offender. Indeed, as one housing officer observed, ‘we only refer cases where there is a clear distinction between harmer and harmed’.

However, despite using these terms themselves, facilitators are clear that restorative justice cases are designed to allow both sides to present their perspectives.

*We are always on the defence and do not choose sides. We have to make sure we give equal time to each party and allow them both to have their say. It’s not always as clear cut as this is the harmed and this is the harmer. (Facilitator 1, Police)*

Indeed, one facilitator reflected that parties to a conference had both contributed in some way to the situation and that the conference was an opportunity for participants to recognise their own roles:

*Often it’s tit-for-tat. Both sides have done things that the other is annoyed about. RJ conferences provide a light bulb moment for many people. (Facilitator 2, Police)*

Restorative justice involves facilitators and other agencies taking a sensitive approach to both parties in which there is no suspicion of prejudice against particular parties. It is important that agency staff make no judgement on the individuals concerned, make no judgements about guilt; and ensure that the case is not used to gather evidence:

*Police and housing officers sometimes make an immediate judgement which can cause problems. One person has refused to see police/housing officers because of perceived prejudice. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

*Sometimes warning letters are sent by the housing association during prep[aration] which can antagonise customers. In non- crime instances, looking at the situation before enforcement process begins will work. Trying to convince them to hold fire to try and get situation resolved with RJ. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

*Sometimes conferences are used as a way of gathering evidence: try and manage all the risk before going into a conference. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

One facilitator observed: ‘at the end both parties sign a form and we try to ensure that they shake hands. A handshake is very important.’ For another facilitator (Police), it is a positive result if both parties have listened to each other and made an agreement at the end of the meeting:

*They’re talking and you’re listening when they shake hands – that’s money in the bank for me. (Facilitator 2, Police)*

## 5.7 Importance of the facilitator role

Interviews with conference participants have highlighted the importance of the facilitator in managing restorative justice cases. Parties refer to the skill of the facilitator in managing the conference. For example, one participant (harmed, Case 1) noted that ‘the facilitator was very good’ and a harmer (Case 5) commented that the conference ‘was well mediated.’

Facilitators refer to the need for careful management of the whole case from start to finish, including the conference itself. Facilitators are concerned to highlight that restorative justice is not an investigative activity. It is important for parties to make the decisions themselves. It is vital that facilitators do not imply that any party is at fault.

A key part of restorative justice conferences, as facilitators point out throughout the interviews, is that participants make their own decisions/agreements. The role of the facilitator is to assist parties in reaching decisions themselves and not act in any investigative or judgemental role.

## 5.8 Challenges facing agreements between parties

A key part of a conference is the development of an agreement between the two parties to address the issue between them.

### 5.8.1 Time to reflect

However, although facilitators state that they are careful to allow parties time to reflect on the draft agreement, it is not always regarded as satisfactory. One party to a conference noted that there was a need for more time to reflect on the agreement before signing it:

*The experience wasn’t rushed, but I would have appreciated half an hour out over a cup of tea to think about it more before the final agreement was signed. You start to analyse it more after the conference. (Harmed, Case 7)*

### 5.8.2 RJ is not legally binding

Once an agreement is reached it is not legally binding and this poses challenges. There is no guarantee that the anti-social behaviour will not occur again. There was some concern amongst parties that, because the agreement is not legally binding, there is little that can be done if parties do not abide by it. One party felt that the risk is still there that the conference agreement might not work:

*I am still affected in terms of ‘it is too good to be true’. The agreement is not legally binding and therefore the offender could easily return. At the moment the offender is causing trouble at his own place rather than his girlfriend’s. (Harmed, Case 7)*

### 5.8.3 Entrenchment in long standing issues

Cases which have gone on for a long time can be difficult to resolve with restorative justice. As one facilitator from the Police argued, ‘You don’t get success with cases that have gone on for years’. This is exemplified in two cases where issues have become entrenched:

*It has been an on-going issue for 5-6 years. It involved the offender having an alcohol problem and it was more of a constant noise issue and being verbally abused. I will never really understand why and I don’t think he really does either. (Harmed, Case 7)*

*The only thing to make things better for me is for her to be evicted. You cannot reason with her, she is unreasonable. (Harmed, Case 3)*

## 5.9 Non-attendance at conferences

Tenants are not always willing to engage with the other party, either harmed or harmer. Indeed, as a restorative justice specialist team supervisor noted, ‘only one in three will agree to meet their offenders’. In two of the cases described by participants, one of the parties has failed to appear at the conference.

No explanation is available from the cases themselves, but clearly the party is unwilling to engage. One participant (Harmed, Case 1), who was positive about restorative justice, noted that there had been two attempts at holding a conference because ‘the first time we got there and the other chap just didn’t show up.’ Another participant, who was very positive about restorative justice, noted that

*RJ is wonderful but I was so disappointed that the other party, a young woman, didn’t turn up…. It was such a shame because there were things I wanted to ask her but didn’t get a chance. (Harmed,* Case 2*)*

There are many potential reasons for non-attendance at a conference. However, as a restorative justice specialist team supervisor explained,

*The lack of participation is often due to fear or more in-depth matters, for example if the harmed feels the situation has already gone too far. (Supervisor, Specialist Team)*

## 5.10 Logistics of arranging a conference

Arranging a suitable time for a conference can be problematic. As each party has commitments and some will be at work at specific times, arranging a mutually convenient time can be challenging for facilitators:

*Practically it’s a challenge. We have to make sure it’s at a time to suit both parties; find out commitments, working hours and so-on. We always then have to confirm the date, time and venue. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

The choice of venue can be problematic for a range of reasons. There are challenges facing facilitators in finding an appropriate venue, which can be problematic and this can take time:

*For new facilitators, trying to find appropriate venues is a big issue. If you are new to the area, trying to find appropriate venues for conferences take time. (Facilitator, Housing Association)*

*Hold-ups can be caused by the lack of venue. We have to tailor the meeting towards the needs of the customers. We try and make the venue local to customers. It’s putting the logistics together. We have to be flexible with our hours to ensure conference is held. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

A venue has to be comfortable, convenient and private for the participants. As one facilitator argued, ‘it has to be comfortable and relaxing’. The same facilitator observed that the nature of the housing association determined what sort of venue was available:

*There is a difference between the housing associations. Birmingham City Council and other big providers own whole buildings and there are often community rooms within these. However, smaller housing associations will own a few flats within a building and it is inappropriate to use the building’s community room. (Facilitator 3, Housing Association)*

For the participants themselves, the choice of venue may have negative associations. Some interviewees, both conference participants and facilitators, felt, in particular, that the use of police stations as conference venues can be problematic:

*It was a bit more nerve-racking than I expected. It took place at a police station and that may have been intimidating for someone who had never been to a police station before. (Harmed, Case 7)*

*The venue can be a barrier. Some parties are put off a conference by the venue especially if it is being held in a police station. (Facilitator, Housing Association)*

*Using police stations can sometimes be an issue due to perception of crime. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

## 5.11 Funding issues

A significant issue for facilitators in trying to organise conferences is that the restorative justice project has no budget for hiring venues. Finding suitable venues is therefore dependent on the goodwill of organisations. Interviews with facilitators have highlighted this issue:

*There is no budget for hiring venues.* *(Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

*There are a range of difficulties in selecting venues. Suitable venues that are owned by charities often come with a cost and there is no budget for this. (Facilitator 3, Housing Association)*

In conferences where English is not the first language for parties, some translation may be necessary. However, funding for such services is patchy:

*There is also sometimes a language barrier. When facilitators are working with people whose native language is not English, translation is sometimes needed and there is no budget for this. Police facilitators potentially have police translation budgets whereas housing associations don’t usually have such a budget. (Facilitator 3, Housing Association)*

Facilitators argued that one of the barriers to the success of restorative justice was fundamentally the way the project was funded. Although positive about the work of the project, the facilitators felt that

*The nature of funded projects contributes to barriers. If we were embedded, many of these issues could be worked through... An RJ hub is the ideal situation. If our funding ends, what will happen? Funding in place until March 2018. Its year on year at the moment. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

## 5.12 Support needs of conference participants

Parties generally felt supported during the conference but did not always feel that support continued after the conference. This is despite frequent statements by the facilitators that they continue to support parties after the conference. In the cases included in this study, the parties clearly expected there to be more dialogue after the conference. This suggests that they had not fully engaged with the notion that restorative justice was aimed at encouraging them to resolve issues between themselves.

### 5.12.1 Support during the conference

All the participants referred to support they had received in the conference. The participant in Case 7, a harmed, said that he had received ‘as much [support] as I needed’ and another, the participant in Case 4, noted that ‘They did allow my husband to come which was important. The facilitator was good.’ One conference participant (Harmed, Case 6) observed that she ‘had been given breaks by the facilitator even when she did not realise she needed them. He really knew what was needed.’

### 5.12.2 Post-conference support

For participants, such as those in Case 3 and Case 4, who felt that their issues had continued despite the conference, were less positive about the post-conference support that they had received. The participant in Case 4 did not feel that she had received any support after the conference but was not expecting further support. A more pro-active approach was taken by the participant in Case 3, who said:

*I have had to call MH Housing Association out-of-office line over the bank holiday weekend and I am waiting for a call back. I have also had to call Environmental Health and the ASB team. (Harmed,* Case 3*)*

### 5.12.3 Support for vulnerable participants

Interviewees indicated that there are continuing support needs with regard to particularly vulnerable individuals. In cases where there is a serious mental health issue, conferences will not be held but otherwise, these issues need to be managed and support workers are allowed to attend the conference:

*If a mental health issue is too high risk: we can’t manage this risk in a conference. Outcome agreement won’t be followed in cases like these. We still do conferences, but we have to manage them – i.e. do they have support in place? Linking with support worker. They can bring support workers into conferences. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

## 5.13 Support needs of facilitators

Facilitators outlined the key support and training they had received and were generally positive about it, In particular, they were positive about having received both Level 1 and Level 2 restorative justice training. Most facilitators felt this was a sound basis of training but that practice and experience was vital in helping them to develop their skills and confidence in managing cases:

*Level 1 and 2 RJ training is what all the police members of the specialist team are trained with. This allows them to deal with most cases apart from serious and sexual offences. (Facilitator 1, Police)*

*We received level 2 training through police trainer. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

*I don’t really need anything else. Levels 1 and 2 were enough. You can learn a lot yourself. It’s like life. (Facilitator 2, Police)*

Concerns were noted that the training is not assessed. Therefore trainees could achieve the qualification without fully engaging in the course. One participant recommended the inclusion of assessed role play during training to help prepare facilitators for a restorative justice conference.

Facilitators referred positively to support they had received from their managers. The point was made that managers and colleagues who were positive about restorative justice were more likely to inspire positive attitudes amongst their staff:

*We have a sergeant with excellent knowledge so on a support side it is very good. (Facilitator 1, Police)*

*It’s a nice little team. If you’ve got a sergeant who’s keen, it rubs off. (Facilitator 2, Police)*

*Peer feedback plays a big part. We go on various relevant training course through work but the major support for RJ is each other. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

Interestingly, four facilitators, both from the police and the housing associations, referred to the impact of their previous experience and training, particularly in counselling, mediation and in neighbourhood policing, in helping them to work more effectively as restorative justice facilitators. Some facilitators felt that mediator training might be of some benefit to the Specialist Team. This might be useful in encouraging parties to go to a conference:

*I would like some mediation training, as sometimes mediation is needed if we cannot get both parties to the conferencing stage. (Facilitator 1, Police)*

*There is mediation and RJ training under discussion at the moment. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

## 5.14 Promotion and further development of restorative justice

Promotional activity is considered an important element in the further development of restorative justice. One interviewee from a housing association felt that it was important to ‘raise awareness of RJ to staff and customers’ and that ‘we might be missing a trick here’. Another facilitator observed that ‘we bang the drum for RJ but there are still many out there who are sceptical.’ Another housing officer reflected that:

*RJ has not been around for long so people are not really aware of it and need to be informed. (Housing officer)*

Interviewees thought that much is done to promote restorative justice already by particular individuals on the team. Several interviewees praised the work of individual team members who had helped to promote restorative justice as a useful tool for resolving neighbour disputes. One facilitator (Police) felt that ‘the work my sergeant does in promoting RJ gets more referrals. Lots of promotion work goes on and trickles down.’ A housing officer mentioned that ‘the facilitators have been along to let people know about RJ’.

Facilitators also highlighted the need for joined-up working between the agencies involved, in particular, between the restorative justice specialist team and the housing associations. One group argued that the key process was to develop a dialogue between the agencies:

*It’s about developing a dialogue... Communication varies from each housing officer. Need to find out where they are with their case – many of them are now familiar with the RJ team and are grateful that we are taking it on. If our partners don’t know we have the case, it can cause problems. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

## 5.15 Need for passion to be involved in RJ

Facilitators particularly emphasised the need for passion on part of the specialist team members. They argued that restorative justice would not work if facilitators are not passionate about it. Consequently, one facilitator argued that it would be better for restorative justice cases to be managed by officers with a particular interest in this area and this was echoed by a conference participant:

*Facilitators are key – they have to be passionate to do it! A lot of police officers don’t understand why we want to do it. (Facilitator focus group, police and housing associations)*

*You’ve got to want to do RJ; got to get a buzz out of it. (Facilitator 2, Police)*

*You’ve got to have passion for this job. (Harmed,* Case 6*)*

# 6.0 Conclusions

## 6.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 of the evaluation of the Restorative Justice Project has highlighted a number of key issues both about the benefits of the project and about the challenges of evaluating costs of such a project.

The evaluation indicates that restorative justice is a cheaper alternative to standard approaches to anti-social behaviour. In particular, the evaluation highlights that costs to agencies of anti-social behaviour actions are limited by restorative justice, especially where a conference is held and, as in most cases recorded, the issues are resolved.

The evaluation has highlighted that restorative justice cases tend to be much quicker than standard anti-social behaviour cases. Comparison of the length of cases, where possible, shows that most restorative justice cases are completed within a month whereas many more anti-social behaviour cases last for much longer and are unresolved.

The evaluation indicates that not only does restorative justice lead to financial and time savings but that the savings to the agencies involved are substantial. Our calculations indicate that savings may well be to the order of a quarter of the cost of standard anti-social behaviour cases.

## 6.2 Phase 2

Restorative justice conferences have generally had positive results for the participants in this research. However, some parties have been more positive than others about the results. In some cases, parties were positive because they felt that their particular issue had been resolved successfully as a direct result of restorative justice. In others, the positive feelings related more to improved quality of life, even if the connection with restorative justice had not been recognised.

The interviews highlighted that in most cases, whilst issues were seldom fully resolved, restorative justice was a way of managing situations. Parties were now more able to manage communication with their neighbours and recognise the impact of their behaviour.

It is not clear how empowered parties have been by the restorative justice process. Some parties are more aware than others of the use and value of restorative justice. There is very little evidence that parties have been more able to address issues themselves.

There are many barriers to successful restorative justice processes. Some of these are logistical barriers to holding conferences but there are also barriers that relate to interpersonal issues of the parties concerned as well as to negative perceptions of the process.

The continued use by participants and commentators, even if for convenience, of the terms ‘harmer’ and ‘harmed’ or ‘victim’ and ‘offender’ is problematic because it reflects an assumption that such cases are straightforward. In reality, issues have arisen because of the behaviour of both parties, often over some years.

The role of the facilitators is crucial to the success of restorative justice cases. There is a need for facilitators with passion and this may mean that restorative justice cannot be implemented by all police officers or housing officers. This will have an impact on the scale of restorative justice.

The fact that some conference participants clearly felt that there was a need for more time to reflect on agreements before signing them highlighted a concern that decisions needed to be made carefully considered and made after a period of reflection. It may also reflect the concern that was expressed by some participants that restorative justice was not legally binding. Similarly, that the parties clearly expected there to be more dialogue after the conference reflects an anxiety about the issues they faced,

Facilitators are positive about the training they have received. However, they do indicate that particular skills need to be developed, particularly those relating to mediation and counselling. However, for them the most important support is provided by others on the team and the leadership given by the supervisors is regarded as pivotal.

Research into the area of restorative justice is naturally confronted by a range of challenges and limitations. As a piece of qualitative research, this phase of the evaluation was not expected to be generalizable but rather highlight the experiences of stakeholders of different aspects of restorative justice conferences.

As so few harmers and harmed participated indicated a certain unwillingness to share their experiences, although it was not clear why this was so. Individuals who were positive about the restorative justice process were, however, much more willing to take part and made it clear that they wanted to support it. Contacting the ‘harmers’ to discuss their views was, as expected, more problematic.

# 10.0 Recommendations

This evaluation has suggested a number of key recommendations:

## 10.1 Sustainable support for restorative justice

Restorative justice is a relevant and effective process for a wide range of ASB and low level crime and should continue to be supported. In particular, there is a need for continuous, sustainable funding. The current project funding model is regarded as unsatisfactory as it does not allow for longer term planning.

## 10.2 Specialist Team should be continued and developed

Restorative justice works best when facilitators are committed to and passionate about the approach. Hence, it is suggested that restorative justice cases are best managed by a specialist team rather than a wider group of police officers and housing officers.

## 10.3 Time for parties to reflect on agreements

Consideration should be given as to whether more time is needed between the end of the verbal part of the conference and signing the agreement. This should be built in to the structure of conferences.

## 10.4 Awareness of facilities

It was clear from interviews with the Specialist Team that they are not always aware of facilities that are available. In particular, they need to be aware of free and appropriate venues provided by the City Council for customers and of translation services in the five key languages across the region where this is required.

## 10.5 Conference follow-up

Clear signposting is required to make conference participants aware of the support structure that is available to them.

## 10.6 Promoting restorative justice

Restorative justice needs to be promoted consistently and continuously both to professionals and housing customers as an effective initiative to resolve disputes between neighbours. The current manner in which individual facilitators promote the approach is viewed positively but a consistent and sustainable approach is needed that evenly covers all areas in Birmingham. Current work to create and develop a restorative justice website, advertising and promotion through social media is too be encouraged to make the initiative accessible.

## 10.7 Facilitators’ skills sets to be developed

More attention is needed to developing the skill sets of facilitators. In particular, there needs to be a focus on the Restorative Justice Competency Framework.

## 10.8 Evaluation of longer term impact

The Restorative Justice Project needs to be evaluated at intervals in order to identify longer term impact on the participants. Attention needs to be given to how the evaluation will be done and efforts made to provide appropriate sets of data.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Restorative Justice cases** | **Matched WMP ASB cases** |
| **Type** | **Compl-exity** | **Interactions** | **Cost of RJ intervention**  | **Interactions** | **Cost of WMP intervention** |
| Noise | High | 2 visits, 2 calls , 1 conference | £106.81 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 47 call outs and meeting across authority | £4,435.00 |
| Noise | High | 2 visits, 2 calls , 1 conference | £106.81 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 26 calls, 2 letters and a ABC | £2,665.00 |
| Noise | High | 3 visits, 2 calls , 1 conference | £106.81 | Initial ASB investigation visit , 5 calls, 2 letters | £807.00 |
| Race hate | High | 4 visits, 1 call, 1 conference | £195.82 | Initial ASB investigation visit, Multiple visits and warning letters. Harassment investigations | £3,244.00 |
| Noise | Medium | 1 visit, 2 calls, conference | £106.81 | Initial ASB investigation visit | £500.00 |
| Noise/Alcohol | Medium | 2 visits, 2 calls , 1 conference | £71.21 | Initial ASB investigation visit, Multiple Visits, letter & ABC | £1,086.00 |
| Noise/Alcohol | Medium | 2 visits, 3 calls, 1 conference | £356.04 | Initial ASB investigation visit , 8 visits, ABC  | £1,045.00 |
| Noise/substance misuse | Medium | 3 visits, 3 calls, 1 conference | £356.04 | Initial ASB investigation visit, Multiple visits, warrant, ABC | £1,350.00 |
| Noise/substance misuse | Medium | 2 visits, 3 calls, 1 conference, 1 multiagency meeting | £106.81 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 13 calls out | £955.00 |
| noise/communal misuse/drugs | Low | 3 visits, 3 calls, 1 conference, 1 multiagency meeting | £142.42 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 8 calls, 5 letters & visits | £1,141.00 |
| Neighbour dis-pute/boundary | Low | *Unresolved at present- costs are still being incurred\** | £53.41 | Initial ASB investigation visit, Several visits, referral to Environment Health | £500.00 |
| Communal Misuse | Low | 4 visits, 1 RJ | £213.63 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 4 visits | £535.00 |
| Noise | Low | 1 visit, 1 RJ | £35.60 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 5 calls | £675.00 |
| Noise | Low | 1 visit, 1 RJ | £71.61 | Initial ASB investigation visit, 6 visits and letters | £1,238.00 |

# Appendix: Cost effectiveness (RJ vs. WMP Police cases)

\*As incomplete, this is case not included in cost calculations

Source: West Midlands Police (2014), *Restorative Justice Cost Analysis, December 2014*. Birmingham, West Midlands Police.

1. All cases that were included were recent and conferences had been held within the last few months. In addition, they had all completed satisfaction surveys. However, that data was not available at the time of the evaluation, nor was it considered relevant to the evaluation as scoped. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. At the time of Phase 1 of the evaluation, which was exploring data from the RJ Tracker up to November 2016, it was too early to measure cases that were facilitated by Pioneer Group staff. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)