

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 OCTOBER 2021

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(1) Questions from David Webb to the Cabinet Member for Public Protection

- (a) In the 13 wards what is the list of the crimes record for each ward for 2019, 2020, what are the top 3 wards and how are the council and the police going to reduce crime in those wards?**

Thank you for your question Mr Webb. The top three wards are:

- Milton
- Victoria
- Kursaal

It would not be possible for Police to list each crime for each ward for a calendar year. However, Police.uk will have that data to refer to if there is any specific information that may be required.

In terms of reducing crime in these and other wards the following is applicable: Operation Grip: This is a dedicated operation where officers are deployed to areas which have been identified as suffering the highest level of community-based violence. The concept is called 'Hot Spot Policing'. Officers remain within the designated area for no longer than 15mins (academia has suggested this is the optimum period of time to maximise the effect). Southend has 16 identified locations in total which cover Southend, Leigh and Shoebury.

Operation Union: This was, and continues to be, a dedicated operation to address crime and anti-social behaviour along the waterfront areas. Throughout the summer, additional officers were tasked to be visible in priority locations seven days a week whilst at the same time engaging with the community, visitors and stakeholders. A significant amount of work went into this operation to ensure that a true partnership approach to create a safer feel to Southend.

Whilst this has now be scaled back, the operation will continue to run on Saturdays to assist in the footfall management of the Southend Firework displays which is organised by Southend BID.

Project Servator: This is again linked to visible Policing. It was originally created by the City of London Police as a Counter Terrorism tactic. However, the principals of what the deployments achieve are applicable in many more ways. Southend is only the fourth area to be awarded Project Servator status, the others being Colchester, Lakeside and Stansted Airport. Officers receive additional training to identify individuals who are acting suspiciously in areas which have high footfall.

This is just three of our current operations which have been put in place to make Southend a safer place to work, visit and live. Each operation has the support and contribution of partners, and Southend Borough Council is a key contributor to each.

- (b) **The local community police meetings started in September, and we only had a couple of days' notice. The meetings are only going to occur every 3 months. Rotate venues, which some are too far (in the West Belfairs). They have been reduced to 3 due to increase attendance. They are not going to give out crime statistics.**

How will the meetings be advertised with more notice (Library, emails to previous attendees, social media not just the Southend Borough Council, other venues i.e. west St Andrew (Westborough), Chalkwell (Synagogue), Prittlewell (Prior Park Bowls) which are all walking distance, what is the reason why the police is not giving statistics in the meeting?

Thank you for your question Mr Webb. The Ward based Local Community Meetings have always been held every three months. The 17 wards are separated into three meetings which translates to one a month. However, each meeting is specifically designed for that designated group of wards.

Following the COVID challenge it has been acknowledged that getting back to face-to-face engagements was going to take some time. Currently Southend Police are at that point and plans are in place to ensure that all public facing meetings are accessible to our community. This engagement is invaluable to ensure Southend Police feel and understand the community temperature and enable the community to influence our priorities.

Dates of meetings have been advertised on various social media platforms and have been shared with key partners and agencies such as Southend Borough Council. There may be occasions where the notice of meetings hasn't been as in advance as we would like. However, Southend Police continue to build a database of community groups and stakeholders to use as our influencers, to enable the sharing of details around work that is undertaken but also to communicate our key messages such as when public meetings will take place and to disseminate crime prevention advice.

The topic of crime statistics has come up over many years. However, when tabled it has been agreed that due to public access to websites such as Police.uk the information is available.