

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject : Venture Annual Update 2021/22
Committee : Services Committee
Date : 4 April 2022
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1. Introduction:

- 1.1. The report provides an annual update on the City Centre Security Officers and their activities.

2. Background:

- 2.1. The City Centre Security Officers (CCSO's) are contracted by Salisbury City Council (SCC), to ensure visitors to the city feel welcomed and enjoy a safe, secure and inviting environment.
- 2.2. The role of the CCSO is to provide a highly visible, approachable, uniformed presence on the streets of the city centre for customers and businesses, and to act as additional eyes and ears to SCC.
- 2.3. They deal directly with a defined range of issues, tackling these effectively and escalating and reporting any other issues to the appropriate authority.
- 2.4. SCC entered into the current contract with Venture Security on 1 July 2020 and it is due to conclude on 31 March 2023.
- 2.5. The budget for the current contract is £72,000 per year.
- 2.6. This budget covers the CCSO who carry out patrols as agreed with Salisbury City Council's, Streetscene Manager. The current arrangement is:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday – 1 x CCSO 8hrs/day
Tuesday, Friday and Saturday – 2 x CCSO's 8hrs/day

- 2.7. Working across the week, the CCSOs undertake a wide range of activities within the city centre, including:
 - disrupting antisocial behaviour
 - welfare checks and engagement with homeless people
 - signposting those in need to appropriate support agencies
 - providing directions and signposting visitors
 - administering first aid
 - acting as the eyes and ears for Wiltshire Police
 - gathering intelligence to support investigations and meetings
 - sweeping of known hot spots looking for drug paraphernalia and ensuring safe removal
 - utilising the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) low level police powers to deal with low-level crime and antisocial behaviour
 - supporting local businesses

- dealing with shoplifters and recovering stock where possible
- providing a reassuring presence for residents and visitors to Salisbury
- providing support to SCC in dealing with wider council matters

2.8. CCSOs are trained in:

- SIA Door Supervisor or Close Protection licensed
- First Aid at Work and/or FPOSi
- NaCTSO ACT Awareness Training
- Mental Health First Aid
- CSAS Accreditation Training
- Advanced Customer Service and Conflict Management Training
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training
- H&S Awareness Training
- Fire Marshal and Extinguisher Training
- Environmental Awareness Training
- Drug Awareness Training
- Sharps Training

3. 2021/22 Update:

- 3.1. Overall, since July 2017, the CCSO have reported 13,303 incidents/ occurrences up to the end of February 2022. Over 11,500 (87%) of these reports are considered criminal / serious incidents.
- 3.2. Between January 2021 and February 2022, over 3,000 incidents were recorded with 1,971 (65%) reports considered criminal / serious incidents as detailed in the chart below.
- 3.3. Begging, public disorder and public drinking are the most prevalent occurrences within Salisbury city centre. At times, these offences are carried out by only a handful of known individuals. The CCSOs have a proactive stance when dealing with known individuals, displaying judgement in the spirit of recognising that behaviour change is the ultimate goal. Where people are displaying behaviours that are causing issues, the CCSOs always seek to address them through consent and agreement in the first instance.
- 3.4. Due to their continuous presence within the city, the CCSOs are able to forge relationship with known individuals, gather insight and intelligence to be able to best support them, often referring the individual(s) for further support. Some individuals over the course of the scheme have engaged positively resulting in them no longer causing issues within the city.
- 3.5. Annex A gives five case studies where the actions of the CSSO can be understood, together with their close working with other agencies, to provide a range of support and welfare services.
- 3.6. The CCSOs regularly meet with SCC colleagues and other partner agencies to address key individuals and to determine a plan of action as to what is the best approach in terms of support. Several repeat offenders are now not willing to engage with support services and therefore discussions continue with the police and SCC as to how best to tackle individuals with the potential of going down the Community Protection Warning (CPW) / Notice (CPN) route.

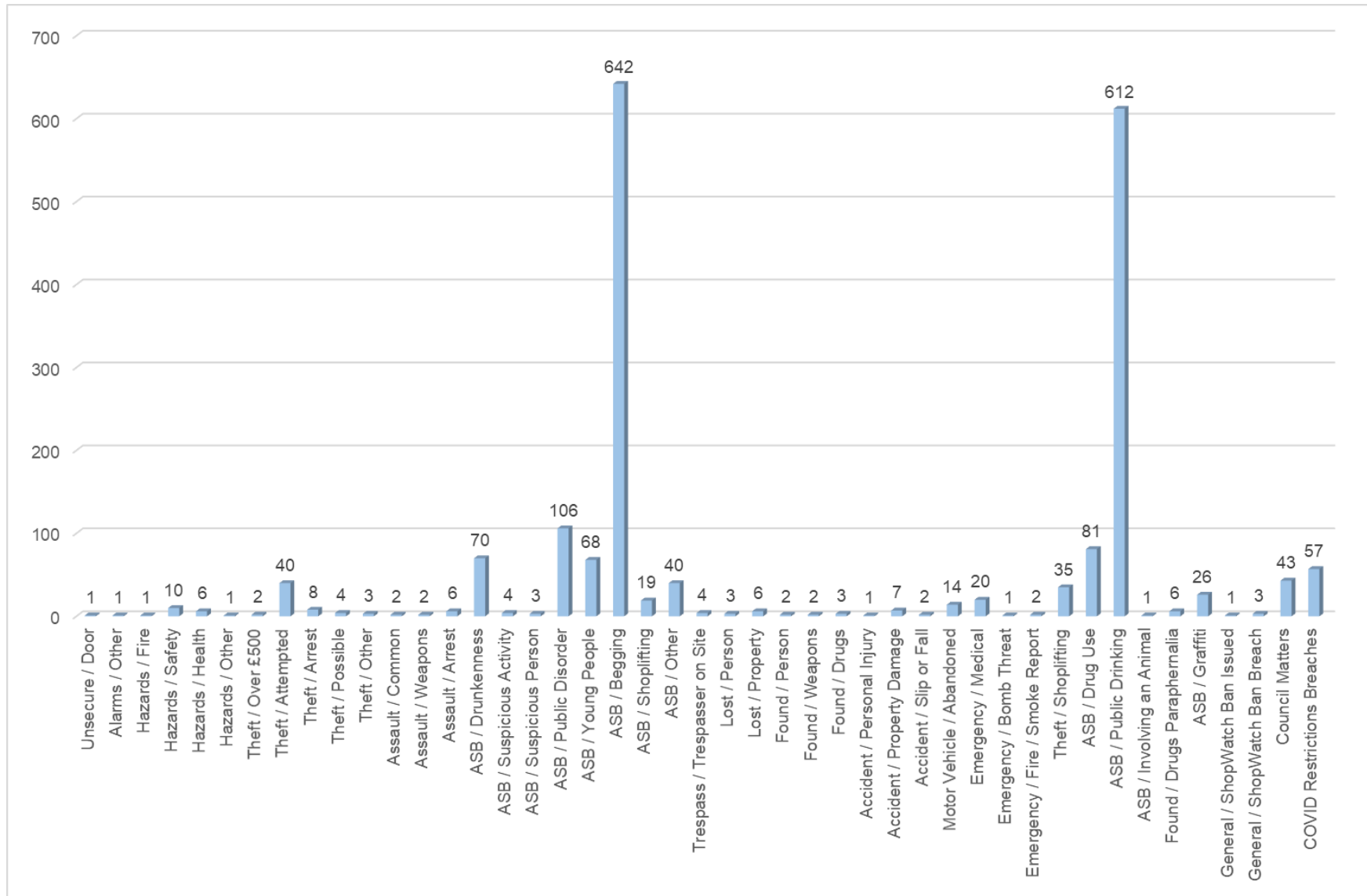


Chart 1: Criminal / serious incidents reported during January 21 and February 22

4. Annual Trends:

- 4.1. During January 2021 to February 2022, the busiest month for the CCSOs was July 2021 with their busiest day being a Tuesday overall. The most prevalent time for occurrences to be reported is between 11:00 to 12:00hrs.
- 4.2. The top 10 most popular locations for ASB activity are:

The Maltings, inc. Car Park	506
Market Square	436
New Canal	391
Culver Street Car Park	252
Cheese Market	204
St Thomas's Square	145
Market Walk	114
Queen Street	86
Castle Street	79
Priory Square	77

5. Impact in the City :

- 5.1. One way the Salisbury CCSOs are having a tangible impact within the city centre, is through their work with known individuals, which results in needs and pressures being lifted from other local agencies.
- 5.2. It is widely recognised that Salisbury has a larger number of hostels, compared to other Wiltshire towns, which means that although people come and go, there is always a dozen or more known individuals that the CCSO's are engaging with on a daily basis.
- 5.3. Due to the consistent presence and specialist training of the CCSOs, they have been able to develop relationships with street-attached individuals and to engage with them in ways other agencies cannot. There is no other agency on the ground, on a daily basis, observing and reacting to behaviours and tackling challenging situations in this way.
- 5.4. Thanks to these relationships, the officers are able to spot changes in trends and patterns of behaviour, which allows them to step in and prevent situations from escalating, further alleviating pressure on the police and other local services.
- 5.5. They act as a form of community ambassador, with the street-attached individuals far more likely to trust Venture's officers rather than someone from the police or social services they have never met before.
- 5.6. The officers also know when and how to escalate incidents and make sure the information gathered is reported to the right person in the most appropriate agency best placed to provide assistance - converting tangible information into practical solutions and supporting vulnerable individuals who might otherwise be at risk of falling through the gaps.
- 5.7. Without the presence of the CCSOs, the behaviour of known individuals, along with their health, would deteriorate. They would become far more disruptive leading to a negative impact for local businesses and the experience of residents and visitors, while increasing pressures on the police and local services.

6. End of Contract:

- 6.1. SCC has a contract with Venture Security to supply the services of the CSSO until 31 Mar 20223.
- 6.2. When the council set its budget in January 2022, the budget forecast for 2023//2024 does not provide funding of this service to continue.
- 6.3. If this position remains unchanged during this year's budget setting, the contract will be terminated and the service cease in Mar 2023.
- 6.4. The service cannot currently be provided by any SCC officers.

7. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 7.1. Note activities of the CSSO during 2021/2022.
- 7.2. Notes the cessation of this service in March 2023 unless other budgetary arrangements are made.

8. Background papers:

- 8.1. Annex A – Case Studies (attached)

9. Implications:

- 9.1. **Financial:** As outlined in the report.
- 9.2. **Legal:** None in relation to this report
- 9.3. **Personnel:** None in relation to this report
- 9.4. **Environmental Impact:** None in relation to this report
- 9.5. **Equality Impact Statement:** None in relation to this report

Case Studies

To further demonstrate their impact for individuals, below are some examples of known individuals who the CCSOs have proactively supported, with the view of getting them to engage with support services and to reduce anti-social behaviours affecting the wider city. An initial has been used instead of a name here due to data protection and to allow this document to be shared more broadly as required.

Case study: Individual 'X' - X is well known within the city. He has complex health needs, a strong personality and is an active substance abuser and day drinker. He is well known to the CCSOs due to his antisocial behaviour, which includes begging, and undertaking drug and alcohol abuse in public places.

X is popular with other known individuals around the city, and this has led to large groups congregating for public drinking sessions that are often loud and intimidating.

Venture's CCSOs have been helping manage X's behaviour for many years. They regularly find him heavily intoxicated around the City. He has also been known to fall into a nearby river where the CCSOs were able to assist X to safety, thus saving him from drowning.

X has been issued Community Protection Warnings (CPW) and Community Protection Notices (CPN) by the Police, but as time has gone on, they have expired and have failed to make a difference.

In 2018-19, X was considered homeless and set up camp in Sainsbury's car park. His 'camp' led to high levels of rubbish and X would also frequently urinate and defecate at the location.

The CCSOs carried out daily welfare checks on X and undertook visual checks of the area, reporting back their findings. This intelligence fed into multi-agency meetings with the Rough Sleeper team, Wiltshire Council, Salisbury City Council and the Police.

As a result of this continued intelligence and welfare effort, X was offered a property on the outskirts of Salisbury. He accepted this accommodation but soon realised he would be away from his friends, so chose to remain sleeping in the car park. This in turn caused X's health to deteriorate. Through regular and consistent engagement, the CCSOs helped X to reconsider getting support from the Rough Sleeper Team.

X has resided in Alabaré Place until recently he has now been allocated his own property suitable to his needs.

X has a good rapport with the CCSOs and displays predictable behaviours that the CCSOs are able to identify and pre-empt. Intelligence continues to be shared with partner agencies and the CCSOs continue to proactively disrupt and tackle X's anti-social behaviour, regularly pushing him in his wheelchair back to Alabaré Place where he is safe.

Case study: Individual 'Y' - Y is very well known in Salisbury city Centre for drinking alcohol, begging and taking drugs. The CCSOs have built up a relationship with Y over the years and this led them to be able to spot a notable change in her behaviour.

Y began prolifically begging over the course of a couple of weeks and this led the CCSOs to speak to her and move her on between 4-8 times a day, but she appeared reluctant and anxious to do so. The CCSO recognised that this behaviour was out of character. They reported it to the police and submitted a welfare concern.

The police issued her with a CPW for her begging offences and carried out a welfare check, however Y refused to speak with the police, so the CCSOs continued to monitor the situation and to report back.

Y was observed to be sleeping in shop doorways which again raised suspicion as Y was known to have a property. Y eventually broke down in tears when speaking to the CCSOs, and she informed them that she was being forced out of her flat and made to beg for money.

The CCSOs informed the police and they managed to get her back into her property the same day. Those responsible for 'cuckooing' Y were processed by the police accordingly. Y is still known to beg every now and then and on occasion meets up with other known individuals to drink in the city centre. Y does however have respect for the rules and is aware that she can speak with the CCSOs if she has any problems or concerns.

Case study: Individual 'Z' - Z has been in and out of Salisbury for many years. He is known to be a prolific drug user, street drinker and to sit on the streets begging for money. He was also in a relationship with a known individual who was known to be very violent at times and the CCSOs have witnessed this threatening behaviour on a daily basis, often needing to step in to defuse the situation.

Over time, Z's body has started to react to the drugs he is injecting. The CCSOs noticed a deterioration in his health and reported it. Rehabilitation was subsequently offered but Z refused to undertake it and chose not to engage with support services.

The CCSOs continued to feed back to partner agencies and after many meetings and reports, it was decided that Z really needed to distance from his partner and attend rehabilitation.

The CCSOs worked with all partner agencies and had daily interactions with Z over a period of weeks, which eventually saw Z agree to accept a place at rehab and to engage with support services. The CCSOs supported Inclusion, explained Z's needs and even assisted in locating him on the morning he went to rehab.

Case study: Individual 'W' - W is a very well-known face in Salisbury and is often found street drinking, injecting drugs and being very aggressive. She is alcohol and drug dependent, and her mood can vary from day to day. She has been homeless for a period of time as a result of her challenging behaviour.

W was sleeping in Sainsbury's car park with her partner. Both W and her partner are very violent to each other and the CCSOs have been called to assist with their disputes on many occasions.

The CCSOs attended many multi-agency meetings to discuss options to support W. However, due to her behaviour the support options were very limited.

The CCSOs continued to monitor the situation, which became worse over time. At one point W tried to take her own life but was stopped by the CCSOs and the police were called.

W has received CPWs from the police which were breached multiple times. The CCSOs continue to support W on a daily basis, and due to her ill-health, have pushed the Rough Sleeper Team to find suitable accommodation for her.

W was subsequently offered a property suitable for her needs and she now lives in Devizes with her partner.

Case study: Individual 'V' - After retiring from the British Army, V ended up losing her home due to rent arrears and began sleeping rough in the coach park toilets. The CCSOs carried out daily welfare checks on V and reported back to multiple agencies, whose help she refused.

Even though V was sleeping rough, she still looked after herself and her daily routine involved getting a newspaper, heading to Burger King, and spending the day reading and watching the world go by.

However, over a period of time, V's mental health started to deteriorate and the CCSOs were often called to Burger King, as she was being verbally abusive towards the staff. One reason for this was that V would get very upset due to having soiled herself. The CCSOs would go and get her some new clothing so that she was fresh and clean.

V was also known for owning a shopping trolley which never left her side. When it became unusable due to a problem with the wheels, the CCSOs spoke with their employer (Venture Security), who purchased a new trolley that exactly matched the previous one, knowing how important it was to V. The Managing Director of Venture personally delivered the trolley, for which V was very grateful.

The CCSOs continued to attend multi agency meetings where information was shared. As time went on, V started sleeping on benches where she would fall off and bang her head. This continued happening on a weekly basis until V was found early one morning, laying on the cold floor with a head injury.

The CCSOs attended with Salisbury City Council's Streetscene Manager, where they made V comfortable until the ambulance arrived. V was taken to hospital and admitted for many weeks, where many assessments were carried out it was decided that she needed to be in a warden-controlled property. V accepted this offer and is now doing very well in her new property, still with her shopping trolley close by.