



Appendix 4

# Operation Viscaria

Swansea City Centre

TCI Lindsey Sweeney

# WHY?

- During 2023 there was a significant rise in Crime and ASB within the City Centre.
- 5 Grip Sentinel hotspots
- 10 ASB Sentinel hotspots
- Repeated concerns from partners and key stakeholders.
- Staff concerned with policing response and capacity to effectively target and problem solve in line with delivery plan & Town and City Centre plan.
- Low trust and confidence issues with police and City being deemed as unsafe with negative reporting in local press.

## The neighbourhood in Wales with the most anti-social behaviour

One security guard claimed he was assaulted by a teenager. Others witness drunken fights in the middle of the day and say it's not a good look for businesses



# RESPONSE

On 20th November 2023, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot BCU launched a proactive policing response, Operation Viscaria, to deliver an effective and proportionate policing response to incidents of antisocial behaviour and crime within the Town Centre. The Operation Viscaria team consisted of 2 Sergeants and 10 Police Constables that were split into two distinct shifts, working opposite days to deliver on the following aims:-

- **To provide a consistent and visible policing presence that provides reassurance to the public, business sector and wider community.**
- **To dynamically attend and investigate occurrences of crime and anti-social behaviour.**
- **To utilise a broad range of sophisticated policing tactics, resources and approaches that are justified and proportionate to achieve the overall aim.**
- **Gather information and intelligence from police and partnership data to support and develop the policing and partnership response.**
- **To minimise the effects of ASB on persons who live, visit and work within the City Centre, specifically focusing on the hot spot locations and high footfall areas.**



# RESULTS

From 20/11/23 to the 11/02/24 the Op Viscaria team had the following overall results:-

- 63 S.35's issues
- 175 Arrests/ PCR's/ VA's
- 148 Stop searches
- 14 ASB referrals
- 55 intelligence submissions
- 989 Retailer visits
- 147 incidents attended
- 88 24 hr occurrences actioned

**NON-PROCESS ARRESTS:** 11 for Breach of peace, warrants & recalls.

**VISCARIA ARRESTS FOR OTHER DEPT/ PARTNERS:** 24 (Priority suspect, RIT, CID, NHS)

**VISCARIA ARRESTS:** 84 (City offences such a shoplifting, violence, drugs)

Of the above arrests 8 were handed to patrol, and 2 to the HUB. Of the prisoners handed to patrol, I am informed all had full files created as opposed to just a hand on package.

**The Viscaria team dealt with 74 of their arrests for matters which would have ordinarily been processed by patrol which equates to 88% overall.**



## Analysis of the arrest disposal report on BI tool for crimes relating to SNPT between 20/11/23 -12/02/24

<u>Supervisor</u>	<u>Total No. records</u>	<u>Positive outcome</u>	<u>POR% of overall records</u>
( Viscaria)	54	36	67%
( Viscaria)	75	53	71%
patrol	50	20	40%
patrol	48	15	31%
patrol	41	15	37%
patrol	42	18	43%
patrol	33	16	48%
(NPT)	16	9	56%

OP Viscaria officers have OIC'd on average 18 crime occurrences each in the last 90 days. Team 2 City in comparison have averaged 10.2.

The niche supervisor report currently shows the teams active investigations at 172. This demand spread across 5 patrol teams would equate to an extra 34 investigations per team.



# CRIME STATISTICS

Swansea City sector is split into 6 distinct beat codes. The original terms of reference set for Operation Viscaria was devised to ensure the team focussed on the Town Centre. Extracted data from the City and Marina beat codes.

Between 20/11/23 – 12/02/24 there has been:-

- A 12.18% YOY increase with all crime reports rising from 922 – 1040.
- A 7.2% and 10.3% YOY decrease with violence with/ without injury offences.
- A 19.7% YOY increase for shoplifting.
- A 100% YOY increase on robbery offences, ***of note there were no offences of this type recorded in December. The first 3 months of the financial year from April to June showed a 433% increase on the previous year.***
- Of note there are rises in both drug trafficking and possession cases and Public order which the team have impacted upon.

ONS Group	Volume	Comparison	% Change
Shoplifting	255	213	19.7%
Violence with injury	129	139	-7.2%
Violence without injury	122	136	-10.3%
Public order offences	103	91	13.2%
All other theft offences	83	76	9.2%
Criminal damage	63	52	21.2%
Stalking and Harassment	62	49	26.5%
Possession of drugs	46	24	91.7%
Vehicle offences	39	25	56.0%
Bicycle theft	25	20	25.0%
Other serious sexual offences	21	21	0.0%
Theft from the person	21	17	23.5%
Business and community burglary	17	4	325.0%
Residential burglary	13	15	-13.3%
Drug trafficking	9	3	200.0%
Possession of weapon offences	9	8	12.5%
Rape	9	9	0.0%
Miscellaneous crimes against society	7	6	16.7%
Robbery	6	3	100.0%
Other sexual offences	1	8	-87.5%
Arson		3	0.0%
Death or serious injury caused by illegal driving			0.0%
Homicide			0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,040</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>12.8%</b>



# SHOPLIFTING DEMAND

- By increasing police resources within the City Centre there was always an expectation that there would be increases in some crime types due to the increase in trust and confidence from seeing a police response.
- The Viscaria team have responded in line with the national retail crime action plan which has become a focus nationally attracting the attention of the home office and scrutiny by NPCC.
- The City and marina beat codes had 255 shoplifting crimes recorded between 20/11/23 and 12/02/24. The Viscaria team have dealt with 121 offences of shoplifting, which equates to 47% of overall shoplifting demand.
- This would inevitably include some offences which would have never reached patrol which had been closed pending AFR submissions, G5'd with a presumption of limited solvability factors. These crimes however were having an impact on trust and confidence levels of the local business community, which is evidenced within the perception survey that was conducted prior to the commencement of Operation Viscaria.



# POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Extracted data from the City and marina beat codes between 20/11/23 and 12/02/24 shows our **positive outcome rate overall has risen from 15.3% to 22.3%**.

Between 20/11/23 – 12/02/24 there has been:-

- Violence without injury has increased from 19.1% to 25.4% YOY
- Most notable rise is in shoplifting outcomes from 8.9% to 32.5% YOY.
- The team have contributed greatly to positive outcomes for Weapon and drug offences.

ONS Group	POR	Comparison
⊕ Violence without injury	25.4%	19.1%
⊕ Violence with injury	18.6%	24.5%
⊕ Vehicle offences	10.3%	8.0%
⊕ Stalking and Harassment	11.3%	18.4%
⊕ Shoplifting	32.5%	8.9%
⊕ Robbery	50.0%	
⊕ Residential burglary	7.7%	13.3%
⊕ Rape	22.2%	
⊕ Public order offences	10.7%	7.7%
⊕ Possession of weapon offences	122.2%	62.5%
⊕ Possession of drugs	43.5%	45.8%
⊕ Other sexual offences	100.0%	50.0%
⊕ Other serious sexual offences	19.0%	19.0%
⊕ Miscellaneous crimes against society	28.6%	16.7%
⊕ Drug trafficking	111.1%	133.3%
⊕ Criminal damage	14.3%	17.3%
⊕ Business and community burglary	17.6%	50.0%
⊕ Arson	0.0%	33.3%
⊕ All other theft offences	6.0%	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>15.3%</b>





# DISPLACEMENT

## Crime trends across BCU 20/11/23 – 12/02/24

- Most notable rise in the Eastside Sector, followed by Gower and then Neath.
- Townhill and Penlan sectors have seen a reduction in overall Crime.
- Mount Pleasant saw a rise of 31.7% YOY, Sandfields 39.6% Increase YOY, with Brynmill at 1.3% increase YOY, with Uplands Seeing a 10.5% reduction.
- Analysis of the St Thomas beat code reveals 171 crimes in Comparison to 126 SPLY which equates to a 35.7% rise.
- Shoplifting has risen by 425% YOY however the POR has risen to 31% ***Between July and October 23 there was a 588.9% YOY rise with only a 6.5% outcome rate in comparison to the SPLY.***

• POR For Swansea 20/11/23- 12/02/24 stands at 15% in comparison to 12.5% SPLY. Between July- October it was 11.9% NPT has seen a reduction in POR from 13.4% to 11.4% SPLY.

BCU	Volume	Comparison	% Change
[-] Swansea, Neath & Port Talbot	6,646	5,901	12.6%
[-] Neath Port Talbot	2,184	1,851	18.0%
Neath & Pontardawe	1,266	1,051	20.5%
Port Talbot	914	790	15.7%
Unidentifiable sector	4	10	-60.0%
[-] Swansea	4,462	4,050	10.2%
City	1,609	1,414	13.8%
Eastside	555	431	28.8%
Gorseinon	467	425	9.9%
Gower	468	376	24.5%
Morriston	566	549	3.1%
Penlan	470	505	-6.9%
Townhill	327	350	-6.6%
Unidentifiable sector			0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,646</b>	<b>5,901</b>	<b>12.6%</b>



# ANTI - SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- There were 197 ASB occurrences reported between 20th November 2023 and 13th February 2024; 85% (167) related to AN18 ASB – Nuisance Occurrence Type and 80 ASB referrals were submitted.
- Between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023 there were 231 Occurrences relating to AN18 ASB and 92 ASB referrals submitted.

Prior to Operation Viscaria there were significant ASB issues around Plymouth St and the bus station, where there were 52 reports recorded between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 15<sup>th</sup> October 23. Between 20/11/23 and 13/02/24 these reports had decreased to 17, however there was a significant rise in ASB incidents (66) in the Wind St area. When looking at the peak time for reporting this rise can be contributed to the night time economy over the festive period with increased focus on early intervention and S.35 notices.



# PERCEPTIONS

## Sept 2023

- The neighbourhood policing team conducted an Op perception survey with businesses within the City Centre. The survey asked 15 separate questions relating to feelings of safety within the City Centre. During this survey only 19.1% of overall respondents felt safe within the City Centre

## January 2024

- When the survey was repeated in January 72.5% of overall respondents felt safe within the City Centre. Despite positive feedback over half the respondents surveyed during January 2024 are unaware of the Op Viscaria team and improvements are needed in respect of communications strategy. 73.75% of those surveyed have seen an increase in police visibility and 82.76% support the continuation of the team.

**Justin St Mary's Church Warden** – “It's been so quiet – we haven't had any of the street vulnerable hanging around the Church – no drug paraphernalia discarded in the Church grounds and really reassuring seeing more Police Officers around.”



## City Centre Rangers

“We’ve seen such a difference, a lot more police around and it is having a big impact on issues in the City. We’ve been approached by a number of members of the public who have said they feel much safer while in town and it’s really reassuring to see more police around.”

## LA Team Leader street cleansing

This is fantastic! We’ve noticed a great improvement in town, only the other day I popped into the police stall/customer service box at Castle Gardens to thank the team for their increased presence in town. Long may this last.

**Aldi Manager Parc Tawe** - “Breathe of fresh air, it’s good to see so much police around and that they are focusing on issues in the City Centre.”

**St Mary’s Church Warden** – “It’s been so quiet – we haven’t had any of the street vulnerable hanging around the Church – no drug paraphernalia discarded in the Church grounds and really reassuring seeing more Police Officers around.”



# STAFF FEEDBACK

## **Police Sgt**

I think it's worked well. Personally I haven't had any impact of prisoners handed on to me intoxicated left for us to deal for example. I think they have certainly reduced demand on the G4. I have had one or two issues I've taken up with them myself. Overall I think it's worked well.

## **A/Insp (Patrol)**

After the first week of Op Viscaria I made a point of emailing an Insp to say how impressed I had been with the team. Since they have started, I have been thoroughly impressed with the enthusiasm of the team and the leadership by the Detective Sgt. From a patrol perspective, the willingness of Op V to assist with calls in the city centre has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the demand which would traditionally be resourced by response. In the first few days my team made a joke saying they hadn't attended any call in the city as they had all been picked up by Op V. They are constantly on the radio and it is clear they are being pro active and looking to target, rather than just responding to any issues. I am also on their Teams chat and I can see on a daily basis the communication between the team in relation to trends, targets and suspects.

To be honest, I have nothing negative to say.



# STAFF FEEDBACK

## **Detective Insp (HUB)**

We were able to pick up a few cases from the Op, luckily we were able to assist as part of the daily business. As a dept the Op didn't have any particular effect on us either way. From my point of view, I think the Op has been really productive, I know that there has been a reduction in some violent crimes.

## **Swansea CID Detective Insp**

The Operation has had a positive impact within the City Centre, the staff have been pro-active and from a CID viewpoint we have seen the following benefits:

1. Use of the Viscaria Teams Chat – Myself and DS's are part of this and this is a good source of information and a place we can utilise if we have outstanding suspects etc.
2. The use of resources to assist with outstanding suspects
3. The presence of the officers has impacted on serious crime within the City Centre.



# CONCLUSION/ RECOMENDATIONS

- Operation Viscaria has had an impact on police visibility within the City Centre, which has improved feelings of safety.
- It hasn't decreased crime reports but appears to have had an impact on positive outcome rates of certain crime types.
- There is an indication that some demand is being displaced, but there are other factors that affect crime rises which we can't exclude.
- Due to the increase in protest activity within the City the team are being utilised more broadly outside the original standing operating procedures, however if this demand was not picked up by Viscaria it would impact on operational colleagues across the BCU.



- There is significant positive feedback from both staff, partners and businesses within the City, and within these comments there is data to confirm wider calls within the City are being answered by the team which contributes to demand reduction for patrol.
- Greater need from a partnership perspective to ensure data capture is accurate and orders and progress with individuals are being tracked effectively. Community Safety manager Jess Williams has already been tasked with reviewing meeting structure within the partnership to limit duplication and ensure terms of reference set are achieving the wider aims of creating a safer Swansea.
- Greater focus needed on the problem solving in locations of repeat demand and tracking progress of drug and alcohol interventions.





- Operation Viscaria to remain in it's current format. I suggest they are included in the after dark deployment plans to spread duties evenly amongst the neighbourhood establishment. NPT to align to this pattern as part of wider shift pattern review, with the third Sgt working Monday to Friday.
- From the analysis of prisoner process demand there is a requirement for additional back-office support in terms of interview and file build to ensure the team remain as visible as possible as set out within the original aims. The PCC office has been approached to fund this post which would also include work around orders to assist community safety.
- Sustain funding streams from both partners and Home office (Sentinel) to ensure visibility remains despite significant staff abstractions.
- Improved tasking of force assets and improved deployment plans for wider BCU coverage on double days.



- There is an argument for a further team to cover the East of the BCU and this will be explored further post summer. There will be a need of flexibility within the teams to deal with acquisitive crime peaks and an expectation that the summer months will bring increased youth annoyance problems, as was observed last summer. With the change in demand there will be a greater requirement to work later shifts.
- The team will need to be built onto a permanent posting sheet which will assist with wider data capture and key metrics.
- Introduction of day time economy/ quality of life meeting with greater buy in from partners with sustainable solutions and coproduction the focus.
- Improved communications strategy.



