

Report to: Sefton Safer Together

Date of Meeting: 8 September 2022

Report of: Simon Burnett Assistant Director Communities

Subject: Serious Violence Duty

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1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Sefton Safer Together (SST) on the Serious Violence Duty and the impact it will have on Council and Partners.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 SST notes the contents of the report.

3 Background

- 3.1 Following public consultation in July 2019, the Government announced that it would introduce legislation relating to a serious violence duty. This will ensure that relevant services work together to share information to target interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures, to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. The Government also announced that it would amend the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships and by making sure they have a strategy in place to explicitly tackle serious violence.
- 3.2 Whilst the guidance does not specify a particular partnership to lead, given the categories classed as “Serious Violence” will be contained with the Community Safety Strategy, it makes sense that SST is the partnership lead for Sefton. This would be an ideal subject for a small sub-group with the relevant statutory organisations to take responsibility for.

4 The Duty

- 4.1 The Duty requires partners to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention. There is a requirement to focus on root causes relevant to the local area and produce a Strategic Needs Assessment with contributions from Partners. This assessment will support local areas to prepare and implement a Serious Violence Strategy, with the ambition to prevent and reduce violent crime through tangible action. The guidance offers case studies from partnerships that have already developed this area of work. Partners expected to form part of the strategic network include Police, Local Authorities, Fire Service, Health agencies, Youth Justice Services, Voluntary and Community Sector, Schools, and local Prisons.
- 4.2 Serious violence relates to homicide, domestic abuse, all violence against the person including gun and knife crime. Partners have the flexibility to include alcohol related crime, modern slavery and violence towards women and girls if this relevant to their area. In addition, partnerships need to focus on areas of criminality where threats are inherent, such as county lines and drug dealing territories.

5 Data Sharing

- 5.1 There is an expectation for partners to share data from a number of sources to develop a local picture. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 enables permissive information sharing.

6 Timescale

- 6.1 Partnerships are required to consult with relevant agencies, including the local Violence Reduction Partnership, Voluntary and Community Sector and children and young people prior to publishing the strategy. Publication is required within one year from the date of the serious violence duty implementation which is expected early 2023. A further report will be brought once detailed guidance has been published.