

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 FEBRUARY 2010

SCRUTINY OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Report from: Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

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Summary

Every local authority is now required to have a designated crime and disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee with power to make recommendations regarding the functioning of their local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (in Medway this is the Community Safety Partnership). This report provides information on the operation of the partnership in 2009/2010.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Community Safety Plan 2009 to 2012 provides a framework plan as part of the Council's policy framework. However the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) now has a duty to conduct a strategic assessment of issues in Medway and to produce annual action plans to address them.
- 1.2 Previously, a specific stronger and safer communities grant has been provided to Medway Council. This now forms part of the area based grant payable to the Authority and the allocation for Community Safety. Beyond that partners contribute resources from their funding to carry out partnership activity.
- 1.3 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives Overview and Scrutiny Committees new powers to require information from and scrutinise partners in relation to LAA targets. In addition the crime and disorder scrutiny provisions of the Police and Justice Act 2006 took effect from 30 April 2009. Regulations and Home Office guidance on crime and disorder scrutiny have now been published. A report to the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 August 2009 outlined the effects including the need to scrutinise the activities of the Community Safety Partnership.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is managed through the Partnership Office based at Medway Police Station with specific responsibility for performance delivery of the Community Safety Plan. The Partnership Office is run by Medway Council through the Community Safety Partnership Manager supported by two posts for data analysis and performance co-ordination. The Community Safety Partnership is chaired by the Area Commander of Medway Police. The action arm of this group is the Performance Delivery Group, which is chaired by the Community Safety Partnership Manager. Attendees to this meeting are representatives from the Community Safety Partnership (Kent Police, Medway Council, Kent Probation, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and NHS Medway). The management structure for the Community Safety Partnership is attached in Appendix 1.

The Community Safety Plan is a published document available in Council contact points and via the Council's website <http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/community/communitysafety/communitysafetyplan.htm>

- 2.2 Every three years the Partnership is required to produce a three year community safety plan which is informed by an audit of crime, disorder and drugs misuse and through consultation with the wider public. A recent review of the Police Justice Act 2006 led to changes in the Crime & Disorder Act and the statutory requirements on the Medway Community Safety Partnership to tackle crime and disorder in Medway. The Medway Community Safety Partnership is now required to produce a 3-year 'rolling' community safety strategy, which is reviewed annually through a strategic assessment. Each year the Partnership will prepare a Strategic Assessment to assist in revising the plan and the community safety priorities for Medway. The strategic assessment must include information on:

- Analysis of levels of crime
- Changes in crime since last strategic assessment
- Views from the community on matters that need to be prioritised.

Medway CSP carried out an innovative consultation exercise across Medway between the 21 November and 4 December 2008. Over 1,300 residents, visitors and workers took part in the consultation whereby priorities were identified. Across the area, "people using or dealing drugs" was the highest priority (21%), followed by "teenagers hanging around" (15%) and fear of being physically assaulted or attacked (13%). These identified priorities were considered and now appear within the Plan.

- 2.3 The current Community Safety Partnership Plan was adopted in 2009 and has identified six priorities for the next three years (2009-2012). These priorities will each contribute to the safety of people of living, working or visiting Medway and a snapshot of performance is shown below.

2.4 Priority 1 – Tackling Substance Misuse

The Medway DAAT was formed in April 2009, having separated from Kent DAAT, thereby becoming more directly accountable and responsive to the needs of Medway.

This 'Safe Exit' programme was conceived during 2009 as a way of tackling the unique and historic problem in Medway of street prostitution and the scourge of drug dependency, abuse and exploitation that went with the trade. After engaging Police, NHS and Public Health in planning this initiative, Safe Exit was launched on 1 November 2009, targeting street sex workers, their clients, and those involved in the sale and possession of drugs. A fully supported and programmed 'safe exit' is offered to the street sex workers, and the take-up to date represents more than 80% of the number of women known to be working.

The 'SOS Bus' service, funded by Medway Council, NHS Medway, Government Office South East (GOSE) and Medway DAAT, is based on a converted and fully-equipped single-decker bus and a supporting minibus, was launched in May 2009 both as a 'safe haven' in the Medway night-time economy and as an educational 'outreach' vehicle for health promotion at other times. In June 2009 the vehicles were deployed in support of National Tackling Drugs Week and successfully helped the public health and substance misuse services to reach out to the community in shopping centres, schools and the more remote parts of Medway in order to give expert advice and information to people in an informal setting.

Performance Overview

NI 39 – Reduce number of alcohol related hospital admission rate – 1378 (target no more than 1613 – within target).
(Rate of Hospital Admissions per 100,000 for Alcohol Related Harm).

NI 40 – Increase number of drug users in treatment – 689 rolling year June 08 – May 09 (target 630 – improving).

NI 42 - Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem – 13% (2008/09 – 19.3%)
(% of people who consider drug use/dealing to be a very big problem in their local area).

Survey data is based on samples of the population and are therefore subject to confidence intervals, which means the 'true' value will fall within a range i.e. the confidence interval, or margin of error. Survey data is rounded.

2.5 Priority 2 - Tackling anti-social behaviour, including criminal damage

The Performance Delivery Group in partnership with the Safer Communities Analyst, and by using the priorities as set down by the PACT process; identify specific areas that are hot spots for Anti Social Behaviour.

A number of targeted operations have taken place the most recent of which were in the Chatham Central Ward and Gillingham North and South (Operation Vision), that was a 24-hour multi-agency operation involving Kent Police, Medway Council, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and Kent Probation. A major aspect of the operation was high visibility joint patrols between Police Officers and Medway Council Safer Communities Officers to reassure and engage with members of the public.

Community Payback through Kent Probation service have been engaged to clear private alleyways that were blighted by fly tipping and address local issues that have been identified as PACT priorities.

Performance Overview

NI 17 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour – 8% (2008/09 – 9.8%)
(% of people who consider ASB to be a very big problem in their local area - 7 types).

This indicator is measured across 7 definitions of ASB, the figure shown is based on the perception of **high** levels of ASB. Survey data are based on samples of the population and are therefore subject to confidence intervals, which means the 'true' value will fall within a range i.e. the confidence interval, or margin of error. Survey data is rounded.

2.6 Priority 3 - Tackling Repeat Business of Violent Crime

The main action delivered through the Community Safety Plan for this priority has been Operation Albatross that focuses on the Friday nighttime economy. Operation Albatross is a multi-agency approach that involves the visiting of licensed premises and fast food restaurants. As well as Kent Police in attendance, there are Medway Councils Licensing Team and Environmental Enforcement Team, plus the UK Border Agency.

Performance Overview

NI 15 Reduce incident of violent crime – minus 50.3%
(target minus 10% - static) (Serious violent crime rate).

NI 32 Reduce incidents of domestic abuse – 25.4%
(target 28% - improving).
(Repeat incidents of domestic violence).

NI 41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem – 17%
(2008/09 – 19.2%).
(% of people who consider drunk/rowdy behaviour to be a very big problem in their local area).

Survey data are based on samples of the population and are therefore subject to confidence intervals, which means the 'true' value will fall within a range i.e. the confidence interval, or margin of error. Some survey data is rounded.

2.7 Priority 4 - Improving Your Local Street Scene

The Community Safety Partnership coordinated a 'Safety In Action' week for Year 6 school children. This was an interactive day where children were given inputs around litter, graffiti, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and road safety. A number of partner agencies joined Medway Safety in Action week (17th-21st May 2009) to set up simulated dangers that gave children hands-on experience of how to act in a variety of situations. It focussed on the consequences of environmental damage, such as an abandoned vehicle, and the effects of graffiti, littering and fly-tipping. The children were told of the cost implications for everyone through the Council Tax, how it makes people feel, and how they can make a difference with their actions.

The agencies involved were Medway Councils Safer Communities Team, Environmental Enforcement, Road Safety, Trading Standards, Medway Police; Kent Fire & Rescue; Port Of London Authority; Red Cross and Grey Zebra (is a young team that works in the prevention of substance misuse in a befriending role specifically with young people). The event brought potential hazards to life, allowing children to deal with danger in a realistic way.

The Community Safety Partnership Reassurance Campaign is being reviewed in February 2010 following results from a Customer First survey. The Home Office are having an input as part of measures to assist Community Safety Units across the country where confidence levels are on or below 25%. Medway is at 25%. To increase awareness under the national banner 'You Said, We Did', campaign adverts have been released which have featured abandoned vehicles, fly tipping and noise. The Community Safety Partnership are also funding advertisements in the local media. The Community Safety Partnership website is kept up to date by the CSP Media Officer, and includes testimonials from members of the public and PACT meeting details.

Performance Overview

NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting) – 20%
(% of people saying rubbish or litter lying around was a very or fairly big problem in their local area)

Survey data is based on samples of the population and are therefore subject to confidence intervals, which means the 'true' value will fall within a range i.e. the confidence interval, or margin of error. Survey data is rounded.

2.7 Priority 5 - Reducing Your Worry Of Crime and Disorder

The Performance Delivery Group has co-ordinated joint high visibility patrolling between Police Community Support Officer's and Safer Community Officers. In addition to the regular joint working, a specific operation was co-ordinated through the Community Safety Partnership over periods of known Anti Social Behaviour, specifically over Halloween and Bonfire Night to tackle issues in a quick and joined up manner, but also to offer reassurance to the public.

Performance Overview

NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police – 72%
(2008/09 – 72.3%)
(% of people who agree the police and local councils are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their local area).

Survey data is based on samples of the population and are therefore subject to confidence intervals, which means the 'true' value will fall within a range i.e. the confidence interval, or margin of error. Survey data is rounded.

2.8 Priority 6 - Improving Your Confidence In Medway Safer Community Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership now has its own Media Officer who coordinates a reassurance campaign and related media output. The CSP is accessible through billboard advertising, Arriva Bus advertising and through the CSP website. New methods of making the Partnership accessible to the residents of Medway are currently being discussed with the Reassurance Group.

In November 2009 the Community Safety Partnership organised a consultation event, "We Asked, You Said" at The Corn Exchange, Rochester. At the event there was 22 Ward based tables in the hall, each one made up of a number of key stakeholders from that particular

community, along with Councillor representation, Police staff, and Medway Councils Community Safety Officers. The event was opened by the Area Commander for Kent Police, Chief Supt. Steve Corbishley, and Medway Councils Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Enforcement Rehman Chishti, followed by a national example of good practice. The format for the rest of the day comprised of three Ward based workshop sessions. Workshop 1 looked at problems and issues within Wards that concerned the stakeholders and what they saw as their priority. The second workshop looked at how the community can find solutions to these problems with the assistance of the Community Safety Partnership. Workshop 3 looked at how to measure successes at the next event in April 2010, "You Said, We Did", in order that stakeholder can see what improvements have been made and which issues have been resolved with their help and assistance.

Performance Overview

NI 27 Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police – 60% (locally this is 'seek views' of local concerns).

% who agree that the Police and other local public services seek peoples views about anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area.

Survey data is based on samples of the population and are therefore subject to confidence intervals, which means the 'true' value will fall within a range i.e. the confidence interval, or margin of error. Survey data is rounded.

3. Options

- 3.1 This report and the associated presentation provides an opportunity for the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the actions of the partnership and to make recommendations that may be considered for incorporation into future activities.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 At least once a year Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee **must** meet to review or scrutinise decisions made or other actions taken by the CSP and has power to make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. This must be done no less than once in every twelve-month period effective from 30 April 2009. This report satisfies that legal requirement but it is planned to submit an updated item for consideration in June 2010 and annually on that anniversary.

- 4.2 The Community Safety Plan supports delivery of targets in the Council Plan and Community Plan in particular the priority to reduce anti social behaviour to increase people's feeling of safety. There are also reputable, environmental, economical and legal risks to the Council for not pro-actively pursuing an improvement in crime and disorder level.
- 4.3 Scrutiny on crime and disorder matters have been circulated under separate cover to all Members of the committee. The guidance summarises the role of overview and scrutiny as follows:
- to consider crime and disorder Councillor Call for Actions (CcfAs)
 - to consider actions undertaken by the responsible authorities on the Community Safety Partnership
 - to make reports and recommendations with regard to these functions.
- 4.4 The guidance also encourages overview and scrutiny committees to include in its work programme a list of issues which it needs to cover during the year. This should be agreed in consultation with the relevant partners on the Community Safety Partnership and reflect local community need.
- 4.5 This committee has already identified the effectiveness of PACTs (Partners and Communities Together) as the topic for its next in-depth review.
- 4.6 Also, since the report to committee in August 2009, there has been a Member training event on scrutiny of crime and disorder and the Vice-Chairman and spokespersons have met the Chief Executive of the Kent Police Authority to discuss co-ordination and activities to ensure overview and scrutiny complements the role of Kent Police Authority,

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report minimise the principal risks associated with the new crime and disorder scrutiny powers by recognising the importance of constructive dialogue with the organisations making up the CSP and also the importance of co-ordinated and collaborative working

6. Financial and legal implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 6.2 The service receives capital grant from the Stronger, Safer, Communities Fund but this has been reduced from £75,267 for 2009/10 to £37,000 for 2010/11. In addition a one-off grant of £54,000 has also been secured for tackling anti-social behaviour. All other expenditure is met from base revenue budgets.

6.3 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a statutory duty on Local Authorities and the Police to carry out an audit of crime and produce a three year strategy to reduce crime and disorder in their area. Following a fundamental review of the Crime and Disorder Act, Schedule 9 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 repealed this duty and in place of this made it a statutory requirement to produce an annual rolling three year plan, that was underpinned by an annual strategic assessment (SA) and reviewed yearly. The plan's overarching aim is to reduce crime and disorder and combat substance misuse.

7. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 7.1 consider the performance of the Community Safety Partnership and delivery of the 2009/2010 Community Safety Plan and to make recommendations that may be considered for incorporation into future activities of the Community Safety Partnership;
- 7.2 agree to inclusion on the Work Programme for Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny an annual scrutiny review of the Community Safety Partnership in June and annually on that anniversary.

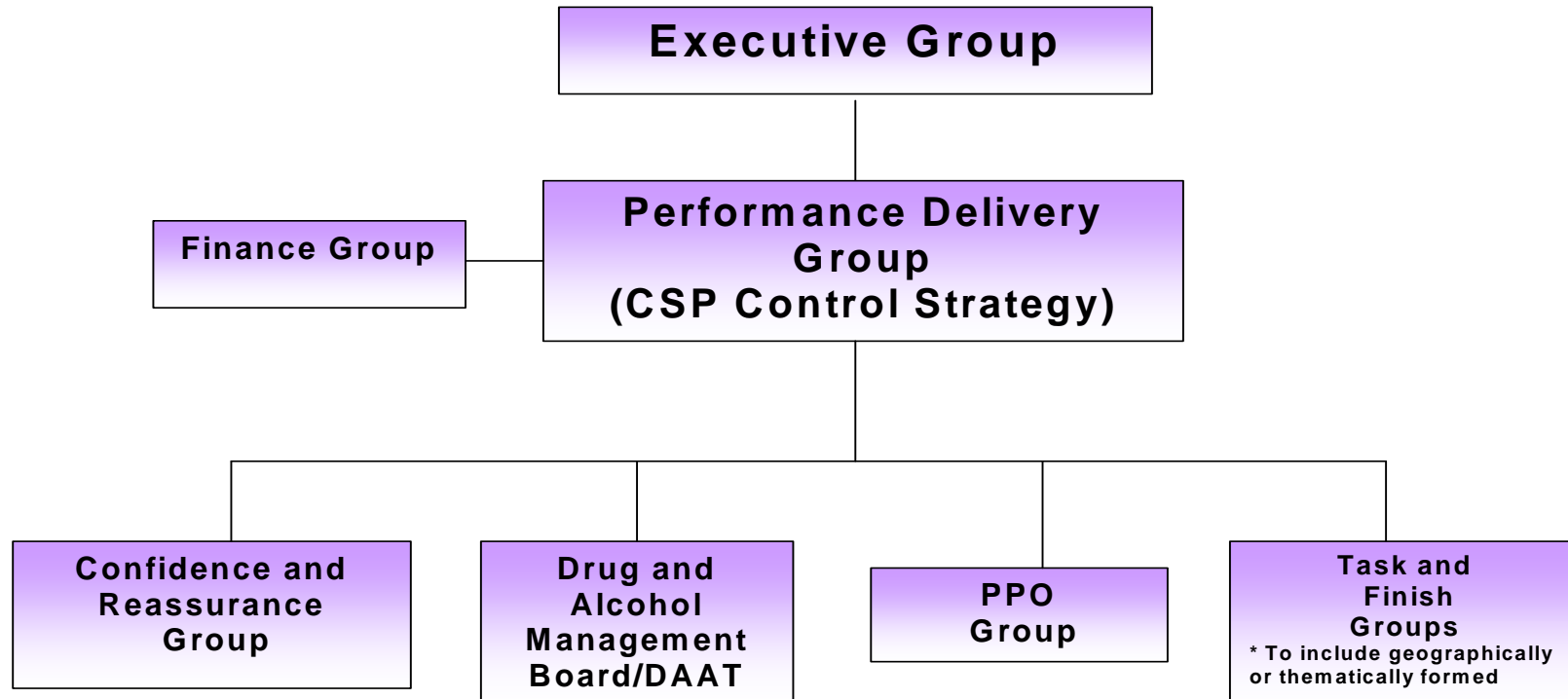
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Background papers

Home Office guidance for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters – England – published in May 2009

Community Safety Partnership Structure



Strategic Executive Group

The Executive Group is the ‘strategic arm’ of the partnership that gives steer, leadership and direction to the Performance Delivery Group. It is responsible for financial plans, accountability and excellence as defined by the Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships ⁵

⁵ Home Office Guidance: Delivering Safer Communities: A guide to effective partnership working.

Performance Delivery Group

The Performance [Tactical] Delivery Group is the 'doing arm' of the partnership. It is an intelligence led business process, driven by partnership analysis collated by the CSP analyst. The analysis of crime and disorder concentrates on the performance of the identified CSP priorities, the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) priorities and 'hotspot' areas. The 'hotspot' areas will be identified by drilling down to street level crime and disorder, i.e. targeting those streets with a disproportionate amount of criminal/anti social activity.

Task and Finish Groups

Feeding out of the Performance Delivery Group are 'task and finish' groups. Task and Finish groups are formed in reaction to identified 'hotspot' areas with only the relevant partners attending (i.e. those partners specific to the problem). The Task and Finish groups operate all the while the problem exists. With the right interventions in place these groups will disband after a couple of months whereby new 'hotspots' will be identified and the process will roll on.

Confidence and Reassurance Group

The Confidence and Reassurance Group takes forward the CSP communications strategy. Opportunities will be identified for good news stories and community engagement.

Priority Prolific Offenders Group

The PPO Group selects individuals by the nature and volume of crime they are committing and the nature and volume of harm they are causing to their local communities. Individuals are then referred to the relevant strand; Prevent and Deter, Catch and Convict and Rehabilitate and Resettle. Once on the strand individuals are put on a premium service with targeted intervention.

DAAT Board

The Drug and Alcohol Action Group is accountable for local delivery of the objectives of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England. The Medway Drug & Alcohol Board will implement these objectives by strategically commissioning substance misuse treatment services to increase the numbers engaging in treatment and to reduce drug and alcohol related harm and crime for adults and young people in Medway and the communities in which they live.