

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 December 2016

Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership, including the Draft Community Safety Plan 2016 to 2020

Discussion:

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman chaired the meeting for this item.

The Vice Chairman welcomed all the partners of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the meeting.

The Committee was reminded that the scrutiny of the CSP was last carried out in December 2014.

The Chairman of the CSP, Councillor Mackness advised that the CSP had undertaken an assessment of issues that had impacted on community safety in Medway and given consideration to potential issues and emerging themes/trends.

The draft Community Safety Plan 2016 – 2020 was appended to the report and contained five new priorities as follows:

- Strengthening communities
- Supporting victims and tackling offenders of sexual and domestic abuse
- Tackling the harm caused by substance misuse
- Reducing re-offending
- Commitment to safeguarding and improving services.

The Committee then discussed various elements of the report and the action plan including the following:

- **The inability to obtain data for a number of targets and indicators** – In response to a question as to the inability to gather data for certain targets/indicators, it was confirmed that the CSP had recognised that there were too many targets, and that some targets were confusing and in some cases difficult to understand because the actual data collected had changed. It was confirmed that in future all targets would be in line with the strategic plan and be meaningful.

Chief Inspector Alland confirmed that the Home Office definitions of anti social behaviour had changed. Therefore it was not possible to compare current statistics to those held for last year.

- **Recognition that mental health had an affect upon a number of CSP priorities and in particular offenders** - In response to a request for an assurance that mental health was recognised as affecting a number of the CSP priorities, it was confirmed that the CSP partners fully understood and

acknowledged that many people known to individual services had mental health issues. Reference was made to the Blue Light Project which ensured a link between various agencies for those suffering from mental health issues and alcohol and substance misuse thus ensuring provision of wrap around services for them.

The Youth Offending Team Manager reassured the Committee that all young people passing through the Youth Offending Team were screened for potential mental health issues and if necessary low level interventions were put in place. He also confirmed that the YOT Team could also fast track individuals to Child Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). In addition, he advised that earlier in the day the first meeting had taken place with a view to reviewing the protocol for Looked After Children who entered the Youth Justice System.

- **The CSP budget** - In response to a question about the level of budget available to the CSP and the type of items funded by the CSP, the Chairman of the CSP confirmed that the budget was available for a range of activities. He explained that it could be used to support the voluntary sector and, in addition it was open for bids from organisations for relevant projects. In the past, the budget had been used to support workshops, programmes and various projects including the provision of the community safety shop.
- **The percentage of people who feel safe in Medway** – In response to a query as to the number of people who feel safe in Medway, the Chairman of the CSP advised that whilst 94% of respondents felt safe, this figure dropped to below 50% at night. It was considered that a major contributory factor to this reduction was the night time economy. However, it was stressed that perceptions were very difficult to measure. The Chairman of the CSP also commented that national events, such as the recent terrorist attacks in Paris also affected perception of safety and such issues that were outside the control of Medway.
- **Possible use of mobile CCTV to deal with flytipping** – In response to a question as to whether CCTV could be used to combat incidents of flytipping, the Chairman of the CSP confirmed that the Council had a very robust approach to flytipping and, as a result had had a number of successful prosecutions. In addition, it was confirmed that other partner agencies in the CSP who travelled around Medway were proactive in reporting flytipping to the Council.
- **Community Safety Shop** - In response to a query as to why the Community Safety Shop had been incorporated into the Smokefree Advice Centre, the Chairman of the CSP advised that the previous unit used for the Community Safety Shop in 2014 in the Pentagon Centre had not been available for use. He advised that the current location had a good footfall of visitors and feedback to date had been positive.
- **E Cigarette Shops** - A Member asked why an e cigarette shop had been permitted to open close to the smoking cessation shop and Dr Barnett

confirmed that the sale of e cigarettes was not illegal. However, she confirmed that there had been several prosecutions in Medway against persons selling illegal tobacco and this would continue to be pursued.

- **‘Licence to Kill’ (LK2) Project** – In response to a query as to whether this project would be repeated, Martin Adams from the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service confirmed that this project had been delivered to 10,000 pupils in Medway schools and colleges in 2015 and involved a wide range of agencies. He confirmed that the project would continue in 2016.
- **Street lighting and visible policing** - In response to a Member’s statement that an individual’s perception of being safe was likely to be increased by the provision of good street lighting and visible policing, the Chairman of the CSP confirmed that the Council’s programme of installing LED street lighting would improve visibility. He stressed that anyone who knew of street lights that were not working should report this to the appropriate Council department so that the problem could be rectified.

Inspector Alland advised that the Chief Constable had confirmed that Police front line services would not be reduced. He added that in addition to Police Officers, PCSO’s and Community Wardens were active in the community.

- **Gang Violence** - In response to a request for further clarification on the mention of gang violence in the Community Safety Plan, Inspector Alland confirmed that Operation Jupiter had been set up with a view to disrupting, dismantling, deterring and detecting gang activity. He informed the Committee that gang activity in Medway tended to involve individuals travelling to Medway from London and was generally drug related. He advised that a number of arrests had resulted from a recent Police Operation.

The Youth Offending Team Manager advised that the YOT Team worked with a number of individuals who had relocated from London to Medway so that they could move from areas where there were gang issues. Such individuals were dealt with robustly if they re-offended.

The Chairman of the CSP advised that the CSP had supported a bid for funding to the Home Office in 2016 for a Peer Mentor Project to end gang violence and that the aim was to work with other local authorities on best practice in this area.

- **Cyber crime** – In response a request for further information on cyber crime, Inspector Alland confirmed that this was an issue being dealt with by the Chief Constable.

The Chairman of the CSP stated that whilst this issue was beyond the scope of the CSP, everyone had a responsibility to have an awareness of radicalisation.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) thanked the members of the CSP for attending the meeting and answering Member's questions;
- b) noted that as a Policy Framework document, the Community Safety Plan would be reported to Cabinet on 5 April 2016 and Cabinet would be asked to formally consider and recommend the proposed Plan for 2016 to 2020, containing new priorities for the CSP to Council on 28 April 2016
- c) noted the responses provided by the CSP on the issues outlined during discussions.