

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 DECEMBER 2016

ATTENDANCE OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR RESOURCES

Report from: Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gulvin

Summary

This report sets out progress made within the areas covered by the Portfolio Holder for Resources which fall within the remit of this Committee.

1. Background

1.1 The areas within the terms of reference of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee covered by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services are:

- Community Safety Partnership

Note: The following services fall within the Resources Portfolio, in relation to the Community Safety Partnership:

- Tobacco control, excluding smoking cessation services
- Community safety aspects of alcohol and drug misuse
- Public health aspects of promotion of community safety, violence prevention and response.

1.2 Paragraphs 5.3, 6.3, and 16.1 relate to the work of Community Wardens which falls within the Portfolio for Business Management. However, these are Community Safety initiatives.

1.3 Achievements for 2015/16 are detailed by services area below.

2. CSP Operational Group

2.1 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has set up a daily conference call with a number of agencies that takes place at 9.15am every day. The call is chaired by the CSP Manager and supported by Kent Police, Community Wardens, Medway Council Housing, and all 3 full time KFRS Stations (Medway, Strood and Rochester). This is to

discuss immediate issues of concern over the previous 24 hours and allocate resources to address them.

2.2 In the last year just over 440 different issues have been discussed during this conference call leading to the issues being dealt with and resolved quickly.

2.3 In addition the CSP Operational Group meets once a month and is attended by a number of agencies focussing specifically at repeat offenders, victims and locations. In the last year 140 complex issues have been addressed by this group.

3. Community Payback

3.1 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) continues to supply the majority of unpaid jobs in Medway for completion by offenders with community sentences. These are managed by the probation service, now Kent, Sussex and Surrey Community Rehabilitation Company.

3.2 Over the year a total of 148 jobs were nominated by a variety of elected members, Community Wardens, PCSOs, and the council's Public Rights of Way (PROW) team. The majority of activities undertaken were litter picks from open spaces, for example, the Great Lines is regularly litter picked. Other projects included working with a number of churches to clear and maintain overgrown graveyards and cutting vegetation back; work for PROW cutting back hedges, and the clearing of alleyways prior to them being gated off.

4 Safe Haven

4.1 We wish to introduce a multi-purpose mobile street triage service capable of delivering health, mental health, wellbeing and community safety services to the night time economy. Discussions have taken place with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and a bid has been submitted to the Department of Health by the PCC's Office to either hire or purchase a vehicle to use as an 'SOS type' bus.

4.2 Such a vehicle would include facilities to respond to people in mental health crisis; providing a place of calm, or who need support to help them recover from the effects of alcohol.

4.3 This proposal is to commission Medway Street Pastors to coordinate the running of the scheme and for the Community Safety Partnership to support them in providing a team of trained volunteers who will be able to offer basic first aid, information and assistance, as well as other types of help to ensure that the service users remain safe. It would also benefit those who visit Rochester at night to enjoy themselves without fear of anti-social behaviour (ASB) or crime, Rochester's business community who do not want their trade or reputation jeopardised by such behaviour and residents who live in close proximity to the town centre.

- 4.4 In addition there is the opportunity for Medway Street Pastors and other services to use the Safe Haven Bus during the day to offer simple health checks such as diabetes checks, and blood pressure checks.
- 4.5 A Steering Group has been set up with the aim of supporting the Street Pastors in formulating a plan to oversee the future implementation of a Safe Haven Bus.

5 PACTs

- 5.1 In November 2010, RCC Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended, as a part of the cross-party task group looking into the operation of PACTS (Partners and Communities Together) across Medway, that a forum for PACT chairs should be facilitated. The CSP coordinates and supports the PACT Chairs Forum along with a Sergeant from the Community Safety Unit. These meetings take place on a quarterly basis and consist of discussion on a specific topic of interest, a police update and an opportunity for Chairs to share best practice and improvement in their areas.
- 5.2 There are currently 6 PACTs running in Medway, compared to 22 in 2010 and 9 in 2015; the majority disband once their specific concerns were addressed; however others have continued to remain active in their communities as residents' groups.
- 5.3 Community Wardens have attended a total of 42 PACT meetings at which 156 issues of public concern were raised - 119 of these (76%) were resolved by the Warden Service and the remainder were referred to other departments or partner agencies.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1 A total of 25 community engagement events have been arranged by the Community Safety Partnership, which were supported by Safer Communities' staff and partner agencies at a variety of locations in both urban and rural parts of Medway, including Community Hubs and Residents Groups/Associations. General community safety advice is given along with personal safety equipment and leaflets, where appropriate. Community Wardens also organised 3 x PDSA pet health check events as well as engaging with the public at the Luton Fun Day and the KFRS Open Day.
- 6.2 Community Wardens delivered presentations to junior schools on the range of services provided by the Community Wardens. The presentations were aimed at year 6 pupils and were specifically related to personal safety and environmental responsibility.
- 6.3 The Environmental Enforcement Team continue to work in partnership with Kent Police. They use Kent Police's custody suite to facilitate the interviewing of suspects in environmental crime investigations. In November an operation working with Kent Police and VOSA called "Op Commando" targeted illegal waste carriers and abnormal loads.

7 Illegal Tobacco

- 7.1 The Trading Standards team have continued to address the issue of the retail sale of illegal tobacco. Trading Standards Officers' work to date has seen six shops found persistently selling illegal tobacco closed using innovative offences under the money laundering provisions of the Proceeds of Crime Act. In the past fifteen months in excess of 100,000 illegal cigarettes have been seized by the team.
- 7.2 The team's work has been lauded by both the Municipal Journal and Public Health England as a novel solution to a national problem. The Trading Standards team was asked to write a manual on addressing illegal tobacco by the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) for use by authorities throughout the country. This is currently residing with the NTSB awaiting feedback prior to publication.

8 Age Restricted Goods

- 8.1 The Trading Standards team continues to address the broad issue of the sale of age restricted goods. In particular, 3 test purchasing operations have taken place in partnership with Kent Police as part of Op Sceptre looking at the availability of knives to under eighteens.
- 8.2 Other operations addressing the availability of cigarettes, alcohol and fireworks have also taken place in Medway ensuring local businesses comply with the relevant age restrictions and reducing the associated ASB with the sale of these products to underage individuals. Action is currently being taken to address the actions of 3 retail outlets where positive sales of alcohol were registered, and 2 retail outlets where fireworks were sold to our child test-purchaser.

9 New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

- 9.1 The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 came into effect on 26 May 2016. The act bans psychoactive substances, also known as 'legal highs' and prevents the supply of these previously unregulated and frequently harmful substances for human consumption.
- 9.2 Immediately prior to the Act coming into force in May, all premises that were selling NPS were contacted by Trading Standards and had the law explained to them. Since the Act came into force there are now no premises in Medway that are overtly selling NPS. Trading Standards are keeping a watching brief on premises in Medway.

10 Reinvigorating Community Safety

- 10.1 A strategic approach is being adopted to ensure the Community Safety Partnership is closely aligned with the ambitions of Medway as a great place to live, work, learn and visit.
- 10.2 The strategic assessment has reviewed our priorities and has confirmed that we meet our statutory obligations as a partnership,

reflecting the priorities of our partner agencies in delivering a safer Medway, and supporting sustainable regeneration.

11 Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO)

- 11.1 Officers are continuing to work on reviewing the five existing Designated Public Place Orders (DPPO), also known as Alcohol Control Zones. Legislation introduced by the Government in 2014 gave local authorities more freedom and flexibility to control ASB in places to which the public has access. The introduction of PSPOs means that DPPOs will expire on 19 October 2017.
- 11.2 PSPOs are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They are designed to ensure the law-abiding majority can use and enjoy public spaces, safe from ASB.
- 11.3 In introducing a PSPO we must ensure that the behaviour being addressed has, or is likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; is persistent or continuing in nature; and is unreasonable.
- 11.4 A number of stakeholder consultation exercises have been carried out. These will be followed by a formal consultation taking place in 2017 to establish what controls are needed and where they should apply.

12 Prevent

- 12.1 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced the 'Prevent Duty', which requires local authorities, and other specific bodies, to act to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Local Authorities, and other specified bodies, are required to have 'due regard' to the duty in the following areas: awareness of the risks of terrorism; leadership; working in partnership; staff capabilities and sharing information.
- 12.2 The Corporate Management Team acts as the strategic Prevent Panel, with a subgroup of the CSP discharging the tactical and operational tasks, chaired by the Assistant Director, Front Line Services and supported by cross-Council participation.
- 12.3 In addition a multi-agency Prevent Board is in place. The duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism applies to Local Authorities and other specific named bodies, these are: education and child care providers, further education and higher education institutions, the health sector, criminal justice commissioned provision penal institutions and providers, and the Police.
- 12.4 The Local Authority and all other bodies are required to have 'due regard' to the duty in the following areas: awareness of the risks of terrorism; leadership; working in partnership; staff capabilities and

sharing information. The board's role is to agree levels of risk and coordinate Prevent activity across Medway.

- 12.5 Officers from the CSP are also members of Kent County Council's Prevent Panel, ensuring a regular dialogue to share best practice.

13 Channel Panel

- 13.1 Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremist or terrorist behaviour. Channel works in a similar way to existing safeguarding partnerships aimed at protecting vulnerable people.
- 13.2 Medway's Channel Panel is chaired by the Community Safety Partnership Manager and brings together a range of multi-agency partners to collectively assess the risk and can decide whether a support package is needed. If the group feels the person would be suitable for Channel, it will look to develop a package of support that is bespoke to the person. The partnership approach ensures those with specific knowledge and expertise around the vulnerabilities of those at risk are able to work together to provide the best support.
- 13.3 Anyone can make a referral. Referrals come from a wide range of partners including education, health, youth offending teams, police and social services. There have been 6 referrals onto Channel this year.

14 Serious and Organised Crime Partnership (SOCP) Community Clear Ups

- 14.1 In the week commencing 11 January 2016, a Peer Group Review was held in Medway around the theme of "Ending Gang and Youth Violence" (EGYV) led by The Home Office. The review formed part of the Home Office's response to increasing gang activity and was set up in 2011 to initially work with thirty three local priority areas where there were recognised high levels of gang and youth violence. The programme was later extended to a further ten areas that had emerging gang related issues. Medway was identified as one of these ten areas.
- 14.2 The purpose of the review was to establish what partners in Medway recognise as emerging EGYV related issues and their associated risks for young people around vulnerability and exploitation, leading to the development of an agreed strategy to confront and tackle identified issues in a partnership approach.
- 14.3 Out of this review the SOCP was formed with an aim to being instrumental in providing an effective local response to the issue of serious and organised crime in Medway. The multi-agency group is developing and implementing plans to disrupt and dismantle the criminality of identified organised crime groups, as well as to work with partner agencies to raise awareness of organised crime and its negative impact on individuals, communities and the local economy.

- 14.4 The SOCP will also work with partner agencies to develop techniques to deter people (particularly young people) from being drawn into serious and organised criminality.

15 Community Clear Ups

- 15.1 Eight Community Clean ups have taken place, including one at Bill Street Road at which residents cleared half a tipper load of rubbish, and another at Medway Gate involving Beavers from 21st Strood, which was reported in the local press.
- 15.2 A further 22 community clean-ups were organised as part of the Clean for the Queen celebrations in March – one per ward.

15 Offensive or Hazardous Litter

- 16.1 Community Wardens patrol known hotspots every morning to remove offensive or hazardous litter. Since January, they have removed 243 items of drug related litter including needles, and 101 items of sex related litter. This intelligence passed to Kent Police through the CSP.

17 Blue Light Project

- 17.1 The Medway Blue Light Project is an innovative multi agency approach, facilitated by Medway Public Health Department (in partnership with Alcohol Concern), to inform joint interventions aimed at adult substance misusers with complex needs and with a history of poor engagement with services. The cohort are also characterised by ongoing involvement in ASB in Medway's communities.
- 17.2 The project has an Operations Group that meets on a monthly basis to discuss nominations to the caseload and agree shared approaches that offer supported engagement with current provision, to reduce the costs associated with the group for agencies and partners. The Operations Group is attended by a wide range of services and partners, including: Kent Police, Probation, Medway Council Social Care, Medway Maritime Hospital, Housing, the CSP, Turning Point (substance misuse treatment service), supported housing providers and other groups working primarily with the homeless. There is also regular participation from community mental health services.
- 17.3 The group have worked with 24 adults (1st September 2015 – 31st August 2016), made up of 17 males and 7 females. The Group has been successful in supporting individuals with accessing a range of services, including primary and acute health provision; supported housing; specialist treatment for substance misuse and other resources that reduce problematic behaviour.
- 17.4 The Group is planned to continue during 2017 – 2018, offering improved measurement of outcomes delivered and savings achieved for Medway Council and its partners'.

18 Illegal Encampments

- 18.1 We have seen an illegal encampment at Marlborough Annex in Gillingham. The CSP has assisted Property Services in serving notice and securing Police support in attending the site. We have also coordinated a response from services including housing providers and Turning Point (drug and alcohol recovery service) who can offer support to the individuals when the eviction is carried out.

19 Domestic abuse One Stop Shop (OSS)

- 19.1 Domestic Abuse One Stop Shops offer free advice, information and support from a range of agencies under one roof to help victims of domestic abuse. Typically each one stop shop is open for 2-3 hours, once a week; no appointment is necessary, members of the public seeking assistance can just turn up to speak to the professionals in attendance.
- 19.2 Core agencies to staff the one stop shops Domestic Abuse Agencies, Kent Police, Housing related Floating Support, 3 local firms Solicitors, West Kent Lifeways, Turning Point, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Children's Centres, MHS Homes, Valuing Parents Support Service, and a Health Visitor (Medway Community Healthcare).
- 19.3 In the period 2015/16 compared to 2014/15 Medway has seen an increase of 25.6% in the number of visitors to the OSS.

Appendices

None

Lead officer contact:

Richard Hicks, Director, Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation
richard.hicks@medway.gov.uk
Tel 01634 331723

Background documents

None