

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

16 FEBRUARY 2021

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2020-2024, REFRESHED ACTION PLAN 2021-2022

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive

Author: Neil Howlett, Community Safety and Enforcement Manager

Summary

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are under a duty to produce a Community Safety Plan to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder, combat substance misuse, and reduce re-offending. This report provides information on the Plan, which forms part of the Council's Policy Framework, to cover the period from 2020 to 2024, and specifically the refreshed Action Plan.

1. Budget and policy framework

- 1.1. CSPs were set up under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and comprise representatives from the 'responsible authorities'. For Medway these are: Medway Council; Kent Police; Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS); Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group and Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company (KSS CRC – formerly Kent Probation). CSPs are able to work in partnership with any other agencies or bodies that they may feel would contribute to community safety.
- 1.2. Although the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is not a responsible authority on the CSP, there is a mutual duty to take account of each other's priorities and to co-operate.
- 1.3. Regulation 5 of the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 requires the CSP to carry out an annual strategic assessment of crime and disorder (see appendix 1). Regulation 10 requires CSPs to prepare a partnership plan and to revise it annually in consideration of the strategic assessment. The plan's overarching aim is to reduce crime and disorder, tackle substance misuse and reduce reoffending.
- 1.4. The current Community Safety Plan covers the period 2020 to 2024 and forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. The classification of this Plan as a

policy framework document is set out in Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, and in Article 4 (The Full Council) of the Council's Constitution.

- 1.5. Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 requires local authorities to have a crime and disorder committee with power to scrutinise the decisions and actions of the CSP in their area and to make reports and recommendations to the local authority and the Partnership. The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 require Local Authorities to scrutinise CSPs at least once a year.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Community Safety Plan was adopted by full Council on 16 July 2020.
- 2.2. The CSP has conducted its annual strategic assessment of crime, disorder and other community safety issues in Medway over the previous year. The assessment looks back at issues that have impacted upon community safety in Medway and forward at emerging issues, themes and trends.
- 2.3. The strategic assessment has shown that the existing priorities and Action Plan should be refreshed as per the findings, with a number of work streams under each priority. This has been agreed by the five responsible authorities.
- 2.4. Whilst the existing Action Plan provides a lot of detail, it can be difficult to identify key actions as there are so many of them. It is recommended that rather than updating a large number of actions each quarter, agencies supply a summary of their work for each of the 4P's within each Priority. This will allow for a quick, concise, and informative update.
- 2.5. The last scrutiny of the partnership, including scrutiny of the strategic assessment and Community Safety Plan, was last carried out in December 2020.
- 2.6. The Committee discussed the following topics:
 - 2.6.1. **Covid-19 pandemic enforcement concerning business compliance and wearing of face masks** – In response to a question concerning enforcement action against non-compliance with Covid-19 rules, the Head of Regulatory Services confirmed that his teams worked closely with the Police on enforcement and he provided a breakdown of the number and type of enforcement actions undertaken to date. This included 14 prohibition notices, 137 voluntary closures of non-compliant premises, 6,503 visits/engagements and the issue of 9 internet take down notices for prohibitive businesses. He advised that Trading Standards were unable to enforce the wearing of face masks in places such as supermarkets. Chief Inspector Dyball confirmed that the Police followed up complaints concerning non compliance with Covid-19 rules and undertook home visits where necessary. He advised that if an individual was unable to wear a face mask due to a medical condition or disability, they could wear a sunflower lanyard to indicate this to others.

2.6.2. **The impact of Covid-19 on Mental Health** - In response to a question concerning the impact on mental health of the Covid-19 pandemic, Andy Willetts (Youth Services), Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) and Aeilish Geldenhuis (Public Health) outlined the existing and additional workstreams and services put in place within their services for young people and within health services.

2.6.3. **Changes to the structure of the CCG following the STP transformation and lessons learnt** – Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) confirmed that the eight Kent and Medway CCG's came together on 1 April 2020 to form the Kent and Medway CCG just as the Covid-19 pandemic was taking hold. She confirmed that functions had changed through the months of the pandemic and there had been a period of catch up through the Summer and a push for increased digitalisation and joint working.

2.6.4. **Re-organisation and transition of the Probation Service** – In response to a question as to the reorganisation of the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and whether the Service's website would be re-branded as a result of the re-organisation, Cynthia Allen (CRC) advised that the service continued to be operated by the private company Seetec until the contract end in June 2021. Work was underway in collaboration with the National Probation Service to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the contract.

2.6.5. **Recording of crime statistics** – Chief Inspector Dyball advised that statistics could be interpreted in different ways and the Police avoided placing targets in plans as the Police was not a target driven organisation. He confirmed that crime statistics were submitted monthly to the Government and he was pleased to report that Kent Police had been graded outstanding by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) for its crime data integrity.

He drew attention to the crime statistics referred to in the report for the last financial year and provided an update as to the crime statistics for the rolling year specifically, as they related to recorded crime during the Covid-19 pandemic. He advised that there had been a general reduction in the levels of recorded crime through this period but reminded the Committee that double recording of crimes now meant that a crime was not necessarily recorded as one incident but also in the wider context.

Chief Inspector Dyball drew attention to a number of areas where there had been a reduction in reported crime including a 20% reduction in robbery, 28% reduction in home burglaries and a 27% reduction car crime. It was considered that some of these reductions could be as a direct result of people working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the number of calls to the 999 and 101 service and electronic communication had remained constant and there had been an increase in issues concerning mental health.

2.6.6. **Police absences due to the Covid-19 pandemic** - In response to a question as to the level of police absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Chief Inspector Dyball advised that as at early December, the pandemic had

resulted in approximately 2.3% absence of police officers and 8% absence of support staff.

He informed the Committee that the HMICFRS had undertaken an inspection of Police support services for staff during the pandemic and the Police as an organisation had been found to be exemplary in the way that it had managed Covid-19 and supported its staff whilst maintaining an efficient service throughout the period.

- 2.6.7. **Anti Social Behaviour staffing levels** - The Committee expressed concern regarding the reduced level of staff within the Council's AntiSocial Behaviour team. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership advised that due to officers taking up posts elsewhere, three vacancies had arisen in the team. He confirmed that during the Summer, traveller/unauthorised encampment work had been absorbed by the Enforcement team and recruitment to one of the other vacant posts was now being progressed. Unfortunately, recruitment to the remaining vacant post had been deferred due to the moratorium but it was hoped that once the moratorium was lifted this second post would be filled.

He also confirmed that there was another post specifically covering Chatham Town Centre which had been funded by Section 106 funding and as this officer had been temporarily redeployed through the Covid19 lockdown the funding had been extended to January 2022. He advised that once this funding stream ceased, it was intended that the post would continue to be funded either through further Section 106 funding or via Medway Development Company.

Chief Inspector Dyball informed the Committee of the importance of reporting anti social behaviour so that the Police could ensure that resources could be appropriately allocated. He confirmed that Kent Police had recruited additional Police Officers and PCSO's during the Covid-19 pandemic so that they could tackle anti social behaviour. In addition, there were dedicated Youth Officers and an additional 10 Police officers designated to work with schools.

Chief Inspector Dyball also expressed a wish for communities to assist the Police by taking an active role in the Police Speedwatch campaign.

- 2.6.8. **Operation of the Community Payback scheme during the Covid-19 pandemic** - In response to a question, Cynthia Allen (CRC) confirmed that the Community Payback Scheme had been suspended nationally during the first Covid-19 lockdown. Staff had been diverted to other activities including additional support for the support line advisory service on the CRC website.

After the initial lockdown, the Community Payback Scheme was able to recommence at 92% of the pre-lockdown hours (436 hours per week) and was the highest performing Community Payback Scheme nationally. Under the current lockdown, the scheme had reduced to 60%, providing approximately 285 hours per week. Cynthia Allen advised that many of the Community

Payback Schemes were located within charity shops which were now closed but the Gillingham Street Angels continued to be operational.

Group projects were operating at 60% and a number of new projects were planned at allotments, Fort Amherst, Medway Foodbanks, Wayfield Primary School and Community Centres.

- 2.6.9. **Concerns as to the physical and mental wellbeing of staff within services during the Covid-19 pandemic** - The Committee expressed concern as to the physical and mental health of staff working within the Partnership's services during the Covid-19 pandemic and asked what measures were in place to ensure that services had resilience to cope.

Chief Inspector Dybal advised that physical assaults on Police Officers were isolated incidents but when they did occur, the assailants were prosecuted. He advised that Kent Police had been recognised by the HMICFRS as a leader in the provision of staff welfare.

David Read (Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service) informed the Committee that within the Fire and Rescue Service there was a good support structure for staff particularly around mental health and regular contact was made with those corporate staff who were working from home. There had been 2% sickness during the summer months.

Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) advised that within the health service there was an emphasis on the mental health and well-being of staff. However, she advised that since the commencement of the second lockdown, staff were getting tired and working above their contracted hours and were therefore being encouraged to take regular breaks. She advised that over the Christmas/New Year break, it was likely that many international staff would want to take long breaks to return to their families and this was currently under discussion.

Aeilish Geldenhuys, Head of Public Health advised that there was a great level of support from the Leader of Medway Council, the Chief Executive and the Council's Human Resources Department to provide support for staff and ensuring that they were aware of the support services available. Managers were being encouraged to keep in contact with those either working from home, working on the front line or in a redeployed role.

- 2.6.10. **Stakeholder engagement on the Community Safety Plan** – In response to a question as to how the pandemic had affected stakeholder engagement on the Community Safety Partnership's Community Safety

Plan, the Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership, Councillor Gulvin advised that whilst it had not been possible to hold the annual stakeholder engagement event in 2020, consideration was currently being given as to how to stage the event in 2021, either as a physical event or online.

- 2.6.11. **The appointment of a fulltime Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (HIDVA)** - In response to a question as to the length of term for the

post of the full time Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (HIDVA) appointed in January 2020, Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) advised that the post had been extended to March 2021. In the meantime, the CCG were putting together a document in recognition as to how people seek urgent support and a model was emerging around emergency treatment centres and increased support in primary care but this was still being finalised. It was hoped that as a result of this work, a Health HIDVA Hub would be provided to support the Primary Care Urgent Treatment Centres as well as the Emergency Departments across Kent and Medway.

- 2.7. During the discussion, the Committee acknowledged that the Country was going through the biggest crisis that had faced the world as far back as anyone could remember and that the response of the various agencies had been extraordinary during this period. This built on the strength of the CSP which had been established prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.8. The Committee thanked the Community Safety Partnership partners for attending the meeting and answering questions and:
 - a) noted the findings of the strategic assessment.
 - b) noted the refreshed CSP priorities in light of the strategic assessment findings.
- 2.9. The Community Safety Plan for 2020 to 2024 contains four priorities:
 - Tackling Serious Youth Violence and County Lines
 - Reducing Vulnerability
 - Reducing Reoffending
 - Listening to our Communities and Partners
- 2.10. These priorities are discussed in more detail in the Community Safety Plan 2020-2024 (appendix 2), the Community Action Plan 2021-2022 (appendix 3) with as previously noted the annual Strategic Assessment 2020 at appendix 1.

3. Options

- 3.1. A protocol is in place to encourage the sharing of assessments and plans, so as to foster improved strategic alignment amongst the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Boards and CSP. Board members' comments are sought on the strategic assessment and Community Safety Plan, to inform future assessments and plan priorities.

4. Advice and analysis

4.1. There are clear linkages between health and community safety and a range of areas of congruence where health and wellbeing and community safety players can make strong common cause, such as:

- Drugs and alcohol
- Domestic abuse
- Mental health
- Tobacco control
- Health of ex-offenders and their families
- Troubled families
- Hate crime and vulnerable people

4.2. The CSP continues to recognise that Medway's future success is contingent on regeneration. It is clear that benefits from growth must be delivered to existing communities and new developments and residents must be effectively integrated. The CSP is confident that the identified community safety priorities are robust and remain the right priorities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.3. This physical regeneration will only be successful if people feel that they and their families are safe. Safety is a key factor in encouraging people to take exercise, especially for children and older people. Taking regular exercise has clear health benefits, including limiting obesity, heart health, reducing the onset of diabetes, promoting a sense of wellbeing and protecting older people from depression.

5. Risk management

There are reputational, environmental, economical and legal risks to the Council for not pro-actively pursuing an improvement in crime and disorder levels. This report reflects the importance of constructive dialogue with the partner organisations comprising the CSP and also the importance of coordinated and collaborative working.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Decreased Agency "buy in"	Changes in leadership, staffing or resources could reduce the involvement of key agencies	Ensure that agencies are aware of the impact of disengagement upon their own service delivery/performance. Ensure that strategic members of the CSP are made aware of	E2

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
		any situation as it arises.	
A wide range of CSP objectives	Means that the CSP may be spread too thin and not have the resources to deal with all aspects so there may be gaps in service.	Prioritisation based on strategic assessment	E2
Legislation	Government guidance could change focus for CSP	CSP to ensure that it effectively horizon scans to be aware of impending legislative changes.	D3
Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) plans	Changes in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.	Continued engagement with the PCC.	D3

6. Consultation

- 6.1. The CSP is required to consult with a wide variety of stakeholders in putting together the annual strategic assessment.
- 6.2. As a result of COVID-19 we have been unable to carry out community engagement events as we have previously done. The last CSP community engagement event was held on the 11 March 2020. Plans for this financial year's event are being discussed by the CSP in order to hold a virtual event.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has submitted his Police and Crime Plan and has proposed that CSPs be allocated a budget to use for funding activities to tackle crime, disorder, drugs and reoffending. In 2020-2021 the amount allocated to Medway CSP was £106,460, however only £60,593 has been received from the PCC to fund a reduced level of activity due to restrictions resulting from Covid-19. The PCC has in previous years been committed to supporting the funding of CSPs, however we will not get any confirmation on the level of funding for 2021-2022 until the overall budget is considered and approved by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. Currently there is no indication that 2021-22 funding will be reduced.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

- 8.2. The Council's statutory powers are detailed in the report.
- 8.3. The adoption or modification of the Community Safety Plan would be a decision for Full Council.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1. The Board is invited to note the strategic assessment and Action Plan 2021-2022 and to make any comments or recommendations to the Partnership in that regard.
- 9.2. The Board is requested to note that as a Policy Framework document the Community Safety Plan was adopted by Full Council on 16 July 2020. The comments of this Board are invited.

Lead officer contact

Neil Howlett
Community Safety and Enforcement Manager
neil.howlett@medway.gov.uk
01634 331183

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Strategic Assessment
Appendix 2 - Community Safety Plan 2020 to 2024
Appendix 3 - Community Safety Action Plan 2021-2022

Background papers

None