

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**10 FEBRUARY 2022**

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2020-2024, REFRESHED ACTION PLAN 2022-2023**

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

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#### **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 for the coming year.

#### **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 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 re-offending.

- 1.4. The current Community Safety Plan covers the period from 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 2020 – 2024 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 scrutiny of the partnership, including scrutiny of the strategic assessment and Community Safety Plan, was last carried out by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2021.
- 2.6. The Committee discussed the following topics:
  - 2.6.1 **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)**

Increase in ASB - A Member referred to the 59% increase in incidents of ASB between April 2020 and March 2021 and requested the reason for this increase. Superintendent Marsh advised that this reporting period covered the Covid-19 lockdowns and during this period, the Police had received an increased number of calls relating specifically to breaches of Covid rules. He reminded the Committee that one incident of ASB could generate multiple calls. Superintendent Marsh was confident that the next reporting period would show a decrease in incidents of ASB. Superintendent Marsh gave an assurance that ASB remained a priority for the Police and that work

undertaken by the Task Force in Gillingham had successfully reduced levels of ASB in this area of Medway.

Comparisons with other areas for levels of ASB - A Member sought clarification as to where Medway was ranked when compared to other area for incidents of ASB. Superintendent Marsh advised that Medway ranked the highest for levels of ASB in Kent when compared to other districts but confirmed that Medway was resourced to reflect this. He was satisfied that in the next reporting period, levels of ASB would reduce to levels previously seen prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Superintendent Marsh also advised that Kent Police were one of the top Police forces in the Country for the way in which crimes were recorded and therefore, this reflected in the crime statistics for the area.

ASB during the Christmas/New Year Period – In response to a question, Superintendent Marsh advised that it was anticipated that there would be increased numbers of people out celebrating during the Christmas/New Year period and, as a result, there would be increased night time patrolling. He informed the Committee that with Covid rule enforcement, the Police took the line of engaging and encouraging compliance and using enforcement as a last resort.

- 2.6.2 **Youth Crime** – In response to a question as to whether the Police should take a more active role in trying to discourage youths who were on the edge of entering a life of crime, Superintendent Marsh advised that Kent Police now had a dedicated School's Team comprising 4 Police Constables who undertook work in secondary schools with a focus on prevention of crime. Superintendent Marsh advised that it was not always necessary or beneficial to take a young person into custody if alternative interventions were available. He further advised that Kent Police had 2 Safety Officers specifically working on disrupting county lines gangs and grooming and work was also undertaken in schools by the Youth Offending Co-ordinator and the Task Force.
- 2.6.3 **Probation recruitment** – In response to a question concerning recruitment to the Probation Service, Tracey Kadir advised that there were staffing challenges in the Probation Service but this was not a new issue. Due to Kent being located in close proximity to London, potential recruits were attracted to working in London where they could receive London Waiting Allowances. Committee was advised that there were 35 vacancies in West Kent currently being advertised.
- 2.6.4 **Public Health** – Aeilish Geldenhuys, Head of Public Health advised that whilst Public Health was not a statutory organisation in its own right it was treated as statutory with equal status on the Community Safety Partnership. They stated that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic would be around for a while and this was being addressed in Public Health.
- 2.6.5 **Mental Health Services/CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)** - Aeilish Geldenhuys, Head of Public Health confirmed that nationally there had been an increase in funding for CAMHS as part of a 10

year plan by the National Health Service. They confirmed that although local waiting times were within the national target, there was a lengthy wait for neuro developmental assessments and help was being provided to those on the waiting list to identify possible alternative strategies.

- 2.6.6 **LAC (Looked after Children) Foyer in Luton** – A Member expressed concern as the location of a LAC Foyer in the Luton area of Chatham as he considered it was not a suitable location to place vulnerable children. Councillor Gulvin as Chairman of the CSP informed the Committee that the Safeguarding Board had undertaken work in the Luton area of Chatham and discussions had taken place with MHS Homes concerning their proposals for Russell House. However, he appreciated and shared the concerns expressed on this issue
- 2.6.7 **Modern Slavery** – In response to a question, Superintendent Marsh advised that the issue of modern slavery was the responsibility of a central team which formed part of the Serious Crime Directorate and confirmed that the Task Force had been involved in securing intelligence for the Team. This work involved a multi-agency approach and included Safeguarding officers.
- 2.6.8 **Domestic Abuse** - Aeilish Geldenhuys, Head of Public Health advised that it was difficult to confirm whether the level of domestic abuse had increased in the last reporting period as many incidents had not been reported during the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020. However, it was noticeable that as lockdown restrictions had eased, reports of domestic abuse had begun to increase. They advised that in cases of domestic abuse, whilst every attempt was made to keep the family in their home, especially where children were involved due to their schooling and local friends, this was not always possible. Superintendent Marsh advised that the primary concern was always to reduce the initial risk and to give all sides breathing space whilst options were considered. The Police had specific Domestic Abuse vehicles to ensure a rapid response. It was also confirmed that the Violence Reduction Unit was involved in cases of Domestic Violence so as to ensure wrap around care especially where children were involved. Councillor Gulvin as Chairman of the CSP referred to a report submitted to Cabinet on 16 November 2021 which sought agreement to update the existing Domestic Abuse Strategy to comply with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The report focussed on the safe accommodation addendum to the existing Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy.
- 2.6.9 **Covid rule enforcement in the Pentagon and availability of lanyards** – In recognition that the Council now owned the Pentagon Shopping Centre, information was sought as to who had responsibility for enforcing Covid-19 rules and whether there was information available as to where to obtain lanyards for those who were exempt from wearing face masks. Councillor Gulvin as Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the Pentagon Shopping Centre security had been proactive in asking members of the public to wear face masks and face masks were available for sale in the Centre and in individual shops. Concerning the availability of lanyards for those exempt from wearing face masks, Rosie Bauer from the North Kent Clinical Commissioning

Group advised that these were usually available within public areas but they would obtain this information and report this to the Committee outside of the meeting.

2.6.10 **Victims of Grooming** – A Member referring to recent national press reports on the issue of grooming sought an assurance that any victims reporting incidents of grooming would be taken seriously. Superintendent Marsh provided an assurance that reports of grooming were treated seriously by Kent Police and confirmed that one active investigation was currently being undertaken in Kent.

2.6.11 **Request for the impact of COVID to be more central in future reports** - A Member suggested that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic be made more central in future reports.

2.7. 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.
- c) noted that further information would be supplied to the Committee concerning the availability of lanyards within the Pentagon Shopping Centre for those individuals who were exempt from wearing a face mask.

2.8. 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

2.9. These priorities are discussed in more detail in the Community Safety Plan 2020-2024 (Appendix 2), and 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.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>
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 any situation as it arises.	E2
A wide range of CSP objectives	Means that the CSP may be spread too thin and not have the	Prioritisation based on strategic assessment	E2

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>
	resources to deal with all aspects so there may be gaps in service.		
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 11 March 2020. An online consultation was carried out during November and December 2021 with plans to hold an event later in 2022.

## 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 re-offending. In 2021-2022 the amount allocated to Medway CSP was £106,460. 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 2022-2023 until the overall budget is considered and approved by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. Currently there is no indication that 2022-2023 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 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 2020 - 2024 was adopted by Full Council on 16 July 2020. The comments of this Board are invited.

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### Appendices

Appendix 1 - Strategic Assessment  
Appendix 2 - Community Safety Plan 2020 to 2024

### Background papers

None.