

Regeneration, Culture, and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 December 2023

Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership, including an update on the Community Safety Plan 2020 to 2024

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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 operation of the CSP from October 2021, which summarises the findings of the strategic assessment. This report provides information on the Community Safety Plan covering the period from 2020 to 2024.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The Committee is requested to note the findings of the strategic assessment.
- 1.2. The Committee is asked to support the proposed CSP priorities in light of the strategic assessment findings.
- 1.3. The Committee is requested to scrutinise the activity of the Community Safety Partnership, over the past year, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. 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)
 - Integrated Care Partnership
 - The Probation Service
- 2.2. CSPs are able to work in partnership with any other agencies or bodies that they feel would contribute to community safety.
- 2.3. Although the Police and Crime Commissioner 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.
- 2.4. 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. 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.
- 2.5. 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.
- 2.6. 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.

3. Background

- 3.1. Scrutiny of the partnership was last carried out in December 2022.
- 3.2. The current Community Safety Partnership Plan, covering the years 2020 to 2024, was adopted at Full Council on 16 July 2020 and contains four priorities for the responsible authorities:
- Safeguarding Adults and Children (Tackling Serious Violence and County Lines)
 - Reducing Vulnerability
 - Reducing re-offending
 - Listening to our Communities and Partners
- 3.3. The Community Safety Plan for 2020 to 2024 is attached as appendix 2 to this report. Highlights on progress are contained within the strategic assessment which is attached as appendix 1.

- 3.4. The CSP has conducted a 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.
- 3.5. There will be a new CSP Plan for 2024–27 which will reflect the new priorities that have emerged from the Strategic Assessment but will need to be agreed by the five responsible authorities post Committee with any comments from Committee considered.
- 3.6. The Action Plan for 2024–25 will allow agencies to provide a summary of their work for each Priority. This will allow for a quick, concise, informative updates.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1. The Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meets annually to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other actions taken by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Committee has power to make reports or recommendations on the functioning of the CSP. Any significant amendments to the Community Safety Plan itself will require a new plan, which will be routed via Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council, in accordance with the Council’s policy framework rules.

5. Risk management

- 5.1. There are reputational, environmental, economic 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 any situation as it arises.	D2
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	D3

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
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. The last CSP community engagement event was held in September 2023 with the same questions asked in the Q2 Citizens Panel. The results are reflected in the Strategic Assessment.

6.3. In summary for the online survey - 107 respondents completed the survey:

- 70% feeling very safe/fairly safe in Medway during the day.
- 16% feeling very unsafe/fairly unsafe.
- 28% felt very safe/fairly safe in Medway during the evening.
- 56% feeling very unsafe/fairly unsafe.

6.4. The top issues that were felt to be a problem in Medway were:

- People using or dealing drugs (79%)
- People driving carelessly or too fast (69%)
- People fly tipping (68%)
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places (66%)
- People dropping litter (63%)

6.5. The top five issues that respondents felt should be addressed as a priority in Medway were:

- People using or dealing drugs (71%)
- People driving carelessly or too fast (51%)
- People fly tipping (40%)
- Violent crime (37%)
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places (28%)

6.6. The top three things respondents felt have the most impact on making people feel safer in Medway were:

- Visible and effective policing (77%)
- Well maintained public spaces and infrastructure (53%)

- CCTV (46%)
- 6.7. In summary for the Citizens' Panel Q2 results - 192 respondents completed the survey; 80% feel very safe/fairly safe in Medway during the day with only 9% feeling very unsafe/fairly unsafe; 36% felt very safe/fairly safe in Medway during the evening with 33% feeling very unsafe/fairly unsafe.
- 6.8. The top issues that were felt to be a problem in Medway were:
- People using or dealing drugs (80%)
 - People driving carelessly or too fast (79%)
 - People dropping litter (72%)
 - People fly tipping (72%)
 - People not clearing away dog fouling (62%)
 - People being drunk or rowdy in public places (62%)
- 6.9. The top issues that respondents felt should be addressed as a priority in Medway were:
- People using or dealing drugs (72%)
 - People driving carelessly or too fast (57%)
 - People fly tipping (46%)
 - People being drunk or rowdy in public places (29%)
 - People dropping litter (28%)
 - People not clearing away dog fouling (28%)
- 6.10. The top three things respondents felt have the most impact on making people feel safer in Medway were:
- Visible and effective policing (80%)
 - Well maintained public spaces and infrastructure (55%)
 - CCTV (48%)

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has not yet submitted his Police and Crime Plan, which in previous years has granted CSPs a Crime Reduction Grant to use for funding activities to tackle crime, disorder, drugs and reoffending. In 2023-24 the amount allocated to Medway CSP was £106,460.
- 7.2. The PCC has in previous years been committed to supporting the funding of CSPs, however the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) are not yet able to update us on the commissioning plan for 2024-25. The Police Grant Settlement for 2024-25 has not been issued by the Home Office and the Crime Reduction Grant is linked to this funding.
- 7.3. The CSP's initial business case needed to reflect no more than a spend of £70,973, the PCC automatically allocates a third of the total grant to a tactical

pot which is £35,487.00. The tactical pot supports the delivery of projects which address emerging needs and demands throughout the financial year. Brief details of successful bids are shown below. There are a number of bids that the CSP have submitted to the OPCC which are still awaiting approval which are not shown below.

7.4. Medway Council Housing - Ladies Night - £5,580.00

Ladies Night is an informal evening which has operated monthly from 8pm till 11pm where several local service providers attend in casual dress and without ID badges. The targeted cohort are women that are sex working and/or homeless. They are invited to attend the evening but do not have to give any details, unless they choose to, after being issued with a menu of services that are in the venue. The option to engage is on the women's own terms and they can get initial advice and information on services without disclosing who they are. It is proven through previous sessions that this results in a willingness to engage and take the opportunity to seek support, coming from a group of women which has been traditionally very difficult to engage. Some providers have stated that they have given up hope of engaging with these women until they started providing staff attendance to Ladies Night. There are also a number of items donated from various services such as personal hygiene items from Public Health. Services that support the project are: River Substance Misuse Services, Oasis Domestic Abuse, Sexual Health Services, Kent Police Rape and Sexual assault specialist, Pathways, Medway Task Force, One Big Family, Medway Street Angels, Caring Hands, Complex Needs Nurse, Public Health, Peer Support Services, Medway Rough Sleeping Initiative and Housing Services. The project allows vulnerable women access to services which may be able to intervene directly (e.g. Kent Police and Sexual Assault staff and Domestic Abuse providers) and also hear about ways of staying As well as being presented to the Police and Crime Commissioner on his visit to Medway to see the work undertaken by the Taskforce in Spring 2022, the role of the Ladies Night service was also presented to Home Office representatives during a visit, and more recently was the subject of a national good practice forum for leaders of women's services hosted by Homeless Link.

7.5. Medway Domestic Abuse Forum (MDAF) - One Stop Shop - £5,000.00

MDAF is a multi-agency practitioner forum with the aim of raising awareness of Domestic Abuse (DA) and increasing support provision for victims of DA in Medway. MDAF members represent statutory and voluntary sectors including Medway Council, Medway Community Healthcare, Medway Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Interventions Alliance, Social Care and a number of voluntary partners. Medway's OSS operates on a Tuesday morning at the Sunlight Centre in Gillingham, for victims (female and male) of DA, offering a safe community location. Medway's OSS has consistently seen the highest number of attendances/victims across the whole of Kent and is recognised as a 'gold standard' for other OSS's across the county. During 2022/2023 they supported 297 victim/survivors through the One Stop Shop.

7.6. Medway Council Youth Services - Brief Intervention Project - £14,583.00

This project offers brief intervention counselling sessions for young people across Medway. The number of sessions and time are based on the need identified for each young person, but usually between 6-8 sessions. Sessions are delivered from Youth Service venues according to need. The target audience are young people who do not meet the criteria for accessing CAMHS and who do not have access to other counselling services. Referrals will be taken from: the CA Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding Panels, which discusses support for young people at risk of CSE and criminal exploitation; the Channel Panel and the Early Help Allocations Panel who support families raised to Early Help Services, Medway YOT, the Adolescent Multi-Disciplinary Team, by schools and other partners. The service aims to provide brief interventions of 6 – 8 weeks' worth of counselling for young people, including the initial assessment. The service aims to work with 21-36 young people across Medway. By delivering a counselling service out of traditional hours and in community facilities, the project is able to provide a more efficient and accessible service and is accessible due to the hours and locations, but also by using 'youth' friendly facilities. The project increases efficiency of other services by helping link young people who are referred into other youth provisions and by offering support young people who do not meet the threshold for CAMHS. This can help prevent escalation of mental health problems that then need interventions that are more expensive. The funding also allows for parental support and group work, as well as the supervision a trainee counsellor to add capacity.

7.7. Medway CDAP - Domestic Abuse Programme - £10,600.00

CDAP delivers a 27-session programme designed to address domestic abuse, with men who acknowledge that they have been abusive to their partners and want to change this behaviour. The partners of the men who attend the programme are provided with the support of a Women's Safety Worker. The programme runs on a rolling process; therefore, it is possible for men to join the programme at any time.

7.8. Medway Youth Services - Contextual Safeguarding: Schools Assessment - £9,000.00

The school assessment is an opportunity to explore the strengths and challenges young people face within the school community and put a plan in place to support the students. Multi-agency partnership helps schools to draw on the expertise and experience contained within the wider local community and to work towards the idea of safeguarding being 'everybody's business'. Over a school term students, parents and carers, teachers and the wider community can participate in a consultation to explore the school community. The school assessment is initially introduced to the school community via training to the full school staff team, this gives an overview of contextual safeguarding and how the school assessment can support the school. This is followed by assemblies led by the Medway Youth Service, explaining the process to the students. A cross section of students will then be identified to

attend focus groups and activities with the youth workers to map the strengths and worries they have. Parents and Carers are also be asked for their views, as a part of the school community, through surveys and face to face meetings. As a part of the process the school staff team also participate in an anonymous survey and focus groups to give a holistic view of the school community. As a part of this pilot, 2 schools were identified: Walderslade Girls School and Victory Academy A third school will need to be identified, potential requests have been made from the Strood and Hoo Peninsula. This pilot is supported by Durham University, who are supporting with expertise and academic oversight, as a part of the pilot.

7.9. Medway Council, Greenspaces - Fashion Show/Youth Event at Hillyfields Community Park - £4,975.003

Hillyfields Community Park has been targeted and suffered abuse with graffiti, litter, vandalism including bins being set alight, bug house burnt, vandalism to playground, drug use, signs being vandalised and general disruption to neighbours close to the park. This started to be addressed with a first Youth Engagement Event by holding a Graffiti Event led by Carers First in the park 25-27 July 2022. The project engaged young people from across Medway and local to the park. They then decorated the youth shelter, and a celebration event was held on the last day attended by partners and The Deputy Mayor. A survey with the young people at resulted in them asking for age-appropriate events which included a Fashion Show for 2023. Reasons given by the group are they were bored and did not feel their voices were heard. Leading up to the event workshops were held to upcycle clothing, supported by Climate Change match funding, and design clothes that the young people can then model on the day. On the day there was a marquee with enclosed changing areas, a catwalk, music and portaloos. Additionally, there were t-shirt painting workshops on the day, so younger children and those previously not engaged could join in. Street Games delivered a mobile boxing ring with two coaches at the event day, plus extra sports activities to engage more young people. Youth Services provided music on the day. KFRS were also in attendance.

7.10. Medway Council - Transport and Parking - Secure Motorcycle Parking - £2,500.00

For the past three years, Medway Council's Transport and Parking Service have maintained positive working dialogue with the North Kent Motorcycle Action Group (MAG). This was originally prompted by some published police statistics around motorcycle thefts. Subsequent conversations with the North Kent MAG led to vibrant "Park it, Lock it – Help Stop Motorcycle crime" signs being produced by the Council's Communications team. With the support of the Transport and Parking Service, the signs were located across all 17 of the Council's public car parks containing motorcycle parking provision (76 spaces) in early 2021 and were well-received at the time. Based on surveys and reports completed by the North Kent MAG and collaboration with Council officers, 5 public car park locations were identified without any form of secure motorcycle parking barriers (locking bars) and this funding put that right to specifically help reduce the number of motorcycle thefts in Medway.

7.11. Medway Council; Community Safety Unit - Rapid Deployment CCTV - £13,000.00

To target resources at those areas of need, either identified through work carried out by Kent Police Neighbourhood Task Force, Kent Police CSU and Medway Council Community Safety Team. Deployments are across Medway. There has been an increased need for CCTV which has seen the number of requests exceed the number of cameras that are available, hence this funding was sought. There is also the need to replace those cameras that come to the end of their life. There is also a need for pan, tilt, zoom cameras (some existing stock are still fixed point cameras). Cameras will gather evidence of those carrying out ASB, reassure residents and act as a deterrent.

7.12. Medway Council, Child-Friendly Medway - "Family Fri-YAY" - £4,000.

Family Fun Fri-YAY previously ran throughout term-time every Friday evening, with the idea to 'start the weekend with fun activities for the whole family'. The free, drop-in sessions were open to all ages, with a range of activities held, such as table tennis, badminton, dodgeball, inflatable obstacles, football, basketball, cricket and many more. These sessions provide free positive opportunities for children, young people, parents, carers and the wider family unit. Helping to encourage healthy lifestyle habits for the whole family and build more resilient families in Medway. They are held in Gillingham and provide much needed no-cost outlets for families, children and young people. The aim is to run sessions across the school year with a higher frequency in winter months when there is less opportunity to play outside. Some of the biggest sessions were 400+ in attendance with queues to get into the sports centre, making it the most popular night. For many attendees (both child and adult) this was their first time attending a sports centre and playing group sports outside of school. There is the potential to deliver some partnership work with sporting teams and professionals such as Kent Crusaders Basketball Club, Medway Park Judo Club and Medway Netball League at these sessions.

7.13. Medway Council, Child-Friendly Medway - Drop In Football - £14,000.

The Drop-In Football program came to be when it was reported that young people were breaking into the Strood Sports Centre to play football. This was addressed with positive action in the form of weekly, free drop-in football sessions. They provide free positive opportunities for children and young people, opportunities that will develop their skills, confidence and sportsmanship on and off the pitch, providing positive mental and physical health benefits from being more physically active. This will combat childhood obesity and social isolation and will narrow the social economic gap by providing free programming for all. The team want to provide positive role models for attendees to build trusted relationships with coaches to combat ASB, gain respect for the staff, local sport centre and community. Since running this programme there has been a positive difference in attendees. The program also encourages physical activity and engagement through sports, supporting the mental health of our young people. This is one of the most popular sessions, with over 100 young people attending every week.

- 7.14. Medway Council, Child-Friendly Medway - Taylor Swift, Eras Tour (Cinema event) - £3,000.

This funding is to hold an event showing the Taylor Swift: Eras Tour at Mid Kent College with the target audience of this film being women and girls 12+. This will be a completely free event ensuring all guests have the same opportunity to enjoy the film and activities, including popcorn and a drink to really make their cinema experience special at no cost to help narrow the social economic gap. Perceptions of safety is a concern that we hear often from young people, especially girls. This screening is relevant and impactful as Taylor Swift is an icon of female empowerment and has “used her platform to speak out on issues like feminism and mental health. This is a message that many young girls have found inspiring, and it has helped to make Swift a role model for many, “fostering a sense of unity amongst her fans”. This unity is something we want to build on in our Violence Against Women and Girls focused programming. There is also going to be a social element to this film screening by inviting some partners such as Neighbourhood Task Force, Public Health, Medway Youth Service and local domestic abuse charities and some members from the Community Safety Partnership to set up a stall before the film to promote their services and answer any questions that women and girls may not be comfortable answering in other settings. This will provide a safe and comfortable space for the audience.

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.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Strategic Assessment 2023
Appendix 2 – Community Safety Plan 2020-2024

Background papers

None