

1. Medway Council - Community Safety Team

- 1.1 The team consists of a Team Leader and two Community Safety Officers and has a close working partnerships with Kent Police and other members of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Community Safety Team are part of Regulatory Services. The team use the tools and powers contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- 1.2 The team attend a weekly Community Safety meeting with Kent Police and other partner agencies which empowers partnership working to discuss and resolve significant issues of anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- 1.3 The team attend various multi-agency partnership meetings including the Medway Vulnerability Panel, Channel Panel, Clear Hold Build, Serious Organised Crime Partnership, Medway Contextual Safeguarding Panel, Police Liaison Group, Child Exploitation, Derelict Buildings, Kent and Medway Unauthorised Encampments, PACTs and Rough Sleeper outreach visits to expediate the process of identifying rough sleepers engaging in ASB. The Community Safety Team has worked on several extensive enquiries that will have a positive impact on Medway's communities and may ultimately bring offenders to prosecution.
- 1.4 In 2024, at the time of this report submission, the Community Safety Team has dealt with 640 cases, including reports of ASB occurring. These reports have ranged from some simple ASB issue which required a straightforward early intervention to resolve, to complicated community safety issues including safeguarding and cuckooing which needed a protracted investigation, and a multi-agency approach led by Community Safety Officers.

Type of report	No.	Description
Reassurance	296	Broad range of issues including nuisance neighbour issues, location ASB, cuckooing, safeguarding, Prevent
Alley Gating - General	110	Includes maintenance and defect reports.
Community Payback	55	Litter Picks, clearing overgrown vegetation, waste removal, Graffiti removal.
Tent Enforcement	44	Enforcement action taken on tent dwellers involved in ASB or pitched in a location likely to cause significant harm to the tent dweller or have a significant impact on the local community.
Unauthorised Encampments Caravans	31	Unauthorised encampments by caravan dwellers on public land.
PSPO Vehicle / Alcohol	104	Multi agency events.
Total	640	

- 1.5 The team (working in partnership with the Animal Noise and Nuisance Team) provide a mediation service provided by Maidstone Mediation. Mediation is offered as an early intervention tool to residents who are involved in neighbour disputes, rather than engaged in ASB within its true context.
- 1.6 The team are currently in consultation with the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board and Kent Police to potentially implement a pilot scheme within Medway to reduce ASB in NHS primary care settings, particularly inappropriate and abusive behaviour directed at GP reception staff. It is anticipated that the pilot scheme will run for twelve months, following which, a review will be carried out to establish how much of an impact the initiative has had on

reducing ASB in primary care settings and whether the initiative can also be rolled out to the Kent Borough Councils.

2. Community Payback

- 2.1 A total of 30 Community Payback requests have been completed so far in 2024 which include litter picks, alley clearances and garden clearances. Further self-initiated litter picks have been completed by Community Payback at litter hotspot locations which are not included within the figures below.

Work required	Number
Litter Pick	15
Overgrown vegetation	4
Waste & vegetation removal from alleyways	11
Total	30

3. Kent Police Update

- 3.1 Kent Police in Medway have had 14,531 immediate or emergency calls in the rolling year.
- 3.2 There has been a number of significant and serious incidents, including Homicides, across the year. Medway has a challenge in relation to High Risk Missing Children. This means resources can be diverted and prioritisation has to take place. Such incidents include cases such as Op Fowl, the attempted Murder of an Army Officer at Sally Port Gardens, Operation Whistle, the disappearance of a teenager, and the response to national and local widespread public disorder.
- 3.3 There is a commitment to the people of Medway in allowing everyone to feel included and represented, so that they have trust and confidence in Kent Police, such as the Independent Advisory Group with plans alongside the CSP to ensure that all is done to maintain and grow community cohesion.
- 3.4 The Neighbourhood Policing Model (NHP) is embedded with a decrease in ASB and victim-based crime on the rolling year. Hate crime has seen a 10% increase in solved crimes; knife crime is down.
- 3.5 Kent Police have utilised national funding to patrol areas linked to serious violence. They have reintroduced the National Intelligence Model within the force to ensure they are targeting and focused on the people causing the most harm and the places where this occurs.
- 3.6 There are plans to enhance the footprint in our town centres. Shoplifting and protecting business for example is a focus. In October alone there was 40 shoplifting charges.
- 3.7 Targeted activity and Problem Management Plans (PMP's) -
- Op Maltby – Great Lines.
 - Op Checker – monitor young people at risk of serious violence.
 - Op Irradiate – Nuisance vehicles.
 - Op Colour – Illegal vapes and underage sales.
 - Medway Vulnerability Panel – to reduce vulnerability in adults with complex needs; assist to reduce demand on all emergency services.
 - There are currently 23 PMPs for Medway; 7 x Op Checker, 4 x GRIP (deter serious violence through visible patrol activity in hot spots whilst also adopting strategic problem-

oriented policing to address the root causes of violence within those locations), 12 x targeted work around individuals or locations.

- 3.8 The Medway Community Safety Unit (CSU) consists of three main elements – Beat officers, Neighbourhood Task Force (NTF) and Child Centred Policing Team (CCPT). All teams work together to build up intelligence within an area and problem solve with our communities to reduce vulnerability, crime and ASB but also to build community resilience. Activity includes intelligence gathering, enforcement, referrals and signposting to relevant partner agencies, education and multiagency work to reduce vulnerability. Beat officers have ownership of Wards and have built excellent relationships with local communities, partner organisations and key stakeholders.
- 3.9 The NTF continue to enhance the CSU's ability to be proactive, visible and engage with all elements of our diverse communities in Medway. CCPT Officers continue to engage with schools, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), Child Friendly Medway, Medway Council Youth Service and young people within the community to protect and prevent the risk of harm. In June (225), July (203) and Aug (243) Sept (251) - 922 Intelligence Reports were completed by the CSU; 612 Arrests were completed between June 2023 to May 24. This is to highlight not only the vast amount of engagement, but the work done to keep people safe by gathering intelligence and taking enforcement action.
- 3.10 The NTF consists of 2 Sergeants (one is primary engagement and partnerships to keep the close links and working with partners – the other is the proactive Sergeant who is responsible for operations and taskings). Police Constables within this team are able to carry out proactive work enforcement such as arrests, stop searches but also spontaneous issues such as Violence Against Women and Girl (VAWG) deployments, violent crime, knife crime and burglary.
- 3.11 The Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) within the team carry out a wide variety of engagements which always have a multiagency element to them. These include door knocking events in areas that are reporting issues, multiagency engagement stands in the Pentagon, My Community Voice (MCV - an online platform which provides a good line of communication between local residents who sign up and local officers) events and surveys, high visibility patrolling in areas for nuisance bikes, support of Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) with ASB and risk in derelict buildings across Medway. The PCSO's regularly co-ordinate an "ASB car" which targets areas where ASB is known to occur, and they monitor calls coming into the Force Control Room and proactive deal with reported incidents.
- 3.12 Overall ownership of 'nuisance bikes' is owned by the Beat officer team and is co-ordinated under the operation name Op Irradiate. Officers are working with local communities to identify riders who cause ASB and act to reduce the risk they pose to the wider public. Enforcement in the form of Section 59 warnings, fixed penalty notices issued under Medway's Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), positive action regarding traffic offences and education is key to tackling this issue.
- 3.13 NTF and Beat officers contribute towards the engagement and enforcement work within the area of VAWG – deploying within the nighttime economy as part of Project Vigilant which work towards preventing future victims and dealing positively with predatory behaviour. Multiagency Walk and Talks take place across Medway with the latest event held in Chatham High Street on 6 December 2024. These Walk and Talk events help to inform the work within Project Vigilant.
- 3.14 Medway Beat Officers and NTF have recently engaged with Park Run in Gillingham, officers got involved and engaged with local residents receiving positive feedback and compliments from the public around visibility and heightened feelings of safety in the local area.

- 3.15 It is worth noting that for S59 Warnings, which can be used by all policing teams, data is difficult to obtain – as it is just a warning. Police Officers will warn a subject and submit an online form to PNC (Police National Computer) – PNC is then updated on the vehicle / subject, and the form is deleted – this is due to Data Protection. In relation to nuisance vehicles Medway Community Safety Unit have issued 13 section 59 warnings, and conjunction with the Medway Council Community Safety Team have issued 27 PSPO fixed penalty tickets since August 2024.

4. PACTs (Partners and Communities Together)

- 4.1 Officers from Medway Council's Community Safety Team and Kent Police continue to support PACT meetings across Medway.

5. Community Engagement and My Community Voice (MCV)

- 5.1 MCV is a two-way engagement tool that allows communities to tell them about issues in their area and will allow Kent Police to create a personalised policing response and enables them to have their say in how neighbourhood policing priorities are approached. People can also contact the Beat Officers on this and ask questions. The Community Safety Unit continue to utilise MCV, whereby surveys have played a large part in community engagement enabling officers to hear the voice of our communities and in turn officers can respond appropriately with enforcement, education and multiagency work where relevant. MCV is a two-way engagement tool that allows communities to tell them about issues in their area and will allow Kent Police to create a personalised policing response. People can also contact the Beat Officers on this and ask questions.
- 5.2 Local Surgeries and drop-in sessions continue to be productive some locations include but are not limited to – The Sunlight Centre Gillingham, Salvation Army Chatham, St Margarets Church Rainham, Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, Rochester Gate and The Bread of Life Cafe Strood. Other surgeries are being developed.
- 5.3 The Partnership approach which continues means that Kent Police can join other engagement strands with Partners – such as KFRS, Housing, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Victim Support, and Immigration Officers. Kent Police have worked during Safer Business Week, ASB week and Hate Crime awareness week. In addition to this, the CSU have worked jointly with British Transport Police (BTP) and other agencies to deliver on Op Sceptre, which was knife crime awareness intensification week.
- 5.4 The Safer Medway Partnership continues to work well. Partner agencies attend regular local meetings and Town Centre Forum Meetings to discuss local issues with Town Centres, residents, and businesses.
- 5.5 The Parish Councils of Medway have nominated Police Officers, and these staff have regular contact with the Councillors and engagement with the residents, dealing with the local issues and providing feedback.
- 5.6 Kent Police Licencing Teams works with Beat Officers and Medway Council Licencing to enhance the safety of customers within Medway – Best Bar None is led by licencing and Medway has seen an increase in sign-ups for this scheme.
- 5.7 The Child Centre Policing Team (CCPT) continue to work well with key partners, Child Friendly Medway, Children's Services and with schools. During knife crime awareness intensification week and hate crime week CCPT officers go into school to provide presentations to young people in assemblies.

6. Illegal Tobacco

- 6.1 Following the cessation of the safer streets funding for a specialist officer the lead enforcement of this area has fallen back to HMRC (His Majesty's Revenue and Customs) and Kent Police. Trading standards continues to collate intelligence regarding local retailers and offer support to our partner agencies. A number of warrants have been executed by HMRC and Kent Police with product seized and defendants identified for further investigation. The Governments recently announced Tobacco and Vapes Bill plans to bring into force a licensing regime for any trader wishing to sell tobacco or vapes. This will see a great increase in enforcement time allocated to this area of work.

7. Age Restricted Goods

- 7.1 Age restricted sales continue to be an area where a large number of complaints are received. Trading Standards officers carryout regular test purchase operations to check compliance with the legislation and target our inspections at premises highlighted by these complaints. Our latest operation resulted in the sale of a vape product to our 15-year-old volunteer. The investigation into this matter is ongoing. Again, the recently announced Tobacco and Vapes bill, when introduced, will create a pressure on the service to ensure that all traders are aware of the new restrictions and that current statutory notices are replaced with ones bearing the updated information.

8. Strategic Community Safety Approach –

- 8.1 A strategic approach continues to be adopted to ensure the CSP is closely aligned with the ambitions of the new administration in Medway as a great place to live, work, learn and visit.
- 8.2 The strategic assessment reviewed the CSP's existing priorities and has confirmed that they meet their statutory obligations as a partnership, reflecting the priorities of partner agencies in delivering a safer Medway, and supporting sustainable regeneration.
- 8.3 The annual strategic assessment this year confirmed the priorities within the 3-year CSP Plan and Action Plan, which the CSP continues to align with the Police and Crime Commissioners Safer in Kent Plan. The Strategic Assessment is being taken to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

9. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO)

- 9.1 PSPOs are Orders granted to local authorities and police to give more freedom and flexibility to control ASB in places to which the public has access. PSPOs replaced the Designated Public Place Order (DPPO), which created 'alcohol control zones' and Dog Control Orders. From this time the DPPOs were treated as provisions of a PSPO.
- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 There are existing PSPOs prohibiting the consumption of alcohol within Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester and Strood town centres. These are pro-actively patrolled and enforced in partnership by Community Safety Officers and Beat Officers. These zones restrict drinking alcohol in designated public places in an anti-social way, for example drinking in the street

- 9.4 This does not mean there's a blanket ban on drinking in public but does mean that a police officer or an authorised council officer can prevent you drinking alcohol if you're behaving anti-socially. If you refuse to stop drinking alcohol when asked, you'll be committing an offence. Your alcohol can be confiscated and disposed of, and you can be fined up to £100.00; if you fail to comply you can also be arrested. Pubs, restaurants, and off licenses do not form part of the PSPO.
- 9.5 A Medway-wide PSPO has been implemented to tackle nuisance vehicles, following a public consultation which was approved by a vote at Full Council in October 2023.
- 9.6 The Council is determined to tackle ASB, utilising the tools and powers contained within the Act have helped us to develop our joint work alongside Kent Police. Over the past 6 months the Council has seen a decrease in complaints related to nuisance vehicles, both on the road and off road which is likely to be due to engagement, education and fixed penalty notices being issued to those breaching the PSPO.
- 9.7 Nuisance vehicle complaints show that reported ASB has a detrimental effect on the quality of life of residents, reducing their ability to feel safe in, use, or enjoy public spaces.
- 9.8 The nuisance vehicle PSPO controls the anti-social use of motor vehicles, some of these behaviours include, but are not limited to:
- Driving in convoy
 - Racing
 - Performing stunts
 - Revving engines
 - Wheel spins
 - Burnouts
 - Recording any of the listed activities on any device
 - Congregating to spectate the listed activities
 - Engaging in any other activity that a reasonable person would consider to be "car cruising".

9.9 PSPO enforcement –

PSPO FPN Issued	No. Issued	Paid	Other Actions	November 2024
Nuisance Vehicle	52	34	1 Voided	10 still within FPN payment period of 28 days. 7 pre-legal action
Alcohol	2	0		2 pre-legal action

10. **Prevent**

- 10.1 Since the last report there have been several key changes to Prevent as detailed below.
- 10.2 The Kent and Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board (PDDB) is the strategic partnership board responsible for overseeing Prevent delivery across Medway and Kent and is jointly chaired by Corporate Directors from Medway Council and Kent County Council (KCC) and has good attendance from a range of partners. Following the 2024 Benchmarking by the Home Office, a subgroup of the PDDB will be established in January 2025 to enable partnership tactical

delivery of Prevent across Kent and Medway. It will be entitled the Prevent Leads Tactical Delivery Group (PLTDG). The subgroup will meet quarterly before PDDDB and report into each PDDDB meeting.

10.3 To summarise some of the key changes –

- There has been a roll out of the New National Referral Form (NRF) for all Prevent referrals. This is live on the Medway Council website and MedSpace as well as other partner sites.
- The new Home Office Prevent training portal went live, and partners now have the opportunity to contact the Kent and Medway Prevent team to deliver Prevent training to their organisations. Key oversight for consistency and ensuring a high level of training sits with the Prevent team and will be fed back to PDDDB.
- All Channel Panels across the country are now using the new Prevent Assessment Framework (PAF). The tool has been developed by the Counter Terrorism Assessment and Rehabilitation Centre (CT-ARC) in collaboration with Homeland Security Group (HSG) and Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters (CTPHQ), using the latest research and insights from Prevent data.
- The Kent and Medway Prevent team training offer has now increased with several new training offers, include bespoke sessions on Extreme Right Wing (ERW), Islamist extremism and antisemitism.
- An updated list of ideologies has been released as part of the transition to a new case management system for Counter Terrorism Police. This is entirely owned by (HSG) and there are several new areas.
- In July, the Home Secretary (in agreement with the Deputy Prime Minister) commissioned HSG Prevent to lead on a cross-Government Counter-Extremism Sprint to set out their understanding of the challenge, identify gaps, and recommend a new approach to tackling the issue. Extremism has historically been, and continues to be, a difficult issue for Government to define and tackle, including through legislation. The complexity, breadth and interconnectedness of extremism, hate crime, political violence, and social cohesion makes it clear that any policy response requires a whole government approach. There is a need to understand, review and redesign Government's approach across this spectrum of harms. The Home Office is best positioned to focus on the 'higher harm aspects', while the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) commands the policy levers on integration, social cohesion, and positive community building projects. Both the KCC Assistant Director Contest and Serious and Organised Crime (SOC), and The Prevent and Channel Manager were involved in separate national roundtables to feed into the Extremism Sprint.

10.4 The Prevent Coordinator and Prevent Community Engagement Officer (PCEO) continue to deliver a high level of training to colleagues, partners, and communities across Medway. The training is constantly updated and new dates for 2025 have been set for Medway staff through Workforce Development. An overview of Prevent information and training courses is available on Medway Council's intranet (MedSpace).

10.5 The Prevent team continue to monitor online sentiment, relating to events around small boat crossings, ERW organisations, protests, and campaigns, as well as national and worldwide events. There remain constant ERW narratives which are continued to be seen online focusing on anti-migration in particular areas. In the summer there was unprecedented levels of disorder and violence across many areas in the country. Although no significant disorder occurred in Kent and Medway, there were several planned protests as well as the huge adverse impact of misinformation and disinformation across social media. Misinformation and links were also posted online in relation to the Gurdwara stabbing in Gravesend and the soldier stabbing in Medway. The Prevent team were at the heart of daily communication across several KCC and Medway teams. This also included attending vital meetings, briefing teams,

documenting community tensions, online tension overviews, security advice and support. This resulted in an increase in training and support to other professionals. The Prevent team were liaising with Kent Police on an almost the daily basis and sharing multiple communications from the Home Office such as Protective Security for Mosque schemes which was applied for across Kent. Southport and the summer disorder had a huge impact on the workload and commitment of the Kent and Medway Prevent team.

- 10.6 The Prevent/Channel Manager is working on a project with SATEDA (Swale Action To End Domestic Abuse) to incorporate a higher understanding of Prevent, susceptibility to radicalisation and incorporating Prevent referral concerns into the Domestic Abuse assessment tool (Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment - DASH and Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment – DARA). A working group with victims of domestic abuse (DA) has been established and SATEDA will be piloting the use of questions around radicalisation and extremism over the coming months. Should this project be successful this may see a 'National' change with Kent and Medway leading on this change.
- 10.7 The 2024/2025 national Prevent area prioritisation process started with the Kent and Medway round table held on October 2024. The portal for priority area resources opens mid December 2024. At this stage there is no reason to believe that Kent and Medway will not remain a funded Prevent priority area. Confirmation of the funding will be shared in February 2025. Project funding will be different for 2025/2026 with a separate bidding process.
- 10.8 The second Kent and Medway Prevent and Serious Organised Crime (SOC) awareness week ran from 23 to 27 September 2024. There were 27 different events including some with guest speakers and partner organisations. A weeklong event successfully raised awareness on counterterrorism and serious organised crime. The team hosted 27 expert speakers, and sessions covered a broad range of topics. The week began with a focus on victims' perspectives and concluded with a review of the government's new 'Clear, Hold, Build' strategy to tackle serious and organised crime. Survey results clearly demonstrated the event's success, with an average rating of 4.68 out of 5 from 1,429 attendees. The event was a resounding success, featuring high-calibre presentations. The next awareness week is in October 2025.
- 10.9 Following the success of the 2024 hybrid event, the 2025 Hateful Extremism event with Kent Police, Counter Terrorism Policing South-East and KCC will be held on 26 February 2025.
- 10.10 The Kent and Medway Prevent Team recently updated all of their resources, There are a number of new Rapid Reads, Prevent and Channel leaflets, easy read documents and Channel Panel professionals guide. All the documents can be found at – <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/The-Prevent-Duty-In-Education>
- 10.11 The two Kent and Medway Prevent Education Officers (PEOs) continue to receive a high volume of calls and emails from education settings requesting support and guidance for Prevent-related enquiries about pupils and potential Prevent referrals. The themes of these enquiries range across all ideological concerns, including Islamist, ERW, school-based violence (often inspired by school shootings in America) and concerns around misogynistic attitudes and language. Whilst many of these enquiries will result in a formal Prevent referral, many are not strictly Prevent-related and so PEOs are able to assist schools with exploring alternative avenues of support through different agencies such as the Child Centred Policing Team, Early Help, Social Services, CAHMS (Child and Adolescents Mental Health Service) for mental health concerns, or other charities that may be able to offer workshops or support in school.
- 10.12 Schools are continuing to report racist, Islamophobic, antisemitic, misogynistic, and homophobic language between students, and at times also directed at staff. Pupils presenting

with Prevent-related concerns often also present with widespread safeguarding issues and/or mental health needs which in turn appears to impact on behaviours, contact and exposure to content that can lead to Prevent referrals and calls from education settings.

- 10.13 Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and assorted neurodiversity attributing to fixations continues to be over-represented within the Prevent space, compared to their neurotypical peers. Even in pupils where this is undiagnosed, professionals who know the student well frequently report that they present with ASC (autism spectrum condition) traits.
- 10.14 The team continue to receive enquiries and referrals concerning children and young people who are perceived to be at risk of committing a violent act or idealising violence against others but have no extremist ideology.
- 10.15 The most frequently reported concerns from education settings remain around ERW views, often referring to Hitler and Nazism, but also local topical issues that have been subjected to Far-Right rhetoric, such as immigration, small boat crossings, and asylum accommodation in the county.
- 10.16 There have also been many concerns raised to PEOs following the conflict in the Middle East between Palestine and Israel. Concerns raised are around Islamophobia or antisemitic because of this conflict, and these concerns originate equally from both primary and secondary schools.
- 10.17 Prevent Community Engagement Officer (PCEO) continues to work alongside all 12 Kent district/county Community Safety Units and Medway Community Safety Unit, as well as working with the Kent Police Community Liaison Officers to ensure the Prevent team is embedded across the county. The PCEO has been delivering training to several organisations. This has been a mix of Prevent Awareness sessions and follow up sessions for specialist training e.g. Graffiti and Stickers sessions, Incel sessions and Venue Hire Guidance.
- 10.18 The first session of the Medway Gaming Bus took place in collaboration with Hate Crime Awareness Week and in partnership with Kent Police hosting Safer Business Action Week. The session took place 15th October. The team worked closely with Kent Police and Medway Council partners to host the Gaming Bus at a significant location – the Pentagon Shopping Centre in Chatham. They then attended a Children’s home on the same day as a secondary location. At the Pentagon Shopping Centre there were valuable conversations with people of all ages in the community and tried to understand their awareness of Prevent, discussions on hate crime and even received disclosures around bullying and domestic abuse. The team spoke to around 50 people and had about 30 come onto the bus for more detailed conversations. All those that frequented the bus scanned the QR code on entry which took them to a 10-question multiple choice form about their online habits.
- 10.19 Following this event, the bus was maximised by taking it to another location in Medway which was a children’s home. Young people who would not normally have the opportunity to use the bus were able to experience it as well as talk to the adults around them in a positive setting, building those relationships with partners present. There were about 10 people in attendance.
- 10.20 Shortlisting is taking place for the next Gaming Bus session in Medway. A full report will be produced once all of the sessions have taken place to establish the outcome of having the Gaming Bus as an engagement tool.
- 10.21 The newly set up for 2024 Prevent Advisory Group (PAG) met 5 times in 2024. The group has steadily grown in the last year, with members inviting others to attend the meetings where possible. The aim has been to have a meeting every quarter, however an emergency PAG meeting was called to discuss the Southport murders and riots. The group used the meeting

to discuss first hand experiences and bring forward any thoughts they had around extremism, so it was an essential meeting for the group. Four of the meetings have been held online and the last meeting of the year was held in person in Maidstone – decided via a poll taken by the group. A Chairperson was elected, who is a Prevent Champion at Medway Council.

11. **Channel Panel**

- 11.1 Channel uses a multi-agency approach to: identify people at risk, assess the nature and extent of that risk, develop the most appropriate support plan for the person concerned.
- 11.2 Channel provides early support for anyone who is at risk of radicalisation, supporting terrorist organisations, or committing acts of terrorism, regardless of age, faith, ethnicity or background. People can receive support before they begin on, or once they are on a trajectory towards participating in terrorist related activity. Cases should not be adopted onto Channel where no such terrorism concerns exist.
- 11.3 The Kent and Medway Channel Panel continues to see a high complexity of cases. Over the past quarter they have continued to see an increase in referrals and adopted cases across Kent and Medway with some challenging cases, and trends remain the same.
- 11.4 New Channel case studies have been drafted and will be used in training sessions to inform practice. A revised and updated Channel Panel Professionals Guide has also been created and has been made available to all attending the Kent and Medway Channel Panel.
- 11.5 The Medway Channel Annual Assurance Statement has been completed and signed off by Medway Council's Chief Executive.
- 11.6 The national evaluation of the Channel programme is being relaunched in January 2025, following a pause earlier in the year due to practitioner feedback. Briefing sessions are being held in November by the Prevent Research Team which will provide a reminder of the Channel evaluation, its value, and explain what changes have been introduced since the original pilot launch. A further briefing session will be held to explain the process for the evaluation, including timelines and what will be asked of practitioners to support the Home Office in delivering the Channel evaluation.

12. **Serious and Organised Crime Partnership (SOCP)**

- 12.1 The SOCP meeting is well attended and has good engagement from partners to tackle serious criminality including organised crime groups (OCG). Information sharing via the partnership continues and is a vital part of tackling these serious issues.
- 12.2 County Line and local drug dealing networks continue to be well suppressed with a number of arrests and prosecutions by local officers and proactive CID teams. CCPT work with young people on the periphery of this activity under Op Checker to enforce, educate and provide support through St Giles Trust and VRU engagement to divert behaviours. In overview of our activity across the summer– July saw 3 active lines were closed, August saw 9 lines closed, and September 4 lines closed down. This is around our continued enforcement and joint working. In that period there was 38 significant arrests of suppliers in Medway.
- 12.3 Agencies have provided intelligence and updates during the meeting assisting enforcement action on those that pose risk to local communities through their criminality. Emerging crime trends, threats and alerts from both national groups and Kent Police, along with partners into the meeting to allow partners to keep people in Medway safe.

- 12.4 County Lines – Kent Police monitor and gather intelligence on County Line Networks operating in Medway. Proactive CID assess information and score a County Line on a matrix system based on threat. Lines are then selected for targeted activity to disrupt and prosecute involved parties.
- 12.5 The Neighbourhood Policing Team work closely with investigation teams, exchanging information and disrupting activity when overtly required. To provide a better understanding a local officer may have knowledge of a drug issue within their area – provided by intelligence through policing, this knowledge will then produce intelligence stops on those involved, which then results in the recovery of a substance and the suspects arrested for supply this drug. This activity from Beat officers and NTF damages organised networks.
- 12.6 The Child Centre Policing Team work with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in identifying vulnerable youths who may be in danger of becoming involved in this criminality using joint engagement and education to move them away from this threat. Kent Police continue the education within schools and working with young person’s families they are able to prevent future children becoming involved. A multi-agency approach is conducted via the VRU.
- 12.7 Certain County Lines are targeted more covertly in the gathering of information and intelligence and building a bigger picture, so when Kent Police go for enforcement, they are prepared meaning a well-managed prosecution package can be put before the Court, gaining best evidence and often seeing large custodial sentences.

13. **Blue Light Project**

- 13.1 In 2022 with cross sector support, Medway became a Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) Area. MEAM is an approach that helps local areas design and deliver better coordinated services for people experiencing multiple disadvantages. The MEAM Approach considers seven key principles:
1. Partnership, coproduction and vision.
 2. Consistency in selecting a caseload.
 3. Coordination for clients and services.
 4. Flexible responses from services.
 5. Service improvement and workforce development.
 6. Measurement of success.
 7. Sustainability and systems change.
- 13.2 Late in 2023 Medway Council in partnership with the Integrated Care Board (ICB-NHS Kent and Medway) through the Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership, funded a small team to work on the Medway MEAM Approach, with a focus on working with individuals living with multiple disadvantages who are at high risk of premature mortality and for whom the current system is not working. This team works with a small group of 14 individuals at highest risk.
- 13.3 This team then in partnership with Medway Councils Housing Services Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) and a range of services through the Medway Council Public Health, Rough Sleeper, Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG) and the local NHS established a cross-sector Network called the Medway Multiple Disadvantage Network (MMDN). The wider MMDN works with a large number of individuals across the wider network, bringing cases forward to the network for assistance when required.
- 13.4 Meeting on a monthly basis, the MMDN operational teams work together to improve access to and experience of services and outcomes for some of Medway’s most vulnerable people.

Together, identifying and building on successes, sharing best practice, identifying calls for flex and change within systems, channelled and supported through the MMDN Strategic Group.

14. **Homelessness**

- 14.1 Housing Services' Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Outreach Officers carry out several sessions of 5.00am outreach per week, followed by visits and support during working hours to people who are sleeping rough in Medway. Oversight of support activity is carried out by the Rough Sleeping Coordinator who also manages a team of Navigators who work with people who the Outreach Team have placed into accommodation, to provide ongoing support and minimise the risk of repeated sleeping rough.
- 14.2 The team also carries out bi-monthly counts across Medway in partnership with police, public health, commissioned services, and the voluntary and community sector, running from midnight until 5.00am the next morning. A range of accommodation and support provision is commissioned, ranging from self-contained with floating support, to 24 hour staffed services for people with a higher range of need.
- 14.3 There is a recognised need for a higher support provision for people who have been multiply excluded from services due to the level and complexity of the challenges they face. Attempts will be made to secure funding either as housing or through a wider partnership approach. There are 36 people currently living in our commissioned RSI services with a further 41 living in shared or self-contained accommodation with visiting support from our Navigator Service.
- 14.4 The Outreach Team are working with a further 32 people to provide ongoing support and a route into accommodation. The service is supplemented by Public Health commissioning services through receipt of the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant, which provides an outreach team, dedicated social worker, an IT client management system, and a visiting night service.
- 14.5 The RSI accommodation provisions and staff are funded through Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government grant, which for 2024/25 was £925,000.

15. **Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop (OSS)**

- 15.1 The Medway Domestic Abuse Forum (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, Social Care and many voluntary partners.
- 15.2 The Medway One Stop Shop (OSS) is strategically run by MDAF, with an OSS Steering Group overseeing the operational side. 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.
- 15.3 During first six months of the current year there have been over 118 attendees to the session. The OSS has resources such as door bars, personal alarms, food vouchers, emergency mobile phones, phone credit and hygiene packs to distribute to those in need. There is also a flight fund available for victim/survivors who need transport or assistance in accessing refuge or fleeing the area.
- 15.4 Medway's OSS has consistently seen the highest number of attendances/victims across the whole of Kent and continues to be offered in person with a growing number of professionals from different services supporting victims.

16. **Doorstep Fraud**

- 16.1 The Trading Standards Team continues to offer free 'no cold calling' stickers and information packs to residents via our social media pages, public events and via our partners at neighbourhood watch. These aim to reduce instances of doorstep crime and increase awareness of the problems that may be faced by consumers contracting for works with cold callers.
- 16.2 Officers regularly attend call outs to consumers homes where work has been carried out by rogue traders and where the traders are still on site, or traceable, appropriate action is taken to protect the consumer and limit the financial detriment. This area of work requires a great deal of information sharing with our partners at Kent Police, the National Trading Standards Scams Team as well as other council services who may notice doorstep callers or works being carried out at clients' homes.

17. **Unauthorised Encampments**

- 17.1 Unauthorised encampments (UEs) are defined by the Government as "encampments of caravans and/or other vehicles on land without the landowner or occupier's consent and constituting trespass". Unauthorised camping is not a criminal offence. It is a civil offence (trespass), giving landowners the right to repossess their property using the due process of law. The prevention of trespass is the responsibility of the landowner.
- 17.2 The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to treat someone less favourably than others because of their protected characteristic, including race (which includes a person's ethnic or national origins and nationality). The Public Sector Equality Duty, under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, applies to the police (as a public authority) and places a duty on the police to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- 17.3 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives Local Authorities in England and Wales powers to make directions to leave land being used by itinerant groups (section 77). It is offence to fail to comply with such a direction. If a direction to leave is not complied with, a Local Authority can apply to the Magistrates Court for an order requiring the removal of vehicles and any occupants from the land (section 78).
- 17.4 Medway Council Community Safety Team seek to immediately attend a site to carry out a welfare check and risk assessment. They will then serve verbal and written notice for the encampment to vacate, subject to a satisfactory welfare assessment.
- 17.5 In 2024 the Community Safety Team has received and investigated 31 reports of unauthorised encampments resulting 14 Section 77 notices; 13 required an escalation to a Section 78 notice; 1 required support by the Community Safety Team to a social housing provider due to the caravan being in situ on private land. When the Council has been required to utilise Bailiffs to assist with an eviction, these costs have totalled £8,397.50.
- 17.6 In certain Circumstances a senior Police Officer has the discretion to order the travellers to leave and remove any vehicles and other property they may have with them (sections 61 and 62 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003). One encampment required Kent Police to utilise section 61 powers due to an increased level of ASB associated with the encampment.
- 17.7 Officers continue to target harden sites, with concrete bollards shortly to be installed at the former Curtis Way Coach Park.

18 CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television)

- 18.1 The primary purpose of the CCTV service is there to support the Council and the CSP to reduce both the level of crime and fear of crime across Medway. Kyndi Ltd provide CCTV Services and monitoring on behalf of Medway Council.
- 18.2 In view of current financial pressures, a 0% uplift was negotiated in the CCTV Partnership cost allocation for 2024–25 without affecting service levels. This equated to a £41,000 cost avoidance of inflationary increases and was not to the detriment of any Kyndi staff increases or CCTV operators. Budget discussions for the next financial year (25-26) are currently underway.
- 18.3 The CCTV Partnership with Gravesham Borough Council has now disbanded; however, Gravesham Housing services have been retained under a separate contract.
- 18.4 There are 87 community safety CCTV cameras across Medway and in the main, these are in High Street areas.
- 18.5 Since November last year to October this year, 1,496 incidents have been captured and 247 arrests made, directly attributable to the use of CCTV monitoring and partnership working across Medway.
- 18.6 CCTV Infrastructure Improvement: Kyndi and Council officers have scheduled a programme of rolling capital improvement works around Medway, utilising the CCTV capital fund approved in the Council budget. These funds will enable our transition from legacy analogue to digital.
- 18.7 Rapid Deployment Cameras (RDC): There is a pool of rapid deployment cameras available, in instances where the Council have to act swiftly to tackle crime hotspots and spikes in criminal activity or civil disturbance. Medway Council currently has a pool of 8 rapid deployment cameras in stock, all of which are deployed –
- Two cameras at The Great Lines
 - Three in Hoo St Werburgh; two on Knights Road and another on Pottery Road (at the entrance to Recreation Ground).
 - One at Splembly Works, New Road, Chatham.
 - One at Ordnance Street, Chatham
 - One on Beacon Hill.
- 18.8 The pool of RDCs once installed, tend to remain in situ for around 12 weeks. At the end of this period, a review is carried out whereby Council officers and Kent Police analyse crime statistics and trends over that period. Thereafter, a decision is taken to propose to extend the monitoring period, remove the RDC if monitoring is no longer required, or to make a recommendation for the camera to be a permanent addition.
- 18.9 Digital Asset Management System (DAMS): Traditionally, digital CCTV footage evidence which is requested via appropriate channels is uploaded to blank DVD desk by Kyndi and collected in person from the CCTV monitoring centre in Strood. This process requires more storage, more visits to the monitoring centre to collect, increased workloads in specialist areas to capture and download, and more complex security and legal retention procedures. Not to mention the amount of wastage for Kyndi. This system is now LIVE with benefits being seen by both Kent Police and Kyndi Control Centre.

- 18.10 In essence, DAMS will enable footage to be uploaded digitally to the cloud, in a secure and timely manner; whilst maintaining the integrity of the data from a data protection perspective. This new way of working will have considerable mutual benefits, both transforming policing locally by enabling better, more timely and proactive decision making; but also improving the efficiency of both front-line Police staff and Kyndi operatives working on behalf of the Council. More importantly though, the positive impact on victims from our ability to transfer evidence in a more agile way and potentially reduce lengthy waits for trial is incalculable.
- 18.11 Monitoring: Each month a report is generated by Kyndi that lists activity levels of all cameras and circulated to the Council's CCTV Single Point of Contact (SPOC). The report includes numbers of incidents and arrests attributed to CCTV, any faults on the network and will also highlight the number of hits (i.e., any unusual activity picked up by the camera).
- 18.12 Process for a new camera or decommissioning: If it is found that a camera is serving no specific purpose in the opinion of the CCTV SPOC, the Community Safety Team and Kyndi Ltd, based on documented evidence, it will be submitted to the CSP for decommissioning or re-deployment elsewhere. It is at this point the qualified professionals of the board may intervene with their own service-based intelligence. If it is decided that a camera is to be removed, Ward Members will be notified of the decision and rationale behind it.
- 18.13 If a Ward Member, a Member of the Public or an Officer of the Council feels a location would benefit from a new camera due to anecdotal evidence of increased activity in an area, this may be reported to the Community Safety Team (it's important to note the distinction between the Community Safety Team and the CSP).
19. **Environmental Enforcement (including Street Scene Enforcement)**
- 19.1 The Environmental Enforcement Team continue to work in partnership with Kent Police and neighbouring local authorities. They use Kent Police's custody suite to facilitate the interviewing of suspects in environmental crime investigations.
- 19.2 Fixed Penalty Notices Issued 01st November 2023 to 31st October 2024. These totals include FPNs issued by Environmental Enforcement and Street Scene Enforcement Teams.
- 19.3 Key - EPA 1990 (Environmental Protection Act 1990); ASBCPA 2014(Anti-social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014).

Type	Legislation	No. Issued	Paid	Other Actions	Nov 2024
Littering	S.87 Environmental Protection Act 1990	14	9	5. 1 witness withdrew, 2 with legal pending court proceedings, 1 within payment timescale.	0
Failure to Comply CPN	S43-58 Anti-social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014	17	2	6 voided.7 referred to case file, 2 incorrectly issued	0
Failure to Provide Authority	S1 Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989	2	0	2 within payment timescale.	0

to transport Waste.					
Failure to Provide Waste Documents	S34 Environmental Protection Act 1990	33	9	6 voided, 6 still within payment timescales, 12 under further investigation	0
Fly Tipping	S33 Environmental Protection Act 1990	16	11	2 still within payment timescales, 1 voided, 2 under further investigation	0
Householder Duty of Care	S34 Environmental Protection Act 1990	50	23	4 voided, 17 under further investigation, 5 within payment timescales, 1 NFA	0
Abandoned Vehicle	Section 2/2A Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 2978	1	1		1

19.4 Case files compiled 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2024.

Offence	No. Compiled	Status	Court Outcome	Nov 2024
S33 EPA 1990	2	2 With legal awaiting court date	N/A	0
S34 EPA 1990	37	3 at court, 2 withdrawn by legal, 18 under further investigation, 4 NFA, 10 with legal	1x Hearings – guilty plea £200, £453 costs, £0 victim surcharge	0
S48-58 ASBCPA 2014	1	With legal awaiting court date	N/A	0
S87 EPA 1990	2	2 with legal awaiting court date	N/A	0

19.5 District Enforcement (litter) from November 2023 to October 2024 -

- 2,865 FPNs issued.
- 2,040 FPNs Paid (71% payment rate).

19.6 Income from November 2023 to October 2024 –

- District contract - £139,818.70 (70% to District / 30% to Medway Council)
- Medway Council - £59,922.30
- Cumulative - £199,741

- 19.7 District Enforcement Littering for November 2024. Unable to provide income as some of these will be under appeal.
- 43 FPNs issued.
 - 16 FPNs paid to date.
- 19.8 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) issued January to November 2024
- Refuse Out Early – 1,286
 - Untidy Land - 90
 - Fly Posting - 1
- 19.9 Community Protection Notices (CPNs) issued January to November 2024
- Refuse Out Early - 45
 - Untidy Land – 16
- 19.10 Fixed Penalty Notices (Non-compliance CPN) – 18.
- 19.11 From the start of April this year, Medway Council's Street Scene team changed the way it works dedicating officers to nominated wards, work streams were reviewed allowing officers to concentrate on the jobs that caused the greatest concerns in the community, working in a more intelligence led way to ensure resource was more appropriately allocated and giving the officers the ability to manage their wards. This has led to an increase in 'enforcement actions' with the focus being on compliance. this new approach has led to a 96.5% compliance rate on refuse related CPW's, an 85% compliance rate on untidy land CPW's, the compliance rate on CPN's is 76% with feedback form residents being positive in most instances.
20. **Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)**
- 20.1 The VRU is funded by the Home Office to develop a public health informed preventative approach to serious violence amongst those aged under 25. The team are drawn from Kent Police, Medway Council and Kent County Council and use four key approaches that underpin their work: data sharing across all services; multi-agency collaboration; evidence-based activity and evaluation of new approaches; hearing the voice of communities and young people.
- 20.2 In September 2024 serious violence amongst those under 25 across the County was lower than the previous three years. Medway has seen a reduction in public place serious violence involving those aged under 25 of around 15% in the last year which reflects the active collaboration of agencies to tackle violence. Across the county there remains a concern around children and their involvement in knife related violence both as the suspects or the victims of violence, as they are over-represented in these cohorts. Medway has consistently had high levels of overall serious violence when considering either volume or harm and remains a priority area for the VRU.
- 20.3 The VRU coordinator for Medway and Swale provides expertise on serious violence to support a strategic response to the issues facing Medway. A number of challenges, such as violence linked to groups of young people, cut across geographic boundaries and the coordinator ensures that the response to violence brings together partners for single, shared approach to violence prevention.
- 20.4 The coordinator has led the work to tackle problematic semi-independent accommodation for children placed in Medway by other authorities. The work has been delivered in partnership

with the Medway Youth Service and other partners. They have also led the work to design Safe Spaces for children which allows fast food restaurants and other community locations to be trained in how to keep adolescents safe. The scheme ensures that these locations advertise that they are a safe space for children should they need support when outside the home. The VRU has funded and helped to deliver school safety roadshows for Medway secondary school students, along with different organisations, to allow children to hear about how they can keep themselves safe.

- 20.5 The VRU currently fund the following services in Medway:
- 20.6 Medway A and E Reachable Moments; Medway Council youth workers offer support to young people admitted into hospital due to serious violence and maintain the support in the community. The project has identified victims of physical violence and those experiencing problematic mental health due to their fear of violence that might affect them.
- 20.7 Focused Deterrence; gangs or young street groups receive a wrap-around response that combines enhanced enforcement with a persistent and repeated offer of support. The approach includes a specialist service to work with the community affected by the group so that solutions to the harm caused are created and supported by the community members. The work was piloted in Chatham and saw a reduction in the harm caused to the local community. Focused Deterrence is delivered across the county as and when required and is the response to recent incidents of violence in Gillingham.
- 20.8 Education; The two Pupil Referral Units receive support from a clinical psychologist to enable their staff to deliver Social Skills to students. The Social Skills approach teaches children how to better manage conflict and challenge in their lives. The VRU are also working with Medway Council to fund and deliver a trauma-informed approach within all schools in Medway. Schools have been offered the opportunity to participate in a pilot project to improve their PSHE offer to children through the provision of a specialist external agency who will provide resources and support them to hold informed conversations around inappropriate language and behaviour towards girls and the impact of knives and weapons, as well as allowing schools to decide on bespoke areas of learning.
- 20.9 Active Bystander; Medway Task Force and the VRU are collaborating to promote an 'Active Bystander' campaign which encourages individuals to intervene or speak out when they witness unacceptable behaviour. The campaign includes messages created by young people from the Rowans PRU and Medway Youth Service.

21. **Communications –**

- 21.1 The corporate Communications team continue to promote the work of Medway Council Front Line Services. Additionally, the CSP has its own 'X' account with messages being sent on behalf of the partnership with general community safety advice as well as messaging when and where community engagement events are held. The account currently has 1,545 followers.

22. **Environmental Health Food and Safety Team**

- 22.1 The Food and Safety Team in Environmental Health delivers a broad range of statutory duties and functions. These include food safety and food standards; health and safety at work; infectious disease control and port health. The team works closely with Medway Trading Standards and Public Health.
- 22.2 Food Hygiene key facts and figures for 2023/24:

- The team continued to focus on interventions in high-risk (A&B) and unrated premises.
- No high-risk premises (A or B) were overdue on 1st April 2024.
- Over 1000 food hygiene inspections were completed during 23/24 (it was 700 the previous year).
- Over 400 new food businesses registered (it was 217 the previous year).
- Over 1817 (99%) of eligible food businesses held a food hygiene rating of 3, 4 or 5 on 1st April 2024.
- Just 19 (1%) of businesses had a food hygiene rating of 0, 1 or 2. This was 33 the previous year.

22.3 The percentage of Medway food businesses deemed to be broadly compliant with food hygiene law remained around 94% (94.46%). This was largely due to the team managing the number of new businesses awaiting their initial food hygiene inspection (food businesses are automatically deemed to be non-broadly compliant until they have been inspected).

22.4 The team responded to over 1,100 service requests from businesses and the public. These included:

- Over 400 new food business registrations
- Over 280 food hygiene complaints
- Over 200 requests for advice
- Over 30 food standards complaints

22.5 The team also responded to over 95 reportable work-related accidents.

22.6 The team received 220 notifications of cases of infectious disease in Medway residents. These included over 150 cases of Campylobacter, 39 Salmonella, 11 Cryptosporidium, 5 Legionnaire's disease, 6 Shigella, 1 E. coli and 1 Giardia. Each case was dealt with in accordance with agreed protocols with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

23. Environmental Health – Animal and Noise Nuisance

23.1 Stray dogs. Animal Control Officers are available to collect stray dogs Monday to Sunday 9am to 5pm. Outside of the above hours, reports can be made via the Council's out of hours line on 01634 304400.

23.2 The statistical data for 2023/24:

STRAY DOGS	
Stray dogs reported	493
Number of stray dogs not collected (returned to owner prior to officer attendance)	223
Number of stray dogs returned to owner from kennels	34
Number of dogs returned direct to owner	40
Number of dogs passed to external agency / authority	3
Number of section 150 agreements – where the finder can request to keep a stray dog	2
Number of dogs relinquished to Battersea Dogs and Cats Home	82
Number of dogs relinquished to other rescues	53
Duplicate reports	32

Dogs PTS - medical	1
Dogs PTS - behavioural	3
Dogs PTS – banned breed	11
MISSING DOGS	
Number of missing dogs reported	93
Missing dog found	62
Missing dog not collected by AW	3
Owner to provide update	19
Duplicate reports	9
GENERAL	
Total number of service requests for Animal Control Officers	1959
Notices served for non-compliance of Microchipping of Dogs legislation:	30
Community Protection Warnings served for dog related issues	5
Community Protection Notices served	1

- 23.3 Animal Control Officers have responded to 182 dog fouling complaints. These complaints will be investigated working with Waste Services to ensure any fouling is cleared. If the Public Space Protection Order for Dog Management is agreed, this will allow officers to issue fixed penalty notices to those dog owners who fail to remove their dog faeces when sufficient evidence is gathered.
- 23.4 The team carry out stencilling of footpaths as part of their ‘bag it and bin it’ campaign and do have the ability to issue Fixed Penalty Notices should they witness an offence of dog fouling whilst on duty.
- 23.5 The team has received 168 reports of dangerous dogs. When an incident is regarding a dog attacking another companion animal such as a dog or cat, and is caused by irresponsible actions of the owner, the team will investigate the issue further. These cases have primarily been resolved through education but, if necessary, they will be pursued under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and joint visits have often been carried out with the Police. Should any owner be seeking compensation for veterinary treatment or other costs associated with an incident, they are advised that it would be a civil matter.
- 23.6 XL Bully Ban - Since the XL Bully ban announcement in September 2023 and its implementation in 2024, the team have had a significant increase in complaints related to suspected XL Bully types and also Pit Bull Terriers, this includes an increase in bully breed types being reported as stray dogs. In addition to this, the team have received numerous requests from dog owners asking for help in relinquishing their dogs. The team are unable to source a rescue or rehome a banned breed and therefore the Council has no option that to euthanise a stray dog that has been typed as a breed identified under section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. It has been a difficult time for the team, not just in terms of resources, but it has also had an emotional impact on officers with dealing with issues arising from the ban.
- 23.7 Service Awards. Medway Council was awarded the RSPCA’s Platinum PawPrint Award this year for our outstanding work with stray dogs as recognition for achieving the Gold Award for 11 years in a row. The team were also awarded the RSPCA’S Gold PawPrint Award for Animal Licensing for the third year running. The RSPCA’s flagship PawPrints awards is the only

scheme of its kind which recognises local authorities and public bodies for going above and beyond to deliver world-class animal welfare services.

- 23.8 Noise nuisance. The Council has a statutory duty to investigate noise and nuisance complaints such as, (and not limited to), loud music, DIY works, construction noise, odours, flies, bonfires, wood burners, house and vehicle alarms, artificial lighting, accumulations and dust. Investigations are carried out under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. For an issue to count as a statutory nuisance it must unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of the property.
- 23.9 The team must take steps as reasonably practicable to investigate a complaint of a nuisance listed in the Environmental Protection Act 1990, but it cannot take legal action unless it is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists and can be proved beyond all reasonable doubt. Where a nuisance may not meet the threshold for a statutory nuisance, action may be considered under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- 23.10 To assist in the investigating of noise complaints, complainants can utilise The Noise App. This allows a person affected by a noise to make short audio recordings and enter details about the nature of the disturbance using a smartphone. An officer can listen to the recordings remotely and they form part of a noise investigation. A complainant has to be approved by the investigating officer prior to be given access to the Noise App. The online reporting form has been improved to enable complainants to report a noise complaint and upload their diary records at the same time, which will enable their complaint to be investigated more efficiently. The Noise App breaks down recordings showing the type of noise and where the recording is made. This information is used when determining if further action is required or can be taken as part of a noise investigation. The recordings cannot be used as evidence on their own and it is likely that the customer will be given access to the Council's daytime monitoring service. This will enable the customer to call officers out to witness and substantiate how they are being affected within their home. Case officers will also programme in proactive visits to a complainant's property to assess a complaint.
- 23.11 An increase in the number of complaints whereby the complainant or perpetrator is suffering from a mental health illness and whereby enforcement action may not be appropriate has been noted. As a result case officers are required to attend panel/safeguarding meetings at the request of social services and other agencies to ensure that any safeguarding needs are identified.
- 23.12 Statistical data for 2023/2024 is below; number of complaints received:

Noise	1154
Light nuisance	51
Odour	113
Bonfires	128
Dust	7
Smoke from chimneys	14
Drainage	65
Community Protection Warnings	19
Community Protection Notices	1
Noise Abatement Notices	1

- 23.13 Temporary Event Notices (TENS) are also reviewed. These are received for temporary events involving activities which would normally have to be licensed under the Licensing Act 2003. TENS allow an event organiser to notify the Council, the police and our environmental health service of small-scale events that involve licensable activities which need to be authorised. These events can be held at a premises where there is already a premises licence or club premises certificate, or they can be used to licence an unlicensed premises. During this period, the team reviewed 311 TENS applications.
- 23.14 Pest complaints and hoarded properties. The team investigate and enforce complaints where there is a pest related issue on private land or property. Where a complaint is concerning a Council owned property or land, it will be referred to the responsible department. Pest complaints include those relating to rats, mice, pigeons, bedbugs, fleas, cockroaches and flies and are investigated under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 and Public Health Act 1936.
- 23.15 These complaints can lead to the detection of hoarded properties, which can take a considerable amount of time and team resources to resolve. Referrals are also received from Adult Services, which require partnership working with KFRS and mental health to ensure the occupier is supported whilst any pest issue is resolved. This may result in the clearance of these properties in default of a formal notice served on the owner/occupier of the property, however this will be the last resort when all other measures of engagement have failed. The number of pest related complainants investigated in this period is 319.
- 23.16 Dog Management Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) - Due to a continuing increase in anti-social dog related issues a new dog management PSPO is being proposed and currently subject to the Council's decision process. The PSPO will impose the following:
- A 'dog fouling of land' prohibition, which makes it an offence if dog owners do not remove their dog's faeces from land within Medway that is open to the air and accessible to the public. This prohibition applies to all land in Medway.
 - A 'dog exclusion' prohibition, which enables the Council to stop dogs from entering certain areas including BMX tracks, children's play areas, multi-use games areas, outdoor gyms, skate parks, small parks, splash pads and children's water features, sports courts, sports playing pitches, and water sports centres (see Schedule 1).
 - A 'dogs on leads' requirement, which requires dogs to be kept on a lead near highways and pedestrianised areas, this also includes cemeteries and certain areas of our Country Parks (see Schedule 2).
 - A 'dogs on leads by direction' requirement, which gives officers the power to request that dogs be put on leads where they are not under the appropriate control of their owner, or where they are causing damage or acting aggressively.
 - A 'maximum number of dogs' requirement, which makes it an offence for one person to have more than four dogs under their control at any one time.
- 23.17 Anyone found breaching a PSPO would be guilty of a criminal offence and can result in £100 fixed penalty notice or a fine up to £1,000 if prosecuted.

24. Parking Enforcement

- 24.1 Parking enforcement is a statutory function carried out under the Traffic Management Act 2004. Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) enforce the presence of parking controls that have been implemented in accordance with a Traffic Regulation Order, and issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for contraventions of compliant signs and road markings. The Council has a team of 29 CEOs and 4 Supervisors working in shifts between 7am and 1am, seven days per

week. These hours align with the enforcement hours of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) and other restrictions across Medway. Training and support are provided, with CEOs obtaining qualifications in City and Guilds Parking Enforcement Level 2 and Conflict Management.

- 24.2 In addition to the enforcement of on-street parking controls, including 20 CPZs, 56 flat surface car parks are monitored and enforced, as well as 2 multi-storey car parks.
- 24.3 The aims of parking enforcement are reflected in our clear and consistent parking enforcement strategies, which provide:
- A safe environment for drivers and pedestrians with clearer roads and pavements
 - Improved traffic flow and accessibility
 - Safe and clear access for Emergency and service vehicles
 - A contribution towards maintaining quality public realm
- 24.4 The Medway Parking Enforcement Policy (MPEP) focuses on customer needs by:
- Providing an efficient, robust and customer friendly parking system
 - Ensuring enforcement is effective, fair, and consistent to maximise compliance
 - Consulting and communicating with internal and external stakeholders over parking management and enforcement issues.
- 24.5 Medway has over a hundred schools and many experience parking issues at peak times. A school enforcement rota system enables us to deal with the most problematic locations and distribute available resources across as many schools as possible using foot patrols and our CCTV vehicle.
- 24.6 Members of the public can report illegal parking via our telephone hotline (7am until 12 am) or on the Council's website. The Council does not have the power to enforce pavement or verge parking, however, which remains the responsibility of the Police.
- 24.7 PCNs are issued when a vehicle is parked in contravention of the Traffic Regulation Order that is in place. Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are set by the Secretary of State, to ensure that charges are consistent. PCNs for higher level contraventions, such as parking in a restricted street, are charged at £70. Lower level PCNs for less serious breaches, such as parking with an expired permit or ticket, are charged at £50. Additional fees are applied if the charge is subsequently registered as a debt and if enforcement agents are engaged.
- 24.8 PCNs are administered by following a regulatory process to recover payment. There is also an appeals process, which is heard by an independent parking adjudicator. The decision of the adjudicator is final, and advice can be provided to local authorities on how matters could be dealt with in the future. All authorities are obliged to consider any advice provided.
- 24.9 PCNs can be paid either online, by post or by telephone. Once payment has been made, there is accepted liability for the PCN and a challenge or representation against the PCN is no longer possible.
- 24.10 Bus lanes help to improve journey times, reliability and punctuality. When bus lanes are misused, they are less effective and can cause delays and increase the risk of accidents.
- 24.11 CCTV cameras record vehicles using bus lanes and PCNs are issued based on this information. Enforcement officers check the recordings to determine whether a contravention has taken place. There are five approved cameras on the network:

- Globe Lane, Chatham (north-western)
- Globe Lane, Chatham (south-eastern)
- Waterfront Way Chatham
- Canal Road, Strood
- Kestrel Road Bus Terminus

24.12 A further four bus lanes will be subject to camera enforcement over the coming months:

- Chatham Hill - toward Rock Avenue
- Chatham Hill – toward Luton Arches
- High Street, Chatham – toward the Brook (by the old Gala Bingo/Go Outdoors)
- Corporation Street, Rochester

24.13 Local Highway Authorities outside of London with civil parking enforcement powers are now able to apply to the Secretary of State for powers to enforce moving traffic offences under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. This brings the rest of the country in line with London, where local boroughs can use video analytics and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras to identify offences and issue PCNs to drivers committing moving traffic contraventions. These contraventions include driving through a 'No Entry' sign, turning left or right when instructed not to do so, entering yellow box junctions when the exit is not clear, driving where and when motor vehicles are prohibited, and going the wrong way in a one-way street.

24.14 The Council was granted powers to enforce moving traffic offences in June 2023 and have installed Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras at eight key locations to enforce traffic restrictions such as 'no entry' signs, pedestrian only zones and yellow box junctions. These powers have also enabled the introduction of School Streets, where temporary vehicle restrictions at peak times promote a safer environment for parents and children to travel to school.

24.15 Five Red Routes are now in place in Medway, improving traffic flow and congestion by discouraging vehicles from stopping, loading or parking along these key routes. The Red Route restrictions have replaced the yellow lines currently in place at these locations and will continue to reduce congestion and make journeys more reliable, prevent illegal and unsafe parking and decrease idling and slow-moving traffic. Parking and loading in dedicated bays is permitted, in the interests of supporting local businesses. The PCN progression, appeals and recovery process is very similar to that for parking and bus lane enforcement.

24.16 The Council publishes an annual report providing information on the number of parking and traffic related Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued during the year, the revenue and expenditure recorded in the Parking Account and how the surplus was allocated to meet our wider transport and highway objectives. The report for 2023/24 will be available shortly.

Appendices

None.