

Regeneration, Culture, and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

12 December 2024

Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership, including an Update on the Community Safety Plan 2024 to 2027

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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 and summarises the findings of the strategic assessment. This report provides information on the Community Safety Plan covering the period from 2024 to 2027.

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 2024 to 2027 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.
- 2.7 The CSP is made up of the following responsible authorities –
- Medway Council
 - Kent Police
 - Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)
 - The Probation Service
 - Integrated Care Board (ICB).

3. Background

- 3.1 Scrutiny of the partnership was last carried out in December 2023.
- 3.2 The current Community Safety Partnership Plan, covering the years 2024 to 2027, was adopted at Full Council on 18 July 2024 and contains four priorities for the responsible authorities:
- Violence Against Women and Girls
 - Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Tackle Drugs and Alcohol

- Reduce Reoffending
- 3.3 The Community Safety Plan for 2024 to 2027 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 The strategic assessment has shown that the existing priorities remain the same and that the Action Plan should be refreshed as per the findings, with a number of work streams under each priority. This has been agreed by the five responsible authorities.

4. Options

- 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. Advice and analysis

- 5.1. For the purpose of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, this Committee acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee and as such is responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the decisions and work of the Community Safety Partnership. The Council is a responsible authority within the Community Safety Partnership and has a statutory duty to deliver against crime and disorder. No other options can be considered.
- 5.2. This strategic assessment has taken into account all aspects of community safety from the five 'responsible authorities' which support the priorities and future direction of the work. The priorities are reviewed annually and based on local crime data for the previous year. Consideration is given to local concerns and trends, police priorities set through community consultation, and taking into consideration the impact of a crime type on the local community.
- 5.3. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) will not be required as this report does not recommend any policy/service change.

6. Risk management

- 6.1. 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. | DII |
| 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 | DII |
| Legislation | Government guidance could change focus for CSP. | CSP to ensure that it effectively horizon scans to be aware of impending legislative changes. | CIII |
| Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) plans | Changes in the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan. | Continued engagement with the PCC. | CIII |
| The Police Grant Settlement is reduced or ceases. | The PCC provides funding from The Home Office for the Crime Reduction Grant to CSPs in Kent and Medway. | The 5 ‘responsible authorities’ would have to consider funding community safety projects themselves, or there is no funding. | CII |

| Likelihood | Impact: |
|---------------|----------------|
| A Very likely | I Catastrophic |
| B Likely | II Major |
| C Unlikely | III Moderate |
| D Rare | IV Minor |

7. Consultation

7.1. The CSP is required to consult with a wide variety of stakeholders in putting together the annual strategic assessment.

7.2 In summary for the online survey - 103 (last year 107) respondents completed the survey:

- 69% (70% last year) feeling very safe/fairly safe in Medway during the day.
- 19% (16% last year) feeling very unsafe/fairly unsafe.
- 26% (28% last year) felt very safe/fairly safe in Medway during the evening.
- 50% (56% last year) feeling very unsafe/fairly unsafe.

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

- People using or dealing drugs 80%
- People fly tipping 73%
- People driving carelessly or too fast 71%
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places 66%
- People dropping litter 60%

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

- People using or dealing drugs 70%
- People fly tipping 44%
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places 40%
- People driving carelessly or too fast 39%
- Sexual offences 36%

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

- Visible and effective policing 79%
- Well maintained public spaces and infrastructure 52%
- CCTV 49%

7.6 The number of consultees was lower than expected – the following shows the reach of the social media campaign –

- Posts - 20
- Clicks - 97
- Shares - 4
- Likes - 7
- Reach - 12,800
- Impressions - 15,800

- Engagement rate - 0.55% (would be considered about average performance)
- 7.7 The consultation was also advertised in the Digital Newsletter -
- Subscribers - 14,678
 - Open rate - 45%
 - Clicks on article - 39
- 7.8 Details were also included on Medspace and Council internal newsletter. The voluntary sector was advised of the consultation and Democratic Services contacted all Members to send out to their community contacts.
- 7.9 Even though a lot of work went into advertising the consultation the response rate remained low. The Strategic Executive Group of the CSP has discussed holding a Community Cohesion Event in 2025 which can also be used as an in-person event where the annual consultation can also be shared with attendees to hopefully see and increase in responses.
- ## 8. Climate change implications
- 8.1. There are neither any positive or negative climate change/carbon emission implications arising from this report.
- ## 9. Financial implications
- 9.1 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 2024-2025 the amount allocated to Medway CSP was £106,460.
- 9.2. The PCC has in previous years been committed to supporting the funding of CSPs, however the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are not yet able to update us on the commissioning plan for 2025-2026. The OPCC are awaiting the grant settlement from the Home Office and Ministry of Justice, this should be received by the OPCC in early December. Once this is known they will then need to work through what this means for the PCC's commissioning budget and associated allocations. The Crime Reduction Grant is linked to this funding.
- 9.3 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. 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, with £13,645 of funding available until March 2025.
- 9.4 **Business Case -**

- 9.5 **Medway Council HRA Tenant Services ASB Initiatives - £3,950.** Medway Council HRA Tenant Services. The Housing Team have a resident engagement team who work with colleagues across Housing and with partners to undertake ASB projects. The team have many years of experience organising successful engagement events. The Resident Engagement Officer has a background in community safety, with knowledge and expertise in anti-social behaviour, vulnerability, trauma informed practice and project management. They will be supported by colleagues from teams such as the Youth Service who will bring their own skills to the projects.
- 9.6 **Safer Medway Partnership (SMP) CCTV Upgrade - £4,125.** To upgrade the 15-year-old SMP control system at the Medway Council CCTV Control Centre which had seen regularly breakdowns and faults.
- 9.7 **Medway One Stop Shop (OSS); for victims of domestic abuse to access multi agency support services - £5,000.** The Medway Domestic Abuse Forum CIC strategically runs the Medway OSS with an OSS Steering Group overseeing the operational side. 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, Medway DA commissioned services and many voluntary partners.
- 9.8 **CDAP (Community Domestic Abuse Programme) Perpetrator Programme - £10,600.** CDAP delivers as 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. CDAP challenges that behaviour and shows the participants how it affects their partner or ex-partner and any children that may be involved. This programme supports the participants to make the changes needed to develop respectful, non-abusive relationships so that they are safe around their partner and any children.
- 9.9 **Rapid Deployment CCTV – £13,000.** Medway Council via Kyndi Ltd. Investment in cameras aiming to deter 'opportunistic' crime, where people take advantage of a situation on the spur of the moment. The cameras can also create a vastly increased rate of conviction after crimes are detected. Anyone caught committing an offence on public space surveillance cameras are more likely to plead guilty, thus saving time on long and expensive trials. Incidents such as robbery, road traffic offences, theft, fly-tipping, drug-related incidents and any other anti-social behaviour or suspicious activities are often captured.
- 9.10 **Brief Intervention Counselling - £20,000.** Medway Council Youth Service. This funding renews and continues the counselling project that was originally funded by the CSP/PCC in 2018 and is now renewed in until March 25. This project has made a real impact supporting vulnerable young people in our community. Funding supports the counselling offer to young people who do not meet the CAMHS threshold.

- 9.11 **Tactical pot –**
- 9.12 **Countering the Extreme Right Wing (ERW) Training ‘Small Steps’ Training - £1,590.** Kent and Medway Prevent Team. Small Steps provide adult awareness training and seek to upskill people so that following their training people both understand what the ERW is, but also how to reduce it. Sessions are delivered in 2 or 1-hour sessions. They train professionals and the community to better understand the ERW and suggest ways to challenge it. The training outlines grievances manipulated by the ERW, a local and national extreme right-wing activity breakdown, recruitment techniques, and alternative narrative ideas explained.
- 9.13 **Kent and Medway Gaming Bus - £2,400.** Kent and Medway Prevent Team. The Gaming Bus serves as a community engagement initiative to promote awareness of how hateful extremism and potential radicalisation is spread via gaming and how it can be countered. Prevent seeks to intervene early, to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and the Gaming Bus supports a light touch start to the conversations that could be had to safeguard others. The team that will be staffing the Bus are Prevent staff, so are adequately trained to have these conversations supported by Medway Council’s Community Safety and Youth Services teams.
- 9.14 **Exploitation Conference - £6,000.** Medway Youth Service. Medway Youth Service and the Missing and Exploitation Team sought an investment to development of Contextual Safeguarding practice by delivering a conference style event for those working within the professional network and beyond, to better understand harm beyond the home for young people in Medway. The conference aims to engage 150 delegates and will be combination of learning experiences and keynote speaking.
- 9.15 **Kent and Medway Hateful Extremism CPD Event - £3,500.** Kent and Medway Prevent Team, Kent County Council. The CPD event each year has grown in success with 2024 seeing an increase in attendees both online and in person, a total of 302 and the team expect this to increase in 2025. The event has previously been held at Mercure Hotel in Maidstone. Kent and Medway are a Prevent priority area, the only Prevent priority area in the southeast. It is vital that we raise the awareness of Prevent, spotting the signs of radicalisation and how to support the most vulnerable and susceptible to radicalisation. The target audience will therefore be any professionals involved in identifying, preventing and spotting the signs of hateful extremism within our communities.
- 9.16 **Child-Friendly Medway Drop-In Football - £14,000.** Child Friendly Medway working in partnership with Medway Sport, who will help deliver the project as they have access to coach contacts and leisure centre locations where the project will take place. Drop-In Football sessions started when it was reported that young people were breaking into Strood Sports Centre to play football. As they were breaking in, they were also vandalising the facility and stealing footballs. This was addressed in the form of weekly drop-in football sessions. The aim is to 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 - combat childhood obesity and social isolation and will narrow the social economic gap by providing free programming for all. Also 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.

- 9.17 **Ladies Night 2024/25 - £3,180.** Led by Medway Council Housing alongside Public Health, the Neighbourhood Taskforce, NHS primary care staff, commissioned drug and alcohol services, domestic abuse and young people's services, voluntary sector homelessness charities. Ladies Night is an informal evening which has operates quarterly from 8pm till 11pm where local service providers attend in casual dress and without ID badges. The targeted cohort are women that are sex working and/or homeless that do not engage in support services. The option to engage is on the women's own terms where they can get initial advice and information on services without disclosing who they are. It is proven through the last 3 years 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). Services that have participated and that have stated they would like to continue to support the project are: River Substance Misuse Services, Streetlight, Oasis Domestic Abuse, Sexual Health, Kent Police Rape and Sexual assault specialist, Medway Task Force, One Big Family, Caring Hands, Complex Needs Homeless Nurse, Medway Housing team. Typically, 20-30 women attend each session. Food and tea and coffee are provided, clothes are supplied for those who need them. Advice is available on a range of issues as well as direct support for those with e.g. physical injuries, sexual health, housing or domestic abuse.
- 9.18 **Op Cover - £3,470.** Medway Community Safety Unit. Op Cover is an operation set up to tackle motorcycle thefts across Medway. Data showed that within a 3 month period, there were 37 thefts of motorcycles across Medway (not including motorcycles taken from garages or sheds). There were two main parts to this operation. First, a proactive targeting of suspects involving patrolling of the key areas, at the times of day. The second part to this operation involved increased engagement with the motorcycle community. The crime prevention element to this operation involved Officers engaging with motorcycle owners and victims of motorcycle thefts within the area to provide relevant safeguarding advice, along with crime prevention equipment.
- 9.19 **Aspire Programme - £2,000.** Kent Fire and Rescue Service deliver the project/programme in collaboration with Child Centred Policing, Medway Sexual Exploitation Team, Medway Youth and the Young Lives Foundation. Concerns were raised regarding several high risk derelict buildings throughout Medway. The Aspire programme is aimed at those aged 11 – 17 years. With a particular focus on those young people who are accessing or likely to access the derelict buildings, the programme works to educate participants with regard to risk, introducing them to safe strategies and approaches to apply. In

addition to building personal resilience with regard to their own safety, the sessions will work to promote aspirations and positive behaviours. The programme supports young people in developing tangible plans and strategies to effectively channel their focus and attention into meaningful, effective and positive activity. In addition, the programme will provide opportunities for the young people involved to meet representatives from the participating agencies.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 10.2. The Council's statutory powers are detailed in the report.
- 10.3. 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 2024
Appendix 2 - Community Safety Plan 2024 to 2027

Background papers

None.