

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

THANET LOCAL BOARD

Date: Tuesday, 7 July 2009

Venue: The Kent International Hotel, Harbour Parade, Ramsgate, CT11 8LZ

Present:

Local Board Members: Robert Burgess, Chris Wells and John Kirby

Apologies for absence: Bill Hayton, Elizabeth Green, Charles Hibberd, Robert Bayford and Michael Jarvis

KCC Officers: Anne Charman (Community Liaison Manager – Thanet), Jo Pannell (Community Liaison Manager – Canterbury)

		Action
A8.	Welcome to the Meeting - Mr Robert Burgess, Vice Chairman	
	Mr Burgess welcomed everyone to the meeting and mentioned there had been some changes to the Thanet Local Board as a result of the recent elections on 4 June 2009. All county councillors present introduced themselves. There were no declarations of interest.	
A9.	Notes of Local Board Meeting held on 03 March 2009 and progress on actions agreed	
	The minutes were agreed.	
A10.	Kent Trading Standards. Presentation by Mark Rolfe, Kent County Council's East Kent Area Manager	
	Mark Rolfe began his presentation by outlining the structure of Kent Trading Standards (KTS). KTS is divided into three teams, one in East Kent, based in Ashford, one in West Kent, based in West Malling and a Legal Services Team based in County Hall, Maidstone. Mark outlined the role of KTS which is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• educate and advise Kent businesses and consumers to support a safe and fair trading environment,• take effective action against businesses that persistently or deliberately break the law,• restrict access for children to harmful age restricted products, e.g. alcohol, cigarettes, unsuitable video games• prevent the spread of animal disease, e.g. foot and mouth in order to protect farming and the wider community• take effective action in relation to the storage and supply	

of dangerous goods

- maintain food standards and assist people to make informed, healthy choices.

The majority of businesses are legitimate and KTS can help local businesses to meet their legal obligations. There are 40 Trading Standards officers in Kent.

Mark then spoke in detail of three issues that are particularly relevant to Thanet.

- Doorstep callers are a menace to the vulnerable householder. Often unnecessary, poorly completed and ridiculously expensive repairs are being undertaken by unscrupulous 'cold' callers. KTS are working with the police to stop this but would recommend the 'Buy with Confidence' scheme, which holds a list of qualified tradesmen who have been checked and approved. For more information contact: Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 or visit www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk
- Age restricted goods and in particular alcohol is a problem with young people. In the short term it is often the cause of anti-social behaviour and in the long term can cause liver disease. Proxy purchasing, that is older people buying and selling on to younger people is becoming an increasing problem. To help tackle this KTS have joined up with other statutory agencies, including Kent Police and Thanet District Council, as well as local retailers, to form The Kent Community Alcohol Partnership. This new scheme is being piloted in Broadstairs and will offer advice and information to young people about sensible drinking limits and help local businesses to keep within the law.
- Loan Sharks are unlicensed and charge massive interest rates on loans. They prey on vulnerable households and use unpleasant tactics to recoup their money. Mark dispelled some myths about Loansharking, for example unlicensed money lending is illegal but borrowing from a loan shark is not an offence. He then cited some examples of how borrowing money at high interest rates can escalate, sometimes with tragic consequences and provided figures that showed a link between the conviction of loan sharks and a reduction in petty crime. Kent is working with the National Loan Sharking Project who is asking people to report any Loan sharks. It has a 24/7 hotline on 0300 555 2222 or visit www.direct.gov.uk/stoploansharks.

Q. As a former Chairman of the Thanet Credit Union, some people have said to me they prefer cash on a Friday night from an unlicensed lender as it is more convenient, quicker and application forms can be difficult to complete.

A. Research shows that victims of Loan Sharks never return

	<p>if they manage to get away from them.</p> <p>Q. Surveillance on premises can be expensive. Will lack of manpower cause difficulties for the KCAP to deliver their objectives?</p> <p>A. More resources and manpower do help, but KCAP scheme means that partners can share the load.</p> <p>Q. How was the pilot area determined? Why did it not include Ramsgate?</p> <p>A. The area chosen has a known night time economy problem and our key partners, including the major supermarkets, are well represented in this area.</p> <p>Q. Are supermarkets prepared to give up some time educating young people?</p> <p>A. Currently the focus is on pubs and clubs but the next phase of the pilot will involve supermarkets.</p>	
A11.	Kent County Council Community Safety Unit. Presentation by Spencer Goddard	
	<p>Spencer outlined the work of the Community Safety Unit at County Hall and in particular how their work links directly to the Local Area Agreement and KCC's 'Towards 2010 Strong & Safer Communities' targets. He described how the unit includes Community Wardens, Handyvan, Community Safety Training, Safe Schools, Safe Travel and tackling Domestic Abuse. They also support the 11 Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) across Kent whose statutory partners include, the Districts, Kent Police, the Kent Police Authority, the Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust, Kent Fire & Rescue and KCC (and soon the Probation Service).</p> <p>Spencer then talked in more detail about the Police & Justice Act 2006 which contains six National Standards for CDRPs, and in particular the Second National Standard that relates to intelligence-led business processes (sometimes referred to as the National Intelligence Model). This states that the work of CDRPs should be focussed upon data and intelligence from the community and how important PACTs (Partners and Communities Together) are in this process. Central government see PACTs increasingly as an excellent way in which to engage communities and encourage community cohesion.</p> <p>Q. Does the Community Safety Unit draw all the public agencies together?</p> <p>A. This is how KCC's CSU attains and maintains targets and standards by working with Districts and other partners.</p>	

A12.	'Perceptions of Crime in Thanet' Presentation by Lacy Dixon, Thanet Community Safety Partnership (TCSP)	
	<p>Lacy Dixon is the TCSP Co-ordinator for Margate and Cliftonville. Lacy described how the TCSP came about as a result of legislation from the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 that required each local authority to have a Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). Thanet is the best performing CDRP in Kent and its partnership includes the voluntary sector and members of the public as well as the statutory agencies outlined in Spencer's presentation.</p> <p>A number of measures recently taken by TCSP has meant that crime in Thanet is reducing at a fast pace, thanks in part to the work of the Tactical Delivery Group whose projects focus on individual areas and their issues, namely Dane Valley, Cliftonville West, Margate, Central Harbour and Newington. Crime Contact Cards have been designed for these areas which give contact details of the local police officer and community warden.</p> <p>Lacy went on to describe in more detail some of the priorities and work taking place in Thanet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal damage. The 'Smart' water campaign is a chemical substance swabbed onto property so that it can be traced if stolen. • Domestic abuse. A mural has been designed in Cliftonville West, an area with high rates of abuse, encouraging victims to seek help and providing them with contact details. • Violence in the night time economy. The 'Smile' campaign in Marine Terrace involves extra CCTV cameras and door staff in clubs, etc wearing head cameras. There has also been an increase in the number of police officers in the area and these measures have resulted in a 49.3% reduction in violence against the person in Marine Terrace. Another initiative, the 'Night Bus' which costs £2 and travels between Cliftonville, Broadstairs, and Ramsgate ensures that people out late (including staff of bars, etc) get home safely. • Perception of crime is a lot worse than the reality, and the TCSP is working to overcome this. Thanet has signed up to the Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Pioneer area scheme which has given it extra funding for initiatives such as recruiting Community Crime Fighters (CCF) to offer advice and contact details for more help. There is also an inter-generational play planned at the Theatre Royal in the near future aimed at breaking down barriers and reducing fear. <p>Q. Will there be police officers on the Night Bus?</p>	

	<p>A. There will be two police officers on the bus at all times to prevent trouble and address issues.</p> <p>Q. Are CCFs another version of Neighbourhood Watch?</p> <p>A. CCFs are different in that they are a liaison point and act as a community lead giving advice on what resources are available.</p> <p>Q. Is Community Safety involving senior citizens, e.g. the East Kent Association of Senior Citizens?</p> <p>A. Yes, we working with the voluntary sector and community wardens also receive feedback from senior citizens.</p> <p>Q. How is all this information disseminated to the public?</p> <p>A. Individual complaints are always responded to. Sometimes the complainant will be visited. For bigger issues, either the PACT panel will provide feedback or information will be given through the media either in newspapers or on the website.</p> <p>Q. Some vandalism seems to be invited because of the way areas have been landscaped, for example using gravelled areas. Is consideration given to the possibility of smashing glass with pebbles, etc. during the planning process?</p> <p>A. During planning consideration is given to right type of landscaping in order to reduce problems and the police do give advice also.</p> <p>Lacy Dixon gave her contact details and invited the audience to contact her if they had any specific issues they wished to raise. Tel: 01843 577 608 or email Lacy.Dixon@thanet.gov.uk</p>	
A13.	Opportunities to ask questions about local public services	
	<p>At a meeting recently held in Margate, Bill Hayton was advised of a problem with speeding cars near a small narrow bridge in Rossetti Road, Birchington and asked how it might be resolved. The problem is most acute where the 20mph speed limit ends and could soon result in a serious accident. Local residents would like to see traffic lights installed by the bridge that are activated by a vehicle presence.</p> <p>Mr Burgess will ask the local county councillor, Charles Hibberd, to bring this matter up with East Kent Highways who may ask for a risk analysis to be undertaken to determine whether the situation warrants any improvements being undertaken. It could then go before the Joint Transportation Board.</p>	

	<p>Mr Burgess mentioned a new grant available to all Kent County Councillors called the Members' Highways Fund (MHF), which gives them each £25K a year. The scheme is currently being piloted and is for resolving local highways issues quickly that may not be a high priority county-wide. The money can be spread over two years if the member wishes and can be used for projects such as drop curbs and access for the disabled.</p> <p>Q. Can the money be used for forecourts in front of businesses?</p> <p>A. Not unless it's KCC property.</p> <p>Q. Will the same poor standard of work continue when repairing potholes?</p> <p>A. Mr Burgess will feed back this comment to Kent Highways.</p> <p>Q. Can the £25k be used for street furniture e.g. shelters and benches?</p> <p>A. Possibly, but it depends on whether it's the responsibility of Kent Highways. This is a relatively new grant and can be pulled into scrutiny – it must be spent wisely and correctly.</p> <p>Q. Can a shelter cover in the Royal Esplanade, Ramsgate be provided with this funding?</p> <p>A. Mr Kirby said he was aware of this issue as the existing Perspex cover had been removed by vandals. Mr Burgess will raise the matter also with Liz Green.</p> <p>Q. There is a flooding problem between Queen Street and Leopold Street in Ramsgate where seven drains are blocked. Can MHF be used to resolve this? Does a drain clearance scheme exist?</p> <p>A. You could telephone Kent Highways Helpine on 08458 247 247 who will be able to answer your question or provide further details to the Board who can take the matter up for you. However a planned maintenance drainage scheme is in place and KCC are working to make this more effective.</p> <p>Q. Why use the Highways' PIPKIN (Prioritizing Investments Programmes for Kent's Integrated Network) approach by looking at the number of fatalities? Why do people have to die on roads first?</p> <p>A. There is now a variance on the PIPKIN scheme in operation.</p>	
A14.	Any Other Business notified to the Chairman prior to	

	the Chairman prior to the meeting	
	<p>Mr Burgess advised the meeting that, in his absence, Robert Bayford had asked the Board to agree to him supporting Broadstairs Folk Week using funding from his Member Community Grant. Mr Burgess also advised the meeting that Mr Bayford had a prejudicial interest as he is the Town Council representative on Broadstairs Folk Week.</p> <p>No objections were received and this was approved by Mr Burgess (Vice Chairman), Mr Wells and Mr Kirby.</p>	
A15.	Close	
	Mr Burgess thanked all the speakers for their interesting and informative presentations. He also thanked the public for attending and closed the meeting.	