

By: Shafick Peerbux - Head of Community Safety, KCC
Shirley Brinson - Community Safety Team Leader, KCC

To: Kent Community Safety Partnership – 21st March 2023

Classification: For Decision

Subject: Kent Community Safety Agreement Update

Summary This report details the annual review of the Kent Community Safety Agreement, recommended priorities for 2023/24 and an update on the current action plan.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gave statutory responsibility to local authorities (KCC/District/Boroughs), Kent Police and key partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities. Under this legislation Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (now Community Safety Partnerships) were required to carry out 3 yearly audits and to implement crime reduction strategies. A formal review of the 1998 Act took place in 2006, with the result that three year audits were replaced with annual partnership strategic assessments and rolling partnership plans, whilst in two tier authority areas a statutory County Community Safety Agreement was introduced.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) outlines the key community safety priorities for the county along with the cross-cutting themes that support the identified priorities. It is a rolling document which is reviewed and refreshed annually with the relevant Chapters and appendices being updated as required.

2.2 In the last review of the CSA which took place in March 2022 a new priority was added entitled 'Violence Against Women and Girls' to reflect the increased focus on the topic both nationally and locally within district/borough plans. In addition, the 'Anti-Social Behaviour' priority was expanded to become 'Preventing Neighbourhood Crime & ASB' and the cross-cutting theme of 'Response and Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic' was renamed 'Response and Recovery from Significant Community Events'. The current published version took effect from April 2022.

2.3 The following report details the latest review process that has been undertaken including the proposed refresh to the priorities and cross-cutting themes.

3.0 CSA Review Process

3.1 The review of the new Community Safety Agreement has taken into consideration the outcome of local district/borough strategic assessments, partnership plans, emerging issues and new legislation. Details of these elements are included in the draft refresh of the Community Safety Agreement attached.

3.2 Local district/borough Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) are in the process of undertaking their annual strategic assessments to identify their priorities and develop local plans for 2023/24. At the time of writing, draft priorities have been received from seven CSPs. The following are some of the main issues that are emerging either as a priority, cross-cutting theme or as part of a broader theme. Whilst many of the overarching key issues faced by community safety partners remain largely the same, it is the focus areas and action plans which tend to change in response to the needs of the community. As some CSPs are still in the process of agreeing their priorities for the coming year, some of themes from the list below may well change however it is not anticipated there will be significant changes to the types of priorities identified:

- Domestic Abuse
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Tackling Violence
- Violence Against Women & Girls
- Safeguarding and Vulnerability
- Reducing Offending & Reoffending
- Substance Misuse
- Serious and Organised Crime
- Extremism & Hate
- Strengthening Communities
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Crime
- Road Safety

3.3 In terms of partnership data, this year the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) is trialling the production of a strategic assessment for Kent. The development of the assessment has been funded by the KCST and produced by Kent Police analysts. The document includes crime data as well as a range of datasets provided by partners on topics such as road traffic collisions, hospital admissions, fire data, etc. Unfortunately the development of the strategic assessment has not entirely fitted the timescale for the refresh of the CSA, however the information will be reviewed and the appendices updated as appropriate to reflect any emerging issues.

3.4 Using PESTELO analysis (horizon scanning) members of the KCSP Working Group helped to identify existing or emerging issues and opportunities that may need to be considered. The most significant emerging issue is the cost of living crisis along with an ongoing high demand for services and support. A summary of the PESTELO analysis is included in Appendix C of the attached document

3.5 In addition, the Police and Crime Plan, which is produced by the Police and Crime Commissioner, has also been taken into consideration when refreshing the CSA as the KCSP has a statutory duty to have due regard to the objectives set out in the plan. Last year the PCC developed a new 3-year plan entitled 'Making Kent Safer' April 2022 to March 2025. The plan includes a set of guiding principles, key priorities and sets out what the PCC will do. As a brief summary, the focus areas for the priorities include: antisocial behaviour, violence against women & girls (VAWG), exploitation and abuse, organised crime & county lines, communities, road safety, and protecting young people. Further details can be found in Appendix D of the attached CSA and the full plan is available on the website.

4.0 Proposed Changes

4.1 There have been a number of minor changes within the document (as detailed in the version control) however the most significant updates are in the chapters covering key changes to the community safety landscape, key achievements, and the updates

to the appendices which include the horizon scanning (PESTELO). In addition, it should be noted that one of the named responsible authorities (the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group) has been replaced by the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board as a result of the Health and Care Act 2022.

- 4.2 Although no major changes have been identified this year there are some emerging issues which are worth noting, including:
- The 'cost of living crisis' which was identified as the most significant emerging issue within the horizon scanning affecting all sectors of society - individuals, communities, charities, businesses (private and public). However it is suggested that any partnership activity relating to this particular issue can be incorporated into existing priorities such as 'Safeguarding Vulnerable People' or be considered as part of the cross-cutting theme 'Improve Quality of Life and Enhance Community Resilience' rather than proposing a new standalone priority.
 - The recent publication of the Home Office's statutory guidance in relation to the Serious Violence Duty (published in December 2022), places a new duty on CSPs to ensure preventing and reducing serious violence is a priority. The statutory guidance outlines the specific changes made to section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as a result of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. Whilst this is a new statutory requirement for the CSPs, serious violence is already referenced within the CSA and the partnership is working with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to support delivery of the other requirements set out in the guidance.
 - The potential impact of future duties and reviews such as the Protect Duty (Martyn's Law) and a national review of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) which could include a potential new duty around anti-social behaviour (ASB). However, both preventing extremism and ASB are already priorities within the CSA and whenever new guidance, or recommendations, are published, any relevant actions can be incorporated into the CSA action plan for delivery.
- 4.3 Similar to previous reviews whilst most of the current CSA priorities have been identified in the strategic assessments and community safety plans of local CSPs, 'Road Safety' is rarely listed as a standalone priority. This is not simply because it is not a concern but that local partnerships are limited in their ability to impact on this particular issue. At a county level road safety is still a focus for partners and with the introduction of the Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy and the inclusion of the following priority in the Police and Crime Plan 'Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero', it is recommended that it remain within the CSA.
- 4.4 Conversely whilst anti-social behaviour (ASB)' remains a specific focus for most local CSPs it should be noted that there are limited opportunities for County partners to contribute to this priority as the operational activities are undertaken by district / borough community safety partners. Whilst the focus of ASB tends to sit with local partners, as the purpose of the CSA is to outline the main priorities for the whole county and ASB is still part of the original remit of CSPs it is recommended that 'Preventing Neighbourhood Crime & ASB' should remain as a priority in the latest refresh.
- 4.5 It is clear from the latest review that the current priorities and cross-cutting themes appropriately reflect the key issues for community safety partners and as such it is recommended that they are retained within the CSA as outlined below:

Priorities

- Preventing Neighbourhood Crime & ASB
- Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)
- Domestic Abuse
- Substance Misuse
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People
- Serious Violence and Organised Crime
- Preventing Extremism and Hate
- Road Safety

Cross Cutting Themes

- Early intervention, prevention & education
- Reduce re-offending and support victims
- Improve quality of life and enhance community resilience
- Support mental health and wellbeing
- Response and Recovery from Significant Community Events

5.0 Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1 As part of the CSA refresh the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is being reviewed. The aim of the CSA is to make Kent's communities safer and stronger by bringing together partners from across the county to agree the key priorities and to develop joined-up approaches. Whilst it is recognised that some people may be more vulnerable and at greater risk of becoming a victim, the CSA is intended to benefit all residents. As there are no proposed changes to the priorities, and based on the EqIA undertaken last year, it is not anticipated that any identified group should be adversely impacted by the refresh of the CSA or the activities within the action plan. In addition, in compliance with current requirements the CSA document will be accessibility checked prior to publication.

6.0 CSA Action Plan and Achievements

- 6.1 Partners are continuing to work towards the activities identified in the current CSA action plan linking in with various organisations and multi-agency groups across the county to help tackle the identified priorities and themes. The KCSP Working Group which meets as a sub-group of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) is monitoring the activities set out in the Action Plan and reviewed the latest update at their meeting in January 2023.
- 6.2 Key achievements for 2022/23 delivered by partners are outlined in Chapter 5 of the draft Community Safety Agreement as well as in other papers that will be presented at the meeting including: Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs); project delivery, workshops and events, information sharing, etc. Final feedback on all the actions within the plan will be sought from partners at year-end, and if appropriate some additional details may be added to the key achievements section.
- 6.3 Following the refresh of the Community Safety Agreement, the action plan will also be reviewed and updated for 2023/24 by the KCSP Working Group with the support of the Kent Community Safety Team.

7.0 Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

- 7.1 The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced the requirement for a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee to review the work of the partnership, as such on an annual basis KCC's Scrutiny Committee meets as the Crime and Disorder committee

to act as a critical friend to scrutinise and challenge the work of the partnership and the outcomes from the Community Safety Agreement.

- 7.2 Whilst the dates for KCC's Scrutiny Committee meetings have been published, the date for when the committee will review the CSA and the work of the partnership has not been confirmed but based on recent years it is likely to take place in June 2023. The lead agencies for each of the CSA priorities will be in attendance to represent the KCSP and respond to any queries raised. Any recommendations or suggested changes arising from Scrutiny will be fed back to the KCSP members and the Working Group for action as appropriate.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) is asked to:

- consider and comment on the refreshed Kent Community Safety Agreement;
- agree the priorities and cross-cutting themes for 2023/24;
- note the duty for partners to attend the upcoming Scrutiny Committee arrangements (date to be confirmed).

Attachments:

Appendix A: Draft Refresh of Community Safety Agreement - April 2023

For Further Information:

Shirley Brinson
KCC Community Safety Team Leader
shirley.brinson@kent.gov.uk

Shafick Peerbux
KCC Head of Community Safety
shafick.peerbux@kent.gov.uk