

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

NOTES of a meeting of the Kent Community Safety Partnership held online on Tuesday, 25 March 2025, 10am.

PRESENT: Mrs C Bell (Chair), Mr S Peerbux, Ms S Brinson, Mr D Paul, DI J Ross, Ms C Bright, Ms C Hartwell, Ms A Oates, Mr N Wilkinson, Ch Insp L Connor, Ms C Harris, Ms S Clare, Mr B Platt, Mr S Butler, Ms S Holt-Castle, Ms K Webb, Ms S Chisholm, Ms V Meller, Supt P Steenhuis, Cllr S Mochrie-Cox, Ms L Dixon, Ms N Floodgate, Ms C Collins, Ms K Turner, Ms J Leney and C Bright.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Romagnuolo.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

138. Declarations of Interest

(Item A3)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

139. Notes of meeting held on 21 November 2024

(Item A4)

1. Cllr Mochrie-Cox asked why the crime data aligned with ward boundaries was still unavailable and Detective Inspector James Ross explained that the data was processed by a third party system and whilst, it was not yet available, it is in process.

RESOLVED that the notes of the meeting held on 21 November 2024 were a correct record.

140. Kent Police and Crime Plan 2025 – 2029

(Item B1)

1. Mr David Paul (Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) Chief Executive) presented the report outlining the PCCs Police and Crime Plan which was recently approved by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
2. On 1 April 2025, the PCCs 'Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust: Kent Police and Crime Plan 2025 – 2029' came into effect, replacing the 'Making Kent Safer Plan'. The Plan communicated the Kent Commissioner's policing vision and objectives for his new term.
3. The priorities of the new Plan centred around four key areas:

- Protecting People
- Protecting Places
- Protecting Property
- Productive Partnerships.

4. In terms of Protecting People, the Plan recognised that there were groups of particularly vulnerable people that needed to be protected. These were the victims of rape, serious sexual offences and domestic abuse. The previous year, over 100,000 victims were supported through Victim Support and other charities.
5. Protecting Places is maintaining police performance/public contact and there had been an improvement in 999 and 101 call handling. There was a renewed focus through the Neighbourhood model where every community would have a named Beat Officer responsible for addressing local concerns and providing a reassuring presence. Dedicated teams within every district would also ensure effective community engagement, long-term problem solving to prevent issues escalating and targeted activity when necessary.
6. On Protecting Property, retail crime, shoplifting and the protection of shop workers had recently received much public attention. Initiatives to tackle these issues included: the delivery by Kent Police of the Retail Crime Action Plan, support for retail workers who experienced abusive behaviour, and the strengthening of partnership working across public and private sectors through a Retail Crime Board.
7. In terms of Productive Partnerships, the Plan recognised that the police could not implement all the aforementioned initiatives alone. Success in making Kent safer was dependent on joined-up thinking and multi-agency collaboration. Commissioners were uniquely placed to bring agencies together and ensure each one played to its strengths in preventing crime and antisocial behaviour and supporting victims of crime. One such example of this was a workshop that took place the previous week, where the Commissioner met with partners in the Criminal Justice System to identify pressure points on the system, look at the future changes in line with government reviews and enhancing special programmes.
8. Mr N Wilkinson mentioned that the PCP had limited detail regarding the PREVENT and Counter Terrorism agenda but assured the partnership that there is a significant amount of work ongoing across the County and that there is really positive engagement with the Police and the Office of the PCC.

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) members **note** the contents of the report.

131. Kent Community Safety Agreement Review and Refresh (Item B2)

1. Ms Shirley Brinson (Community Safety Team Leader, KCC) outlined the refreshed Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) report. Most of the chapters had been edited, although some had only minor amendments. The most

significant changes had taken place in the chapters covering community safety landscape, key achievements, the Appendices and the Kent Police and Crime Plan was moved from the Appendix and included in a new chapter.

2. The Review had taken into account the outcome of the local Districts and Boroughs' strategic assessments to ensure that the priorities within the Community Safety Agreement (CSA) were reflective of community safety partnerships across the county.
3. Although no major changes had been identified this year, some issues were noted. These included:
 - The high cost of living and ongoing funding pressures
 - The Serious Violence duty placed on Community Safety Partnerships
 - The Crime and Policing Bill, which aimed at introducing a number of measures to support the delivery of the Government's Safer Streets Mission to reduce knife crime and violence against women, and to increase public confidence in policing and the wider criminal justice system.

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP):

- a) **consider** and comment on the draft Kent Community Safety Agreement;
- b) **agree** the priorities and cross-cutting themes for 2025/26;
- c) **note** the duty for partners to attend the Scrutiny Committee.

132. Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group Update (Item B3)

1. Mr Shafick Peerbux (Head of Community Safety, KCC) explained that the main focus of the report was to update on the key activities and projects that were managed by the Working Group on the behalf of the Partnership.
2. The role of Chair of the KCSP Working Group was currently vacant, following the departure of Mark Powell, Director of the Violence Reduction Unit. KCSP members were asked to consider putting forward a senior member from their organisation to take on the role of Chair. The role of KCSP WG Chair was supported by the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST). Mr Peerbux expressed the gratitude of the Working Group to Mr Powell for his excellent chairmanship.
3. In terms of funding, the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had allocated £39,661 grant funding to the KCSP to fund projects in 2024/25 focused on the priorities set out in the CSA and the Commissioner's Making Kent Safer plan. Similar funding was also provided by the PCC to all Community Safety Partnerships across Kent and Medway to help deliver projects in support of more local priorities.
4. The Kent Community Safety Team (KCST), on behalf of the Partnership, received approval from the Partnership and the Commissioner's Office to fund nine projects totalling £39,505 including crime prevention initiatives, training events, and resources. A small amount of remaining funding (£156) was returned to the Commissioner's Office as an underspend.

5. The Commissioner confirmed that the KCSP allocation of Crime Reduction Grant (CRG) funding for the new financial year would be £39,661 and the Partnership would like to extend their thanks to the Commissioner for this. Two-thirds of the funding (£26,440) was available for upfront project spend and the deadline for business case submissions to the PCC was the 9 May 2025. The remaining third (£13,220) would be placed into a tactical pot to support the delivery of projects which addressed emerging needs and demands throughout the financial year. Access to the tactical pot funding would close at the end of December 2025.
6. Mr Peerbux advised that there is a lot of activity being undertaken by the KCST, including the lunchtime learning Community Safety Information Sessions (CSISs), regular e-Bulletins and the webinars exploring the learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews/Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews. Additionally, the KCST Memorandum of Understanding was developed and agreed by Kent Police and KCC for the next three years (April 2025 to March 2028).

RESOLVED that Members of the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP):

- a) **Consider** putting forward a senior member from their organisation to take on the role as Chair of the KCSP Working Group.
- b) **Note** the progress and actions undertaken by the Working Group and the work of the KCST.
- c) **Contact** the KCST (kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk) with any:
 - Project proposals for the Crime Reduction Grant funding.
 - Suggestions for future speakers/topics that might be of interest for the Community Safety Information Sessions (CSIS).
 - Key updates that might be appropriate to include in future editions of the KCST e-bulletin.

133. Kent and Medway Road Safety Update

(Item B4)

1. Ms N Floodgate (Road Safety & Active Travel Group Manager, KCC) delivered a presentation. She explained that, in 2021, KCC launched its Vision Zero Strategy and the main long-term objectives were:
 - Zero road fatalities or life-changing injuries by 2050
 - Safe System as the norm
 - Safe and easy walking and cycling, and
 - Kent as a leader in road safety innovation.
2. The Strategy also included a number of shorter-term goals:
 - Reduce fatalities and serious injuries
 - Develop an evidence base through research and trials
 - Improve collaboration between partners
 - Embed the Safe System approach
 - Promote Vision Zero to the public, and
 - Increase safety for walking and cycling.

3. Ms Floodgate acknowledged that Road Safety is complex and partnership working is vital and a fundamental part of the strategy is collaboration and working with partners.
4. Ms Claire Harris (Coordinator of the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership - KMSRP) said that the Partnership for Road Safety had existed for many years and was previously known as the Casualty Reduction Partnership. In the last couple of years it underwent some changes.
5. In terms of its structure, the KMSRP consisted of key stakeholders who identified opportunities for coordination and collaboration. The Strategic Board, which comprised senior officers and elected members, provided governance and oversight, and was chaired by Kent's Police & Crime Commissioner. Delivery plans were developed and actioned by the Tactical Coordination Group. This group monitored the outputs from recently established Safe System Working Groups.
6. Ms Alison Oates asked whether work relating to suicides where road structures has been utilised was included and Ms Floodgate advised that colleagues had met with the Suicide Prevention Team in KCC recently to discuss how to incorporate this into the Strategy.
7. Supt Peter Steenhuis (Kent Police) said that he was the Mental Health Lead within Kent Police and that he was aware of national practises about displaying signs on bridges to discourage people from taking their own lives. However, these initiatives had the adverse effect of creating suicide hot spots. He asked whether the Road Safety team could liaise with him so that he could provide an input from the mental health perspective.
8. Ms S Brinson expressed her gratitude to Ms Floodgate and Ms Harris for their assistance with the Road Safety elements of the Community Safety Agreement and action plan associated with this.
9. A number of members from the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) expressed an interest in Ms Floodgate and Ms Harris either attending their CSP meetings or having discussions in order to avoid any duplication and to work cohesively. Ms Bell agreed that Road Safety is a high priority as a risk to the public and partnership work needs to continue to address this.

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership **note** the contents of the report.

134. Kent & Medway Serious Violence Duty Update (Item B5)

1. Chief Inspector Lara Connor (Kent Police) explained that the report provided a summary of the strategy that was agreed by the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Board (SVPPB) and progress against the action plan.

2. The Strategy consisted of three key strands:
 - Sexual Violence
 - Serious Youth Violence, involving those aged under 25, and
 - Violence linked to drugs and alcohol
3. In terms of Sexual Violence, levels had fallen compared to those of the previous two years. The offences of sexual assault, rape and exposure made up 50% of all sexual violence.
4. The Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and SVPPB had worked with young people to understand how they were affected by sexual violence. Their feedback was beneficial in informing the preventative work of the Partnership. This included the design and launch of the 'Don't Disrespect' campaign in February 2025. The campaign raised awareness of the extent of harassment of girls and women and showed how boys and men challenge their friends and peers. The film has been viewed more than 15,000 times since its launch.
5. With regard to Serious Youth Violence, there were seven key areas of focus outlined in the report. There has been progress in tackling public place serious youth violence. Knife-enabled serious violence had decreased in the last 12 months. The overall levels of serious violence for those aged under 25 were at their lowest point since 2019 – except the lockdown period.
6. In terms of violence linked to drugs and alcohol, the Board lead is Medway Council. The work on this strand was delayed following the death of the Medway Board representative but Medway Public Health have agreed a plan to work with partner organisations to capture the following information and use it to make proposals to the Board: to identify strategies, priorities, resources and system governance that already seek to achieve the same aims; develop an evidence based system response with clear, shared and measurable objectives; and understand the link better between drugs, alcohol and violence.
7. In relation to future planning, the Government had committed to a 'Young Futures' strategy which included a pledge to halve knife crime and create Young Futures Hubs for adolescents. VRUs were required to establish a Young Futures Prevention Partnership by July 2025 and, by October 2025, establish at least one operational panel that targeted support to children with risk factors linked to violence but who were not open to statutory services. The work will be used by the Home Office to develop national guidance in advance of prevention partnerships being rolled out across England and Wales.
8. The VRU had funding confirmed for the year 2025-26 and was expected to maintain its core function to lead and co-ordinate the local response to serious violence, adopting a 'whole system' approach to violence prevention. The structure of the VRU and the services to be commissioned had yet to be finalised with the Kent PCC.

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership **note** the contents of the report.

135. Dates of future meetings

(Item C1)

RESOLVED that the KCSP **note** the dates of future meetings.

135. Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews Update

(Item D1)

1. Mr Peerbux explained that the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 changes the name of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) to Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) and provided an update on the status of the Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) cases. Updates from the Steering Group on policy and procedures, funding and the sharing of lessons identified were also discussed.
2. The published DARDR cases can be found on the Kent.gov website using the link below:
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/partnerships/kent-community-safety-partnership/domestic-homicide-reviews>

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership:

- a) **Note** the updates within this report and progress on all cases.
- b) **Note** the plans for continued online learning events.
- c) **Note** the risks to the current funding model.
- d) **Note** the 2024 Thematic Update Report and share findings within agencies.

137. Kent and Medway PREVENT Duty Delivery Board Update

(Item D2)

1. The report provided an update to the KCSP on the local and national context in relation to the Prevent Duty.

RESOLVED that the Kent Community Safety Partnership **note** the update.