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To: Kent Community Safety Partnership – 31st March 2026

Classification: For Decision

Subject: Kent Community Safety Agreement Update

Summary This report outlines the review of the Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) and seeks endorsement from the Kent Community Safety Partnership for the revised framework. It summarises the proposed changes for 2026/27, including a streamlined format and a move from eight priorities to three overarching strategic aims to support a more flexible, data-led approach to partnership working.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) gave statutory responsibility to local authorities, the police and other responsible authorities to work together to reduce crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending within their areas.
- 1.2 In two-tier local authority areas such as Kent, this duty is supported by the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007, which require the preparation of a county-level Community Safety Agreement (CSA) to support coordinated and joint working across district, borough and county partners.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA) outlines the countywide priorities and strategic framework for community safety across Kent. The document is reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure it remains relevant.
- 2.2 Last year's review of the CSA which took place in March 2025, confirmed that the existing eight priorities and five cross-cutting themes remained appropriate. Although changes to the community safety landscape and emerging issues were noted within the updated document, it was agreed that any partnership activity could be incorporated into the existing priorities or themes. The [current published version](#) took effect from April 2025.
- 2.3 The annual review and refresh of the CSA traditionally includes the addition of new content to reflect emerging issues, new statutory duties, changes in policy and practice and updated priorities. While this approach has ensured the CSA remained comprehensive and up to date, it has also resulted in the document becoming increasingly lengthy and complex over time. In recognition of this, partners agreed that this year was an appropriate opportunity to undertake a more fundamental review of the CSA, with a focus on streamlining the document, reducing duplication and improving clarity and usability.

2.4 The following report details the outcome of the latest review of the CSA and the proposed changes for 2026/27.

3.0 CSA Review Process

3.1 The review of the Community Safety Agreement (CSA) has been informed by a range of evidence and engagement including local district/borough strategic assessments, partnership data and plans, horizon scanning of emerging issues and discussion and feedback from partners.

Workshop

3.2 An in-person, multi-agency workshop was held with members of the Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group at the end of January 2026. Providing partners with the opportunity to discuss emerging issues and risks, organisational priorities, the impact of changing legislation, new duties, etc. As well as an opportunity to reflect on the existing structure of the CSA.

Horizon Scanning

3.3 The workshop discussions contributed to the horizon scanning undertaken through a PESTELO analysis. The Working Group discussed a range of emerging issues and organisational priorities which helped inform the horizon scanning review. Including issues such as local government reorganisation; the introduction of new legislation including enacted and emerging bills such as the Sentencing Act 2026 and the Crime and Policing Bill; high cost of living; financial pressures on organisations; global events; polarisation; and both the opportunities and threats such as the use of artificial intelligence in everyday life. A brief summary is included as **Appendix B** to this report.

Strategic Assessment

3.4 Discussions were also informed by the initial county Strategic Assessment produced by the Kent Community Safety Team (KCST) Analyst in partnership with Kent Police. The assessment draws together crime data as well as a range of datasets provided by partners including hospital admissions, fire data, road casualties, youth offending data, etc. The assessment, which is marked as 'restricted', has been shared with members of the KCSP Working Group to inform the review of the CSA. A high-level summary of key issues and drivers is included as **Appendix C** to this report.

Partnership Plans

3.5 Following their own strategic assessments, **district/borough Community Safety Partnerships** (CSPs), are in the process of reviewing the priorities and local plans for 2026/27. At the time of writing, draft priorities have been received from all CSPs in Kent and although there may be some amendments prior to finalising the plans, it is not anticipated there will be significant changes. The following are some of the main issues that have been identified either as a priority, cross-cutting theme or as part of a broader theme (included as **Appendix D** to this report):

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Domestic Abuse
- Violence Against Women & Girls
- Serious Violence
- Safeguarding and Vulnerability
- Strengthening Communities
- Substance Misuse
- Extremism & Hate
- Crime (including acquisitive crime)

- Serious and Organised Crime
- Reducing Offending & Reoffending
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Public Spaces
- Road Safety

3.6 In line with the statutory duty to have due regard to **Police and Crime Plan**, this has also been considered as part of the CSA review. The Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) [Kent Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029](#) 'Cut Crime, Support Victims, Build Trust' is supported by 4 key priorities: Protecting People, Protecting Places, Protecting Property, and Productive Partnerships.

Workshop Outcomes

3.7 Partners discussed whether the existing priorities remained fit for purpose and how the CSA could better support effective joint working and strategic oversight. It was agreed that a more streamlined document structure around broader themes would provide a clearer and more strategic framework. The KCST was therefore asked to review the CSA and develop a revised proposal reflecting the discussions and feedback from the Working Group.

4.0 Proposed Changes

4.1 The review (as detailed above) confirmed that the issues contained within the Kent CSA priorities (April 2025) remain relevant, including, *neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour; violence against women and girls; domestic abuse; substance misuse; safeguarding vulnerable people; serious violence and organised crime; preventing extremism and hate; and road safety*. However, partners recognised that these issues are interconnected and increasingly complex, and that a long list of individual priorities and cross-cutting themes did not always reflect how community safety activity is delivered in practice.

4.2 It is therefore proposed that the CSA for 2026–27 is structured around three broader **strategic aims**, which are not listed in order of priority:

- **Stronger, safer and resilient neighbourhoods: addressing ASB, neighbourhood crime, and local concerns** – *focusing on the issues that most affect everyday life, impacting communities and feelings of safety.*
- **Reducing violence, abuse and high-harm offending** – *including domestic abuse, violence against women and girls, and serious violence.*
- **Protecting vulnerable people: reducing exploitation, susceptibility, and repeat harm** – *including safeguarding people, substance misuse, mental health, reoffending, and reducing the risk of radicalisation.*

4.3 Members of the Kent Community Safety Partnership Working Group have been consulted on the proposed changes to the CSA, including the move to broader strategic aims and a more streamlined document. Partners were asked to consider whether the revised approach remained representative of activity across Kent, reflected both local and countywide priorities, and allowed their organisations' statutory responsibilities to be clearly aligned within the new framework.

4.4 Feedback from statutory partners has been positive and supportive of the new approach, and suggested changes and improvements have been incorporated into the draft CSA (**Appendix A**).

5.0 Key Benefits of the New Format

- 5.1 The refreshed CSA introduces a simplified structure based on three strategic aims rather than eight individual priorities, reducing duplication and improving readability.
- 5.2 The document places greater emphasis on statutory purpose, strategic direction and high-level priorities, with stronger alignment to district and borough Community Safety Partnership plans and the Kent Police and Crime Plan.
- 5.3 The revised approach provides improved strategic clarity for partners and scrutiny bodies, greater agility to respond to emerging risks in-year, clearer links between local and countywide priorities, more effective use of partner resources, and enhanced ability to demonstrate compliance with statutory duties.
- 5.4 It is also worth noting that some of the district and borough Community Safety Partnerships have adopted a similar approach, or are moving towards, broader thematic approaches, and that the proposed revision to the CSA appears to align well with local CSPs as well as the Kent Police and Crime Plan.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 The current draft presented to the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) is in-development and due to the significant changes to the format of the CSA, members are invited to provide feedback during the meeting or in writing to the KCST kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk by Wednesday 22nd April 2026.
- 6.2 Following discussions at the KCSP meeting on 31st March and receipt of any written feedback received from partners, the draft CSA will be updated accordingly and submitted to the Chair of the KCSP for formal agreement and sign-off.
- 6.3 Once agreed, the KCSP Working Group will work in partnership to develop a data-led action plan aligned to the three strategic aims, focusing on areas where countywide partnership working can add value without duplicating existing arrangements.

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 A date for the Crime and Disorder Committee has been set for the 1st July 2026, representatives of the responsible authorities 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 new draft format of the Kent Community Safety Agreement;
- agree the proposed approach, including the three strategic aims;
- submit any feedback or proposed changes to the KCST (kentcommunitysafetyteam@kent.gov.uk) by 22nd April 2026;
- note the requirement for partners to attend the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in July 2026.

Attachments:

Appendix A: Draft Community Safety Agreement - April 2026

Appendix B: Horizon scanning summary

Appendix C: Supporting evidence summary

Appendix D: District / Borough CSP priority summary

For Further Information:

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