

By: Anna Taylor, Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Scrutiny)

To: Crime and Disorder Committee – 1 July 2026

Subject: Kent Community Safety Agreement

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Summary: This report outlines the background of Community Safety Agreements and the development of Kent's Agreement. It also explains the role of the Committee in scrutinising the Kent Community Safety Agreement as a 'critical friend' to the Community Safety Partnership.

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## **1. Community Safety Agreements**

- 1.1 Community Safety Agreements (CSAs) are mandatory for two tier authorities and are used by the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to meet their statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006). Additionally, the 2006 Act required CSPs to include anti-social behaviour (ASB) and substance misuse within their strategies. The Police and Crime Act 2009 added reducing reoffending to the areas to be addressed by CSPs and most recently the Police, Crime and Sentencing Courts Act 2022 introduced Serious Violence as a statutory duty.
- 1.2 The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 revised the 1998 Act, altering the manner in which District and Borough Council evaluated their Community Safety arrangements. The previous method of three yearly audits was replaced with an annual strategic assessment, triennial partnership plan and public consultations. These district/borough level assessments feed into the higher authority's CSP and influence the Community Safety Agreement.
- 1.3 The broad range of public safety considerations addressed by CSPs requires joint work from the partners that serve as responsible authorities:
  - Police
  - District and Borough Councils
  - County Council
  - Health
  - Fire and Rescue Service
  - Probation Service
- 1.4 The CSA brings together the key strategic aims of all relevant partners in the crime, disorder and public safety sectors, promoting a joint approach that enables more effective, co-ordinated inter-agency planning to deliver improved outcomes.

- 1.5 Each CSA reflects its own area's priorities based on needs assessment and shared intelligence between the partner agencies. Since the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) Community Safety Partnerships must give due regard to the PCC's Police and Crime Plan. The strategic assessments undertaken by local Community Safety Partnerships are reviewed for common issues and priorities, which are then consulted on with relevant stakeholders to confirm their inclusion in the CSA. This engagement with stakeholders also provides opportunities for gaps to be identified and broader cross-cutting themes to be taken into account.

## **2. Kent Community Safety Agreement**

- 2.1 Responsibility for delivering the CSA priorities rests with the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP). The CSA is reviewed annually and refreshed as appropriate, along with the associated CSA Action Plan to ensure it remains aligned with local priorities and emerging risks.
- 2.2 The Kent CSP has delegated performance monitoring to the senior officer led working group and relevant priority leads from the partner agencies. Any points of concern or anomalies are reported to the KCSP for consideration.
- 2.3 The most recent refresh of the Kent Community Safety Agreement (CSA), attached at Appendix A, was completed in April 2026 and introduces a revised framework for 2026/27 onwards based on three overarching strategic aims. This updated structure reflects the partnership's shared priorities and is intended to provide a more streamlined and focused approach to delivery. Cabinet Members are invited to review and comment on the refreshed CSA as it will guide future partnership activity.
- 2.4 Appendix B provides a summary of partnership activity undertaken during 2025/26, which was delivered against the previous framework of eight specific priorities. It includes an overview of activity, supported by contextual information and data to assist the Committee in its scrutiny role. This approach ensures continuity in reporting on agreed priorities, while supporting the transition to the new strategic framework. Effective delivery across both the previous priorities and the new strategic aims continues to rely on coordinated activity and strong partnership working across the statutory responsible authorities.

## **3. Committee Role**

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee is required to meet annually in the form of the Crime and Disorder Committee to review and scrutinise work undertaken by relevant partner agencies and authorities responsible for managing crime and disorder in the County. This duty arises from the Police and Justice Act 2006 which introduced Crime and Disorder Committees to fulfil this scrutiny function.

- 3.2 The Committee exists as a 'critical friend' of the Community Safety Partnership, considering the strategic level approach to crime and disorder and should not seek to challenge operational level actions.
- 3.3 Reviewing, considering and commenting on the current Community Safety Agreement and the activities undertaken to address the priorities serves as a constructive approach for the Committee to fulfil its statutory requirement to scrutinise strategic activity in relation to crime and disorder.
- 3.4 The focus of the Committee's scrutiny should be on the collective work of the partnership rather than the activities of the individual agencies, with particular attention to areas of risk, performance challenges and gaps in delivery where identified.
- 3.5 All district/borough CSPs across Kent have scrutiny functions in place meeting the benchmark for annual scrutiny set out in the legislation; with some local Scrutiny Committees meeting more frequently to review the CSP plans as well as other Community Safety related topics.

#### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 The Committee may resolve to:

- Note the refreshed Community Safety Agreement (April 2026) and make no comment.
- Make comment on the refreshed Community Safety Agreement (April 2026) and the year-end action plan and performance summary for 2025/26.
- Offer recommendations to one or more of the responsible authorities, particularly where further improvement or clarification is required.

#### **Appendices:**

- Appendix A - Kent Community Safety Agreement April 2026
- Appendix B - Kent CSA Priorities and Actions 2025/26

#### **Contact details:**

Anna Taylor, Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Scrutiny)

[anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk](mailto:anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk)

03000 416478

Shafick Peerbux, Head of Community Safety, Community Protection.

[Shafick.peerbux@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Shafick.peerbux@kent.gov.uk)

Shirley Brinson, Kent Community Safety Team Leader, Community Safety.

[Shirley.brinson@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Shirley.brinson@kent.gov.uk)