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To: Kent Community Safety Partnership

Classification: For Information

Subject: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Update: Community Trigger and the ASB Case Management System (Themis)

Summary This report provides an update on the progress to agree countywide criteria for the Community Trigger, a new element of legislation under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Police & Crime Act 2014, and requests County Partners to provide links to the application forms via their websites. This report also provides an update on the ASB Case management system known as Themis.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 received Royal Assent in March 2014. Phasing in of the Act began in May, with all aspects of the legislation due to be in force by October 20th 2014.
- 1.2 This Act overhauls the existing powers and tools that are available to deal with anti-social behaviour (ASB) and introduces a new element which allows the public to request a review of the actions taken around ASB complaints, referred to as the Community Trigger. The criteria for initiating a review has been left to all local authorities to decide based on minimum agreed standards within the Act.
- 1.3 In July 2014, the Home Office published statutory guidance for frontline professionals to help authorities interpret the new legislation and to set their own criteria for the Community Trigger.

2.0 Community Trigger

- 2.1 Whilst the legislation allows for each local authority to set their own criteria and review process, discussions have been undertaken between all partners across Kent, and Medway to agree a single criteria that will be adopted by all authorities. In addition, there is a preference that other elements of the review process be the same pan Kent, ensuring consistency across the County.
- 2.2 KCC Community Safety has met with all local authorities to assist with compiling options to set the criteria and the review process itself. This has been followed by a number of discussions/meetings with the district/borough Community Safety Managers to determine the final trigger criteria, process and appeal route if dissatisfied:
 - **Trigger:** In the simplest terms the threshold for requesting a review will have been met if three similar/same complaints were made to relevant agencies in a six month period. However in addition to the basic threshold,

recent guidance from the Home Office also indicates that the persistence of ASB, the harm/potential harm caused by ASB, and the adequacy of response by agencies should also be taken into consideration when deciding if someone has met the criteria. This allows discretion amongst local CSU's to assess applications on an individual basis if they do not automatically meet the trigger criteria. (See Appendix A: Kent Community Trigger Process)

- **Application Form:** A task and finish group has been set up to develop a unified application process across the county. However, there are varying limitations with the IT software available in each district and this is being investigated locally. A draft has been created and shared across districts to aid in the development of each online application form.
- **Review:** Once a trigger has been activated the relevant bodies must then review the actions taken and respond to the applicant, subject to their agreed process & timescales. Although an overarching process has been agreed across the county, there may be some variations locally to allow for differences in the existing partnership arrangements.
- **Dissatisfaction:** If the applicant is dissatisfied with the review, they will be able to ask for it to be referred to another body. The options for this are not prescribed in the legislation and are being discussed locally. This has included discussions with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to determine their possible involvement. All options are currently being considered.

- 2.3 It is important to note that the Community Trigger process will not replace an organisation's own complaints procedures. Individuals can still complain to the relevant bodies if they are unhappy with the service received from an individual or service.
- 2.4 The final criteria, application form, review process and route for dissatisfaction are being agreed between the district/boroughs and aim to be in place by the end of October. It has been requested that partner organisations including Kent County Council, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue, etc. place links to the application forms / processes on their websites to ensure residents can direct their requests appropriately.

3.0 ASB Case Management (Themis)

- 3.1 Solid ASB casework underpins all activity aimed at reducing ASB, starting at the point of contact and continuing through the management of a case. The provision of a case management system accessible by all key partners, such as the police, KCC and local authorities is a key principle in the joint approach to tackling ASB.
- 3.2 As previously reported, the case management system known as 'Themis', which is a joint Kent Police and KCC IT project, is currently in use by both Kent Police and the Kent Community Warden Service. As of September 2014 the system is ready to roll out to local authorities, subject to successful vetting.

- 3.3 Although Themis will be available to all districts, use is optional and currently those districts interested in using it are sending in expressions of interest and completing vetting procedures prior to gaining access to the system. The training necessary to enable them to utilise Themis is awaiting approval and a decision is anticipated in the coming weeks as to when and how this will be carried out within districts.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 Discussions are in progress between district partners to develop a unified application form and finalise the trigger, review process and route for dissatisfied applicants. The finalised process will be made available on local authority websites and should be made available on county partner websites where possible.
- 4.2 Kent Police will be reviewing the applications of interest for accessing Themis and are finalising training for local partners. The vetting process will be completed in due course and the training rolled out to relevant staff once available.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) is asked to note the progress that partners have made towards developing a Community Trigger process for Kent and Medway, and to acknowledge the request for County Partners to provide a link to the application process on their websites.
- 5.2 Kent Community Safety Partnership is asked to note the progress made with the roll out of Themis to district/borough councils.

For Further Information:

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