

Communities, Housing & Environment

February 14th
2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

2017-18 Strategic Assessment

Final Decision-Maker	Council
Lead Director or Head of Service	John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Nicolas Rathbone, Community Safety Partnerships Officer
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All wards

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee recommend to Council that the 2017-18 Strategic Assessment is adopted and implemented by the Safer Maidstone Partnership.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- The Strategic Assessment will continue to create safer communities and deter and reduce crime & anti-social behaviour.
- It will contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Plan priorities; for Maidstone to be a decent place to live and Corporate and Customer Excellence.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Safer Maidstone Partnership	January 11 th 2017
Safer Maidstone Partnership Away Day	February 16 th 2017
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	February 14 th 2017
Council	April 12 th 2017

2017-18 Strategic Assessment

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the Committee on the crime data over the past year, update on the Community Safety Partnership priorities and ask for the aforementioned document to be accepted for implementation.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The Maidstone Community Safety Strategic Assessment is a report published by the council each year as required under the Crime and Disorder act 1998. The act requires Local Authorities in conjunction with key partners to produce a detailed crime and disorder audit. This identifies community safety issues, emerging trends and future priorities for the Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

2.2 The Maidstone Community Safety Plan 2013-18 is a five year rolling document, which highlights how the SMP plans to tackle local community safety issues that matter to the local community. The plan is revised annually through reviewing information set out in the Strategic Assessment which ensures that current issues can be taken into account and used to direct the SMP's strategy. An away day to discuss and complete the action plans for the priorities is taking place later in February 2017.

2.3 Last year's Strategic Assessment raised the following priorities:

- Violent Crime (specifically Domestic Abuse & Night Time Economy)
- Reducing Re-offending
- Road Safety (Killed or seriously injured)
- Substance Misuse
- Community Resilience (emerging issues around Child Sexual Exploitation, Prevent, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, Serious Organised Crime and Safeguarding)

Emerging themes that occurred through the year were:

- Serious Organised Crime (SOC) covering all vulnerabilities with a safeguarding risk, have seen an increase.
- Mental Health issues becoming more prevalent in all priorities.

2.4 Our priorities for this year have been extracted from a wide variety of information shared with our partners and represent the most important issues to focus on this (2016-17) year. Based on the information in the Strategic Assessment, it is recommended that the Committee confirm the following 2017-18 priorities:

- Gangs and Organised Crime Groups (including modern slavery)

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - Substance Misuse
 - Domestic Abuse and Other Violent Crime
 - Mental Health
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Do nothing (not recommended). This is not a recommended option as the data sourced from the Kent Safer Communities portal shows that some community safety trends have changed. Other emerging issues need to be tackled within the partnership and if not picked up by the SMP, this will potentially result in more victims of crime, especially amongst the most vulnerable of society.
- 3.2 Support the identified priorities for 2017-18 so they can be implemented and developed by the SMP (recommended). These priorities have been clearly evidenced and some also raised by other Community Safety Partnerships around the county. This assists with cross borough interventions and valuable information sharing around similar issues.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Move forward with the acceptance and implementation of the listed priorities. These will be delivered under the umbrella of the Safer Maidstone Partnership. The annual Strategic Assessment and subsequent refresh of the Partnership Plan demonstrate that issues do change and even emerge between assessments. Often this is as a result of partnership working targeting specific issues or crime types. It also shows that keeping up to date with current issues allows partners to be at the forefront of innovation and try to keep within one step of the perpetrators of crime.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Strategic Assessment has been sent out to members of the SMP for consultation. These comments have been carefully considered and the reports updated accordingly in line with the desired direction of the majority of the partnership. The comments mainly related to specific wording within the documents and changes made to avoid confusion or misrepresentation of data. No further feedback was received in the two weeks following the SMP meeting.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Following final approval from Council and implementation of the decision, the Strategic Assessment will be disseminated to all partners for their information.

The Partnership Plan which will be completed following an SMP away day later in February and its actions will be fed through the priority subgroups. This year's Police & Crime Commissioner's community grant has to date not been announced. However, as and when this is done; it will then be advertised externally. Part of the criteria for bids is their alignment with the SMP and PCC's priorities and applications will normally need to be submitted, sifted and a report sent to the PCC's office for invoicing around May.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Community Safety Partnership Plan will contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Plan priorities; for Maidstone to be a decent place to live and Corporate and Customer Excellence. In addition, the Community Safety Partnership Plan supports the delivery of Tackling Disadvantage and Building Stronger Communities.	Head of Housing and Community Services
Risk Management	None.	Head of Housing and Community Services
Financial	All Community Safety Grant funding is allocated directly to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) who uses this money to target his identified priorities and support the ongoing delivery of the Crime Plans. Details for the 2017-18 funding have to date not been released. For the last two years the amount has been £37,104. However, the plans and strategies detailed within the plan will cover a wide range of services provided by the Council and partner agencies with the majority of activity being either mainstream funded or funded via other grants or allocations not directly allocated to community safety.	Head of Finance and Resources
Staffing	The priorities within the Plan cross cut the agencies that make up the Safer Maidstone Partnership. Delivery against the priorities will be via mainstream activity and any grant funding that the borough is able to secure, including this year's Community Safety Grant allocation.	Head of HR Shared Service
Legal	Sections 5 to 7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (the 1998 Act), headed "Crime	Head of Legal Partnership

	<p>and Disorder Strategies”, require “responsible authorities” to comply with section 6 of the 1998 Act which states that “responsible authorities” shall formulate and implement;</p> <p>a) A strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area; and</p> <p>b) A strategy for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area; and</p> <p>c) A strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area.</p> <p>By virtue of section 5(1)(a) of the 1998 Act, the Council is the “responsible authority”. By completing an annual refresh of the Community Safety Plan based on the findings of a comprehensive Strategic Assessment, Maidstone is fulfilling its statutory requirement. There are reputational, environmental, economical and legal risks to the Council for not pro-actively pursuing an improvement in crime and disorder levels. The recommendations in this report recognise the importance of constructive dialogue with the partner organisations comprising the Community Safety Partnership and also the importance of coordinated and collaborative working.</p>	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The benefits of delivery against the plan will apply across the Maidstone borough, although by adopting an evidence based approach more benefit should be felt in areas where identified problems are greatest.	Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	None.	Head of Housing and Community Services
Community Safety	The Community Safety team is under the reporting line of the Community Partnerships and Resilience Manager. The focus is strongly on preventative work while continuing to be co-located and working closely in partnership with the police and other community safety related partners.	Head of Housing and Community Services
Human Rights Act	None.	Head of Housing and Community Services

Procurement	None.	Head of Finance and Resources
Asset Management	None.	Head of Housing and Community Services

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Strategic Assessment 2017-18
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