

Effective interventions for tackling ASB by the community safety unit - Follow Up

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing & Environment Committee
Lead Head of Service	John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Martyn Jeynes, Community Protection Team Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Further to the report provided in February 2022, this report outlines how the Community Protection Team, as part of the wider Community Safety Unit, will utilise the agreed growth budget to continue challenge Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and their Statutory functions in a more visible and enforcement led way.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That Committee endorse the use of agreed growth to increase operational resources as set out in section 4 to provide a more visible regulatory service

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	30 March 2022

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1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Accepting the recommendations may materially harm the Council's ability to achieve Safe, Clean and Green</p>	Head of Housing & Community Services
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendation(s) supports the achievement of Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced.</p>	Head of Housing & Community Services
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section	Head of Housing & Community Services
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within the approved budget and so need no new funding is required for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	There will be Staffing implications and these are set out in section 3	Head of Housing & Community Services

Legal	Acting on the recommendations will support the Council's responsibilities as set out in the Crime & Reduction Act and other statutory functions already within the service's remit.	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	The recommendation will have a negative impact on Crime and Disorder. The Community Protection Team have been consulted and mitigation has been proposed	Head of Housing & Community Services
Procurement	Not applicable	Head of Housing & Community Services
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no implications on biodiversity and climate change. 	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In February 2022, the Head of Housing & Community Services provided a report which demonstrated the effectiveness of the Community Protection Team and the wider Community Safety Unit in tackling and challenging ASB alongside a variety of other statutory and non-statutory functions. A second report was also provided which outlined how the approach adopted by the service was seen as in line with the techniques and approaches endorsed as the appropriate approach to be taken on a national and international basis.
- 2.2 As part of the recommendations from the latter report, it was highlighted that the approach taken by the Maidstone Task Force has been particularly effective and that a Task Force approach to the Town Centre would be

considered. This review has been undertaken and work is in progress to implement a new Town Centre Task Force within the next couple of months.

- 2.3 As described in the draft Community Safety Partnership Plan 2022-25, under a new priority centred on providing a safe town centre, SMP Partners will:
- develop a multi-agency task force to address concerns, such as:
 - anti-social behaviour
 - violence, particularly in the night-time economy
 - substance misuse and illegal supply of drugs and alcohol, particularly to children
 - vulnerable people who live in the town, including domestic abuse
 - ensure businesses develop a culture in the town that keeps people safe in both day-time and night-time economies
 - protect young people by challenging behaviour and ensuring safeguarding opportunities are provided for those in need of support
 - work to improve the reputation of the town by sharing successes and publicising initiatives that make people feel safe when in the town
- 2.4 It has been agreed that rather than move the original Task Force to the Town Centre, a new focused Task Force will be created to deliver the overall objective to Provide a Safe Town Centre.
- 2.5 As outlined to the Committee in the February reports, the Community Protection Team is an integral part of the Safer Maidstone Partnership, not only undertaking enforcement and engagement across their broad remit, but as facilitators and enablers who ensure the partnership works collaboratively with a high level of synergy.
- 2.6 Increases in service demand, driven by changes in licensing legislation (Animal and Caravan) and the pandemic itself means that the existing resource is unable to sustain the level of demand, particularly with the additional requirements of two task forces.
- 2.7 As agreed at the February meeting, section 4 outlines how the team plans to evolve to:
- meet service demand and maintain customer service standards
 - better support two task forces
 - and increase visibility of the team in the community

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee could choose to do nothing but this option is not recommended as the Committee has previously expressed a desire to be more interventionist in tackling ASB.
- 3.2 The Committee could choose to endorse the use of resources has set out in section 4 to ensure the Community Protection Team is resourced to ensure Community Safety is delivered in an effective, high profile and efficient way.

- 3.3 The Committee could ask officers to deploy resources in a different way, however, reports provided in February 2022 highlighted to members the approach outlined in section 4 not only reflects local successes but also is recognised as following good practice as part of an evolving partnership.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is for the Community Protection Team to utilise the agreed growth budget to increase its operational resources with one new Community Protection Officer and one new Assistant Community Protection Officer. These increases are at an operational level to ensure services are adequately resourced, so as to allow a more visible, sustainable and robust service.

Ensuring Service Delivery

- 4.2 The proposed changes to the Community Protection Team will be ensure specific statutory functions are prioritised, including but not limited to:
- Tackling ASB and nuisance
 - Increasing community liaison, particularly rural areas
 - Regulating Animal Licensing/Welfare and Strays
 - Public Health and the Pest Control contract
 - Caravan Licensing and Safety Advisory Group
- 4.3 Service demand in each of these areas has continued to grow owing to the pandemic. The intense demand on the service means that in addition to service delivery, work is needed to improve processes which have not been improved for a number of years, but have been put on hold whilst the team coped with unprecedented service demand.
- 4.4 Our Community Protection Officers undertake a number of roles for the team. They are authorised enforcement officers, technical specialists/ subject matter experts and are also project leads. They challenge behaviour and ensure that action is taken where offences are committed, they raise awareness and facilitate services to support the most vulnerable in our communities.
- 4.5 Assistant Community Protection Officers are investigating officers who support customers in gathering evidence and providing advice where necessary. They help them to amicably resolve neighbour disputes or where matters that do not reach evidential thresholds for enforcement. Where cases do require enforcement action, our assistants pull together case files for the Community Protection Officers to act upon. Our assistants also maintain core processes, including but not limited to service financial processes such as grant management, processing service requests and administration of partnership meetings.

Support for the two Task Forces

- 4.6 The proposed changes to increase operational staffing will also enable the CPT to dedicate resources into the two task force areas. Officers will therefore be positioned to better utilise and influence the delivery of a multi-agency approach to deliver high profile and visible enforcement in both the Town Centre and within the selected focus areas.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 The officer recommendation is within the Council's agreed risk appetite for the intended purpose of reducing anti-social behaviour.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Feedback from the Committee at the previous meeting indicated that the approach outlined in this report would be welcomed as it provides an opportunity to provide a more visible response to ASB, particularly in the town centre, utilising a multi-agency approach.
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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

CHE Committee report, February 2022- [Effective interventions for tackling ASB by the community safety unit](#)

CHE Committee report, February 2022- [Review of the use of anti-social behaviour measures.](#)

Draft Community Safety Plan 2022-2025