

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Partnership and Well Being Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday 14 March 2011**

#### **Update from Kent Police**

**Report of:** Overview & Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Partnerships and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee have a statutory role to act as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee. In light of the recent appointment of Ian Learmouth, Chief Constable of Kent Police, the Committee wish to establish what the Chief Constable's priorities are for Maidstone and remain informed on the services being provided.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to interview Matthew Nix, Mid Kent Commander, Kent Police to establish the direction the new Chief Constable has given and to be updated on the performance of the Basic Command Unit (BSU) and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) neighbourhood policing.
- 2.2 Areas of questioning could include but are not limited to:
- What are the current police priorities for Maidstone;
  - On what basis are the priorities set and refreshed;
  - What influence has Ian Learmouth's appointment had on the Police priorities for Kent;
  - What methods are in place for PCSO's to engage with the community;
  - How are the successes of Neighbourhood Policing measured;
  - What long term ambitions are there for Neighbourhood Policing in Maidstone;
  - What is the 'best practice' in Neighbourhood Policing that is observed;
  - What impact does CCTV monitoring have on crime in Maidstone;
  - What information sharing takes place between the Police and with organisations such as the SMP and to what benefit; and
  - What is the (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement) MAPPA process.

### **3 Chief Constable, Ian Learmouth**

- 3.1 In his role as Strathclyde Police's Assistant Chief Constable (Operational Support) had responsibility for Support Services, Roads Policing, Emergencies Planning and most of the major projects that impact on operational policing.  
Mr Learmouth joined Norfolk Constabulary in August 2007 as Deputy Chief Constable with responsibility for Human Resources, Legal Services, Professional Standards and the Business Performance Unit. Mr Learmouth joined Kent Police on 5 July 2010 as Chief Constable and is a member of the association of Chief Police.

### **4 The Basic Command Unit**

- 4.1 A Basic Command Unit (BCU) is a Police area within a Police Force. In April 2006, Kent Police had a major re-organisation and consolidated the work force from nine BCUs to six BCU areas. These are North Kent, West Kent, Medway, Mid Kent, South Kent and East Kent.
- 4.2 Within each of these areas, teams of Public Protection Officers work in the Special Investigation Unit (SIU). Each area will have a Detective Inspector, Detective Sergeant, constables and administration support. Their duties are varied from keeping records of the Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) to collating and profiling person subject to the MAPPA process.
- 4.3 The Detective Inspector has overall strategic responsibility for the effective running of the unit whilst the Detective Sergeant and Constables carry out the day-to-day business. This includes managing information using VISOR (Violent and Sex Offender Register) carrying out visits to RSOs homes and ensuring the correct policing response is given to events of concern, raised by the general public.
- 4.4 The BSU works with other multi-agencies involved in the day-to-day management of MAPPA subjects. Public Protection Officers are skilled in the sharing of information ensuring law on disclosure is upheld, however the protection of the public is paramount.
- 4.5 The role of the Public Protection Officer on the BCU continues to develop and the safety of the public remains a priority.
- 4.6 The BSU in Mid Kent, serving Maidstone, is said to be the best performing in the county.

### **5. Police Community Support Officers Neighbourhood Policing**

- 5.1 Neighbourhood policing is an approach to increase contact between the police and the public, giving the opportunity for the police to be more responsive to the needs of local people. Neighbourhood Policing is about tackling local priorities in partnership with public and partner agencies, increasing public confidence in the police and reducing the types of crime and anti-social by the public behaviour prioritised by the public. The primary aim is to improve the public's perceptions and safety. This can be achieved through foot patrols, by holding meetings, proactive engagement methods to find out residents thoughts, range of enforcement and prevention techniques to reduce crime and disorder problems in the local area
- 5.2 The crime figures for Mid Kent shown on the Kent Police Website show that the level of crime in Mid Kent is average in comparison to the rest of Kent and that the average number of crimes in this area has **decreased from 1645.7 to 1556 (5.4%)** (compared to the same three month period last year) as shown below:

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Average
<b>2009</b>	1656	1637	1644	<b>1645.7</b>
<b>2010</b>	1499	1579	1590	<b>1556</b>

## **6. Impact on Corporate Objectives**

- 6.1 Understanding and engaging with Kent Police relates specifically to the Council's priority of a place that has strong, healthy and safe communities and the MBC objective to make people feel safe where they live.
- 6.2 There are no risks involved in considering an update from Kent Police.