

Safer Maidstone Partnership Mid year update

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Committee on the Safer Maidstone Partnership's community safety work to reduce crime and disorder in the Maidstone borough. The report outlines achievements to date and future priorities and challenges.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on councils to do all they reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder locally and improve people's quality of life as a result.
- 2.2 The Safer Maidstone Partnership is made up of Responsible Authorities (those bodies for whom membership of the CSP is a statutory obligation) and voluntary members. Our statutory partners are: Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Probation services and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (which have the responsibility for health services locally). We also work with a large number of public and private sector partners as well as voluntary and community groups to collectively implement and deliver initiatives that will help all areas of the Maidstone borough become a safe place to live, work and visit.
- 2.3 Locally, the priority areas for the Safer Maidstone Partnership are informed by the annual Strategic Assessment, which looks at the range of detailed information that exists about crime, disorder, substance abuse and other community safety matters affecting Maidstone. 2015's Strategic Assessment identified the 6 priorities for the Borough in reducing and tackling crime and disorder:
- Antisocial Behaviour
 - Reducing Re-offending
 - Road Safety (killed or seriously injured)
 - Substance Misuse
 - Violent Crime - domestic abuse
 - Violent Crime - night-time economy
- 2.4 Additionally the strategic assessment process has identified four subsidiary priorities:
- Safeguarding, educating and engaging young people
 - Hoarding and Self Neglect
 - Legal Highs
 - Victim Support and Restorative Justice

3. 12-month performance update (year to date)

3.1 The table below shows the volume of crimes by type within Maidstone for October 2014 – September 2015 and the same time period in 2013-2014

	October 2014 to September 2015	October 2013 to September 2014	Difference	% change
Victim based crime	8483	8457	+26	+0.3%
Violent Crime	2945	2612	+333	+12.7%
- Violence Against The Person	2643	2349	+294	+12.5%
- Sexual Offences	224	203	+21	+10.3%
- Robbery	78	60	+18	+30%
Burglary Dwelling	361	468	-107	-22.9%
Burglary Other than Dwelling	505	568	-63	-11.1%
Vehicle Crime	601	642	-41	-6.4%
- Theft Of Motor Vehicle	129	160	-31	-19.4%
- Theft From Motor Vehicle	472	482	-10	-2.1%
Vehicle Interference	81	60	+21	+35%
Theft and Handling	2620	2728	-108	-4%
- Shoplifting	1056	1108	-52	-4.7%
- Theft of Pedal cycle	111	138	-27	-19.6%
- Other Theft	1453	1482	-29	-2%
Criminal Damage	1370	1379	-9	-0.7%
Crimes against society	695	953	-258	-27.1%
Drug Offences	279	431	-152	-35.3%
Possession of weapons	47	47	-	-
Public order offences	228	305	-77	-25.2%
Other crimes	141	170	-29	-17.1%
All crime	9178	9410	-232	-2.5%

3.2 Performance headlines

- All crime in the borough fell by 2.5% in the period October 2014 to September 2015 compared with the same period the previous year, from a total of 9,410 crimes to 9,178 crimes. This equates to a drop of 232 crimes or 0.64 fewer crimes per day.
- Victim based crime rose in the period October 2014 to September 2015 compared with the same period the previous year by 0.3%, or an extra 26 crimes, whilst non-victim based crime (classified as drug offences, possession of weapons and public order offences) fell by 27.1%, or 258 fewer crimes.

- The largest % rise in the period October 2014 to September 2015 compared with the same period the previous year was for 'vehicle interference' up from 60 to 81 – a rise of 35%. Other large rises were recorded for 'Robbery' (up from 60 to 78 +30%) and for 'violence against the person' (up from 2349 to 2643 +12.5%)
- The biggest % decrease in the period October 2014 to September 2015 compared with the same period the previous year was for 'drug offences' down from 431 to 279 – a decrease of 35.3%. Other large falls were recorded for 'Public Order Offences' (down from 305 to 228, -25.2%) and for 'Burglary Dwelling' (down from 468 to 361 -22.9%)

3.3 Antisocial behaviour

The number of antisocial behaviour incidents recorded in Maidstone continues to fall in the period April to September 2015 compared to the same period in previous years:

	Apr-Sept 2012	Apr-Sept 2013	Apr-Sept 2014	Apr-Sept 2015	% change 2015 on 2014
ASB incidents in Maidstone Borough	2,489	2,189	2,117	1,925	-9.1%

Since 2012, recorded antisocial behaviour incidents in the Borough have fallen from 2,489 to 1,925 - a fall of 22.7% for the comparable period year on year.

3.4 Road Safety (killed or seriously injured)

The number of people of all ages killed or seriously injured (KSI) in Maidstone had fallen from an average of 115 per year for the period 1994-1998 to 57 in 2012, a reduction of over 50% . However, in 2013 the number KSI in Maidstone rose to 63 and 2014 saw a further increase to 74. For the period April to August 2015, the number of people killed or seriously injured is reported as 20.

3.5 Violent Crime (domestic abuse)

There has been a rise of reported domestic abuse incidents in Maidstone of 294 cases for the same six month period since 2013, an increase of 32.6%

		Apr-Sep 2013	Apr-Sep 2014	Apr-Sep 2015
Maidstone Borough	Total	903	1,076	1,197
	Repeat victims	247	305	342
	% repeat victims	27.4%	28.3%	28.6%

4. Current projects

4.1 Antisocial Behaviour

- Identified repeat and vulnerable victims through the Weekly Partnership ASB Briefing.
- Sought ASB/Injunction orders where appropriate.
- 14 action days have been held with multiple agencies visiting targeted areas as part of Operation Civic.
- Community Trigger launched.
- Engaged young people in projects, such as Zeroth Gym and Challenger Troop.

- Identified NEET's (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and referred them to Maidstone Engage programme.
- Identified troubled families and referred to the Maidstone Families Matter programme.
- PredPol launched by Kent Police.
- Worked with partners to maximise environmental protection.
- Carried out targeted substance misuse and mental health support with offenders.

4.2 Reducing Re-offending

- A steering group was established involving all key agencies to provide strategic direction to the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) and Deter Young Offenders (DYO) groups.
- Restorative Justice has become an embedded process within IOM. All offender managers have been briefed in relation to the process and benefits of these approaches.
- Awarded £10,000 funding from Kent PCC towards Restorative Justice programme.
- Community Payback scheme used by Maidstone Borough Council and some parish councils.
- Electronic 'Buddy' tracking is being piloted in partnership between Kent Police and Probation. At present this can only be undertaken with the agreement of the offender.
- Yes Plus and Challenger Troop commissioned to provide diversionary and personal development programmes at Kings Reach Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

4.3 Road Safety (killed or seriously injured)

- Identified hotspots of concern.
- Identified repeat offenders for speeding and promoted Speedwatch.
- Held multi-agency events around speed enforcement and safety.
- Delivered Safety in Action programme to all primary school children transitioning to secondary school, providing road safety education and pedestrian awareness.
- Promoted walking buses and 20 MPH zones around schools.
- Promoted bus safety driver and pedestrian awareness.
- Signposted to bicycle and marking events.

4.4 Substance Misuse

- Targeted multi-agency evening operations have been delivered with Trading Standards, Kent Police and Borough Council teams to tackle underage sales and licensed premises.
- Partners launched a Legal Highs awareness campaign aligned with national campaigns.
- Delivered x2 Professionals training days around NPS/Legal Highs to Teachers, Police, NHS etc and 'Early Help' frontline staff.
- Riskit type NPS programme delivery to targeted cohorts of young people.
- Increased the needle exchange scheme in town centre.
- Aligning Kent Alcohol Strategy with Kent Public Health.
- Exploring use of single use 'Smart Syringes' – no needle stick injuries/sharing issues.
- Working with Licensing and Kent Police around a voluntary Reduce The Strength scheme for the town centre.
- KCC Trading Standards successfully used forfeiture orders to tackle legal highs across Kent, including 'head shops' in Maidstone, who did not oppose the application and have been closed down.
- Over 1,800 young people attended 'SNAP' disco, where targeted messages were

- delivered regarding the misuse of drugs and alcohol.
- Increased number of street population referred and engaged in CRI support services as a result the Maidstone Assertive Outreach programme.
- Service provision provided by CRI has been integrated into the partnership. Outreach workers have delivered additional sessions to engage with hard to reach individuals (e.g. street population) misusing substances.
- Needle bin pilot launched in Brenchley Gardens, reducing needle finds by 50%.

4.5 Violent Crime - domestic abuse

- Partners have continued to run regular seasonal awareness campaigns aligned with national campaigns.
- Work Place Health employee awareness campaign launched.
- Supported the Freedom programme and Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service.
Facilitated support for Specialist Domestic Violence Court workers.
- Promoted and supported the Community Domestic Abuse Programme (CDAP).
- Referred all High Risk cases to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
- Provided support to male and female victims of DA through Choices
- Promoted the DA Schools Project (SAFE).
- Provided support for male offenders wishing to rehabilitate.
- Helped facilitate the Sanctuary Scheme.
- Increased referrals for domestic abuse victims who are street homeless.
- Assisted in providing a domestic abuse One Stop Shop in the borough.
- Domestic Homicide review training undertaken by Community Safety Unit.

4.6 Violent Crime - night-time economy

- In conjunction with Pubwatch, excluded violent individuals from the Town Centre premises.
- Shared information proactively from CCTV control room and Kent Police via MaidSafe network radios provided to door staff of key premises.
- Supported the town centre Street Pastors initiative.
- Used CCTV to protect and prevent crime.
- Enforced Alcohol Control Zones.
- Supported the county-wide Hate Crime Reporting Line.

5. Emerging issues

5.1 Priority 1: Vulnerable and Emerging Communities

- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015. Among other provisions, the act places the Prevent programme on a statutory footing. This means all local authorities have a duty to have due regard to preventing people being drawn into terrorism. The SMP finalised its Prevent Action Plan in July this year and it was adopted as the county template across all Kent districts.
- The Prevent agenda also encompasses Serious and Organised Crime networks (including modern slavery, forced labour, drug and human trafficking, child sexual exploitation, cyber and gang crime etc.) and there are opportunities for the SMP to apply for funding to explore its impact on the borough and how partnership working can prevent and tackle it, including the use of POCA (Proceeds of Crime Act). It is recommended that the SMP work with Kent Police to produce a local profile to progress the work of the Partnership in tackling organised crime and develop a common understanding among local partners of the threats, vulnerabilities and risks.

5.2 **Priority 2: To understand the complex needs of those with substance misuse and mental health issues and to work with partners across these two issues**

- Drug users will have a substantial impact on crime, health and associated social care needs. One in four people will experience a mental health problem in any one year and while not all of these will come into contact with partners, some will either as victims, witnesses, offenders and suspects.
- The SMP needs to work with partners to improve sharing data which is collated, establishing links with the substance misuse and mental health service providers to ensure all partners are working together and processes are in place to help high risk victims.

5.3 **Priority 3: Safeguarding**

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) has been highlighted by Kent Police as potential high risk, but currently the SMP does not have sufficient information to fully understand the threat, risk and what actions need to be undertaken in Maidstone. CSE is sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involving exploitive situations, context and relationships where the young person receives something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or others performing on them sexual activities. CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example being persuaded to post images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. Violence, cohesion and intimidation are common. Involvement in exploitative relationships is characterised by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice, as a result of their social, economic or emotional vulnerability. A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation.
- The SMP will work with partners to undertake a piece of work to identify the extent of CSE in Maidstone and to use this piece of work to create a local action plan. It is recommended that our local response should: raise awareness; understand what is happening; develop a strategic response, support victims of exploitation; and, facilitate policing and prosecutions.

6. **Conclusions**

- Over the past year the SMP has worked to gain a deeper understanding of the local community collating different data sets, intelligence and community needs.
- The SMP has agreed an approach to look at priorities on the 'hidden harms' (e.g. hoarding and self neglect) that affect our residents and our communities. We will continue to increase our understanding and awareness of the hidden harms our communities face, but also encourage those who are suffering to have the confidence to come forward and seek help from the Partnership and our services.
- The CSP has built up a strong base to support crime reduction, and offers crime prevention and reassurance in the community. This will continue.
- The annual Strategic Assessment and Community Safety Partnership Plan is due to be refreshed in December 2015 and discuss in detail key emerging issues and considerations that have been identified for 2016.

- End -

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