

By: Assistant Director, Community Safety  
To: Planning and Performance Committee – 27 April 2015  
Subject: JOINT KENT COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM  
Classification: Unrestricted

**FOR DECISION**

**SUMMARY**

This report seeks Members' approval for the creation of a Joint Kent Community Safety Team through the amalgamation of the existing Community Safety teams of Kent Police, Kent County Council and the Authority. It details the initial areas of joint working arising from this project and proposes future areas for collaboration.

Available accommodation has been identified to house the joint team at the Authority's Training Centre, Loose Road, Maidstone.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the creation of a Joint Kent Community Safety Team (paragraph 9 refers).

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

## **Background**

1. In April 2013 the Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) commissioned a project to consider the concept of closer collaboration and joint working on community safety matters across Kent and Medway. The Project Steering Group is sponsored by the KCSP and was formed to examine the proposal further. This group consists of representatives from Kent County Council (KCC), Medway Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner's office, Kent Police, District Chief Executives, District Community Safety Partnerships, National Probation Service, Public Health and this Authority.
2. Over the past year the Steering Group and a Practitioners' Working Group have been engaged in discussions about the formation of a joint Kent Community Safety team. The three main partners (KCC, Kent Police and the Authority) have a strong history of collaboration and joint working, via the statutory KCSP, as well as working with district-level Community Safety Units (CSUs) and district-level Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This is all encapsulated in the '*Kent Community Safety Agreement*' which sets out how partners will work together to address the key community safety priorities for the county.
3. In the past both county and district partners have been able to access funding streams available as part of Government initiatives. This funding enabled county-wide partners to provide services in support of their district colleagues. With the gradual removal of these funding streams over the last few years, and changes to support funding, all three partners now face significant financial pressures and this will continue in the future. Inevitably this will have an impact on what services any individual organisation can provide.
4. There are a number of community safety issues that impact on the statutory responsibilities of all three partners such as domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, and on-line safety. By working together to share resources and expertise, and reduce overlap, there are opportunities to avoid, or at least minimise, the extent of any service reductions.
5. Extensive scoping, discussions, activity-mapping and options appraisals have enabled the Steering Group to draw together proposals for greater integration. Detailed below are the initial two phases of this integration and the areas that will be considered for joint working.

## **Co-location**

6. The proposed initial phase is to create a co-located Joint Community Safety Team which would be made up of staff from each of the three partner organisations. (Although Medway Council has been actively involved in the discussions, it will not

be moving to the joint team at this stage, although it will be involved in a number of the workstreams.) Staff would remain under the management and control of their own organisation. The main duties of the team will be to:-

- Undertake strategic assessments to enable and support the production of county-wide and district community safety plans;
- Review the current County Community Safety Plan;
- Undertake a review of each organisation's youth education arrangements and report on the feasibility of combining this activity;
- Manage and provide administrative support to any domestic homicide reviews that may be required;
- Review current and future community safety campaigns with the ambition of creating more efficient joint campaigns;
- Reduce duplication by providing joint co-ordination to develop common approaches to changes in procedures and legislation;
- Promote the work of the joint team amongst other county partners such as health and offender management;
- Support the management of the anti-social behaviour (ASB) requirements of the Police and Crime Act 2014, and support partners in the management of the ASB recording system;
- Improve service to the district-level Community Safety Partnerships and Community Safety Units and provide a single point of contact for enquiries. This would include collation and sharing of best practice.

7. The Steering Group has reviewed the impact of these changes and the time needed to relocate the necessary staff. It is anticipated that the initial phase could be concluded by late-2015. Suitable accommodation has been identified to house the joint team at the Authority's Training Centre, Loose Road, Maidstone.

### **Full Integration**

8. The second phase (2016 onwards) will be to review the successes of the initial phase and to build on the improvements and efficiencies achieved. The scope of the work to be undertaken within the second phase will be led by the review of phase one, but may include the following:-
  - Review and report on initial phase to each partner organisation and the County CSP;
  - Examine the possibility of pooled budgets and greater financial integration of the community safety resources of each organisation;

- Work with road safety partners to amalgamate road safety activity into the team;
- Undertake a feasibility study of amalgamating team management arrangements;
- Scope the feasibility of team members being able to represent all three organisations at meetings across the county;
- Approach other organisations to join the team;
- Extend the delivery of joint campaigns (e.g. road safety) to support Community Safety priorities across the county.

## **PROPOSALS**

9. Members are therefore requested to consider and approve the phased approach to the creation of a Joint Community Safety Team initially comprising the existing Community Safety Teams of KCC, Kent Police and the Authority.
10. Further reports on the progress of the team will be brought back to this Committee on a regular basis for Members' information.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

11. As existing funding streams are removed, and organisations experience changes to support funding, all three partners will continue to face significant financial pressures. By co-locating community safety teams, it is anticipated that resources can be shared and further efficiencies explored in order to minimise the impact of these reduced resources.
12. Opportunities exist to provide improved and more co-ordinated levels of community safety services in the future by bringing the three teams together.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

13. Members are requested to:
  - 13.1 Approve the creation of a Joint Kent Community Safety Team (paragraph 9 refers).