

**SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY &
ACTION PLAN 2024-25**
People and Places Advisory Committee – 5 March

Report of: Sarah Robson, Chief Officer People & Places & Deputy Chief Executive

Status: For Decision

Also considered by:

- **Cabinet – 14 March 2024**
- **Council – 4 April 2024**

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: The 2024-25 Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan is set out in the report and appendices. The plan responds to the community safety priorities identified for the District in the most recent Strategic Assessment.

This report supports the Key Aim of Council Plan and Community Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee

To make recommendation to Cabinet to approve for the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Action Plan 2024-25.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Cabinet approves the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Action Plan 2024-25 and agrees for it to be presented to Full Council for sign-off in April 2024.

Recommendation to Council

To approve the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Action Plan 2024-25.

Reason for recommendation: The Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce a strategic assessment and annually refreshed community safety plan.

Introduction and Background

1. The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory responsibility on Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Health, Probation and Kent Police, together with other key partners, to undertake an audit of crime and disorder in the District and co-operate in the development and implementation of a strategy and action plan for tackling local crime and disorder. The audit is known as the Strategic Assessment and provides an analysis of data and trends in relation to community safety.
2. The Strategic Assessment for Sevenoaks District was undertaken in December 2023. As a result, the seven priorities, as ranked in the Strategic Assessment, are:
 1. Serious and Acquisitive Crime including Crime Trends and Serious Violence Duty
 2. Anti-Social Behaviour including Environmental Crime
 3. Domestic Abuse including Stalking and Harassment
 4. Business Crime
 5. Safeguarding (including Mental Health, Prevent, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), Adults at Risk and Protecting Children
 6. Violence against Women and Girls
 7. Drugs and County Lines
3. The draft 2024-25 Sevenoaks District Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan is attached as Appendix A. It sets out the Community Safety Partnership's activity aimed at addressing the above priorities, how each priority will be measured and progress monitored.
4. Working with our statutory and voluntary and community sector partners as well as residents, communities, local businesses and all our stakeholders will be instrumental in keeping the people of Sevenoaks District safe from crime and repeat victimisation and help us achieve our outcomes.
5. The Action Plan is a multi-agency document and is monitored on a quarterly basis by the Community Safety Partnership, to ensure that actions are on target and are helping to meet the identified success measures.

Serious Violence Duty

6. In addition to this year's action plan the Council has a duty to include the Serious Violence Duty. Specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, robbery and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as domestic abuse, sexual offences, gangs, county lines and drug supply.

7. The Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) convened a partnership board meeting with relevant strategic authorities (Kent Police, K&M Violence Reduction Unit, Public Health (Kent & Medway), NHS, KCC and District/Borough Councils) in June 2023. The Board will co-ordinate a multi-agency response in developing a Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment and Strategy for Kent & Medway by 31 January 2024. Work will be implemented through a Serious Violence Network meeting.
8. The Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) will provide evidence-based analysis of information relating to the violent crime types, the drivers of crime and the cohorts most vulnerable through the gathering and analysis of data from specified and relevant authorities. The SNA may also draw on qualitative data gathered by the partnership and should identify any gaps in data or intelligence.
9. The SNA findings should be used to define serious violence issues and prioritise bespoke actions that the partnership will take forward.
10. The partnership must collectively develop a strategy outlining the multi-agency response that will take to prevent and reduce serious violence in Kent and Medway.
11. The strategy should comprise of a range of new and existing actions that the partnership will take forward to prevent and reduce the issues and drivers identified in the SNA.
12. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) will meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty through its Community Safety Plan, Action Plan and Assessment, working alongside partner agencies.

Other options Considered and/or rejected

To not have a plan – rejected as the Council would be failing to comply with its statutory duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no direct financial implications of developing a Community Safety Plan but there are a number of budgets within the Council that are directly and indirectly attributed to aspects of the delivery of this plan and ensuring that our District is a safe place to live, work and play. The plan is also one which requires a multi partnership approach and in doing so may require using partners budgets, flexibly in order to maximise the potential outcomes and efficiencies that can be delivered. Police & Crime Commissioner funding plays a critical part in the delivery of the plan. The Council's core costs for staff enable the delivery and monitoring of this action plan.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The Community Safety Plan is to meet the duties under Sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places obligations on Community Safety Partnerships to formulate a Strategic Assessment to ascertain the levels and patterns of crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour and substance misuse in their area; in order to identify the priorities for a Community Safety Plan. Following the completion of the Strategic Assessment, the Community Safety Plan is then developed to address the priorities identified by the Strategic Assessment.

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk description	Mitigation
The Community Safety Strategy fails to deliver its priorities.	<p>The actions in the strategy were identified and formulated through consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and relevant stakeholders, together with the production of a strategic assessment.</p> <p>Delivery against the Community Safety Strategy is routinely reviewed, and progress reported quarterly to the Community Safety Partnership and to elected members via the People and Places Advisory Committee and Cabinet, enabling adjustments or remedial action to be taken.</p>
Failing to meet the legal requirement of producing a Community Safety Strategy	Producing a Community Safety Strategy is a legal requirement under The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for all Community Safety Partnerships. This risk can be mitigated by approving the strategy, as per the above recommendation.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment.

Safeguarding

This strategy supports our Safeguarding Policy and includes a priority focusing on safeguarding adults and children at risk.

Community Impact and Outcomes

This document helps reduce the community impact and improve outcomes, by

tackling and reducing certain crime types. The plan ensures a partnership approach to provided targeted initiatives to increase feelings of safety and reassurance.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is at the heart of the strategy. Experience of crime impacts on the mental and physical health of victims, families and those witnessing or participating in criminal and anti-social behaviour. By developing a partnership approach to crime and disorder, this strategy tackles issues impacting wellbeing including substance misuse, domestic abuse and other criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Conclusions

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are statutory bodies which exist in all local authorities. The Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce a strategic assessment and annually refreshed community safety plan. CSPs are expected have a Plan to direct their delivery with an annual strategic needs assessment to ensure that the priorities remain relevant and appropriate and an annual performance report to monitor milestones and impact.

This strategy is aligned to national crime and disorder plans, and to other local plans in key areas such as safeguarding, to ensure we are all working towards the same goals; that we properly understand the issues; are able to address the risk factors that increase the likelihood of somebody becoming an offender or a victim of crime and work together effectively to reduce this risk. As such, prevention is central to our approach.

It is recommended that the report Community Safety Partnership Strategy & Action Plan 2024-25 is approved.

Appendices

Appendix A – Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Action Plan 2024-25

Background Papers

Strategic Assessment for the Sevenoaks District

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People & Places