DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee held on Wednesday 27 July 2016.

PRESENT: Councillor R J Wells (Chairman)
Councillor A S Sandhu, MBE (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor R Lees
Councillor M A Maddison
Councillor D J Mote

ABSENT: Councillors: C J Shippam, S R Jarnell, Mrs. M B Kelly and C S McLean.

Dartford Borough Council Officers:-

Sheri Green – Strategic Director(External)
Tony Henley – Community Safety Manager, CSU
Lewis Kirnon – Town Centre & Business Manager
Mike Morgan – D-TAC Intelligence Manager
Kit Weller – Community Safety Officer, CSU

CABINET MEMBERS: Councillor Ann Allen MBE, Portfolio Holder for Community Development

PRESENT TO RESPOND TO ISSUES RAISED BY THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Insp. Gary Woodward – Dartford CSU Inspector, Kent Police

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: C J Shippam, S R Jarnell, C S McLean and Mrs. M B Kelly.

Councillor Ann Allen was in attendance as Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Development, at the invitation of the Committee.

The Chairman gave a special welcome to Tony Henley the Community Safety Manager (CSM) who was attending his first C&D (O&S) Committee meeting and paid tribute to his predecessor, Matt Roberts, for his contributions to the Committee’s work over the previous 7 years.

Officers in attendance included the Strategic Director (External Services), the Town Centre & Business Support Manager, the D-TAC Intelligence Manager, the Community Safety Officer and the Dartford CSU Kent Police Inspector.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

   There were no declarations of interest from Members.

3. **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2016**

   RESOLVED:

   1. That the Minutes of the Committee’s meeting held on 10 February 2016 be confirmed as an accurate account of those proceedings.

4. **URGENT ITEMS**

   The Chairman proposed and the Committee agreed; that Item 12 in the published agenda ‘Performance Report’ be taken after Item 14 so as to facilitate reference to the EXEMPT appendix A to the report, in the closed part of the meeting, should that be necessary.

5. **TO CONSIDER REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES (IF ANY)**

   There were no references from other Committees to consider.

6. **REGULATION 9 NOTICE**

   RESOLVED:

   That the contents of the Regulation 9 Notice for the period 17 June 2016 to 31 October 2016 be noted.

7. **COMMITTEE PROTOCOL & LEAD MEMBER PARTICIPATION**

   The covering report from the Head of Legal Services asked Members to consider the revised Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee Protocol which detailed the process for Lead Member participation in the Committee’s proceedings.

   The Strategic Director (External Services) confirmed that the Scrutiny Committee Protocol had undergone a similar revision to provide for the participation of Lead Members in those proceedings and commended the revised C&R (O&S) Protocol for adoption.

   In the absence of any questions from Members it was RESOLVED:

   1. That the contents of the report be noted;
2. That the revised Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee Protocol as attached at Appendix A to the report be adopted.

8. KENT POLICE AND CRIME PANEL (PCP) UPDATE

The Chairman briefed Members in the absence of Councillor Shippam, the Council’s nominated representative on the Kent & Medway Police and Crime Panel (PCP).

The Chairman advised that he had attended the November 2015 and February 2016 meetings of the PCP as Substitute for Cllr. Shippam but that Dartford had not been represented at the most recent Panel meeting held on 14 June 2016.

Members were referred to the Minutes of the PCP meetings held on 17 November 2015, 2 February 2016 and 14 June 2016 included in the Agenda pack. The principal item of note was the appointment of the new Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Kent and Medway, Mr Matthew Scott.

The new Commissioner had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee on 15 February 2017 and his office had recently confirmed his attendance to Member Services.

In the absence of any questions from Members the Committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the contents of the Minutes of the Kent & Medway Police and Crime Panel (PCP) meetings held on 17 November 2015, 2 February 2016 and 14 June 2016 as enclosed in the agenda pack [pages 41-60].

2. To congratulate the new Kent and Medway Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Matthew Scott, on his appointment and to welcome his attendance at the next meeting of the Committee on 15 February 2017.

9. DARTFORD TOWN AGAINST CRIME (D-TAC) PROGRESS REPORT

The report updated the Committee on the progress made by the Dartford Town Against Crime (D-TAC) Scheme to date and asked Members to note the objectives and targets outlined in the Scheme’s 2016-18 Business Plan (attached at Appendix A to the report). Appendices B-D gave details of D-TAC’s current operating statistics plus the Kids Safe and Vulnerable Persons Schemes.

In addition to the agenda papers the Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Town Centre & Business and D-TAC Intelligence Managers. Members were informed that:
The Dartford Town Against Crime (D-TAC) Scheme had been established in December 2002 as a partnership between the local business community, Kent Police, and other public service providers including the Council and promoted the concept of a safe and secure Town Centre environment to encourage investment and growth;

The Scheme enabled Town Centre Partners to adopt a positive co-ordinated response to threats of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) through a pro-active approach to identify and target the most serious, prolific and professional criminals targeting the Town Centre and those engaged in petty crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) including in the 'Night-time Economy';

Membership of the Scheme had grown significantly since 2002 and now stood at 66 full members paying £360 p.a. for the provision of: a digital radio handset (the Shop Safe Radio system); access to DISC (Database for Safer Communities) to share information and photos of known offenders; the support of the D-TAC Intelligence Manager; DBC CCTV facilities and assistance from the Orchards Shopping Centre Control team. The Scheme generated some £31K income annually including; affiliate fees from businesses on Temple Hill Square, various Charity Shops and allied services/clients;

The fundamental benefit of the Scheme to members was the sharing of information on persistent known offenders operating in the Town Centre ('Dartford’s Top 10’) in accordance with the Scheme’s obligations under the Data Protection Act 1988. Monthly meetings of retailers, licensed premises owners, drugs charities, Council Officers, Kent Police and representatives of the Probation Services addressed issues of criminal gangs, mobile criminals, individual offenders, persistent offenders and ASB. This sharing of information strengthened the partnership mechanism and created added value benefits for Scheme members;

D-TAC operated as a sub-group of both the Dartford Town Centre Partnership and the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership with its own formal constitution, terms of reference, Board of Management and active Steering Group. The Council’s Intelligence Manager co-ordinated the dissemination of information and promoted activity which resulted in positive action being taken against persistent offenders;

D-TAC in conjunction with the business community and relevant agencies had identified the following areas for growth:

a) Development of the radio infrastructure to ensure coverage across the Borough;
b) Expansion of the membership over the next 3 year period to 140 clients (including affiliates);

c) Increased number of members using DISC [including via WhatsApp];

d) Provision of radios for lone workers across the Borough where needed e.g. Housing staff;

e) Increase revenue by 50% to £42K per annum.

In summary; D-TAC in conjunction with the Council's CSU team, Kent Police, Orchard Shopping Centre Security and town centre stakeholders, effectively dealt with a wide variety of crime in the Town Centre.

Councillor Allen, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Development, praised the efforts of the D-TAC Scheme, in particular the excellent 'Shop Safe – Stay Safe' arrangements for vulnerable adults.

In a subsequent Q & A session D-TAC and CSU Officers and the CSU Kent Police Inspector, confirmed the following detailed points for Members:

- It was intended to enlarge the present D-TAC Scheme from the Town Centre base across the Borough including Eastern Dartford;

- The CSU was aware of historical problems of ASB around Co-op stores in Swanscombe and Longfield and was re-visiting possible options for those sites despite past difficulties;

- It was hoped that a new transceiver would extend the present ‘Shop Safe Radio System’ beyond Temple Hill to the wider Borough, but the positive co-operation of individual store managers was crucial to expanding the present Scheme;

- Membership of the D-TAC Scheme had dipped in 2007 following the financial crisis but a membership push was now underway following the appointment of the new Intelligence Manager who was networking effectively with current members and publicising the Scheme by word of mouth;

- Measures proposed to enhance the current D-TAC service for existing members included: publication of the new D-TAC Business Plan for 2016-18; the proposed roll-out of the WhatsApp facility across the Borough to access DISC by telephone, tailored primarily to help SMEs and Licenced Premises without computers; connecting more members beyond Temple Hill to the ‘Shop Safe Radio’ network (including radio training sessions from the D-TAC Intelligence Manager) and increased co-operation with Kent Police; were all. Advertising for new D-TAC
members would follow the successful bedding-in of the proposed measures detailed above;

- The proposed growth in D-TAC membership over the next 3 year period would enhance the DISC data-base system in terms of both quantity and quality of intelligence gathering and sharing. DISC could accommodate some 500-600 users [D-TAC members can register multiple DISC users]. A review of present DISC usage was proposed to identify regular users and ensure that current intelligence held, was both relevant and up to date;

- The Council had links to Darenth Valley Hospital and The Bridge development for recording incidents of crime and ABS, but data for the Bluewater shopping complex was held separately by that organisation. Ebbsfleet Garden City Management Company also held its own crime and ASB data, but a possible role for D-TAC was envisaged in the future, as the infrastructure of Ebbsfleet International expanded;

- It was hoped in the future, to extend the concept of ‘Dartford’s top 10 offenders’ to encompass e.g. ‘Swanscombe top 5 offenders’ and similar identified groupings across other areas of the Borough;

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the progress made to date by the D-TAC Scheme as set out in the report be noted;

2. That the proposals detailed in the Scheme’s 2016-18 Business Plan, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted;

3. That the Committee receive further annual progress reports on the Scheme each July, to coincide with the Dartford & Gravesham’s Community Safety Partnership’s (CSP’s) mid-term Performance report.

10. COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2016-19

This report asked Members to consider the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership’s Community Safety Strategy 2016-19 document (attached as Appendix A to the report) and comment accordingly.

The report informed Members that the priorities identified, and the views expressed by partner agencies and elected Members in the CSP’s annual Strategic Assessment document considered by the Committee in February 2016 had been taken forward into the new Community Safety Strategy 2016-19 (Appendix A to the report). The CSP had considered the new Strategy document at their subsequent meeting on 24 March 2016. Detail:

**Priorities**
• Violent Crime and Domestic Abuse
• Anti-Social Behaviour (incorporating Criminal Damage related to ASB)
• Acquisitive and Property Crime
• Substance Misuse
• Reducing Re-offending
• Road Safety

The common factors and links between these 6 areas of work contributed to the three (3) overarching themes of the Strategy of:

Themes

1. Protecting vulnerable people from harm;
2. Disrupting and preventing organised acquisitive crime;
3. Protecting and strengthening communities.

The Community Safety Manager (CSM) advised Members that the CSP had recognised that the personal safety of residents was paramount and had identified as a particular priority the protection of vulnerable people from harm and risk on a personal level and in the wider community.

He explained that within the CSP the role of Kent Police was to focus on the arrest and detention of perpetrators as required. The focus and core business of the Community Safety Unit(s) was to address Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Environmental crime, Alcohol-related violence and Domestic Abuse (DA). Significant other areas of CSP work which required a multi-agency approach by the Partnership were: child sexual exploitation (CSE); modern slavery and human trafficking; combatting terrorism and protecting people at risk of being drawn into terrorism, through the adoption of the Government’s Prevent & Channel strategy.

In response to specific questions from Committee Members the following points were confirmed by Officers and the Kent Police CSU Inspector:

• **Off-road motorcycle joy-riding:** Kent Police recognised this issue as a pan-Dartford problem which also affected Sevenoaks and Bexley and a combined approach was being adopted. Criminal gangs were involved and Police action hampered by road safety considerations which precluded chasing joy-riders in Police vehicles. There was no ‘golden bullet’ solution but collaborative efforts were aimed at; making open spaces more defensible, using Community Wardens, educating offenders at the local level through schools, parent groups and the Police and employing new Housing and ASB legislation. A specific Councillor suggestion which the CSM undertook to take forward at Ward level, was a mailshot to the parents of identified joy-riders warning them of the consequences of their children’s continued antisocial behaviour in terms of fines and restriction Orders;
• **Accuracy of CSP data:** Gathering CSP partner agency data was challenging as the emphasis evolved away from the traditional Police-led statistical approach based on empirical numbers. CSPs now judged their performance on a series of Performance Indicators drawn from raw data provided by each of their partner agencies. However, agency data gathering differed in format, timing and recording periods which combined to complicate the task of compiling [previous] annual Strategic Assessments and the new evolving three year Strategic Strategy document;

• **Domestic Abuse (DA) data:** Obtaining DA data for victims attending hospital A&E facilities and G.P. surgeries was notoriously difficult for a variety of reasons. Third Sector input from Dartford charities and cultural groups helped in the assessment of DA in the Borough and it was hoped that a national initiative to fund specialist DA nurses in hospitals, would be extended to Dartford, and add to the DA data gathering process. Other key sources for DA data gathering included the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group [as a CSP partner] and the corresponding Health & Wellbeing Board. Ultimately, success for the CSP would be judged on results e.g. the number of visitors to Dartford’s ‘1 Stop Shop’ facility for victims of DA, tempered by the knowledge that a victim suffered abuse on average 10 (ten) times before seeking help;

• **Awareness Training:** Dartford’s changing community demographic, allied to Kent-wide changes, underlined the need for relevant Council staff to receive ‘awareness’ training in the early identification of vulnerable people in safeguarding issues such as DA, CSE, Modern day slavery and Domestic extremism, to enable them to become vigilant within their everyday roles. The Committee discussed extending ‘awareness’ training of these safeguarding issues to Councillors to help them to deal more effectively with resident’s issues encountered in their regular Ward surgeries, many of which were increasingly conducted on-line and via Facebook. The CSM proposed a short Briefing Note of ‘Possible Indicators’ of safeguarding issues plus appropriate action to be taken e.g. reporting their concerns to the Police/Council Officers. Member Services undertook to add the briefing material to Member’s Induction Packs as and when it became available;

• **Protecting Vulnerable People from Harm:** The Government’s Prevent Strategy and recent Acts of Parliament addressing Policing, Serious Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour, Modern Slavery, Safeguarding and Child Exploitation would be reflected in the work of CSPs over time. Police and other partner agency co-operation within the Dartford and Gravesham CSP were evolving to meet the new challenges and policy drivers enshrined in these Acts. The change to an overarching three year Community Safety Strategy was evidence of that change. The CSP’s Community Safety Strategy 2016-19 was a ‘living’ document which would continue to evolve and be assessed annually to
ensure it met challenges of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) faced by both Boroughs.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee note the report and the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership’s Community Safety Strategy 2016-19 (attached as Appendix A to the report).

11. COMMITTEE ROLLING WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17 AND BEYOND

The report asked Members to agree the contents of a Rolling Work Programme for the Committee for 2016-17 and beyond as set out in the attached Appendix A to the report.

The Strategic Director (External Services) confirmed two amendments to the Agenda papers [Work Plan - Appendix A agenda p.114]:

- Consideration of Kent’s current Domestic Abuse (DA) Framework [July 2016] would now take place in July 2017; following the completion of a pan-Kent consultation exercise of users and providers which was likely to result in a re-tendering of the DA Service in Kent. Deferment to July 2017 would enable the Committee to consider the new pan-Kent provision to combat Domestic Abuse (DA), Dartford’s provision within the new DA Framework and the role of the CSP and partner agencies within the new arrangements;

- The proposed 6 monthly D-TAC Update would be changed to an annual report, presented to the Committee each July, to coincide with the Committee’s consideration of the CSP’s Performance Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Rolling Work Programme for the Committee for 2016-17 and beyond (attached as Appendix A to the report) be approved, with the addition of the amendments set out above.

12. COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2015-16 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The draft report and Appendices recorded the work carried out by the Committee during the preceding 2015-16 municipal year and asked Members to approve its submission to the next meeting of the General Assembly of the Council.
The Chairman thanked the Committee Co-ordinator for compiling the Committee's Annual Report for 2015-16 and the Strategic Director commended it to the Committee for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's Annual Report for the 2015-16 municipal cycle as attached at Appendix A to the report, be submitted to the next meeting of the General Assembly of the Council without amendment.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman advised that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), he was required to ask that all members of the press and public present vacate the Chamber prior to discussion of the final Item on the agenda.

No members of the press or public were present.

14. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (CSP) PERFORMANCE REPORT - JUNE 2016

The covering report from the Community Safety Officer (CSO) asked the Committee to consider the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) June 2016 Performance Report (attached as EXEMPT Item A). The CSP had discussed the Performance Report (PR) at their meeting on 13 June 2016. The PR detailed performance in relation to levels of crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and other indicators as set out in the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Strategy 2016-19 document considered elsewhere in the Agenda.

The CSO advised Members that the format for the June 2016 PR differed from that used in previous years. A revised set of Performance Indicators had been utilised [as advised in the CSP’s 2016-19 Safety Strategy – Min. No. 10].

The new Indicators were less Police-led than in previous years and more reliant on data from CSP partner agencies. In some cases data was taken directly from front-line recording systems; such data was not generally in the public domain and had been provided to the CSP on a confidential basis. CSP agency data also varied in terms of frequency of submission and reporting periods covered. Wherever possible a comparison had been provided between the information supplied for the 2015 Performance Report and the revised data used in 2016.

Members were further advised that CSPs across Kent had adopted a range of alternative measures which demonstrated progress made in tackling risk and harm and improving life for residents, rather than the traditional Police-led statistical approach of previous years. However, there was no standard dataset used by the 12 (twelve) Local Authorities and CSU Officers had to make individual enquiries of each Agency to obtain the information each
separate CSP required to compile their Performance Report, Strategic Assessment and Safety Strategy. Consideration was being given at County level for either KCC or Kent Community Safety Managers, to make a collaborative request for Agency data. The proposal would be given further consideration by Kent CSMs at their next meeting.

In response to subsequent questions CSU and Kent Police Officers confirmed the following points for Members:

- **Domestic Abuse - One Stop Shop (OSS) Services** [Agenda p. 163]: the intended relocation of the Dartford OSS had been forced, when the previous premises had become unavailable. Moving to new premises would provide for an increased range of services to be made available to visitors. Health workers had a vital role to play in the work to identify and tackle domestic abuse (DA) and good links already existed with the Health sector through the work of the DA Forum. It was acknowledged amongst professionals, that children who had witnessed DA were more likely to become either perpetrators or victims themselves, and several programmes existed to support young people who were at risk of DA or becoming a perpetrator;

- **Increased issue of ‘Cannabis Warnings’** [Agenda p. 169]: The new Cannabis Website whereby residents could report their concerns direct to the Police including via a mobile App. (rather than phoning 101) was proving to be a great success. The information was shared with CSP partner and National agencies and the CSU Inspector welcomed feedback from Members. He saw a role for Councillors to play in their communities by encouraging residents to report their suspicions, either when holding their surgeries or via their individual resident constituent newsletters;

- **Safer Socialising Scheme for Licensed Premises** [Agenda p. 165]: The Safer Socialising Scheme was administered in Dartford by D-TAC in conjunction with DBC Licensing and the Town Centre team. In 2012 seven (7) premises had received awards under the Scheme but no awards had been made subsequently. D-TAC and DBC Licensing had identified the Safer Socialising Scheme as an area of work worthy of a re-visit;

- **Channel Referrals** [Agenda p.171]: Members were assured that Kent and its residents were in no greater danger than any other part of the UK with regard to the likelihood of a terrorist incident being perpetrated in the County given its proximity to the Continent. Co-operation with the French authorities had been intensified following the recent horrific murder of a French priest in Rouen, but no specific threat to the County had been perceived. Kent had a good overall strategy in place to combat terrorism and PREVENT and all other national policies had been rolled out in the County to help prevent terrorist incidents occurring. In addition, the newly elected Kent Police and Crime
Commissioner (PCC) had confirmed that greater numbers of armed police officers would now be deployed in Kent, in response to the directive issued by the (previous) Home Secretary. In relation to the PREVENT scheme of measures to combat terrorism, applicants who wished to obtain a Dartford Borough Council Mini-Cab licence now had to undergo training to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and measures including; PREVENT, child exploitation, child trafficking and slavery. Feedback from applicants to date had been very positive. Relevant Council staff had undertaken similar training.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee noted the contents of the Performance Report June 2016 document, discussed by the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) on 12 June 2016, which detailed performance in relation to levels of crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and other indicators as set out in the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Strategy 2016-19 document.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Councillor R J Wells
CHAIRMAN