



**CRIME & DISORDER (O & S)
COMMITTEE**

Draft Annual Report 2021-22 Municipal Year

Introduction and Background

The Council has a legal duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all of its various functions with regard to the need to prevent crime and disorder and reduce re-offending in its area. '*Crime and Disorder*' is defined as including forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour (ASB) or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment or the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.

The **Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee** was appointed by the General Assembly of the Council (GAC) in October 2009 under the provisions of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and in direct response to the provisions of the subsequent Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009. The 2006 and 2007 Acts and the 2009 Regulations granted the Council the power to scrutinise both crime and disorder matters and hold the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (D&G CSP) together with its statutory partner organisations to account for their performances.

In **October 2020** the D&G CSP was dissolved and two separate district specific CSPs formed by Dartford and Gravesham Councils, which retained the same statutory partnership bodies as the previous joint CSP. Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the new single DCSP were submitted to Members in **February 2021** [Min. No.52 refers] and are attached at Appendix B to this report. Revised Committee Protocol and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) documents reflecting the new directorate structure of Housing and Public Protection were submitted to Members in **July 2021** [Min. No. 11 refers] and subsequently approved by the GAC, and are submitted at Appendices C and D respectively to this report.

Committee Work Programme (WP)

The Committee's Work Programme for the **2021-22** municipal cycle and beyond is set out in the rolling Work Plan (WP) detailed below, which incorporates amendments agreed by Members during the period under review, including the dissolution of the joint D & G CSP in **October 2020** and the formation of the new single DCSP from **January 2021**.

The WP also reflects the increasing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic in the period under review, on the ability of the CSP and its partner agencies to effectively deliver its crime and disorder remit, and the measures taken by the Partnership collectively and on an individual agency basis, to combat the effects of COVID in terms of combating crime and disorder.

In accordance with its Protocol, the Committee is required to report annually to the GAC, on the work it has undertaken in the preceding municipal year. This report provides a *summary* of the work undertaken by the Committee during the **2021-22** municipal year, with *comprehensive* details of the Committee's work and discussions in the period under review, set out in the minutes of its meetings as published in full on the Council's website.

The work carried out by the Committee compliments the work undertaken by the Scrutiny and Policy Overview Committees, as defined in their respective Terms of Reference (ToRs) and Protocols, and detailed in their respective annual Work Plans, to avoid any duplication of effort and resources.

CRIME & DISORDER (O&S) COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

In accordance with its Protocol the Committee is required to consider on a **statutory** basis each year:

- The Dartford [formally Dartford & Gravesham] Community Safety Partnership’s (CSP’s) Strategic Assessment document;
- The CSP’s projected Community Safety Strategy or the annual Strategy Refresh document (as appropriate).

The Committee also considers standard items as part of its annual published Work Plan (WP) including:

- The Dartford [formally D&G] CSP’s mid-year Performance Report;
- the Council’s Dartford Town against Crime (DTAC) annual update report;
- Minutes of the Kent & Medway Police & Crime Panel meetings;
- Regulation 9 Notice [Council’s Forward Plan]

In addition, on a **discretionary** basis with the prior agreement of CSP partners, the Committee reviews on a rolling basis the contributions made by individual CSP partner organisations to the overall aims of the DCSP.

The Committee met twice during the period under review on **28 July 2021** (Summer Meeting) and **9 February 2022** (Winter Meeting). Members agreed an initial rolling Work Plan in July 2021 [see table below] to be reviewed at the next and subsequent meetings in the cycle.

Rolling Work Plan 2021-22 and Beyond

Meeting	Work Plan Items		
Summer 2021 (July)	DTAC Annual Update PCP Update Dartford CSP Performance report Dartford CSP 2021 Refresh	Dartford CSP ToRs & Protocol Committee A.R. 2020-21	2021-22 WP review Regulation 9 Notice
Winter 2022 (February)	Dartford CSP Strategic Assessment & Strategy Update	PCP Update DCSP Performance & Progress Update (August-September 2021)	Draft WP for 2022-23 Regulation 9 Notice DCSP Performance report [EXEMPT]
Summer 2023 (July)	TO BE AGREED		
Winter 2024 (February)	TO BE AGREED		

Draw-Downs

In addition to the consideration of statutory and discretionary Work Plan reports under the terms of its Protocol, Members may also 'draw-down' topics on an ad-hoc basis with the agreement of the Chairman, for approval by the Director of Housing and Public Protection. No items were drawn-down in the 2021-22 municipal cycle.

Work Plan Items considered during the 2021-22 Municipal Year

Summer Meeting - 28 July 2021

Item 1: Kent Police and Crime Panel (PCP) – Update

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Safety [attending by standing invitation as Dartford's PCP rep.], reminded Members that the PCP was the Kent-wide body administered by Kent County Council which held the Kent & Medway Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account. The Panel comprised 1 Member from each Kent District [Cllr. Wells for DBC], 1 Member from KCC, 1 Member from Medway Council, and 2 Independent Members.

The Panel's terms of reference (ToRs) were to review all aspects of the PCC's work and to report on the Commissioner's actions and decisions including the approval of the police precept within the Council Tax - i.e. the annual sum of money the Commissioner proposed be raised to spend on policing in Kent; to review the PCC's proposals for the appointments of the Kent & Medway Chief Constable, Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer; and to review the PCC's Police and Crime Plan and Annual Report documents.

In the absence of published minutes for the PCP meeting held on 17 June 2021, the Cabinet Portfolio Holder advised that the Panel had discussed the following principal points:

- The Kent Police Service Complaints Process – the change in the recording process had resulted in an increased work load for Complaints Staff;
- The Panel had received an update from Mr Scott the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on his new Plan for the ensuing cycle;
- Various Crime Prevention Initiatives [EXEMPT];
- An update on the extension of the Police Cadet scheme in Kent, including a new mooted cadre in Dartford which it was hoped would lead to greater positive interaction between the KPS and youth of all ages;
- Additional Police Resources were announced by the PCC including funding for additional Police Staff across Kent;
- Diversity and Inclusiveness - the KPS had recognised that its staff profile needed to more fully represent the profile of the communities that it served, as highlighted by recent Census figures.
- Violence against Women
- Additional Court Facilities were to be provided for Kent at Maidstone;
- Action to address increased mis-use of E-scooters.

Item 2: Dartford Town against Crime (DTAC) Scheme Annual Report for the period July 2021 to July 2022

Members considered the standard annual report from the DTAC Intelligence Manager (DIM), which set out the background to the existing DTAC Scheme operation and its key aims, listed the achievements in the period under review, and set out proposals for the Scheme in the ensuing 2021-22 cycle.

Members were advised that following its re-launch in 2020 to comply with GDPR (Government Data Protection Regulations) legislation, DTAC membership was returning to pre-COVID levels following a recruitment campaign, and had now attained national accreditation under the Police Crime Initiative Scheme, a prodigious national qualification.

The 'Shop Safe Stay Safe' scheme to safeguard registered elderly and vulnerable adults visiting the Town Centre with a safe place to go to in times of emergency, upset or illness, continued to operate effectively via the Orchard Centre Security team, the CSU team and the CCTV operators at the Civic Centre. Registered members of the Scheme received a personal ID card and key ring and the DTAC team recorded any existing medical conditions and a nominated contact in cases of emergency.

The DIM confirmed in response to Member's specific questions that she was in consultation with retailers across Dartford in an effort to expand DTAC membership further, despite encountering resistance in Temple Hill. The current DTAC radio system covered the whole Borough and it was hoped that control of the system for monitoring purposes would be returned to the Council's CCTV system shortly once COVID measures had receded. The national accreditation of the current DTAC scheme would be re-assessed in two years' time.

Members expressed their thanks to the DIM for her report and detailed presentation, and resolved to note the achievements of the Scheme in Dartford for the period **July 2021 to July 2022**.

Item 3: Dartford CSP Community Safety Strategy (2019-22) 2021 Refresh

Members considered a report from the Community Safety Manager (CSM) which enclosed at Appendix A, the Dartford CSP's Community Safety Strategy (2019-22) 2021 Refresh report, which had been approved by the Dartford Community Safety Partnership (DCSP), at its meeting on 24 March 2021. The covering report reminded the Committee that legislation required each CSP to produce a crime and disorder Strategy which ran for 3 years, with an annual Refresh document produced in each intervening year, to help guide the work of all CSP partner agencies, to ensure that their collective focus remained on the CSP's agreed Priorities. The report also confirmed that the priorities identified in the 2019-22 Strategy for the former joint D&G CSP remained unchanged for the new DCSP body, and that the 2021 Refresh document reflected that reality in a Dartford-centric context.

Members resolved to note that the priorities contained in the existing 2019-22 Strategy and 2021 Refresh documents remained relevant to Dartford, and that a new 2022-25 Strategy Document for the DCSP would be prepared for presentation to the DCSP and noting by the Committee in July 2022.

Item 4: Revised Committee Protocol and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dartford Community Safety Partnership (DCSP)

Members resolved to note the new documents which had been updated to reflect the formation of a new single Dartford Community Safety Partnership, and the appointment of a new Director of Housing and Public Protection earlier in the year.

Item 5: Dartford CSP Quarterly Performance Report (July 2021)

Members considered a report on the performance of the DCSP in the three month period ending 30 April 2021 in closed session, under an '*obligation of confidentiality*' to protect the source material in the report that had been provided by individual DCSP partner agencies. The data recorded levels of crime and anti-social behaviour recorded by Kent Police in the period February-April 2021 and compared it to similar date for the corresponding period in 2020. In addition to the statistical data presented by Kent Police and Partner DCSP agencies, the Performance report also detailed key work undertaken [or planned] to address the Strategic priorities within the DCSP's existing 2019-22 Strategy.

Members congratulated the DCSP as a whole in the reduction in comparative crime figures for the period under review, compared to the corresponding period in 2020 but expressed their concern on the disparity with other areas in Kent where crime was lower, and the fact that the confidential nature of the proceedings did not allow them to pass details of relative 'success stories' in the period under review onto residents.

The District Commander, Kent Police, advised Members that in recent months some policing initiatives had improved Dartford's position as one of the most troubled areas in Kent. However, the Borough's unique geographical location adjoining London and metropolitan Essex, enabled criminals to easily migrate into Dartford commit crimes and leave the area, which made detection and apprehension extremely difficult. This unique problem did not affect more rural areas of Kent.

Members thanked the Community Safety Manager for his report and the Council's CSU and Kent Police Officers for their efforts to reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour on behalf of Dartford residents in the period under review, and asked that Officers examine ways to place the data contained in the report in the public domain to encourage and re-assure residents.

Item 6: Committee Annual Report for preceding 2020-21 Municipal Year

Members resolved to note the annual report and appendices recording the work undertaken by the Committee in the previous **2020-21** municipal year as presented for presentation to the General Assembly of the Council.

Winter Meeting – 9 February 2022

Item 1: Chairman's Update

The Chairman noted the sad passing of Cllr. Ann Allen MBE, since the last meeting of the Committee and advised that her attendance as Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Youth would be subsumed by Cllr. Wells as Cabinet Member for Community Safety going forward.

He also advised Members that he had accompanied Kent Police Officers recently to crime 'hot-spots' in the Borough which he had found instructive and as a consequence, proposed regular meetings by PCSOs with residents in their patrol area, including Bexley Heath which

had suffered from a number of arson attacks at a private allotment site. A presentation by PCSO's to the Committee covering their duties was another proposal to be considered.

Item 2: Kent Police and Crime Panel (PCP) Update

Members received a verbal update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Cllr. Wells, in his role as Dartford representative on the PCP since he last updated the Committee on 28 July 2021 [Min. No. 8 refers]. Principal points made by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had included his proposals and priorities for his 2022-25 Police and Crime Plan, including an increase of Police Officer numbers to 2010 levels, and an increase in Kent Police Service budget of 4.6% in the forthcoming 2022-23 fiscal cycle to finance a number of proposals. Cllr. Wells had supported the proposed increase in funding as Dartford PCP rep. given the need to increase Kent Police officer numbers and increase public confidence in the Service as a whole.

Item 3: Dartford Community Safety Partnership (DCSP) Strategic Assessment & Strategy Update

The report from the Community Safety Manager (CSM) informed Members of changes to the rationale for compiling and submitting the Strategic Assessment for the newly formed DCSP, and the subsequent integration of the aims and priorities identified in the 2021 SA document into the new DCSP Strategy for 2022-2025 by April 2022.

In previous years the SA for the former D&G CSP had been presented to the Committee in January, for integration into the existing Strategy or annual Strategy Refresh document by April. However, because the Dartford CSP was a new body, Dartford residents had to be consulted [via an on-line survey], for their views on what the DCSP's Strategic Assessment should contain, prior to informing the new DCSP Strategy 2022-25 document. A further delay to that traditional time-line was that due to unforeseen circumstances, access to the comprehensive partnership data required by the districts to complete their SAs has been delayed, or yet to be produced.

As a consequence, it was hoped to present a completed 2021 SA to the next meeting of the Dartford CSP at its meeting on 23 March 2022, and new 2022-25 DCSP Strategy document [informed by the 2021 SA], to the DCSP for approval in July 2022 and the Committee for comment later that same month.

Members noted the explanation and future proposals.

Item 4: DCSP Performance and Progress Report January 2022

Members considered a report from the Community Safety Manager (CSM) which addressed the performance of the new DCSP in the period August to December 2021 which considered levels of crime and anti-social behaviour recorded by Kent Police Service (KPS) in the period under review, and drew comparisons with the same period in 2020.

In addition to the statistics provided by KPS and CPS partner agencies, the report also provided details of key work and initiatives undertaken [or planned] that addressed the 4 (four) strategic priorities of the DCSP's Community Safety Strategy:

Violent Crime Including Domestic Abuse: Night Time Economy, Violence against Women and Girls, and a Knife Crime Initiative;

Persistent ASB and Environmental Crime: Community Triggers and Environmental Enforcement;

Preventing Offending and Reducing Re-Offending: Dartford Town against Crime (DTAC), Criminal Behaviour Orders, Catalytic Converter Thefts;

Protecting Vulnerable People and Strengthening Communities: Dartford Vulnerability and Contextual Safeguarding (DVACS) Meetings, Police Community Engagement, and the Mini Cadet Programme

Following consideration of the report, Members expressed their concern at the rising levels of crime in the Borough (across several categories as reflected in the statistics), in comparison to levels of crime in the remainder of Kent. Members also noted that the rise in total recorded crime in Dartford, compared to universally falling rates of crime across Kent.

Whilst noting Dartford's unique geographical position in Kent next to the Metropolis with good road and rail access, plus a major retail complex within the Borough, both significant factors which attracted a high level of cross-border crime within Dartford's statistics, the Committee considered these factors as historical challenges which should be met and effectively addressed.

Members resolved to note the performance and progress report for the final quarter of the 2021 calendar year and asked that Officers invite the North Kent Divisional Commander to the next meeting of the Committee to address the rising levels of crime in the Dartford.

Item 5: Committee Work Programme & Plan for 2022-23 Municipal Year and Beyond

Members noted the 2022-23 Work Plan [Appendix A to the report] and resolved to add an additional report from Officers regarding 'Violence against Women and Girls' to be presented at a future meeting of the Committee.

Item 6: EXEMPT Appendix to DCSP Performance Report

Members considered this EXEMPT material in closed session following the exclusion of the Public and Press.