

# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ACTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 19 September 2023

Time: 7.30 pm or at the conclusion of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting, whichever is the later.

Venue: Town Hall, High Street Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Cannon, Clark, Cleator (Vice-Chairman), Conyard, Eagle, English (Chairman), Mrs Gooch, Hastie, Hinder, Round, S Thompson and Webb

*The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.*

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## **AGENDA**

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Urgent Items
4. Notification of Visiting Members
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers
6. Disclosures of Lobbying
7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information
8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 July 2023 - To Follow
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)
10. Question and Answer session for Local Residents (if any)
11. Questions from Members of the Council to the Chairman (if any)
12. Cabinet SCRAIP - Response to the Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Safety in the Town Centre 1 - 12

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**Issued on Monday 11 September 2023**

**Continued Over/:**

*Alison Broom*

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive**

## INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

In order to ask a question at this meeting, please call **01622 602899** or email [committee@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committee@maidstone.gov.uk) by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Friday 15 August 2023). You will need to provide the full text in writing.

If your question is accepted, you will be provided with instructions as to how you can access the meeting.

In order to make a statement in relation to an item on the agenda, please call **01622 602899** or email [committee@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committee@maidstone.gov.uk) by 4 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 4 p.m. on Friday 15 August 2023). You will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on.

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email [committee@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committee@maidstone.gov.uk).


To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit the [Council's Website](#).

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommended Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP)**

The following recommended actions have arisen from the review into Safety in the Town Centre. This SCRAIP provides comments on the recommendations from the relevant Lead Officer/s such as its feasibility and possible method and timeline for implementation.

The recommendations arising from the Safety in the Town Centre Review were thematically grouped in being presented to the Cabinet (then Executive) at the April 2023 meeting. The intended outcomes for each theme can be found at the end of the document.


<b>Review Title: Safety in the Town Centre</b>				
Recommendation & Intended Outcomes	Relevant Cabinet Member	Financial impacts ( <i>'None' or explanation provided as applicable</i> )	Officer Response/s	Lead Officer/s
<p><b>To continue regular meetings with the Kent Police Press Office</b></p> <p>See Greater Communications theme below.</p>	Cabinet Member for Housing and Health	None	The Town Centre Task Force meet monthly, and the partnership Communications Plan is discussed as a standard agenda item. This provides partners, including Kent Police, the opportunity to identify opportunities to publicise work in the Town Centre proactively. The MBC Communications team have a good relationship with both Kent Police and One Maidstone enabling a timely joint response to Town Centre matters as necessary.	Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager

<p><b>To organise an Annual Community Safety Partnership Event, with all partners in attendance.</b></p> <p>See Greater Communications theme below.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>	<p><i>Explanation provided as applicable</i></p>	<p>The Safer Maidstone Partnership facilitates an annual event where partners are asked to consider the data collated in the Strategic Assessment and to contribute towards the development of action plans and areas of focus for the partnership.</p> <p>A public facing conference has been considered, however it was felt that it would be more impactful to deliver events focussed on more specific areas of Community Safety, such as Violence Against Women and Girls and Youth Safety. Events of this nature have been hosted; publicising of these events can be improved and will be a focus for future events. These will be complemented by regular “pop-up” public engagement events, such as Walk and Talks, which are undertaken by the Town Centre Task Force and focus on contemporary high priority themes, including Safety of Women and Girls, Pride and Knife Crime.</p> 	<p>Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager</p>
<p><b>To circulate the Communications Team’s updated</b></p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>The Community Protection and Safer Streets Communications Plans are regularly updated and are</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p>


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<p><b>'Communications Plan' to Members, to outline all elements of the communications works.</b></p> <p>See Greater Communications theme below.</p>			<p>shared with the Lead Cabinet Member for Housing and Health.</p>	
<p><b>To include information on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review within the next iteration of the Borough Insight Magazine.</b></p> <p>See Greater Communications theme below.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>A reference to the review of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review will be included in the next edition of the MBC Borough Insight Magazine which is due to be published in October 2023.</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p>
<p><b>That Kent Police be requested to:</b></p> <p><b>a. Promote the multi-agency work of the Town Centre Task Force; and</b></p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>a) This recommendation was discussed with the District Commander and the Community Safety Unit Inspector at the Safer Maidstone Partnership Executive Group. To improve awareness of policing and specifically the work in the town task force area, the Town Centre officers promoting the take up of their two-way engagement tool, <a href="#">My Community Voice</a> (MCV) by residents and businesses. MCV enables Kent Police to update users with news, alerts, appeals, engagement events and</p>	<p>Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager</p>


<p><b>b. Publicise their community engagement plans, to allow the Council to align its communications actions to this.</b></p> <p>See Greater Communications theme below.</p> <p>4</p>			<p>general policing activities. In Maidstone this has also included updates for collaborative work.</p> <p>Members of the public can choose what information they receive and how they receive it – whether that’s by email, text or voice mail. They can also share or reply to the messages they receive, enabling improved two-way communication, information sharing and problem-solving opportunities for the force. Throughout June there will be an increase in promoting the use of MCV to businesses, with officers distributing information directly into businesses, as well as promotion through both MBC and One Maidstone social media.</p> <p>All elected members are encouraged to promote the use of <a href="#">My Community Voice</a> in their areas and through their surgeries and newsletters as appropriate.</p> <p>The Communications team will promote ‘My Community Voice’ through the MBC Stay Connected ‘Safe Clean and Green’ newsletter.</p>	
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<p>5</p>			<p>b) As detailed in the response to the first recommendation, the Town Centre Task Force meet monthly, and the partnership Communications Plan is discussed as a standard agenda item. This will extend to the new Neighbourhood Task Force to ensure communications considered for each operation and when developing engagement activities.</p>  <p>The image shows a promotional graphic for 'My Community Voice'. At the top, it says 'My Community Voice' with the tagline 'Protecting the neighbourhoods of Kent and Medway'. Below this, it states 'MCV is a two-way engagement tool brought to you by Kent Police'. There are four main sections: 'Find out what's happening in your area' with a megaphone icon, 'Receive alerts from your local officers' with a person and bell icon, 'Tell us what matters most to you' with a speech bubble icon, and 'Sign up' with a hand icon. A QR code is in the bottom right corner, and the website 'www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk' is at the bottom.</p>	
<p><b>That the British Transport Police and Southeastern Railways be reminded that the displacement of anti-social behaviour from the town centre to wider areas would be better managed if train tickets were checked on a regular basis.</b></p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>Links with South-eastern Railway are being developed with new Service Level Agreements are in place for information sharing. Maidstone's stations are not seen as high priorities, it is therefore unlikely that barriers will be implemented as they would need to be staffed.</p> <p>The work of the District Contextual Safeguarding Meeting has identified groups using the rail network and work has been undertaken with police, partners and BTP to challenge them. With levels of ASB now falling in the Town Centre, work will continue with an intelligence led approach.</p> <p>The Violence Reduction Unit have funded the Switch Youth Café to undertake joint operations with BTP and their Outreach Workers, providing a presence on the trains across the network, to specifically engage with young people.</p>	

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<p>See Greater Communications theme below.</p>			<p>BTP have a relatively new Community Safety App and a link will be included in Cluster Contact Sheets when they are updated in June/July. The app is available <a href="#">here</a>.</p> 	
<p><b>To encourage all Members to sign up to the 'My Community Voice' facility provided by Kent Police.</b></p> <p>See Member Engagement theme below.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>Details of <a href="#">My Community Voice</a> are included and promoted through Ward Cluster meetings and included on the Cluster Contact sheet and can be shared with the wider community.</p>	
<p><b>To encourage all Members to sign up the 'Stay Connected' online newsletters produced by the Council.</b></p> <p>See Member Engagement theme below.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts</p>		<p>The Communications Team regularly email all MBC councillors including sending them all of the MBC press releases which include information regarding the 'Stay Connected' newsletters and provides an electronic link for people to use in order to sign-up.</p> <p>In addition, we promote the Stay Connected service via social media and Cabinet Members are actively encouraging their colleagues to sign-up to the service.</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p>



<p><b>To provide Members with the contact details for the various reporting mechanisms outlined in cluster contact sheets.</b></p> <p>See Member Engagement theme below.</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>Contact sheets are being updated to reflect the new Sergeants and Beat Officers for Members’ use only. The following information is also included for residents. These will be updated to include BTP’s App too.</p> <p><b>Information for residents</b></p> <p>MBC and Kent police build processes that support residents. It’s important that they use the following to ensure issues are recorded and safeguarding issues can be monitored.</p> <p><b>Police matters:</b></p>  <p><a href="#">My Community Voice</a> (MCV) is a two-way engagement tool set up by Kent Police for residents, businesses and community groups in Kent and Medway. MCV will enable Kent Police to update users with news, alerts, appeals, engagement events and general policing activities. Members of the public can choose what information they receive from us and how they receive it – whether that’s by email, text or voice mail. They can also share or reply to the messages they receive, enabling improved two-way communication, information sharing and problem-solving opportunities for the force.</p> <p>Residents should be encouraged to report all crimes and ASB to the police. The easiest way to do this is by calling</p>	<p>Head of Housing and Regulatory Services</p>
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			<p>101 or online <a href="http://www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/">www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/</a>. <b>If an emergency 999.</b> Residents can also report anonymously via <a href="http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org">www.crimestoppers-uk.org</a> or 0800 555 111.</p> <p>Also for young people <a href="http://www.fearless.org">www.fearless.org</a> is a site where young people can access non-judgemental information and advice about crime and criminality. It also allows them to report anonymously issues or concerns.</p> <p><b>Nuisance and community issues:</b> Report via <a href="http://www.maidstone.gov.uk">www.maidstone.gov.uk</a> or <a href="#">here</a></p>	
<p><b>To facilitate a Member representative engaging with the Youth Forum.</b> ∞ See Member Engagement theme below.</p>	Cabinet Member for Housing and Health/Communities, Leisure and Arts		<p>The Maidstone Youth Forum has been established and operating for nearly a year and is growing in momentum. They have been approached, via the KCC Youth Hub Delivery Manager, regarding whether they would welcome the opportunity to speak to an elected member from Maidstone. This will be raised at their next forum, and we await their response.</p>	Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager
<p><b>To provide Members and Officers with Bystander Training.</b> See Member Engagement theme below.</p>	Cabinet Member for Housing and Health		<p>Opportunities to provide training to relevant officers and Members will be sought throughout the Municipal year. This could include invitations to sessions hosted for business and community groups as appropriate. The following leaflet will be distributed shortly to businesses to generate interest as part of the Safer Streets initiative.</p>	Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager

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- Could you be an ambassador against gender based crime?
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**Places are limited so register your interest and tell us why you are a good candidate by emailing [maidsafer@onemaidstone.com](mailto:maidsafer@onemaidstone.com)**





**Working together to make Maidstone Safer - The Community Bystander Approach**

- Do you want to make Maidstone a safer place?
- Do you wish you knew more about what to do when you see something wrong, but feel powerless to change it?
- Could you play a role in challenging misogyny, prejudice, anti-social behaviour but worry about how to do so safely?

**Places are limited so register your interest and tell us why you are a good candidate by emailing [maidsafer@onemaidstone.com](mailto:maidsafer@onemaidstone.com)**

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<p><b>To encourage continued engagement from Members with Council activities, such as Member Briefings.</b></p> <p>See Member Engagement theme below.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health/ Communities, Leisure and Arts</p>		<p>Officers welcome this suggestion, to ensure members benefit from the inputs to improve their awareness and understanding of a range of community safety matters.</p>	<p>Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager</p>
<p><b>To circulate the information provided to Town Centre Ward Members at the Town Centre Street Scene Meetings relating to safety in the town centre, to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee acting as the Crime and Disorder Committee.</b></p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>The Street Scene Group is overseen by Our Environment and Public Realm team.</p> <p>**** We are discussing with the team how this information is best shared and will update the response when we have the recommendation from the team ***</p>	<p>Head of Environment and Public Realm</p>

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<p>See Member Engagement theme below.</p>				
<p><b>That the questions contained within the annual survey on town centre safety be reviewed, to ensure that the questions contained be used to conduct a benchmarking exercise for future measurement.</b>          →          See Future Actions theme below.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>We do not undertake an annual survey in the Town Centre. When relevant surveys are undertaken, such as the consultation on the Town Centre Public Space Protection Order and the Residents' Surveys, questions relating to Town Centre Safety and perceptions of crime are kept consistent for this very purpose.</p>	<p>Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager and Head of Housing and Regulatory Services.</p>
<p><b>That a Member be appointed as a rapporteur to conduct a post-review evaluation.</b>           See Future Actions theme below.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</p>		<p>Democratic Services will oversee the relevant appointment at the appropriate time.</p>	

### **Greater Communications Theme**

Overall Outcome: To enable the production of a greater number of positive communications on town centre safety.

The Committee felt that there should be greater communications to publicise the actions taken to improve safety in the town centre, in part as negative press could be inaccurate and often attracted greater public attention than positive communications.

Specific references were made to the below aspects throughout the review in outlining the topics that Council communications should be covering:

- The achievements of the Town Centre Task Force
- Partnership working
- Successful interventions
- Provision of Youth Services
- Contact details for partner organisations and council services, such as Domestic Abuse Support

### **Member Engagement Theme**

Overall Outcome: To provide improved support to Members.

During the review, the Committee and external attendees highlighted the role of Elected Members in reporting incidents of criminal activity, supporting the services provided and engaging with young people, and raising the work undertaken with their respective political groups.

### **Future Actions Theme**

Overall Outcome: Ensure effective monitoring of any actions agreed and ensure that public feedback is considered.

In formulating its recommendations, the Committee highlighted the feedback they had received from residents on reporting safety concerns and the importance of ensuring that further information and feedback was provided on the matter following the review.