

# Kent County Council

## A Framework for Community Safety

2012-2015



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# Foreword



Community Safety means cutting crime and the fear of crime as well as reducing the effects of anti-social behaviour, drug misuse, fires, road accidents – all the things that cause harm to Kent people or affect their quality of life. The County Council has a duty to promote Kent's economic, social and environmental well-being.

Community Safety is a key part of this: Kent is a safe place to live and work but people and businesses cannot flourish and prosper if they do not feel safe, or if the costs of crime place too great a burden on the local economy. With this in mind Community Safety is one of our highest priorities over the coming years. As a major provider of public services – children's services, education, trading standards, roads and transportation – we can greatly influence these matters in our day to day work: in partnership with district/borough councils, Kent Police and other statutory partners even more can be achieved.

Community Safety has to be 'mainstream' – affecting the plans and the work of many different agencies. But with so many people involved it can be difficult to know who does what, how it all works and what the plans and policies for Community Safety are.

This document describes contribution by the wide range of services delivered by Kent County Council that make a tangible difference in preventing and deterring crime and that provide support to particularly vulnerable households in Kent, in terms of crime and disorder.

It sets out to answer those questions and to provide a guide for everyone in the County Council who is involved and concerned with community safety. We hope you find it helpful and informative.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underlining the name.

**Mike Hill OBE**  
Cabinet member for Customer and  
Communities

# Introduction



Kent is one of the largest shire upper tier authorities in England and Wales with a population of 1.4 million and is generally a safe place to live, work and visit. In the last 5 years, Kent has seen a 27% reduction in crime compared to 23% from the South East region.

The County Council's contribution to Community Safety is integral to addressing the community safety priorities set for Kent. As a leading authority, KCC has a duty to promote Kent's economic, social and environmental well-being. Community Safety is a key part of this and the KCC plays a vital role in safeguarding not just the vulnerable children and adults but its residents, businesses and visitors in Kent, and has been at the forefront of multi-agency working for many years. The majority of government policy requires strong partnership working between agencies, often including the public and private sector. The gross budget for KCC is around £2.2 billion annually with some £1.53 billion spent on a

wide and diverse range of frontline public services. Many of these services directly contribute to the Community Safety agenda in Kent including the Kent Drug & Alcohol Action Team, Integrated Youth Services, Community Safety Unit, Trading Standards and Supporting People. The Families and Social Care and Education, Learning and Skills directorates contribute considerably within KCC's safeguarding agendas and through their engagement with partnerships.

KCC services are numerous and complex and the aim of this framework is to offer a clear roadmap of how these services contribute to the Community Safety landscape in Kent.

Including:

- An overview of who does what in community safety;

- How all the different agencies work together;
- What has been achieved so far; and
- What the policies and plans and key issues are for the future.

# Legislation



County Councils, District Councils, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Health Authorities, Police Forces, Police Authorities and Probation were designated by the 'Crime and Disorder Act 1998' as amended by the 'Police and Justice Act 2006' as 'Responsible Authorities'. These Acts place a duty on them to work together to reduce crime and disorder in their areas.

The arrangements established to comply with these Acts of law are known as Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's). Kent has 11 CSP's based on District/Borough geographical areas (with one merged CSP for Dartford and Gravesham). CSP's also work with other key agencies / organisations known as 'Cooperating Bodies' to develop and implement strategies to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safe.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to take

account of crime and disorder in all their work. This has the effect of making Community Safety 'mainstream' for local authorities and it must influence all their policies, strategies, plans and budgets.

The Police and Justice Act 2006 also gives statutory responsibility for two tier areas such as Kent to have a County level CSP and a Crime and Disorder Committee. The Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) is chaired by the KCC Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities. The overall function of the KCSP is to produce a 3 yearly Community Safety Agreement to coordinate county wide priorities and partnership activities for crime and disorder in Kent and to drive forward strong partnership working across the county delivering outcomes against the key priority areas.

# Community Safety Definition



Kent County Council has adopted the following definition of Community Safety –

*Community Safety is an aspect of the quality of life in which individuals and communities are protected from, equipped to cope with and have increased capacity to resist crime, antisocial behaviour and those associated aspects that affect the general quality of life.*

*Safe communities should enable those who live, work and visit Kent to pursue and obtain fullest benefits from, their social and economic lives within a just and tolerant community free from risk factors such as criminal and anti-social, racial, fire and environmental issues.*

**KCC Cabinet 2001**

# What are we aiming to achieve?



The countywide 'Vision for Kent' (2011-21) ambitions; to grow the economy; to tackle disadvantage; and to put citizens in control cannot be achieved without the commitment and contribution of all partners through their own delivery plans and strategies as well as embracing multi-agency agreements. Improving Community Safety, addressing crime and anti-social behaviour is one of the cross cutting themes in the Vision for Kent, with well established partnerships committed to making Kent a safer place. These ambitions are also echoed in KCC's Medium Term plan 'Bold Steps for Kent' (2012-15).

## Our Overall Aims

Our overall aims for Community Safety are to:

- reduce the level of actual crime and disorder;

- reduce the adverse impact of crime and disorder on people's lives; and
- reduce the economic costs of crime.

We will pay particular attention to:

- the fear of crime
- prevention of crime
- drugs and alcohol
- youth crime
- domestic abuse

Community Safety is not just about crime: there are many other issues that affect people's safety and quality of life. They include fire safety and prevention, cutting road casualties, addressing domestic violence and reducing drug and alcohol misuse. These aims feature prominently in KCC's plans and they are reflected in targets which we have

set for ourselves or have been agreed with Government.

# Roles of KCC Services



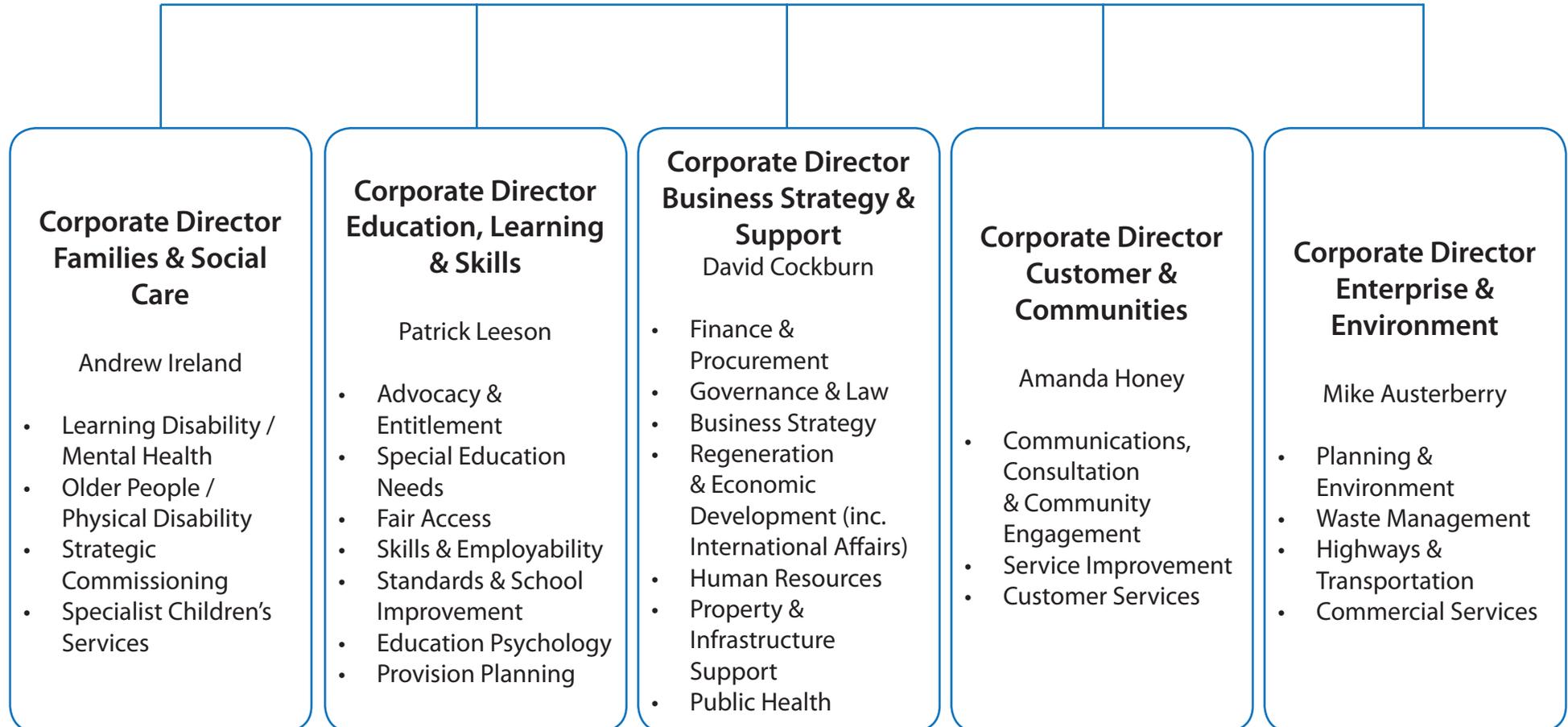
Prevention is better than cure - enforcement of the law will always play a major part in Community Safety but much can be done to prevent problems before they arise. KCC is a vital contributor to the reduction of crime with a wide range of preventative and intervention services.

A major part of crime and disorder reduction is achieved through considering and addressing the causes. The root causes include social issues of poverty, poor education attainment and training opportunities, unemployment and drug and alcohol misuse. Striving towards community cohesion, helping people become active citizens and improving personal responsibility in the community also contributes to improving Community Safety.

The County Council consists of a number of service directorates (shown below), each of these deliver services that contribute to the Community Safety agenda of reducing crime,

reducing the fear of crime and dealing with anti-social behaviour in Kent.

**Cabinet Leader**  
Paul Carter



# Contribution of KCC Services to Community Safety



In terms of service provision KCC delivers a vast range of services, most of them contributing and having an impact, either directly or indirectly, on Community Safety issues across Kent.

They include:

- Adoption and fostering
- Adult education
- Adult social care
- Apprentices
- Arts and culture
- Children's and families social services
- Community Safety
- Community Wardens
- Concessionary travel (bus passes etc)
- Coroners
- Countryside access
- Disabilities (disabled children, disabled adults)
- Early years interventions
- Education
- Highway Maintenance
- Integrated Youth Services
- Planning and land use (Secure by Design)
- Libraries and archives
- Protecting the environment
- Public health
- Public rights of way
- Public transport
- Recycling
- Road safety
- Schools and Post- 16
- Special needs
- Sports development

- Street lighting
- Trading standards
- Traffic and parking
- Transport planning and policy

The Directorates of the County Council manage these services and contribute strategic leadership in the following key areas:

The **Families and Social Care** directorate contributes to Community Safety through its services for children and families, child and adult protection and mental health services.

The **Education, Learning and Skills** directorate has a number of specialist services that work in partnership with schools to promote regular school attendance for all children and provide alternative curriculum for pupils who are not attending school.

The **Business Strategy and Support** directorate provides strategic policy, performance, planning, analysis and partnership support for the whole Council.

**Public Health** - from April 2013, KCC will be a Public Health Authority identifying and supporting the health and well-being of Kent residents based on Needs Assessments. This will provide the leadership and strategic framework to enable effective action to be implemented to address the public health priorities identified in Kent. These priorities include reducing health inequalities, improving children's mental health and wellbeing; improving sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancies, increasing the number of adults living healthier lives; enabling more people with chronic disease to live at home; reducing substance misuse and excessive alcohol drinking.

The **Customer and Communities** directorate is a grouping of front facing services with a range of core functions; including provisions for young people through accommodation support, drug and alcohol and integrated youth services to those groups of people often considered vulnerable or at risk. Drug and alcohol support services and Supporting People. The Community Safety and Emergency Planning function

delivers the cross directorate strategic and operational support mechanisms to ensure an effective response to these critical areas of public concern complimented by the Kent Community Warden Service that is a key partner in neighbourhood management. Trading Standards aim to make Kent a better place to live and do business in, by improving standards of trade.

The **Enterprise and Environment** directorate host the Highways and Transportation service who maintain and improves the County's roads, pavements and other assets such as streetlights and drains that support their safe use by all. They deliver a wide range of services which includes improving road safety for all users. According to published figures, fatal and serious casualties on Kent's roads have halved over the last 10 years.

Whilst this high level overview indicates how individual services under each directorate are contributing to improved Community Safety, it is evident that many of KCC's services are working together to tackle this important issue.

# Community Safety Priorities



Every year levels, types and locations of crime are fully analysed by Community Safety Unit staff in conjunction with Kent Police analysts and strategic assessments are provided to local CSP's and partner agencies. The common issues and priorities are identified and form the strategic assessment priorities. The Kent Community Safety Agreement is an amalgamation of the 12 district assessments undertaken annually in Kent. The priorities are agreed by all statutory partners including KCC and are refreshed annually.

The table shows the current Community Safety priorities which have been identified as those with the potential to benefit from being supported at a county level, with the cross-cutting themes to be addressed within each priority.

These priorities and cross-cutting themes form the basis of a county wide action plan

that is delivered across partner agencies underpinned by a performance framework.

Several of the identified priorities already have existing multi-agency partnership arrangements in place, the Community Safety Agreement ensures clear linkages with business planning processes across relevant KCC services and partner agencies; therefore ensuring a coordinated approach across organisations at a strategic level

Priorities	
Anti-social behaviour including environmental	Domestic Abuse
Substance Misuse	Acquisitive crime (i.e. thefts/ shoplifting)
Violent Crime	Road Safety
Cross-cutting Themes	Early Intervention, Prevention & Education
	Priority Neighbourhoods / Geographic Focus
	Vulnerable Households & Individuals
	Safeguarding Children & Young People
	Reducing Re-Offending

# Opportunities and Challenges



Improving Community Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour is one of the cross cutting themes in the Vision for Kent 2011-21 and is echoed in KCC's Medium Term plan 'Bold Steps for Kent' (2012-15) of which Community Safety is integral to delivering these priorities. KCC is responding positively to the new legislative Acts such as the 'The Localism Act' and the 'Policing and Social Responsibility Act 2011' that introduces the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC's). All Acts will give greater power to communities and empower citizens to take more control over their communities and local services.

## Opportunities

- The elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will replace the Police Authority from November 2012 and will require a significant transition in police accountability and have significant impact upon the Community Safety landscape. KCC will establish a close and productive

working relationship with the PCC and maintain effective communications.

- KCC has agreed to act as the lead authority to provide support to the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) who will scrutinise PCC activities.
- The County Council is well placed to assist the new PCC with the commissioning of services across the partnership arena in Kent utilising the wide knowledge and experienced gained through commissioning models already in existence such as the Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT).
- Due to the County Council's increased responsibility for Public Health, there are opportunities to explore a closer working relationship to deliver the strategic framework addressing the public health priorities identified in Kent.

## Challenges

- Working within an environment where public spending cuts across all agencies involved with Community Safety, challenges us to work even closer together with our partners.
- Due to forthcoming changes to the way Community Safety related funding will be allocated, there is a possibility that there will be changes to current commissioned services. KCC will work to ensure that a quality service is still being delivered to the people of Kent.
- The County Council has a Duty from the 1st April 2011 to manage with partners the delivery of Domestic Homicide Reviews. This is a very complex task closely related to serious case reviews and the timescales involved along with the resource intensive nature of each case requiring review, places significant demands upon the unit that will require careful management and review over the forthcoming months.

# The Future



During these times of severe financial pressure with reductions in local government funding, KCC will strive to ensure that the services delivered continue to be of a high standard that the authority has always maintained. Therefore, KCC considers this an appropriate time to '**Review, Reflect and Redesign**' ways of working and how to do things differently but effectively.

- **Integrated Preventative Strategies** are a priority for KCC across different service areas, particularly social care and children's services.
- **The Troubled Families** programme agenda will work with individual families in a more coordinated way to keep children in school and reduce anti-social behaviour. Their parents will be able to improve their education, health and work opportunities and ultimately this will boost local neighbourhoods.

- The **Early Intervention Prevention Strategy** will provide an opportunity to find different ways of working together with our partners and help families to turn their lives around. As an example the Integrated Youth Service proposed hubs could also support the joint delivery of services such as foundation learning to support young people gaining qualifications, programmes aimed at preventing young people entering the Youth Justice System, offer information, advice and guidance, welfare rights information, housing advice and support as well as targeted work for more vulnerable young people.
- The introduction of a **Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panels** and the uncertainty associated with new commissioning arrangements and future funding will provide an impetus to review and redesign Community Safety

services and to develop leaner and more productive partnership arrangements.

- The introduction of **new Anti-Social Behaviour powers**, together with the case management project that will be implemented during 2012 will result in a thorough review of current working arrangements in addressing anti-social behaviour and lead to more cohesive intervention arrangements being implemented across the county.
- In line with current government policy initiatives, The County Council, together with the Police and Crime Commissioner, will raise the priority for support to **Victims Services** and will provide leadership during this emphasis change.
- The Criminal Justice System and the Government are increasing the focus towards reducing re-offending and this is already a key priority for council services

and will continue in future years. The County Council's **Youth Offending Service** delivers the following key roles: the prevention of offending and re-offending by children and young people aged 10 to 17, dealing appropriately with those who do offend, including encouraging them to make amends for their crimes and supporting the victims of crime.

- The County Council is committed to maintaining and improving its successful **Restorative Justice** programmes. In the first three quarters of 2011 -2012 there was an 18.5% reduction in first time entrants to the criminal justice system compared to the previous year. **Restorative Justice** gives victims the chance to tell offenders how their crimes have affected them, to get answers to their questions and to receive an apology. It gives the offenders the chance to understand the effect of what they have done and to do something to repair the harm and has had a significant impact upon the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System.
- KCC is committed to a whole systems approach to reduce the major concern of Domestic Abuse in Kent. **Domestic Abuse** services are currently under strain following financial reductions across the not for profit sector. The County Council is fully in support of introducing

commissioning arrangements for domestic abuse support services and once again will be a lead partner with taking forward these concepts.

- The longer term management of **Domestic Homicide Reviews** and the subsequent governance related to the implementation of review recommendations will require careful management.
- Future Commissioning arrangements in terms of Public Health budgets based on Needs Assessments.

# Summary



The County Council has statutory duties in relation to Community Safety. KCC Cabinet has ultimate responsibility and has appointed Members to take the lead. Much of the Community Safety work is preventative, with the majority being carried out by KCC staff in their everyday, core activities. The Community Safety Unit provides strategic leadership, information and advice and implements county wide projects in conjunction with partners.

Local Community Safety activity is currently focused on the 11 district/borough based Community Safety Partnership's where KCC is well represented by a range of officers based on local needs assessment.

As this document indicates, the way Community Safety operates in Kent is complex and involves many different agencies and people. There are many overlaps and the risk of duplication and partnership overload

is real. The future will provide a number of challenges as structures change and new legislation starts to be implemented and this will require careful management to ensure that the very successful partnership working that has developed since the introduction of the original legislation in 1998 is preserved.

The aim of this Framework is to illustrate who, what and how the numerous service delivery activities currently provided by KCC, that support Community Safety delivery are harnessed and focussed towards the priority areas; therefore avoiding duplication both in terms of KCC and partner agencies.

This will be achieved in a number of ways but will include the promotion of joint strategic assessments that highlight shared priorities and by ensuring connectivity between the business planning processes across the County Council. This will be underpinned by a strategic performance framework based on

this document that maintains communications and ensures focus on the key activities.

We hope you find this framework helpful and informative: if you have any questions or suggestions for improving it, please contact the County Council's Community Safety and Emergency Planning Group by email using [communitysafetyunit@kent.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafetyunit@kent.gov.uk) or via the KCC Contact Centre on 08458 247 247.