

Classification:Appendix 1: **Strategic Assessment 2017 – PART B EXEMPT****Key Decision:**

No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

Date: 20 March 2018

Reporting Officer: Strategic Manager, Community Safety Unit

Subject: Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2017

Purpose and summary of report:

The document attached as Appendix 1 is the annual Community Safety Strategic Assessment completed on behalf of the joint Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership and in accordance with our legal obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This year, the Assessment has been completed by Dartford Community Safety Unit (CSU). It is provided to the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in order that Members have an opportunity to note levels in recorded crime and anti-social behaviour and to be apprised of any findings that may have an impact on local community safety priorities.

Members are asked to note that the Strategic Assessment is exempt from publication as some of the data contained within it is restricted/protectively marked and therefore, there is an obligation of confidence. Data remains the property of Kent Police and partner agencies and is not for wider dissemination.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) Note the content of the Strategic Assessment 2017 (Appendix 1) taking into account the limitations of the document this year as detailed below in this cover report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a legal requirement on all Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to complete an annual audit of crime and disorder known as the Strategic Assessment. The primary purpose is to assess the current levels of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) and allow an opportunity for existing priorities to be reviewed and revised if necessary to reflect changing circumstances. This may mean having to focus attention on a particular crime type that is escalating, responding to new legislation or taking advantage of opportunities to work in collaboration with different partner agencies or community groups.
- 1.2 The findings of the Strategic Assessment are also used to refresh the content and actions contained within the CSP's Community Safety Strategy which currently remains effective until March 2019.

- 1.3 A number of factors have made the completion of the Strategic Assessment a particular challenge this year. Historically, the Assessment has presented recorded levels of crime by comparing recorded figures in the current year with those in the previous year and normally this would be a reliable approach to take. However, following Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) analysis in 2017 into how offences were being recorded, a number of changes were introduced to improve the accuracy of crime recording.
- 1.4 Kent Police has fully adopted HMIC's recommendations and consequently, reliable comparisons cannot be drawn between crimes recorded in this latest year with crime recorded in years prior to the introduction these improvements as the criteria applied when offences have been recorded is not consistent. It is also important for Members to note that the new method adopted for recording offences, whilst being much more accurate, has also inevitably resulted in a significant increase across many crime categories in the latest year considered in the Assessment.
- 1.5 In addition to Kent Police's changes to crime recording, a number of alterations have also been made to the Home Office Counting Rules and the definition of certain crime categories. This has further frustrated the ability to carry out comparative analysis in this year's Assessment.
- 1.6 The Strategic Assessment was considered by the Dartford and Gravesham CSP in January 2018 and it was determined that due to the above the CSP's priorities for the new financial year would remain unchanged with the exception that vehicle crime and vehicle-related nuisance and ASB be included as local knowledge/experience within each Borough's CSUs indicate that this is an issue that has become more prevalent in the last 12 months.

2. Appendices

Appendix 1: Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2017

3. Background Papers

None – Data sources are acknowledged throughout the Strategic Assessment.