

**Classification: Public**  
**Key Decision: No**

### Gravesham Borough Council

**Report to:** Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 12 March 2024  
**Reporting officer:** Strategic Manager (Community Safety Unit)  
**Subject:** Proposed Topic Review and Process

**Purpose and summary of the report:**

To provide the Committee with details of a proposed Topic Review following the recommendations made by Members at the last meeting of this Committee in October 2023.

**Recommendations:**

The Committee is asked to:

- i) Consider the proposed Topic Review and subject to Members' approval, agree that the appropriate Members and Officers commence the Review process.

Key Implications:	
Item	Implications
<b>Legal</b>	The Council has a statutory obligation to work with partner agencies to address crime and ASB and Serious Organised Crime (Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Serious Organised Crime Act 2015) and to be subject to scrutiny by a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee which must meet at least once a year.
<b>Finance and Value for Money</b>	There are no identified or specific financial implications.
<b>Corporate Plan</b>	Work undertaken by the Gravesham CSP makes a direct contribution to the Council's Corporate Plan's priorities: <b>#oneborough - Safer Gravesham:</b> deliver stronger neighbourhoods and a more secure living environment through a portfolio of initiatives, delivered with Kent Police and key partner agencies.
<b>Climate Change</b>	No direct implications.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 At the last meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in October 2023, Members were invited to put forward proposals of community safety activity/issues that could form the subject of a Topic Review. The Committee agreed that the Chair, Vice-Chair and Strategic

Manager, Community Safety, would meet to discuss the suggested topics and report back with a proposal at the Committee's next (current) meeting. Subject to the Members' approval, it is suggested the next Topic Review focuses on:

*'Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) involving school-age young people and occurring after school finishing time in the afternoon and early evening, particularly in Gravesend town centre'.*

1.2 The selection of this subject for a Topic Review takes into account the following:

- ASB is an issue that affects the Borough as a whole and reports of public space ASB (particularly in Gravesend town centre) frequently refer to large groups of young people gathering after school and in the early evenings.
- This behaviour (which in part may also be a perception issue as large groups gathering can in themselves be intimidating to some) can have a negative impact on local businesses whilst some residents/others wishing to visit to the town centre, report avoiding the area at these times as a consequence.
- The Strategic Assessment 2023 established that Police-recorded ASB in Gravesham had increased by 11.4% in the year ending 30 September 2023 compared to a Kent average increase of 2.0% and the highest rate of ASB incidents per 1,000 population are reported from within the immediate vicinity of the town centre.
- Respondents to the Community Safety Public Consultation completed at the end of 2023, very clearly identified ASB as the main issue locally affecting community safety.
- Tackling ASB is resource-intensive, places demands on all CSP partner agencies but can equally benefit most significantly from multi-agency working.
- From working to prevent and reduce ASB through to taking enforcement action when appropriate, tackling this issue is a CSP strategic priority and will be a key area of focus within the Partnership's new Community Safety Strategy 2024-28.

## 2. Process for the Topic Review

2.1 The process for completing the Topic Review requires that:

- i) Subject to the Committee's agreement, the subject of the Topic Review as described in 1. Above is approved by Members.
- ii) The Committee agrees which Member will chair the Topic Review Group and determines the membership of the Group (there should be four Members in total and the Group must be politically balanced).
- iii) Draft Terms of Reference are prepared for the Topic Review Group, incorporating the membership of the Group, the format of the review and these are agreed by the Committee.
- iv) The Committee agrees the length of time during which the Review should be completed (6 months is recommended).
- v) A **draft** report of the findings of the review and setting out its recommendations is considered by the Committee prior to the report being presented to Management Team.

- vi) Following Management Team's approval, a **final** report is taken to the C & D Scrutiny Committee by the Lead Officer/Group Chair. After this Committee, the report is amended as necessary and then presented by the Lead Officer/Group Chair at Chief Executive's Briefing and Cabinet for approval.
- vii) At the next C & D Scrutiny Committee following the completion of the review, the Committee shall be informed of the response to any recommendations made in the final report.
- viii) Six months after the Topic Review report, recommendations and response have been considered, an Agenda item shall be listed for the next available C & D Scrutiny Committee, to receive a report on actions completed, their outcome and the status of any actions still in progress.

<b>Secondary Implications</b>	
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Failure to work in partnership with other statutory agencies as required would be to the detriment of addressing crime, ASB and Serious Organised Crime.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of <a href="#">personal data</a> or <a href="#">special category data</a> or <a href="#">criminal offence data</a>? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links. No</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at <a href="mailto:gdpr@medway.gov.uk">gdpr@medway.gov.uk</a>.</p>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. N/A</p> <p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. N/A</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The Council has a statutory obligation to work with partner agencies to address crime and ASB (Crime and Disorder Act 1998).
<b>Digital and website implications</b>	None at this stage.
<b>Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</b>	The safeguarding of vulnerable young people and adults is corporately a high priority for the Council, and it is also a strategic priority for the CSP. Personal characteristics which may make some people more vulnerable may also mean that ASB can have a greater negative impact on their quality of life.