

Review into the effectiveness and future of

PACT

Partners and Communities Together

in Medway



Prepared by a task group of the
Regeneration, Community & Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee

November 2010

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The effectiveness and future of PACTs in Medway

1. FOREWORD

- 1.1. On behalf of the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Task Group is pleased to present its review into the effectiveness and future of PACTs (Partners and Communities Together) in Medway with its associated recommendations for the Cabinet and Community Safety Partnership to consider. The Task Group also invite Kent Police Authority to consider and respond to the review.
- 1.2. This review is not a strategy or statement of policy. It is an analysis of the Task Group's findings taking into account evidence from partner agencies, PACT chairmen, councillors and council officers. The Task Group also visited a PACT meeting where 25 young people had been invited along to present their views and opinions about their local area.
- 1.3. We hope our recommendations will generate discussion and action to strengthen the effectiveness of PACTs in Medway. We have been struck by the commitment of those who participate in PACT meetings and would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the participants in the review.

The task group



Councillor Peter Hicks (Chairman)



Councillor Paul Godwin



Councillor Tashi Bhutia



Councillor Cathy Sutton

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook this review in order to evaluate the effectiveness and future of PACT meetings in Medway.

(Note: PACTs are now being called Neighbourhood Panels by the Police and Community Safety Partnership office. However throughout this report the old terminology is used).

Terms of reference

To undertake an in-depth review of the effectiveness and future of the PACTs within Medway including:

- to locate provision of PACTs in Medway and best practice within Medway and/or elsewhere
- to examine whether the same issues are being raised at meetings over time and whether each PACT's priorities are being achieved and maintained and if not, why not
- to investigate the benefits/disadvantages of PACTS and engagement of partners in the process, especially when compared to areas not covered by a scheme and whether they really benefit the communities involved
- to consider if PACTS provide value for money and assist with LAA indicator NI 4 (% of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality)?
- to investigate possible future work activities for PACTs.

Conduct of work

Members of the task group took evidence from a number of people and also invited Councillors and PACT chairmen to complete a questionnaire. The Task Group visited a local PACT meeting in Medway and undertook desktop research on best practice in Kent and elsewhere. The activities of the Task Group included:

- an initial discussion with Chief Inspector Mark Arnold and Inspector Richard Cherry of Kent Police
- a visit to the Gillingham Green PACT meeting
- a discussion with Martin Featherstone, Council for Voluntary Services – lead partner for NI 4 (% of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality)
- a discussion with the chairman of Gillingham Green PACT and the Chairman of Ordnance Street PACT

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- a meeting with the council's Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Enforcement, the Assistant Director for Frontline Services and other officers
- questionnaires sent to local councillors and PACT chairmen.

Outcomes of the review

The following summarises the main findings of the review under each heading of the terms of reference agreed for the review:

Provision of PACTS in Medway and best practice within Medway and/or elsewhere

Overall the task group believe PACTs are a good way of bringing residents together to develop priorities and action plans at neighbourhood level alongside other opportunities for community engagement currently on offer. The Task Group has been impressed by the commitment and energy shown by residents who are taking part in the active PACTs across Medway.

The Task Group has made several recommendations relating to the capture of information about PACTs, the analysis and reporting of this information and the guidelines available to residents wishing to set up panels.

In addition it has been established that PACT chairmen would welcome a facilitated opportunity to meet and network and that more could be done to mentor and support new chairmen.

The difficulty of the same issues being raised at meetings over time and whether each scheme's priorities are being achieved and maintained and if not, why not.

Although there is no documented overview of the issues and outcomes arising from neighbourhood panels, the Task Group's investigations have established a general consensus that they are a useful mechanism to target and address a particular problem. They may then go on to develop a wider role but it seems sensible to periodically review the purpose and effectiveness of PACTs to validate the case for ongoing support to be provided by police and other agencies.

The Task Group is firmly of the view that feedback should be provided to the whole community in a PACT area about priorities, action and outcomes generated by PACTs and not just to those who attend the panel meetings. This would assist all residents to understand why some problems prove to be particularly intractable and what has been done to resolve some problems.

The Task Group recommends that analysis of the effectiveness of PACTs should be taking place with regular reports to the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

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The benefits and disadvantages of PACT schemes and engagement of partners in the process, especially when compared to areas not covered by a scheme and whether they really benefit the communities involved.

Again the Task Group had some difficulty in reaching a considered view on this because of the absence of any comparative information or analysis of the effectiveness of PACTs locally.

However the Task Group believes PACTs should continue alongside other types of community engagement in order to give people different opportunities to attend whatever type of forum suits them best. There may be a case for differing formats for PACT meetings. For example a cross-Medway Youth Panel.

The Task Group is recommending the development of some guidance and a protocol for PACTs to assist residents and partners to understand their purpose and to establish some the basic operational standards.

The task group also recognises that PACTs may not be the way that some groups, for example, young people) wish to have a voice and that it is important to continue to offer a range of engagement options.

Do PACTS provide value for money and assist with delivery of LAA indicator NI 4 (%of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality)?

Since the launch of this review the Local Area Agreement (LAA) has been abolished and the Place Survey for 2010 cancelled. However, NI4 remains a local priority and the Task Group supports the action under NI4 seeking to produce PACT data on a quarterly basis.

The Task Group wishes to emphasise the importance of periodically reviewing the activities of each PACT to validate the case for ongoing support from the police and other agencies.

PACTs should also be reaching out to under-represented groups and encouraging their participation. In particular the Task Group supports the suggestion of encouraging involvement by young people in PACT meetings or the establishment of separate PACTs specifically for young people.

Possible future work activities for PACT schemes.

The Task Group recommends ongoing and strengthened support for PACTS alongside development of some guidelines and a protocol covering best practice in operational arrangements with an express expectation they will work to include a wide cross-section of local residents.

3. BACKGROUND

In January 2010 the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a Task Group to undertake a review of the impact and future of PACTs (or Neighbourhood Panels as they are now known) in Medway. PACT stands for Partners and Communities Together and, in practice, provides an opportunity for local people to come together to tell their local policing team, local authority and other partner agencies about the issues causing concern within their neighbourhood and to identify those to be dealt with as a priority. PACTs have evolved as part of the national neighbourhood policing initiative.

At the point of selecting this topic for in-depth review the Committee understood there to be between 20 and 30 active PACT Groups in Medway at any one time.

Councillors expressed an interest in examining:

- the impact and effectiveness of PACTs in comparison to areas without them
- the issues being raised by PACTs, and the difficulty of the same issues being raised at meetings over time.
- whether each PACT's priorities were being achieved with long-term benefits to those neighbourhoods and
- the extent to which information about the activities of, and outcomes from PACTS was being recorded, analysed and acted on.

Around the same time as launching this review the Committee was designated as the Councils crime and disorder committee under the Police and Justice Act 2006¹ with a new power to review and scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the partners who comprise it (insofar as their activities relate to the partnership itself). This is relevant because the majority of PACTs in Medway were initially set up to deal with crime and disorder issues, which the partners who make up the CSP are collectively seeking to tackle together through the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2009- 2012². The responsible authorities represented on the Community Safety Partnership are now under an obligation to respond to reports from the Committee and to have regard to associated recommendations.

¹ See glossary for weblink

² See glossary for weblink

4. SETTING THE CONTEXT

(a) Legal framework, obligations, accountabilities and performance

The development of strong partnerships to tackle issues at the neighbourhood level has been a key feature of the roll-out of neighbourhood policing in England.

The Louise Casey Review, “Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime”³, published in 2008, refers to a description of neighbourhood policing provided by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) on its website as follows:

“Neighbourhood policing is provided by teams of police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), often together with Special Constables, local authority wardens, volunteers and partners. In some areas, neighbourhood policing may be known as Safer Neighbourhoods or another locally decided name.

It aims to provide people who live or work in a neighbourhood with:

- **Access** – to local policing services through a named point of contact;
- **Influence** – over policing priorities in their neighbourhood;
- **Interventions** – joint action with partners & the public; and
- **Answers** – sustainable solutions & feedback on what is being done.

This means that neighbourhood teams:

- publicise how to get in touch with them;
- find out what the local issues are that make people feel unsafe in their neighbourhood and ask them to put them in order of priority;
- decide with partners and local people what should be done to deal with those priorities and work with them to deliver the solutions; and
- let people know what is being done and find out if they are satisfied with the results.

There are Neighbourhood Policing Teams working in areas all over England and Wales. The way that Neighbourhood Policing is delivered will vary in different areas, as it is designed to be flexible and responsive to local needs and resources”.

In her review Louise Casey also established the top ten policing approaches that the public want to see. These included continuity in the local policing team and good engagement with the community to identify priorities for action

³ See glossary for link to website

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and to give feedback on action and outcomes on cases of greatest community concern.

To meet these expectations the police service agreed to commit to a new policing pledge setting out national standards on what people can expect from the police, underpinned in each area by a set of local priorities, agreed by people in each neighbourhood.

One of the national standards for accessible and responsive local policing in the Police Pledge commits the police to:

“arrange regular public meetings to agree your priorities, at least once a month, giving you a chance to meet your local team with other members of your community. These will include opportunities such as surgeries, street briefings and mobile police station visits which will be arranged to meet local needs and requirements”.

Whilst there is no legal obligation on the Police or other members of CSPs to set up and support PACTs, they are used widely up and down the country as one mechanism to fulfil this aspect of the policing pledge and as one method of community engagement in a wider landscape of available options.

The Task Group has been unable to find any national guidance on how to set up and run a PACT and there are no established standards or performance indicators against which the effectiveness of individual PACTS can be measured. However, there are some good examples of best practice as set out later in this report.

(Note: Since the launch of this review the Government has removed the Policing Pledge).

(b) Medway Council’s policy framework

As a result of the information and evidence gathered by the Task Group it has established that PACTs in Medway are generally set up initially to address neighbourhood concerns about anti-social behaviour. They are one mechanism for community engagement supported by the Police, the Council and other agencies.

The Council, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) have agreed a range of priorities and performance measures against which progress on community engagement and community safety is being measured. These are set out in the Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy⁴, which is the overarching strategy for Medway, the Council Plan⁵ and Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the Community Safety Plan for 2009-2012² produced and delivered by the CSP.

⁴ See glossary for link to website

⁵ See glossary for link to website

² See glossary for link to website

In each of these documents there is a commitment to the development of the work of PACTs to enable the police and partners to listen and respond to resident's concerns and in particular to involve residents in tackling local crime and anti-social behaviour concerns.

(Note: During the course of this review, the Government has abolished Local Area Agreements).

(c) National and Local Picture

(i) National picture

During the course of this in-depth review a new coalition government has been formed and, therefore, the future development of PACTs has to be considered in the context of the new government's priority of tackling the national deficit, its proposals to involve individuals and communities far more actively in the issues that affect them and the changing performance landscape for crime and policing.

In July 2010 the new Secretary of State for the Home Department introduced proposals for further police reform in a consultation paper entitled "Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting police and the People"⁶. This prefaces a Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill expected later in the year. The proposed reforms include the introduction of directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners and regular beat meetings that will allow people to challenge the police's performance together with accessible "street level" crime data. In addition the coalition government has expressed its commitment to providing new funds for neighbourhood groups, charities, social enterprises and other non-government bodies.

(ii) Local Context

Community Engagement

The population of Medway is about 253,500 and is expected to grow to 280,000 by 2026. It is younger than the national average but it is ageing faster.

The Council knows that locally people of different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds prefer a variety of methods of engagement - from using the internet to face-to-face contact. A wide variety of forums, community groups and alternative initiatives are therefore used in Medway in an effort to achieve high levels of community engagement. PACTs are one of these methods.

In a survey earlier in 2010, members of the Medway Citizen's Panel were asked to indicate **which of the following would help to make them feel more a part of the community**. As can be seen a high percentage of the 718 respondents said that being more involved in decisions about the community and being involved in making the community safer would help.

⁶ See glossary for link to website

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	Respondent %
Being involved in decisions about the community	59
Getting to know the neighbours	56
Being involved in making the community safer	52
Being involved in making the community tidier	47
Having organised community activities	43
Having more community centres	35
Knowing more about the different backgrounds of people within the community	29
Other	7

Similarly, in the Medway Residents Opinion Poll conducted in the Autumn of 2009, residents were asked to identify from a range of options the single improvement that would do most to make things better. 82% of respondents identified community safety and crime as the single improvement that would do most to make things better.

These survey outcomes establish that local people welcome initiatives such as PACTS as a vehicle for establishing community cohesion and tackling the issues of most importance at neighbourhood level.

Local priorities, actions and performance indicators

The Council and its partners have already established a range of priorities, actions and performance measures of relevance to this review of the future and effectiveness of PACTs. These can be summarised as follows:

The Council's **Sustainable Community Strategy**⁴ prioritises a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime and anti social behaviour with a commitment to a range of actions in pursuance of this target, including the **continuation of development of community engagement through such initiatives as PACTs**.

Safer Communities is one of the 6 priorities in **Medway's Council Plan**⁵. Key outcomes under this priority include improving community cohesion, reducing antisocial behaviour, criminal damage and youth crime, and reducing the fear of crime and improving public confidence.

⁴ See glossary for link to website

⁵ See glossary for link to website

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In order to reduce the fear of crime and improve public confidence the aim is to increase public awareness about anti-crime initiatives and provide an accessible partnership to tackle the perception of crime. **Supporting the PACT process to involve residents in tackling local crime and antisocial behaviour concerns is identified as a key action.**

Although **Local Area Agreements (LAAs)** have now been abolished, at the start of this indepth review the Medway LAA included National Indicator 4, which measured the % of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality and this is still a local priority. **The associated action plan⁹ for delivery of this target included the aim of producing PACT data on a quarterly basis to identify ward by ward public priorities.**

The Community Safety Plan for 2009-2012², delivery of which is the responsibility of the Medway Community Safety Partnership (under the umbrella of the LSP), also includes several priorities of direct relevance to this review of PACTS. In the introduction to the plan Councillor Mike O'Brien, Medway Council's Cabinet member for community safety and enforcement and Vice Chairman of the CSP, says:

"We continue to actively listen to the issues facing our residents through the current PACT and other neighbourhood and community groups. We believe that the strength and commitment of the individual partners and this positive engagement through PACTs leads to an improvement in the quality of life for all residents"

The Plan acknowledges the role played by PACTs in helping to shape the priorities for the CSP.

Of the five priorities in the Community Safety Plan 2009-2012 the following are of particular relevance to this review:

- Priority 2 – Tackling anti-social behaviour, including criminal damage
- Priority 4 – Improving your local street scene
- Priority 5 - Reducing your worry of crime and disorder and
- Priority 6 - improving your confidence in Medway Community Safety Partnership.

In particular, under Priorities 5 and 6, the Plan makes **a commitment to the development of Street Pacts to be attended by the Police and Community Officers and states that work is ongoing to share information about PACTs.**

There is an established view locally that PACTs are a "good thing" and this is reflected in the relevant Council and Partnership policies and strategies.

PACTs are regarded as key to delivery of effective community engagement, establishing neighbourhood priorities for the police and other agencies and reducing fear of crime and improving public confidence.

⁹ See glossary for link to website

² See glossary for link to website

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In summary, the actions already identified to secure the future development of PACTs in Medway are as follows:

- **Ongoing support for PACTS as part of overall community engagement**
- **Supporting the PACT process to involve residents in tackling local crime and antisocial behaviour concerns**
- **producing PACT data on a quarterly basis to identify ward by ward public priorities**
- **development of Street Pacts to be attended by the Police and Community Officers**
- **work to ensure that information about PACTs is shared.**

5. OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

Terms of reference

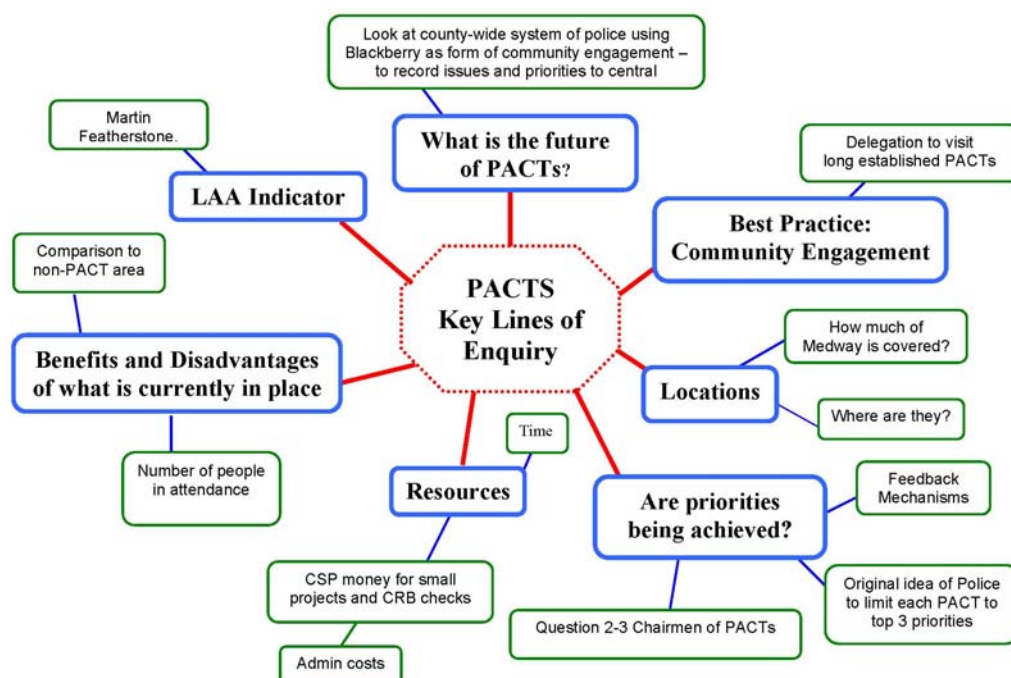
On 22 March 2010, the task group met to scope the review and determine its detailed terms of reference. At this point the group also considered the evidence it would wish to collect and the methodology for the review.

The task group agreed the following terms of reference:

To undertake an in-depth review of the effectiveness and future of the Partner and Communities Together (PACT) schemes within Medway including:

- to locate provision of PACTs in Medway and best practice within Medway and/or elsewhere
- to examine the difficulty of the same issues being raised at meetings over time and whether each scheme's priorities are being achieved and maintained and if not, why not
- to investigate the benefits/disadvantages of PACT schemes and engagement of partners in the process, especially when compared to areas not covered by a scheme and whether they really benefit the communities involved
- to examine whether PACT schemes provide value for money and are contributing towards delivery of LAA indicator NI 4 - the % of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their community
- to investigate possible future work activities for PACT schemes.

Members also identified possible key lines of enquiry as follows:



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Methodology and approach

The approach, methodology and programme for the review is set out below:

Date	Others present	Invitees	Where	Purpose of event
11 May 2010	Councillors Bhutia, Hicks and Sutton	Local residents	Gillingham Green PACT	Observe an 'open' PACT meeting.
13 May 2010	Councillors Bhutia, Godwin and Sutton	Chief Inspector Mark Arnold and Inspector Richard Cherry	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	Invite evidence from the Police about PACTs.
18 May 2010	Councillors Godwin and Hicks	Martin Featherstone, CVS – lead partner for NI 4	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	To raise questions about possible PACT information received to aid the indicator.
20 May 2010	Councillors Bhutia, Hicks and Sutton	Kevin King, Chairman of Gillingham Green PACT Stephen Williams, Chairman of Ordnance Street PACT	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	Discussion with PACT Chairmen on the practicalities of running a PACT and future of PACTs.
June			Questionnaires Local	Sent to all Councillors inviting them to provide information and comment on active PACTs in their wards
27 July	Councillors Hicks and Sutton	Clem Smith, Social Regeneration Manager	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	Discussion about PACTS in context of other method so for community engagement and social regeneration.

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Date	Others present	Invitees	Where	Purpose of event
11 August	Councillors Bhutia, Godwin, Hicks and Sutton	Councillor Mike O'Brien, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Enforcement Andy McGrath, Assitant Director, Frontline Services	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	To take evidence from the Council's Portfolio Holder and officers on various aspects of PACTs.
August			Questionnaires PACT Chairmen	Questionnaire sent to PACT Chairmen to seek feedback about role and effectiveness of PACTs
14 September 2010	Councillors Bhutia, Godwin, Hicks and Sutton	None	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	To discuss the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review.
2 November 2010	Councillors Bhutia, Godwin, Hicks and Sutton	None	Council offices, Gun Wharf, Chatham	To sign off the final report

6. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE COLLECTED

The locations and priorities of PACTs in Medway

One aim of the Task Group was to establish how many active PACTs there are in Medway, the neighbourhood areas they cover and to identify the issues and priorities they have identified for the police, the council and other agencies to focus on at a local level. A particular issue for the Task Group was the perceived difficulty of the same issues being raised over time at PACT meetings.

When the Task Group began this review, it was acknowledged by the police and the council that there is no definitive list of how many PACTs there are locally or the areas they cover. Neither has there been any systematic recording or evaluation of the issues and priorities identified by PACTs or whether they are effective in achieving good and lasting outcomes for local communities.

In view of this, the Task Group looked at the neighbourhood policing section¹¹ of the Kent police website which enables members of the public to enter a postcode to get in touch with the local policing team in their ward and find the dates for neighbourhood meetings and other community engagement events, such as mobile police events involving partner agencies (including PACTs). The Task Group also found useful information about the principal policing priority for each ward in Medway on the Community Safety Partnership's website¹². This is part of the You said – we did initiative. However there appears to be no information available to the public about the priorities agreed at PACT meetings and the action taken as a consequence. All the available information is at ward or Medway-wide levels rather than PACT level.

In order to find out more about the operation of PACTs in Medway the Task Group devised a questionnaire which was sent to all members of the council asking them to provide feedback on the activities of PACTS in their wards. A summary of the responses received from Councillors is set out in Appendix 2 to this report

A different, more detailed, questionnaire was sent to PACT Chairmen (where their contact details were known) and a summary of the responses received to that questionnaire is attached at Appendix 3.

Having considered available information and feedback from the questionnaires the Task Group has established:

- a list of Neighbourhood Panels in Medway drawn from information provided on the Kent Police website and feedback from the questionnaires sent out to Councillors and PACT Chairmen. This list shows there are currently 22 PACTs in Medway and is attached at

¹¹ See glossary for link to website

¹² See glossary for link to website

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Appendix 1 together with a map of the location of current PACTs ward by ward (insofar as the Task Group could determine). However further work is required to ensure this list is definitive.

- that typically, PACTs in Medway are set up in the first instance to deal with concerns about anti-social behaviour and are well supported by Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Council staff together with staff from other relevant agencies as appropriate.
- That local councillors, police officers, PCSOs and the council's community safety officers are usually the initial attendees at PACT meetings unless the subject to be discussed is a specific issue involving housing, health or another topic. In these cases the appropriate organisation is invited to attend to assist in the discussion.
- That occasionally the formation of a new PACT may be suggested to the police by the council's community safety team.
- That a local venue is chosen, usually a church hall, school, library or community centre and leaflets are distributed in the local area inviting residents to attend a public meeting about the specific issue.
- That once the first meeting has been held, if further meetings are required, local residents are asked to volunteer to chair and run them and also to distribute leaflets and inform and encourage other residents to attend the meetings.
- That each PACT operates very differently depending largely on the availability, capacity and enthusiasm of the Chairman and other participants.
- That there is significant variation in levels of attendance by local residents between different PACTs.
- That the subjects discussed at PACTs are similar.
- That PACT Chairmen would welcome more formal support especially when a PACT is formed and may also find the establishment of a forum for PACT Chairmen to meet periodically to share experiences and ideas and discuss best practice to be of value.

Visit to Gillingham Green PACT meeting – 11 May 2010

On 11 May 2010 the Task Group attended the Gillingham Green PACT meeting held in a church sited in the middle of the green. The newsletter publicising this meeting is shown below.



NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE RESIDENTS AROUND GILLINGHAM GREEN

Experts or vandals?

We start this edition of your community newsletter - *On The Green* - with details of the state and condition of the lime trees on the green around the church. You have no doubt noticed that many of the trees have been severely pruned, or 'pollarded' as it is properly called, during the early part of this year. Many people were shocked and dismayed by this "heavy handed vandalism" and made their feelings known to us. On your behalf we contacted Medway Council who went to great lengths to explain the reasoning for the pollarding. The limes are obviously very old trees and without careful management and, what appears to us, some quite drastic immediate action, we risk losing the trees forever. Limes are very fast growing trees and will start producing new growth very quickly, and the long term benefits to the tree itself of pollarding far outweigh the harshness of the treatment now. We asked the council to consider a more structured and long term programme of tree management for our trees in the future, rather than the 'all in one fell swoop' approach that seems to have happened so far, this they have agreed to do and will, in the future, consult us before carrying out



any work. We cannot, and do not wish to, stop the management of our trees, as their long term survival is very important to us. We just have to accept that in this case we have to be cruel to be kind.

It's picnic time again!

Make a note in your diary, this year's *Picnic on the Green* will take place on **Sunday, 18 July** with a litter-pick on the green the day before. Those of you that came last year will know what a wonderful event it was, and if you didn't make it last year don't miss out this time! We're going to try and make it bigger and better than last year and get even more people to attend. As before we'll link into the national Big Lunch event. You can find out more about the picnics and street parties that took place all over the country last year by visiting www.thebiglunch.com



We want to hear your views and ideas

The Gillingham Green community group and PACT panel has been operating for over two years and we think we've achieved some very positive results. We have built up a strong working partnership with Medway Council, the police and the members of St Mary Magdalene church. But we can only speak and act for those members of the community that speak to us. We are really interested to hear what you have to say about the area where you live, whether it be good or bad. If it's good then share it with your neighbours, if it's bad then let's do something about it. Don't forget we live here too so what affects you affects us. We can't work miracles but we can stand together and continue to make our area of Gillingham a very special place to live. **We're particularly interested to hear what our younger residents have to say.** All too often the youths in our community are frowned upon and branded as a nuisance or behaving in a threatening way, we know that's not always the case and more often than not they're just bored and want something to do or somewhere to go. So come and talk to us, you never know we might be able to help.

We're holding a **community meeting** on

Tuesday 11 May at 7.30pm

Everyone is welcome to come along and have their say, and hopefully there'll be representatives from Medway Council and members of our local police officers on hand to answer your questions or give you some information and guidance on something that might be bothering you. Reverend Suzanne Pattle has very kindly said we can meet in the church so please do try and come along. If you can't make that evening or don't want to voice your views or opinions in a public meeting then let us know and we'll speak on your behalf, everything you tell us will be treated confidentially so don't be afraid to say exactly what you want.

Contact **Kevin** on 280478 or **Malcolm** on 570331 for more info or to give us details of something you'd like raised at the meeting.

- This PACT has been running for approximately three years and has an established group of local residents helping to arrange meetings and organise local events for the immediate community surrounding the green.
- Approximately 50 local people attended the meeting, including 20 or more young people who attended with a youth worker, as the PACT had specifically wanted to hear from local young people about the issues that concerned and mattered to them.

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- When asked for their priorities, most of the young people stated they would like a football court which would save them playing in the park and scaring off children and parents from using the park as well. They asked if the PACT could apply for lottery funding for this facility.
- They were advised that the PACT would support any ideas put forward and asked whether they would be prepared to help raise some money towards this as well. The young people confirmed that they would be happy to do this.
- The young people reported that glue had been smeared on the top of a wall where they liked to congregate. The community safety officer responded that he would arrange for the wall to be cleaned as soon as possible.
- The young people also stated that they needed somewhere dry to spend time when it is raining. There were discussions about nearby youth centres but it was decided that the local young people could try using a small annexe to the church once a week in the first instance.
- The PACT asked if one or two representative of the young people would become a regular part of the PACT, so that they would continue to have a voice.

Meeting with Kent Police (Medway) – 12 May 2010

Chief Inspector Mark Arnold and Inspector Richard Cherry were invited to give an overview of how they believed PACTs are currently working in Medway and for their views on the future development of PACTs. The information and views they provided to the Task Group are summarised as follows:

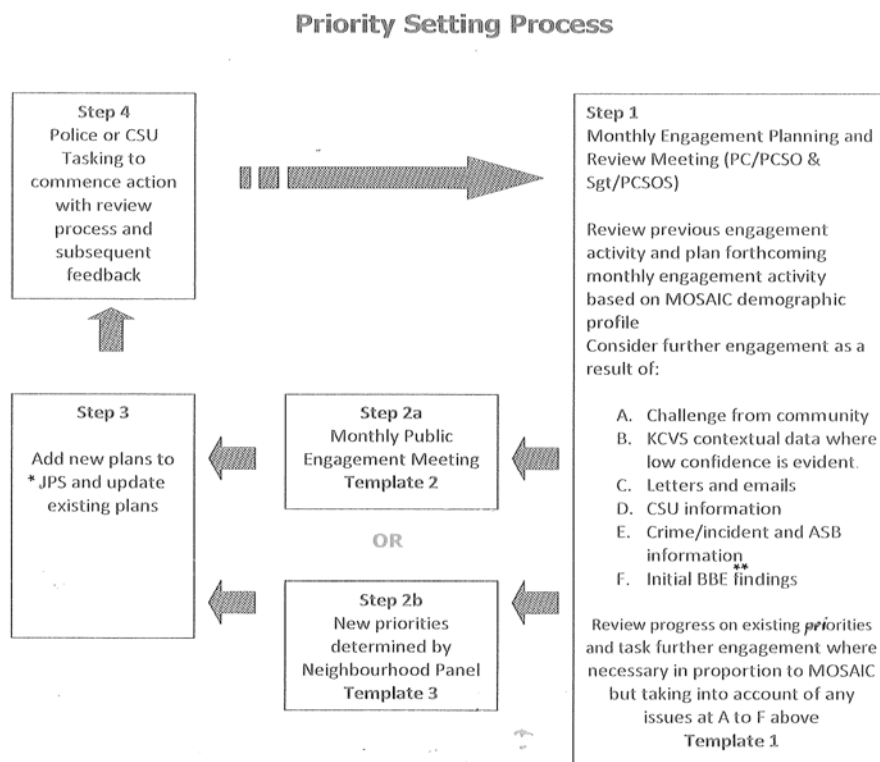
- Overall PACTs are flourishing in Medway. (Note: since providing evidence in May the Police and Kent Police Authority have advised that PACTs in Strood and Chatham Town Centre are about to start. In addition there are plans to hold a dedicated PACT for young people attached to the Delce Road PACT on a trial basis.).
- Neighbourhood Panels (PACTs) are only one of a range of community engagement methods used by the police to establish neighbourhood priorities and meet the standards set out in the policing pledge. The police recognise it is important to offer a range of different opportunities and methods of engagement to include people from a wide range of backgrounds. As an example the police are currently holding PACT meetings on buses and trains for commuters who otherwise would not be able to attend a meeting during the daytime or evening. In addition there are mobile police community engagement events, residents associations and neighbourhood watch schemes all of which involve engagement by residents with the police.

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- The police also make a point of visiting residential care homes, schools and engaging with local businesses to establish a cross- section of views of local priorities.
- A 'Priority Setting Process' paper was circulated (shown overleaf) that explained how police priorities are set. This process aims to ensure a quantifiable way of demonstrating how the police respond to issues raised by local communities. (Note: since May 2010 the Police have discontinued Blackberry engagements except for surveys in high crime hot spot areas or where an incident of a serious nature has taken place or where there have been a cluster of crimes in one shift).
- However, the Police confirmed to the Task Group that currently there is no systematic recording or evaluation of the issues raised and outcomes from PACT meetings.
- The Police are now endeavouring to have at least one monthly meeting at ward level to fulfil the commitment to this in the Policing Pledge. These meetings are led by the Police rather than residents.
- The government has also recently announced its intention to introduce regular 'beat meetings' so that residents can hold the police to account. The CSP in Medway is already exploring innovative ways of reaching residents building on action like train and street PACTs and blackberry instant surveys as outlined above.
- In terms of the current operation of PACTs in Medway the Police take the view that they can be very effective in shaping local police priorities as long as they are well attended by a representative cross- section of the community concerned. There were a number of PACTs in Medway with high levels of representative attendance but this was not the case for all PACTs.
- PACTs are usually set up to deal with crime and disorder issues but often quickly move on to look at local street scene issues impacting on community quality of life which require more significant input by the Council and other agencies. There are clear mechanisms now in place for involving the relevant agency via the Community Safety Partnership.
- Experience has shown that quite often attendance by local residents at PACT meetings declines once the issues identified as police priorities had been successfully resolved.
- The Police had to carefully target the limited resources available for community engagement initiatives. Whilst there is an ongoing commitment to provide support for active PACTs, the police view PACTs as best used to deal with issues of immediate priority for local communities. For example high levels of anti-social behaviour. The Police consider that once issues have been resolved a successful PACT may well close. Other forums often proved better for ongoing longer-term engagement.

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- The overall budget for community engagement in 2010/11 had been reduced from approximately £67,000 to £30,000. Some of this was available to support PACTs. £7,000 was available for use on a case by case basis, although most of this resource had been prioritised to three wards where levels of social deprivation, anti-social behaviour and other socio-economic factors was highest.
- Finally the Police accepted that local people want continuity of police and council attendees. In response, the aim is to keep officers and PCSO's working in the same ward for up to 2-3 years to provide the continuity required - unless there was a very specific operational reason not to.



The above process is shown as separate steps for illustrative purposes. If as a result of engagement, plans need to be worked on or commenced prior to a formal monthly engagement meeting they can still be added to the JPS system BEFORE the monthly meeting and actions commenced. Where practicable it may be valuable to schedule step 2a first then build internal meeting processes around this. This will ensure meetings are close together enabling relevant and up to date information to be available.

* JSP – Joint Problem Solving database

** BBE – BlackBerry engagement (used by PCSOs)

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Step 1

Monthly Internal meeting between officer and supervisor.

Collect together all evidence of engagement for the prior month using template 1 (section 1).

This includes:

Summary of Blackberry engagement

Items as listed A to F

Discuss and then plan any targeted engagement required (section 2)

Set the priorities (section 3)

Step 2a

Hold the monthly public engagement meeting. This can be part of an existing engagement event, main requirements are that the public have the opportunity to challenge the priorities, comment upon them and where necessary have a one to one meeting with their local officer. Officers should take the core information in template 1 to inform the public.

Outcome should be recorded on template 2

Step 2b

Hold the Panel meeting and set the new priorities using the evidence and information collected as above. Discuss and sign off any old plans. Officers should take the core information in template B to inform the meeting.

Outcome should be recorded on template 3.

Step 3

Add to JPS as per existing process.

Step 4

Commence actions and ensure stakeholders are updated.

Meeting with Martin Featherstone, CVS – lead partner for NI 4 (% of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality) – 18 May 2010

The Task Group invited Martin Featherstone to comment on the action being taken to increase the number of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality and to provide his views on the effectiveness and future of PACTs. In response Martin made a number of points:

- Martin highlighted the close link between NI4 and NI1 (the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area). It has been quite difficult to measure NI4 or set related targets. There had been different outcomes from the Place Survey (required by the Government in each local authority area) and Medway's Residents Opinion Poll on this issue. Work was underway to identify proxy public perception questions asked of the public by a range of public sector and voluntary organisations in Medway whilst working on a baseline and target setting for the indicator.
- The current delivery plan for NI4⁹ included assessing how existing work streams could be used to add value to this indicator. For example, Equality Impact Assessments, effective monitoring of involvement in the democratic process, capturing findings from the Police Neighbourhood Task Teams and reviewing the impact of Neighbourhood Action Plans.

⁹ See glossary for link to website

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- A Community Cohesion Conference had been held on the issue of diversity. There had been discussion at the conference about how to make people feel they can influence decisions and some of the suggestions made included:
 - Youth ward councillors
 - Making it mandatory to vote
 - Moving the same conference out into the community
 - Running a summer fair
 - Building awareness of the cultural offer in Medway
 - Health initiatives.
- Examples of other specific initiatives so far had been the VOICE community forum and PCSO's using blackberry technology as an engagement tool.
- One of the actions within the NI4 delivery plan was the production of PACT data on a quarterly basis to identify ward by ward priorities. However, at an operational level there were capacity problems with producing this information. PACTs and police analysts needed to formalise the process of capturing and reporting data about the work of PACTs.
- Martin agreed with the view of the Task Group that work should be done to ensure that PACTs were contributing to community cohesion¹⁰ and improved cultural awareness. He suggested asking the Equalities and Cohesion Group (a partnership group under the umbrella of the LSP) to support the CSP in taking this forward in terms of best practice guidance for PACTs.

(**Note:** this session with Martin Featherstone took place before the abolition of the LAA and suspension of the 2010 Place Survey).

Meeting with PACT Chairmen – 20 May 2010

The Task Group sent invitations to a number of PACT Chairmen. In response, the Chairman of Gillingham Green PACT and the Chairman of Ordnance Street PACT agreed to meet with the Task Group. Both these PACTs had been running for over three years and the Chairmen spoke about their PACTs and the experience they had in setting them up and what the priorities had been.

Ordnance Street PACT

- The Ordnance Street PACT had been established because of local agitation and residents had approached the police, who were receptive to dealing with the problems and played a key role in setting up the PACT. Two public meetings were held before the PACT was officially formed. 60 people attended the public meetings and approximately 25 were at the initial PACT meetings.

¹⁰ See glossary for link to website

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- The Task Group was informed that the original problems in Ordnance Street had been prostitution, drugs, gangs, anti-social behaviour and drinking. Medway Homes (mhs) and police worked over a period of time to address the specific issues and as the position improved the streets had become noticeably quieter. The problems raised more recently at the PACT had been parking and refuse bin collection problems. This was a big difference from three years ago and not on the same type or scale of problem. However the Chairman was currently unsure what ongoing support and resource was available to the PACT beyond law and order issues.
- The number of people attending this PACT had declined as ongoing improvements in the area had been achieved. The PACT was now a majority female group that met, on average, every 8 – 10 weeks with 12 regular residents and 5 - 6 partners attending.
- Attendees were e-mailed to inform them of future meetings. The chairman also produced posters, from his own money, to put up in local pubs. He had tried using shops but that did not seem to work so well.
- A lasting benefit of the establishment of the PACT was the links made between the attendees and various partner agencies. They were often people who would not raise an issue via the telephone and preferred to come along to a PACT meeting for face to face contact. The Chairman actively encouraged people in raising short-term issues that last between 2-3 months and that seemed to work well.
- The Task Group asked about diversity and community cohesion and whether there were representatives from a wide range of ages and groups attending PACT meetings. The Chairman of the Ordnance Street PACT felt that ethnic minority communities were under-represented at PACT meetings. He reported that regular attendees tended to be white and aged between 35 – 70 years of age. He thought the conventional format for PACT meetings may not appeal to people below the age of 35 which was a particular issue for this PACT as there were a high number of students living in the area and their voice was not being heard at PACT meetings.

Gillingham Green PACT

- Initially a public meeting had been called at Gillingham Green with the police and the council about anti-social behaviour which had resulted in a committee of people prepared to take on the tasks of running a PACT.
- The Chairman went on to state that young people are often blamed as 'part of the problem' and the source of many complaints from other residents when it was often a 'them and us' culture. A youth worker had been invited to a PACT meeting as it had always been one of the

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main intentions of the PACT to involve the youth of the area. An interim meeting had then been held with the youth worker and when he left that meeting he had walked across to talk to a group of young people nearby about the PACT. The youth worker was also kept up-to-date with copies of the PACT newsletter.

General

- The publicity used for both of the PACTs had been via e-mail, newsletters and adverts in local pubs and shops. Both Chairmen agreed that originally they had targeted too large an area for the PACT but by default it had reverted back to the immediate area. If the area is extended too widely the problems raised are not relevant to all the residents.
- Both chairmen expressed the view that a PACT should only focus on 2-3 key issues, otherwise there was too much to cope with and nothing would be achieved. Some problems could never be completely solved, such as prostitution and drug taking, so the PACT needed to bring residents back to areas that could be influenced or controlled. However, local, in-depth, community knowledge was invaluable to the police, council and other agencies, especially to help with enforcement of issues.
- Both Chairmen stated that it was vitally important to have continuity of police officer representation, as currently the police kept moving officers on to other areas. It was important to know people's names and faces and what the current issues are, rather than having to repeat them every meeting to a new person representing that organisation.
- The Chairmen suggested that when a PACT is first set up, training and an overview of 'the system' would be a good idea, especially about any capacity they might have, as Chairmen, to invite a range of people and who they could, and could not, invite.
- The Chairmen were asked if they thought a forum for PACT Chairmen would be useful. Both Chairmen responded that meeting each other at this session had been invaluable to both of them and they would definitely support this idea. It would be extremely useful to exchange and share ideas, problems, solutions, advice and understand what help was available. PACTs currently worked in isolation and were unaware of the others existence.
- The Chairmen added that it was good to now know they are part of a larger group but that it would also be useful to know who was involved and where they were located. They also offered their time and support to any new PACT Chairmen, or those having problems, to assist them in any way required. They felt that it would be especially helpful for new Chairmen, particularly for the first two to three meetings. One Chairman advised that he had been fortunate to have been invited to attend several Community Safety Partnership events but the other

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Chairman was unaware of them. These events were very useful and a good opportunity to mix, listen and network with others and it would be extremely useful and important that other Chairmen also have the opportunity to attend in the future.

- The Chairman for the Ordnance Street PACT asked if there was a 'natural lifespan' for a PACT unless it took on more of a community role. His view, based on his own experience, was that a three year lifespan was a suitable time as his PACT had been running for that length of time and he was now thinking about the direction it should go in. As a community they had tackled all their major issues and the area was substantially better. Other than community days with funding from others, he could not see in what direction the PACT would go next.
- Both Chairmen also asked about resources and funding. The Chairman of the Gillingham Green PACT explained that he was particularly lucky to have two residents who attended the meetings and were able to help produce newsletters and write minutes. The newsletters were passed to him to be checked and then e-mailed through to the police who printed them. There were about 3-4 newsletters a year plus periodic advertising of events. The Chairman of the Ordnance Street PACT stated that he was unaware that support with printing was available from the Police and re-iterated that he produced the PACT newsletters at his own expense.

Meeting with Clem Smith, Medway's Social Regeneration Manager – 27 July 2010

The Social Regeneration Manager had been invited to attend, as over the last few years he had co-ordinated successful community engagement in specific Medway neighbourhoods where social regeneration had been identified as a priority because of high levels of social deprivation, anti-social behaviour and other socio-economic factors. The Task Group invited him to share with them his experience of using different and targeted methods of community engagement. His comments are summarised as follows:

- Between 2005 and 2008 officers had developed a programme of workshops on local community issues in particular neighbourhoods where residents were feeling marginalised. This year a further 10 refresher workshops were being held for residents to monitor and assess progress. The workshops were promoted through community newsletters and in some neighbourhoods there had been doorstep interviews and doorstep leafleting. In other areas the workshops had been promoted through schools and nurseries.
- The attendance at each workshop varied dramatically with the best attended by about 60 residents and another by only 6. This also corresponded to the level of general willingness to engage but on the whole they were successful and where they were not, a doorstep survey was undertaken.

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- The purpose of the workshops was to get residents' perspective of what they thought regeneration priorities should be. Facilitated discussion groups took place covering specific themes and culminating in conclusions about remedial action required to address the issues identified. Officers took these ideas away to see what was viable and reported back with an action plan.
- A variety of people and organisations had attended, ranging from ward councillors, police, housing officers and partners, NHS Medway, schools, Job Centre Plus, libraries, benefits team and others.
- The two most common issues raised were anti-social behaviour and questions about community safety. After these two main issues, litter, flytipping, alleygates and general area clean-ups had been high on the list. Other feedback had included better access to services and delivery of those services in local facilities. On the back of these issues officers had developed and delivered key initiatives.
- An independent facilitator ran the workshops, so people could participate as equals. Interim meetings were held by community and residents' groups, chaired by their usual chairmen. There had been funding available as part of 'capacity building of local community organisations' and this had helped the establishment of a residents' association in one area with on-going advice to that association.
- Measurable timescales and clear outcomes had been agreed for delivery of agreed actions.
- Specific workshops had been arranged with the help of the Ethnic Minorities Forum. Following one of these, the momentum was continued to form a Slovak/Czech Community Organisation which is starting to organise cultural events.
- The social regeneration team was now looking at other ways of engaging the local community. This included use of new media, such as Facebook, Twitter, texts, etc. particularly for young people. A good example of this was the new White Road Youth Forum - this had been very successful as officers had used Facebook to communicate with local youths and 50 young people had signed up to it.
- The Social Regeneration Manager stated that whilst all partners and organisations would be under significant financial pressure, it was encouraging to note that the coalition government had indicated its support for the future for local community groups. However in his view the challenge for local public sector organisations and voluntary groups would be to target the limited resources available for community engagement initiatives in the most effective way.

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Meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Enforcement, the Assistant Director for Frontline Services, the Community Safety Partnership Manager and the Community Safety Manager – 11 August 2010

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mike O'Brien and officers asked the Task Group to take the following points into account:

- The Portfolio Holder expressed the view that PACTs are an absolutely essential part of the democratic process for consultation with residents. The PACTs he had visited so far all seemed active and well attended. The issues being raised were virtually the same across the authority: speeding motorists; requests for, CCTV, parking enforcement, car parking; dog fouling and graffiti. Every PACT he had visited had a local resident acting as Chairman – some of whom had been very good in that role.
- PACTs are usually set up because of a single issue and it was left to the Chairman to drive it forward and explore wider and different issues if residents wished to. The idea of PACTs specifically for young people had been suggested by the Portfolio Holder as all partners would like to see young people more involved. A lot of PACTs and community groups complained about groups of local youngsters and associated them with anti-social behaviour but the young people are not invited to the meetings to give their side of the story.
- Officers emphasised the importance of PACT participants being representative of the local community, otherwise there is a risk that a minority of more vocal residents can dominate the agenda. This is the reason why it is important PACTs are only one part of the wider landscape of community engagement.
- Officers indicated that once the issue a PACT had been set up for had been resolved, there may no longer be a reason for a PACT to continue. The Portfolio Holder added that successful PACTs could evolve into community organisations with the community continuing to work together not just to solve problems but to create community events etc. Other PACTs had reverted to meeting every six months to see if anything had arisen in that time.
- During the review, the Task Group had come across complaints that outcomes are not fed back to the wider community of residents and there is lack of follow up at PACTs. Officers responded that the top three priorities for each PACT are recorded on a database and, provided the council was informed that a meeting is taking place, community safety officers should be present to provide feedback. However this relied on sufficient notice of the meeting being given.
- The Community Safety Partnership had run two public sessions last year purely as a means of providing feedback.

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- PACTs are all located in urban areas and this seemed to be because rural areas have always had Parish Councils to provide an alternative means for residents to raise significant issues.
- The Portfolio Holder and officers were asked whether the creation of a PACT forum to allow the Chairmen the opportunity to learn from each other be a good suggestion. They responded that police funding was available for the training of 'Community Champions' and this could probably be rolled out to cover the training of PACT Chairmen as well.
- The Task Group asked whether an area with a PACT received a higher level of support and input from the Police and Council officers in comparison to those without a PACT. They asked if the police and council were drawn into responding to requests from PACTs as a priority compared with complaints and issues raised through other channels. Officers responded that using the PACT facility was a powerful way to get the police, council and others to address a problem but wherever a request came from it should be given the same priority. The main impact of PACTs on officers was the time spent attending the meetings, rather than an increase in operational workloads.
- There are regular fortnightly meetings between the police, the council and other partners and the fortnightly information (which did not include information or priorities from PACTs) is used to show where to focus resources and gives an opportunity for attendees to also discuss 'hot issues'. The Portfolio Holder added that he also had regular meetings with the Area Commander.
- Officers agreed that persistent problems could be raised time after time at a PACT, sometimes being raised year after year by the same resident. The Task Group suggested that this could be reduced if the quality of feedback given to residents was such that they understood the problems (such as alleygating an alleyway not owned by the council) to stop the same issue being raised.
- There is a link from the council's website to the Community Safety Partnership website¹² (which the council manages) and this is also on Twitter and Facebook for public use.

Best practice in Kent and other areas

In undertaking this review the Task Group did some desktop research into best practice that could be drawn on from elsewhere in order to support the operational arrangements for PACTs in Medway.

Whilst there is no national guidance available there are many examples of good practice up and down the country. Some of these are highlighted below.

¹² See glossary for link to website

Kent: A PACT Handbook is currently available on the Kent Police website¹³. This is described as “a ‘How to guide’ for forming a PACT and getting things done”. It is based on the experiences of a pilot process covering Borough Green, Wrotham and Platt.

There are excellent guidelines available to residents who wish to set up a PACT in **Tonbridge and Malling (T and M)**. These guidelines signpost residents to the full guide on the Kent Police website, referred to above. However T and M have also put procedures in place to ensure that all new PACTs are endorsed by the CSP locally before they start up to ensure they are set up in the right locations, cover the right areas and have appropriate operational arrangements in place. There is a PACT section on the T and M CSP website¹⁴ and an expectation that PACTs will be open and inclusive and publish agendas minutes and action plans on the website.

Caerphilly: PACTs in Caerphilly appear to be set up at ward level and a tool kit has been published with a range of useful templates and suggested formats for use in seeking community views and running meetings. Included in the toolkit is a template for recording the priorities agreed at PACT meetings¹⁵, expected outcomes, target dates and progress made.

Herefordshire: The Herefordshire Partnership recognises PACTs as part of their overall Community Engagement Strategy and have produced comprehensive PACT terms of reference¹⁶ which includes a section on equality of opportunity requiring venues for, and the and format of, meetings to be fully accessible. Clear and accessible records of priorities and actions for each PACT are published in a common format on the internet.

Bristol: In 2008 there were 37 PACT meetings in Bristol with no two alike, erratic attendance and variable approaches to priority setting and decision-making. At that stage sometimes the only agency represented at the meetings was the police. The Bristol division of Avon and Somerset Constabulary carried out an audit of PACT meetings and priority setting to improve quality and consistency. By 2009 greater consistency had been achieved across all PACTs; meetings are now clearly publicised and a set format for meetings has been introduced. A guide to priority setting has been produced and there is a transparent record of decisions.¹⁷ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) cited this work as an example of good practice in its strategic overview of delivery of the policing pledge published in October 2009.

¹³ See glossary for link to website

¹⁴ See glossary for link to website

¹⁵ See glossary for link to website

¹⁶ See glossary for link to website

¹⁷ See glossary for link to website

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall

PACTs are one of many existing and evolving methods being used by the Police and other agencies in Medway to achieve community engagement. Overall the task group believe PACTs are a good way of bringing residents together to develop priorities and action plans at neighbourhood level. The Task Group has been impressed by the commitment and energy shown by residents who are taking part in the active PACTs across Medway. It recognises that a new requirement to hold local beat meetings may add pressure to already stretched policing resources. It will also become increasingly important for PACTs to be able to demonstrate that they are inclusive, representative and effective as they compete for support and resources in a climate of public expenditure reductions.

Set out below are the findings and conclusions of the task group under each section of the original scope of the review for consideration by the Cabinet and Community Safety Partnership. The Task Group would also like to invite the Kent Police Authority to consider and respond to the findings and recommendations in the report.

Location of PACTs in Medway and best practice

Currently there is no coordination of approach to the operational arrangements for Medway PACTs. It has not been possible to acquire a definitive list of PACTs or a comprehensive list of contact details for PACT chairmen. Only limited progress has been made in setting up arrangements to collate and publish PACT data.

Whilst each PACT should be able to organise in a way that suits the local community there are currently no best practice guidelines designed for Medway residents who wish to establish a PACT.

Much could be learnt from the guidelines, toolkits and basic operational standards for PACTs developed by LSPs and CSPs in other areas. It is arguable that support for PACTs should be conditional on them meeting certain basic operational requirements, particularly relating to communication, accessibility and inclusion.

It is also arguable that the most effective PACTs deal with no more than 2-3 issues at any one time.

The Task Group takes the view that ward councillors should always be invited to join PACTs from the outset although this is not currently happening consistently across Medway.

Recommendations:

1. That the CSP should be asked to accelerate action to establish a database of PACTs, the areas they cover and contact details for each should be produced and published ward by ward.

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2. A protocol and guidance for PACTs in Medway should be produced by the CSP in consultation with PACT chairmen, to include a clear statement of purpose, basic operational standards and advice on how to access support and resources.

3. A toolkit should be developed by the CSP to assist PACT Chairman and neighbourhood teams to run meetings, record priorities, actions and outcomes.

4. The protocol for PACTs should include a requirement that Councillors are automatically invited to become members of any PACT within their ward and provided with sufficient notice of meetings.

5. Consideration should be given to facilitating contact between PACT Chairmen by establishing a Medway-wide Forum to enable them to share experience and best practice and to coordinate priorities across wards.

Examination of the difficulty of the same issues being raised at meetings over time and whether each PACT's priorities are being achieved and maintained and if not, why not.

The Task Group has struggled to reach an informed view on this issue as there is no published record of the issues and actions agreed by PACTs over time.

The evidence provided by PACT Chairmen, the Police and Council Officers shows that PACTs are usually set up to deal with local concerns about anti-social behaviour. They either disband once the problems identified have been resolved or go on to tackle wider issues affecting the community such as speeding traffic and the general street scene. Some PACTs have developed a role in organising community events.

Concerns have been raised where attendance at PACT meetings dwindles or where the views of a small but vocal minority group of residents prevail. There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest some PACTs continue to review the same issues time and time again with no visible outcomes.

PACTs are a useful mechanism to target and address a particular problem and may go on to develop a wider role but it seems sensible to periodically review the purpose and effectiveness of PACTs to validate the case for ongoing support to be provided by police and other partners.

The Task Group is firmly of the view that feedback should be provided to the whole community in a PACT area about priorities, action and outcomes generated by PACTs and not just to those who attend the PACT meetings. This would assist all residents to understand why some problems prove to be particularly intractable.

The Task Group is very pleased that the Police and the Council are doing their best to ensure continuity of staffing in neighbourhoods as this is an issue of key concern to residents.

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Recommendations:

6. As part of its annual scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership the Regeneration, Community & Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be provided by the CSP with an update on PACTs, including the priorities, actions and outcomes from them on a ward by ward basis with some evaluation of effectiveness.

7. That the CSP should develop some analysis and comparative information to assist in evaluating the impact of PACTs and other forms of public engagement on the incidence of crime and anti social behaviour ward by ward with a view to providing this information in the quarterly news ward profile information provided to Councillors.

The benefits/disadvantages of PACT schemes and engagement of partners in the process, especially when compared to areas not covered by a scheme and whether they really benefit the communities involved.

Again the Task Group had some difficulty in reaching a considered view on this because of the absence of any comparative information or analysis of the effectiveness of PACTs locally.

However, PACTs are considered to work well when supported by a broad and representative cross-section of the local community and when residents are prepared to put in a lot of commitment, especially the Chairman.

The Police were unable to provide crime statistics for each PACT area against those in a non-PACT area, so no comparison was possible.

However the Task Group believes PACTs should continue in their current format alongside other types of community engagement in order to give people different opportunities to attend whatever type of forum suited them best.

As outlined above, the Task Group is recommending the development of some guidance and a protocol for PACTs to assist residents and partners to understand their purpose and the basic rules of engagement.

The task group also recognises that PACTs may not be the way that some groups (for example, young people) wish to have a voice and that it is important to continue to offer a range of engagement options.

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Recommendations:

8. That the CSP should recommend the Police to continue to fund support for PACTs and extend this to the development of evaluation and analysis of their effectiveness in line with commitment made in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Community Safety Plan.

9. That the Medway Equalities and Cohesion Group should be asked to support the CSP in developing guidance to encourage and achieve participation by the widest cross section of people.

To consider if PACT schemes provide value for money and assist with LAA indicator NI 4 (% of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality)?

Since the launch of this review the Local Area Agreement (LAA) has been abolished and the Place Survey for 2010 cancelled. However NI4 remains a local priority and the Task Group supports the action under NII4 seeking to produce PACT data on a quarterly basis.

There needs to be a clear audit trail produced, with the help of Kent Police's data analysts, to show issues that are regularly raised at PACTs (and other community engagement forums) being presented to the Performance Delivery Group of the Community Safety Partnership for consideration alongside other issues for its annual review of priorities.

The earlier recommendation of the Task Group recognises the importance of periodically reviewing the activities of each PACT to validate the case for ongoing support from the police and other agencies.

In particular the Task Group wishes to emphasise the importance of PACTs reaching out to under represented groups and encouraging their participation.

Recommendation:

10. In addition to ongoing publication of PACT data there should be an opportunity for local residents to periodically provide feedback on the operation of their local PACT and, in particular, the extent to which they feel able to influence decision-making at meetings.

11. That the CSP should encourage and support each PACT to hold an 'open meeting' (with no issues pre-arranged for discussion) specifically to involve local young people and neighbours of different ages and/or ethnic background in order to gain a real understanding of the issues and priorities for those groups.

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12. That the CSP should be asked to progress the idea of Youth PACTs), with membership invited from every secondary school, and the Youth Parliament.

Possible future work activities for PACTs

Since the launch of this review the Government has published “Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting police and the people”⁶ which heightens the emphasis on local communities coming together with the police and other organisations to take collective action to tackle neighbourhood issues. Nationally, neighbourhood agreements are being piloted in 12 areas whereby communities, businesses, local residents, police and other CSP partners formulate a set of mutually agreed obligations and responsibilities to take forward action on agreed priorities. The Government is also promising local beat meetings to enable local people to hold the police to account.

Locally new community engagement trials are also taking place in Medway including establishment of a Youth PACT attached to the Delce Road PACT and Police led “Super Community Engagement” meetings in Strood and All Saints Ward.

However all this has to be considered in the context of diminishing public sector resources and competing demands from a range of community organisations for support.

The Task Group believes it is crucial that resources and funding should continue to be available to PACTs and should be equitably distributed. It is clear that currently some PACT Chairmen are unaware that funding can be provided to pay for newsletters, posters and events to help raise the profile of PACTs within the community.

The Task Group would support an initiative to create a network of PACT Chairmen with a facilitated forum meeting once or twice a year. It is also suggested that PACT Chairmen should receive briefing materials and training.

The Chairman of a new PACT should be given an introduction to the process: who can be invited, what the aim is, and offered the help of an experienced PACT Chairman through the first 2-3 meetings to set the meetings on-course to achieve its aims.

The Task Group commended the police for the event organised in the Autumn of 2009 bringing together representatives of a wide range of organisations in a ward based format under the “We asked – You said” initiative and for the subsequent event in the Spring of 2010 under the banner of “You said – We did”.

All PACT Chairmen should continue to be invited to CSP events to ensure they understand the bigger picture.

⁶ See glossary for link to website

The effectiveness and future of PACTs in Medway

One of the most important issues raised during this review was the inconsistency of arrangements for publicising PACTs. Some PACTs were producing excellent publicity through the distribution of good quality leaflets and newsletters but in others, the publicity was left to the Chairman to try and circulate homemade posters in local shops and pubs.

In addition to notifying PACT Chairmen how to access funding it was felt that the CSP media officer could be working with PACTs to help them with this task.

Recommendations:

13. The CSP is recommended to invite all LSP partners to review their community engagement strategies and the groups and organisations they support to eliminate duplication and maximise the use of, and support for, PACTs where possible and appropriate.

14. That the CSP should be invited to consider launching a Medway annual PACT recognition award scheme to help raise the public profile of PACTs, particularly in the local press.

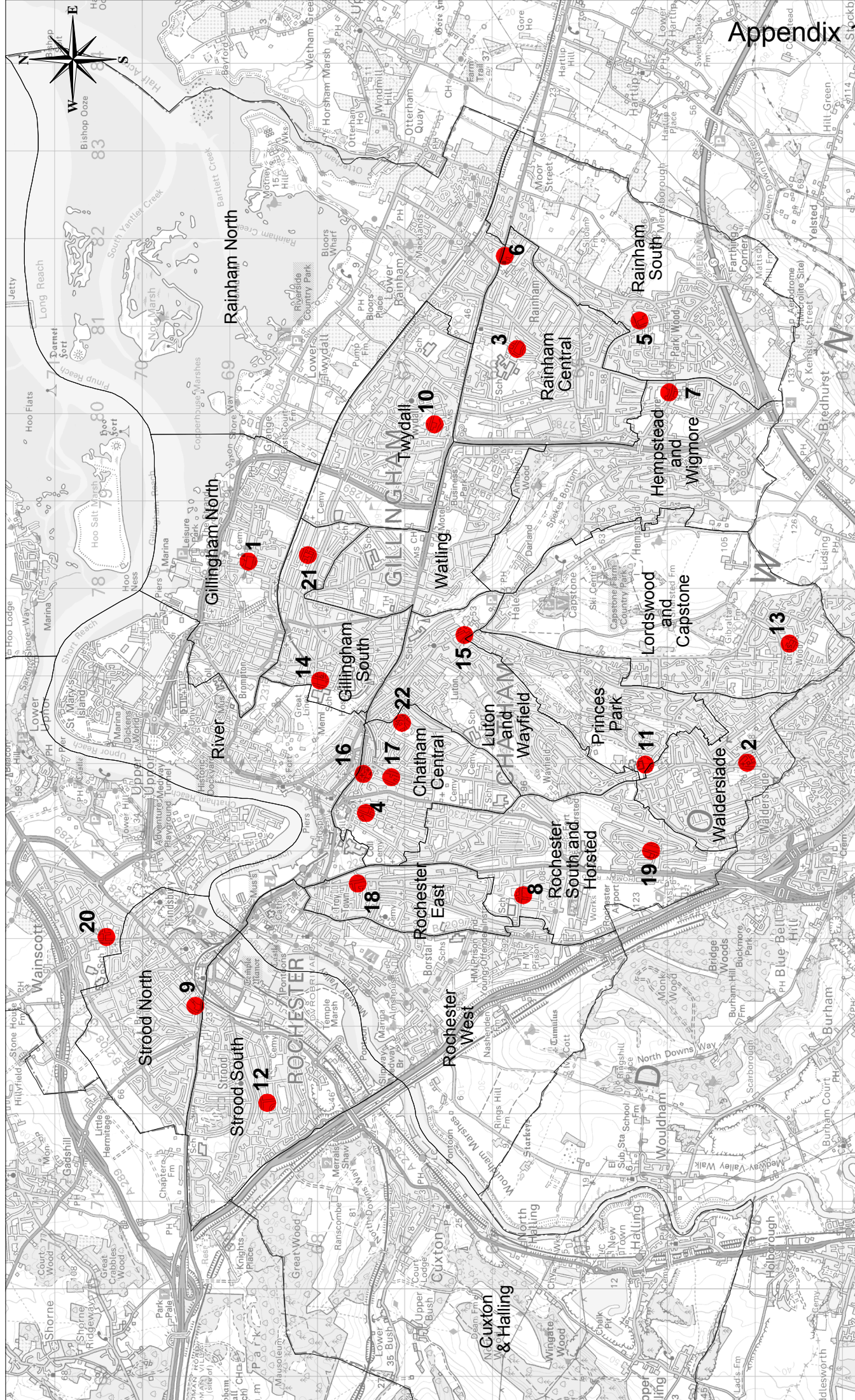
15. That the CSP Media Officer should be asked to develop some guidelines and offer practical support to PACTs with production and publication of advertising material for meetings.

8. GLOSSARY

1. Police and Justice Act 2006 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/48/contents>
2. Community Safety Partnership Plan 2009–2012
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/cspplan09.pdf>
3. Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime (June 2008)
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/corp/assets/publications/crim e/cc_responses.pdf
4. Medway Sustainable Community Strategy -
http://www.medway.gov.uk/sustainable_com_strategy_web.pdf
5. Council Plan http://www.medway.gov.uk/pdf/council_plan_2010-13_v10.pdf
6. Policing in the 21st Century: reconnecting police and the people
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/consultations/policing-21st-century/>
7. The Coalition: our programme for government -
<http://programmeforgovernment.hmg.gov.uk/files/2010/05/coalition-programme.pdf>
8. Local Area Agreement targets
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/council/policy/laa.htm>
9. NI 4 Action Plan (% of people who feel they can influence decision-making in their locality) http://www.medway.gov.uk/ni_4_delivery_action_plan_0809.pdf
10. Community Cohesion
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/communityandliving/partnerswiththecommunity/communitycohesion.aspx>
11. Neighbourhood Policing
<http://www.kent.police.uk/Your%20Area/medway/index.html>
12. Community Safety Partnership - <http://sites.medway.gov.uk/mcsp/>
13. PACT Handbook
http://www.kent.police.uk/about_us/neighbourhood_policing/attachments/PACTHandbook.pdf
14. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council guidelines and PACT web page
http://www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk/assets/PACT_guidance.pdf
<http://www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk/cgi-bin/buildpage.pl?mysql=55>
15. Caerphilly <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/saferccb/english/involved/pact.html>

The effectiveness and future of PACTs in Medway

16. Herefordshire
<http://www.herefordshirepartnership.com/4BF9FCCAC13D4B5C9D4C75AAB51AA2DF.aspx>
17. Bristol
<http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/information/documents/Section.aspx?s=55>



PACTs in Medway (November 2010)

Appendix 1

List of PACTs (Neighbourhood Panels) in Medway

Ward	No. on map	Name	Location
Chatham Central	4	Ordnance Street	Evangelical Church, Ordnance Street
	17	Charter Street	Trafalgar Maid, Warner Street
	22	All Saints* (+ Luton & Wayfield)	All Saints Church, Magpie Hall Road*
Gillingham North	1	Gillingham Green	St Mary of Magdalene Church, Gillingham Green
Gillingham South	14	unknown	St Mary's Irish Club, Alleyway off College Avenue
	21	Sunnymede Ave, Toronto Rd, Linden Rd & Ferndale Ave.	Gillingham Football Club
Hempstead and Wigmore	7	Hempstead and Wigmore	Fairview Library, Fairview Avenue or Hempstead Shopping Centre (outside Wallis) or Hempstead Road (outside the Co-op)
Lordswood & Capstone	13	Kestrel Road	St David's Methodists and Church of England Parish, Kestrel Close or The Soapbox Community Café, Kestrel Road
Luton & Wayfield	15	Luton Residents	Nelson Court Day Centre, Nelson Terrace
	22	All Saints* (+ Chatham Central)	All Saints Church, Magpie Hall Road*
(* operating in both	Chatham	Central and Luton	& Wayfield wards)

Appendix 1

Ward	No. on map	Name	Location
Rainham Central	3	Rainham Central	Rainham Girls School, Derwent Way
	6	St Margaret's Rainham	High Street/Station Road, Rainham
Rainham South	5	Barleycorn	Parkwood Infants school, Deanwood Drive, Rainham
River	16	New Road	Chatham Unitarian Church, New Road
Rochester East	18	Delce Road	St Peter's Church, Delce Road (piloting youth PACT group)
Rochester South & Horsted	8	Warren Wood	Warren Wood Primary School
	19	Davis Estate	Davis Estate Community Centre
Strood North	9	Central Strood	Strood Youth Centre, Montfort Road, Strood
Strood Rural	20	Cooling Road	Hilltop School, Hilltop Road, Strood
Strood South	12	Hawthorn and Cedar Roads	Woodside Community Centre, Chestnut Road
Twydall	10	Twydall	St Thomas Junior School, Romany Road
Walderslade	2	Walderslade Village	St William's Church, Walderslade Road
	11	Weedswood	Greenacre School

WARDS WITHOUT PACTs

Cuxton & Halling, Peninsula, Princes Park, Rochester West and Watling.

PACT QUESTIONNAIRES TO COUNCILLORS

Ward	Name of PACT	Issues covered	Feedback and advertising	Other information
Chatham Central	1. Charter Street PACT	Anti-social behaviour and rubbish in alleyways	Feedback is verbally at the next meeting. Advertising – word of mouth, e-mail, sometimes in local paper	Meets approx. every 2 months
	2. Ordnance Street PACT			
Lordswood & Capstone	Kestrel shopping parade and GLC Estate, Lordswood	Youth-related problems	Leaflets and follow-up meetings	Meets approx. every 6 weeks in a library. Problems not dealt with involve mhs homes, who never/rarely attend
Peninsula	No PACTs			
Princes Park	No PACT at present – currently trying to re-form one.			
Rainham Central	1. Barleycorn PACT 2. Derwent Way PACT 3. St. Margarets PACT 4. Wigmore PACT	Anti-social behaviour, parking, traffic and litter	3 issues identified at each meeting with feedback to following meeting	Ranging from every 8 weeks – 6 months

Ward	Name	Issues covered	Feedback and advertising	Other information
Rainham South	No PACT			
Rochester East	1. Delce and surrounding areas 2. Upper part of Warren Wood – due to start Autumn 2010	Anti-social behaviour Illegal drinking Lack of green space Lack of youth clubs In response to residents requests (not disclosed)	Councillors make notes and provide feedback at next meeting, or by letter to complainant.	
Rochester South & Horsted	1. Davis Estate 2. Warren Wood	All local difficulties	Police inform Cllrs. who remain in touch with residents on non-police matters	Every 4 weeks
Strood North	1. The friends of Broomhill 2. Strood town centre forum 3. Frindsbury PACT 4. Strood North PACT	Anti-social behaviour Commercial well-being Unknown Unknown		Feedback to following meeting. No's 1 & 2 act in a very similar way to PACTs. Ward cllrs not informed of new PACT No. 4
Strood South	No PACT			

Ward	Name	Issues covered	Feedback and advertising	Other information
Twydall	Twydall PACT	Public rights of way issues (hope to widen to other issues soon)	Feedback to following meeting. Flyers are distributed.	Every 6 weeks
Watling	No PACTs			
Walderslade	1. Walderslade village 2. Weedswood PACT			1. meets regularly 2. Meets 'as and when'

No response was received from other ward councillors.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM PACT CHAIRMEN

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets, Rainham
On average, how many local residents attend?	6	Open meetings – 40+ Committee meetings 8-12	2	26 – 51	Average 8 – 10	Average - 12	4 –10. Important issues 20+
Which partners regularly attend your PACT?	Police and local councillors (councillors)	Police, ward councillors, safer communities officers, church reps, youth workers	Police, council, youth services, NHW, shop keepers	Police, housing providers, youth offending team, local councillors, guest speakers	Police, ward cllr, MHS Homes, community safety, school. Others by invitation – council officers	Police/PCSO Council SCOs Ward Councillors School reps	Police, Councillors, pub landlord, council reps, as required
Is your PACT attended by all parts of the community eg. young people, the elderly, ethnic minorities, etc.	Only 35 years + - mainly due to not being interested in problems or not aware of PACT	Ranges from 16 to 70+. Some people from ethnic minority communities do attend open meetings	Poorly attended unless by a specific group with a specific problem/issue	No-one under 25. Perhaps this type of forum is not for them. We would welcome advice on how to attract this group	No youth – mhs homes has relocated many youths out of area to tackle gang culture. Good cross section of adult ages but not a significant attendance from ethnic minorities	Mostly over 50's Occasionally 1- 2 school children Area low in ethnic minority groups	Not measured. Open to all.

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets, Rainham
Has there been any specific attempts to invite different residents?	Leaflet drop last year, had no real impact	Local youths were invited through a youth worker and encouraged them to ask questions and give views (see notes on pages 23 & 24 of this report)	Advertised through Neighbourhood Watch, local shops and youth services	Regularly deliver 1,000 leaflets advertising the quarterly meetings door to door over as wide an area as possible. Posters in local shops and other public places.	Mail drops on a regular basis with 'open meetings' have boosted numbers for short periods. Notices in local shops and pubs have proved more successful and the landlord has pointed many people in the direction of the PACT.	Police/PCSOs originally delivered info leaflets but were ineffective	Leaflet invitations into all houses in area
How often does your PACT meet?	Every 6 months (originally it was every 2 months)	Committee meets every 2 months with 3 open meetings per year	Every 2-3 months	Public meeting every 3 months + committee meetings at same interval or more regularly	Approx every 8 weeks	Every 2-3 months	At least quarterly, more often if there are 'live' issues
What local issue was the reason for forming your PACT?	ASB of youths, sometimes numbering groups of 20+	ASB Crime Maintenance of the Green	Youth ASB and the formation of a local youth club	Anti-social behaviour (ASB)	Youth gangs, drug dealing, open prostitution, drunks and ASB.	Anti-social problem	Installation of a gate in a public thoroughfare
How many issues do you look into/discuss at any one time?	Around 3 or so	We try to keep to 3 issues at one time	Maximum of 3 issues	However many are raised. Usually 4 –5 separate issues.	Try and focus on 2 key issues per meeting but requires flexibility	Between 3-4 but it is getting harder to find 4 issues	No more than a couple

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets, Rainham
What issues has your PACT resolved?	ASB has been reduced by 90%	Poor maintenance of the Green, community issues with police and council, installation of speed signs, inclusion of young people within the community	Specific target areas for youth ASB	Provision of more salt bins, raised the priority with police of a number of ASB issues. Quad bike disturbance, teenage drinking, drug dealing and vandalism.	ASB's, alley gates, working with mhs homes and police to focus attention and action leading to solution re gang culture and for 18 months a significant reduction in drug dealing and taking and prostitution. However, this is on the increase again.	ASB, Mini motorbikes, parking, vandalism, litter, street lighting, and other issues	Youths making a disturbance, parking restrictions, salt bins, flooding, litter and flytipping, graffiti, etc.
What unresolved issues do you have?	None – hence the 6 month gap in meetings	Continued speeding vehicles, parking on Grange Road, Gillingham	General youth ASB	Housing issues – maintaining their estates properly, and using their legal powers to intervene in cases of ASB or illegal behaviour of some of their residents	Drug dealers	None unresolved, 1-2 on-going	None

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets
What is the quality of feedback from partners?	Very good	A good level of feedback	Currently has no Chairman or Secretary and failed to find willing participant to date. Meetings currently chaired and minuted by the local ward officer	Very good.	Police, ward cllr and mhs homes have been very supportive	100%	Good to very good
Do you perform other community functions (such as litter picks, community events, etc)?	Litter pick held once and quite well attended	Litter picks, The Big Picnic, Maintenance of Memorial Garden Christmas carols in the community/ Gifts to the elderly, harvest festival old time musical sing-a-long	N/A	Not to date but have ideas for the future	Litter picks through MHS Homes and community fun days through CEC.	No – but try to advise PACT of any community events that am aware of	Litter picks have taken place. Nothing else planned.
What support was given to you when you became Chairman?	Not much. Was given a list of addresses, email and useful telephone numbers. Also names of people who may be relevant	None	N/A	Ward councillors are supportive but no practical help or guidance and would welcome it, eg. centralised support office for PACT Chairmen to contact with any problems or ideas	None	Local councillor made contact and gave PCSO's contact details.	Nothing formal but good support from partners

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets, Rainham
How and where do you advertise your PACT meetings and who pays for and distributes any leaflets/newsletters?	We do not advertise but may like advice on this in the future	Newsletter called "On the Green" approx 3 times a year to coincide with open meetings. Police print these and local people distribute + mini newsletters for events.	Advertised through Neighbourhood Watch, local shops and youth services	The police print the leaflets for us and help to distribute them	Police budget used to fund mail drops. All other funding out of Chairman's pocket!	On ward councillor and PCSO websites.	Email to street reps and core attendees. Stopped leaflet drops.
Have you set up, or considered setting up, a website, Facebook, Twitter account to advertise your PACT?	No – but would like the opportunity to do so, if possible	Currently planning to do this	No	In the process of developing a Facebook page. There will also be an e-mail address and mobile telephone number being advertised soon	No. Only half the PACT Members even have e-mail.	No	Have a site – but not used that often.
Have you ever visited the Kent police and/or CSP websites? Did you know about the neighbourhood policing sections?	Yes – to both	Yes – meetings are notified on this	N/A	Aware of them but not visited them recently	Yes	Yes – to both.	When necessary

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets, Rainham
What have been the advantages for your local area since the setting up of your PACT?	Decrease in ASB, good rapport with local police and councillors	Greater community spirit and better links with community partners	A forum for raising issues and an opportunity for partner agencies to talk face to face	A much greater sense of community + reduction in ASB. Providers/partners find it helpful to meet face to face and they learn first hand what is working, or not. Greater liaison between the services.	Relationship with police improved significantly. Their efforts are now recognised and people are more sympathetic when calls not responded to quickly. The flow of information TO the police has increased with tangible results	Improvement in parking, litter and groups of youths, and less ASB	It is a place for people to contact if they don't know how else to resolve a problem. Achieved a community wide view of problems.
Have there been any disadvantages for your local area and what are they?	None	No		No	As things improved – interest dropped. Result – active members focus on their issues rather than those of wider community	No	
Have you ever visited another PACT meeting in Medway?	No	No	N/A	No	No	No	No

Question (summarised)	Barleycorn, Rainham	Gillingham Green	Lordswood	Luton	Ordnance Street	Rainham, Central	St Margarets, Rainham
If the police and council were to set up a forum in order for PACT Chairmen to meet, share experiences, ideas, etc. do you think this would be useful?	Yes – this would be helpful, perhaps to seek advice and share positive outcomes from other places	Definitely – with a greater emphasis on building a greater community spirit in Medway. A chance for Chairmen to share ideas and methods	N/A	It would be very useful to share good practice and how to engage more with the local community	Yes. Areas of discussion could include sustaining interest in PACT especially when key issues tackled. How to reach out to ethnic minorities	Could have themed table discussions, each PACT headlines the issues covered + good practice examples for resolution of a problem	Yes – would be useful. Core items could be common issues, sharing info, knowledge, problem solving approaches, etc.
If the CSP invited you to attend an event would you be interested/able to attend?	Only after 4pm	Yes (work permitting)	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Depends on content and time
If the police and partners were to withdraw from your meetings once the major issues had been resolved satisfactorily, would you wish to continue as a community group?	The police are a valuable member of our PACT and would not wish them to stop attending. The group may not feel the need to meet if the police were to pull out.	The group would continue, as there are always issues and the need for the community to express its views to partners. It would be counterproductive for the police to stop attending.	N/A	Yes – but not so effective, as many issues would require police action	Unlikely	If agree to dissolve – should do that. Otherwise, could meet every 6 months, or when necessary – if the Chairman keeps in contact with the PCSOs and ward councillors.	Already do this. There is a general invite but only ask them to attend as necessary.

