

Overview& Scrutiny Panel Recommendations to Cabinet

Cabinet	09 March 2017
Report Author	Penny Button, Head of Safer Neighbourhoods
Portfolio Holder	Councillor L. Fairbrass, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Ward:	Thanet Wide

Executive Summary:

To consider recommendations made by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel regarding the provision of support for victims of sexual crime in Thanet that was scrutinised by the Community Safety Partnership Working Party.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to approve the following recommendations:

- 1) Thanet District Council approach town councils in Thanet to request funding of £188 to finance one day per week, of EK Rape Crisis Centre counselling services if Thanet District Council will provide a room for the counselling sessions on a match funding basis;
- 2) Approaches are made to the 'Place To Be' to provide their free children services to schools in Thanet;
- 3) A letter be written to the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) to raise concern about the changes to policing in the area and write a letter advising the PCC that approaches were being made to town councils in Thanet to support the EK Rape Crisis Centre and inquire if the Commissioner was willing to work with town councils in this effort.

And the following recommendation from Officers:

- 4) Authorise officers to submit an application on behalf of council for funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) victims specialist service grant. If successful, organise the funding arrangements for the counselling services with the other sub district councils.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money	If Cabinet agree any other recommendations other than those mentioned within the body of this report there could be financial implications for the council in that any further commitment for Thanet District Council to provide funding will require the identification of a suitable funding source.
Legal	If Cabinet agrees to co-fund the counselling services to be provided by a third

	party, there is a need for an formal agreement to be signed which details out some of the roles for each of the signatories.								
Corporate	Council would need to ensure that any collaborative arrangement agreed with the sub district councils and the voluntary sector organisation will provide the service that the residents would be expecting. If the service is not what is expected by the public there may be a risk to the council's service delivery reputation.								
Equalities Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty	<p>Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td><td>✓</td></tr> <tr> <td>Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td><td>✓</td></tr> <tr> <td>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td><td>✓</td></tr> </table> <p>The decision being requested in this report would assist individuals who would have been subjected to violent crime through the provision of counselling services. This service being to be provided by EK Rape Crisis Centre would be an extension of the same service that the organisation is already providing to local residents in need, with main difference being that this facility would offer an outreach service that can be easily accessed by Thanet residents in need of help.</p> <p>If agreed Thanet District Council would have gone a long way in supporting its neighbourhoods, promoted open communication and contributed to the elimination of harassment and victimisation of members of the local community.</p>	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.		Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,	✓	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	✓	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	✓
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant)✓	
A clean and welcoming Environment	
Promoting inward investment and job creation	
Supporting neighbourhoods	✓

CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant)✓	
Delivering value for money	
Supporting the Workforce	
Promoting open communications	✓

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Panel was asked by the Community Safety Partnership Working Party to consider a set of recommendations that were drawn up as a result of the discussions by Members regarding a topical issue on how the council could assist victims of sexual crime in the area.
- 1.2 Over two meetings the Community Safety Partnership Working Party received presentation from Kent Police to understand the type of offences reported and the complexities of investigation as well as from external agencies who provide support to victims.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 The Panel considered the recommendations from the sub group and approved these for onward submission to Cabinet. The recommendations were as detailed below:
 - a) Thanet District Council approach town councils in Thanet to request funding of £188 to finance one day per week, of EK Rape Crisis Centre counselling services if Thanet District Council will provide a room for the counselling sessions on a match funding basis;
 - b) Approaches are made to the 'Place To Be' to provide their free children services to schools in Thanet;
 - c) A letter be written to the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) to raise concern about the changes to policing in the area and write a letter advising the PCC that approaches were being made to town councils in Thanet to support the EK Rape Crisis Centre and inquire if the Commissioner was willing to work with town councils in this effort.
- 2.2 Although the recommendations made specific reference to town councils, Members did in effect agree that that an approach could also be made to parish councils as well as the town councils. They also noted that Margate Charter Trustees could not be approached to contribute as they do not have legal authority to make such contributions.
- 2.3 The Panel meeting was advised by one councillor that Ramsgate Town Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee had recommended that the town council sets aside circa £10,000 per year for the provision of the counselling services to be provided by the EK Rape Crisis Centre.
- 2.4 The Member also indicated that the committee had further recommended that other councils could be invited to provide support towards that budget if they wanted their residents to access the service in Ramsgate.
- 2.5 Confirmation on the Ramsgate Town Council position on the matter was received from the Deputy Town Clerk who confirmed that the council had agreed the set aside circa £10,000 for 2017/18 only.
- 2.6 The Community Safety Partnership Working Party was advised by officers at the meeting on 06 February 2017 that the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner had allocated a pot of £500,000 for victims' specialist service that councils can apply for funding for local community safety initiatives in this financial year. The deadline for the applications (which are up to a maximum of £35,000) was 03 March 2017. In

response, Members asked officers to expedite an application for Thanet through the Executive.

- 2.7 If an application was successful, such funding could assist with paying for the counselling service initiatives discussed above. It might be that by the time the issue is considered at a Cabinet meeting, officers would have been authorised to submit an application on behalf of Thanet District Council, an update on this will be provided at the meeting.
- 2.8 The contribution from Thanet District Council will be the provision of officer support in establishing a formal agreement, there is no monetary contribution. Whilst Thanet District Council may offer rooms for the sessions to be held in, work will need to be undertaken with any service provider on the suitability of location.

3.0 Options

Option 1

- 3.1 Cabinet could agree the Panel recommendations.

Option 2

- 3.2 Cabinet could agree the principle of the recommendations from the Panel, but suggest a different approach to funding such as counselling service and further explore what appears to be an offer to take the lead in co-ordinating the provision of the service by Ramsgate Town Council.

Option 3

- 3.3 Cabinet could reject the recommendations, in which case no further action is required.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 If Cabinet agrees the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Panel, correspondence will be initiated with the Parish/Town Councils to ascertain the level of support for the request service to the District.
- 4.2 If the Parish/Town Councils are agreeable to the proposed arrangement for a support counselling service to be accessed by the residents in need, then the arrangements will be confirmed in a formal agreement between the participating councils, committing themselves to the arrangement.

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Reporting to:	Rob Kenyon, Director of Community Services ext 7071

Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Nicola Walker, Finance Manager, - HRA, Capital & External Funding
Legal	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance & Monitoring Officer

