

Meeting:	Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Date:	23 March 2006
Subject:	Reducing fear of crime scrutiny review
Responsible Officer:	Director of People, Performance and Policy
Contact Officer:	Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer 020 8420 9203 heather.smith@harrow.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder:	Communications, Partnership and Human Resources Environment and Transport
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

1. To consider and approve the report of the scrutiny review group.
2. To consider and approve the amendments to the recommendations as agreed by the Chair of the review group, arising from consultation subsequent to the agreement of the report by the review group.
3. To refer the report to Cabinet and to the Safer Harrow Management Group.
4. To agree the publication and dissemination of the report.
5. To request a report on progress in 2006-07.

Reason for report

To provide the Sub-Committee with progress made on the review and to enable

the Sub-Committee to approve the review group's report.

Benefits

Fear of crime is an area of concern to Harrow residents, as identified by the council's MORI quality of life survey undertaken in June 2005. The review group's report identifies ways in which the council and its partners should seek to address it.

Cost of Proposals

This report is not seeking additional financial resources. The scrutiny programme of work will be delivered within existing budget provision for scrutiny activity.

There are no financial implications relating to the agreement of the report by the Sub-Committee. However, the implementation of the recommendations within the report could have financial implications for the council and/or its partners.

Risks

If the Sub-Committee does not agree the report it will not be able to be referred to Cabinet and the Safer Harrow Management Group for consideration.

Implications if recommendations rejected

If the Sub-Committee does not reach a decision, this could result in a reduced opportunity to influence the development of future approaches for tackling fear of crime.

Section 2: Report

2.1 Brief History

2.1.1 In 2004-05 Harrow was the second safest borough in London in terms of recorded crime. However, the council's June 2005 MORI quality of life survey demonstrated that concerns about crime were paramount for Harrow residents. It identified that nearly 79% of residents said that the level of crime was the most important thing in making somewhere a good place to live. 53% of respondents said that the level of crime was the thing most in need of improvement. Furthermore, the survey showed that fear of crime has a moderate impact on 42% of residents and 24% said it had a high impact.

2.1.2 At its meeting held on 13 April 2005, the Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee agreed to undertake a review of reducing fear of crime in Harrow. This project has been the main area of focus of the Sub-Committee for 2005-06 and it explores how the council and its partners can make Harrow feel safer for local residents.

2.2 Options considered

Not applicable.

2.3 Consultation

In conducting the review, the review group:

- Examined existing research and survey data on crime and fear of crime in Harrow
- Attended community events in Harrow town centre (community engagement consultation, 28 October 2005) and Wealdstone high street (Safer Neighbourhoods police surgery, 2 December 2005) to meet with local residents to discuss safety.
- Attended a meeting of the Partnership with Older People (POP) panel (5 December 2006).
- Held a conference on 19 January 2006 to enable local residents to discuss local safety concerns and potential solutions.

Following consultation on the draft report, the Chair has agreed the following amendments to the recommendations. However, they have not been agreed by the review group due to time constraints and the Sub-Committee is requested to consider amending the report as follows:

Recommendation 11 (new recommendation)

The review group recommends that further consideration be given to providing personal safety training to young people in the school environment in order to help to address young people's concerns about fear of crime. Such activity may need to include local Safer Neighbourhoods teams in order to build local relationships.

This recommendation reflects the invaluable input of the young people at the review group's conference and also reflects the fact that young people are more likely to be victims of crime than other sectors of the community. The recommendation was developed following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communications, Partnership and Human Resources and the Executive Director (People First).

Recommendation 13 (previously 12)

The review group supports the further development of the CCTV infrastructure in order to help to provide reassurance to the community. Efforts should be made to enhance provision in partnership with transport providers such as TfL and National Rail. There also needs to be greater publicity of the CCTV van and greater communication of where CCTV has been involved in successful convictions or has acted as a deterrent.

This recommendation reflects the high priority given to CCTV by attendees at the conference. The recommendation was developed following consultation with the Executive Director (Urban Living).

Recommendation 14 (previously 13)

The review group recommends that consideration be given to developing mechanisms through which the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community can (a) be consulted; and (b) provided with

reassurance. This may involve setting up an LGBT forum or adapting or expanding existing provision.

The recommendation was developed by a review group member subsequent to the agreement of the draft report by the review group and was discussed with the Portfolio Holder for Communications, Partnership and Human Resources.

2.4 Financial Implications

There are no financial comments on this report.

2.5 Legal Implications

Under Part 1 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002, the Council and the Police have duties to formulate and implement 3 yearly strategies for crime and disorder reduction. There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report.

2.6 Equalities Impact

The review group's report explores equality issues associated with fear of crime, such as reassurance for vulnerable communities and consultation with hard to reach groups.

2.7 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

The review group's report addresses the need for partners to work together to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder and misuse of drugs. The report makes recommendations relating to partnership working arrangements and activities that should be co-ordinated across agencies, such as communications.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Background Documents:

- Scope of the review (included in the draft report)