

**Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

**Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act**

**Report of the Scrutiny Challenge Panel**

**August 2006**

**Panel members:**

Cllr Anthony Seymour (Chairman)

Cllr Robert Benson

Cllr Golam Chowdhury

Cllr Stanley Sheinwald

Cllr Sasikala Suresh

Cllr Keeki Thammaiah

Dr Karim Murji, Independent Member, Metropolitan Police Authority (co-opted member of the panel)

**Witnesses:**

Cllr Susan Hall (deputising for Cllr Eileen Kinnear, Portfolio Holder, Urban Living (Public Realm))

Ian Pearce, Crime Reduction Manager

Dean McStay, Crime Reduction Officer

**Panel support**

Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer

# 1 Chairman's introduction

1.1 This report is the first piece of work undertaken by the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny sub committee. I would like to thank my fellow panel members for their input and constructive questions, and I am grateful that we were able to benefit from contributions from Dr Karim Murji, the Independent Member for Harrow from the Metropolitan Police Authority. Thanks are also due to officers from Urban Living and to Cllr Susan Hall for taking the time to contribute to this process.

Councillor Anthony Seymour, Chairman

# 2 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

2.1 Section 17 requires local authorities to consider the community safety implications of all their activities. Section 17 says:

“it shall be the duty of each authority to... exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.”

2.2 This means that the local authority should take community safety into consideration in all of its decision-making. Compliance with section 17 “can be used as a means to demonstrate the overall local authority response to crime and disorder”.<sup>1</sup>

2.3 Guidance identifies three levels at which section 17 can be implemented. At the minimal level this means that officers take community into consideration when preparing committee reports, stating the potential implications of a decision on community or alternatively explaining why it does not apply. At the mid-level, departments build community safety into their day-to-day work. Table 1 provides two examples of how departments could take crime and disorder into consideration. At the corporate level, community safety is built into corporate plans, partnership working and information sharing.

**Table 1: Examples of activity undertaken by departments<sup>2</sup>**

Service	Function impacting on crime	Potential impact on crime	Possible action
Education	- Enforcing school attendance	- Excluded or truanting children engaging in ASB	- Develop policy to maximise attendance - Education provision for excluded children
Housing	- Nuisance neighbours - Management of housing stock	- Incidence of ASB and crime - Voids attracting crime & disorder	- Ensure strict tenancy agreements in place - Ensure properties are not left empty

2.4 Scrutiny acts as a ‘critical friend’ by examining the extent to which Harrow has complied, and suggesting areas for improvement. The Audit Commission will consider how effectively Harrow has mainstreamed crime and disorder reduction as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment due to take place in November 2006.

<sup>1</sup> Local Government Association/NACRO. (no date). *Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - section 17: a briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998*. p. 1

<sup>2</sup> Bullock, K. Moss, K. and Smith, J. (2000). *Anticipating the Impact of Section 17 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act*. Home Office Policing & Reducing Crime Group. Table adapted from p. 5

### 3 Methodology

3.1 The sub committee was asked to examine the council's self-assessment of its current performance in this area and agreed to undertake a challenge panel to do this. A desktop research exercise was carried out in order to identify best practice. The panel met on 21 August to discuss best practice and develop questions for the challenge panel.<sup>3</sup> At the challenge panel on 30 August, members put their questions to officers from the Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) and Cllr Susan Hall, who was deputising for Cllr Eileen Kinnear, Portfolio Holder for Urban Living (Public Realm).<sup>4</sup> We then developed our findings, which are detailed within this report.

### 4 Main findings

#### **Assessing compliance**

- 4.1 National guidance on mainstreaming section 17 is not prescriptive. Guidance from the Home Office/Crime Concern<sup>5</sup> and the Local Government Association/NACRO<sup>6</sup> was used to develop a framework of what would constitute best practice. This was structured around the three 'levels' of mainstreaming and is included as an Appendix B of this report. The main test for compliance is the Corporate Assessment element of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).
- 4.2 The panel were pleased that efforts have been made locally by the Crime Reduction Unit to assess current performance via the 'ten steps', which had been adapted from resources from the London Borough of Bexley, who had been awarded Beacon status as a result of their mainstreaming activity. This document (Appendix C) highlighted that so far five of the ten steps had been achieved in full with the key remaining gaps relating to:
- developing a section 17 handbook (step 3)
  - training staff (step 4), partners (steps 6 and 7) and councillors (step 9)
  - monitoring and review compliance (step 8). This will be achieved in part through this current scrutiny process.
- 4.3 The rest of the report addresses these areas under the headings of training, awareness, engaging partners, section 17 steering group and future reporting.
- 4.4 Other means through which the crime reduction unit assesses compliance include a departmental audit (underway) and an assessors' panel which audits departmental service plans, of which the crime reduction unit has membership.
- 4.5 Based on the information and evidence presented to us we are satisfied that the crime reduction unit's assessment of current performance is accurate. However, the ten steps will need to be fully supported with documented evidence for the purpose of Corporate Assessment.

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<sup>3</sup> Attendees were Cllr Seymour (Chairman), Cllr Thammaiah, Cllr Suresh, Cllr Chowdhury and Cllr Benson (apologies were received from Cllr Sheinwald).

<sup>4</sup> Panel members: Cllr Seymour (Chairman), Cllr Thammaiah, Cllr Suresh, Cllr Chowdhury, Cllr Benson, Cllr Sheinwald, Dr Karim Murji, Independent Member, Metropolitan Police Authority. Witnesses: Cllr Susan Hall (deputising for Cllr Eileen Kinnear, Portfolio Holder for Urban Living (Public Realm)); Ian Pearce, Crime Reduction Manager; Dean McStay, Crime Reduction Officer.

<sup>5</sup> Crime Concern (2000). *Mainstreaming Community Safety*; [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk); Crime Concern/LB Havering. (no date). *Keeping Section 17 on the agenda*.

<sup>6</sup> LGA/NACRO. (no date). *Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998*

## **Training**

- 4.6 The crime reduction unit reported to us that training is the key area of weakness, which has in turn impacted on organisational awareness. The purpose of training is to improve awareness across the organisation as well as enabling officers to apply and explore the possible impact on community safety on services when they are developing policy or reports. It is also intended to assist members in their decision making.
- 4.7 The Crime Reduction Unit has actively explored many options for undertaking the training programme but has had limited success in implementing these due to a lack of funding availability. Considerable time and effort has been invested by the Crime Reduction Unit to engage departments in implementing the training programme and discussions have been held with council departments to coordinate section 17 training using the following council initiatives:

- Harrow Corporate University
- Harrow Rules
- Corporate training and member induction programme

As part of the proposed training programme an online real-time training tool was investigated as a joint national pilot between the council, a private provider and GOL but as no council funding was available to support it this part of the training programme has not been progressed to date.

- 4.8 The key issue was the existing pressure on these training programmes and that it had not proved possible to obtain funding to support additional provision. A funding bid against the Safer Stronger Communities Fund was also submitted to the Safer Harrow Partnership but was not successful as Section 17 is a statutory obligation on the council and not the wider partnership. Funding has also been sought through the Medium Term Budget Strategy to meet Crime and Disorder Act.
- 4.9 However, plans are in place and progressing to introduce a 'train the trainer' scheme in order to build capacity within the organisation, to be developed initially by working with an external provider. Officers advised that this issue together with the outcome of the self-assessment and departmental audit will be reported to the corporate management team in October. The crime reduction unit advised the panel that 'train the trainer' scheme will require corporate funding to ensure implementation. The panel believes that the crime reduction unit must ensure that it is able to provide evidence for the plans that it is developing for the purposes of the corporate assessment.
- 4.10 The panel were informed that the CRU received Government Office for London funding to develop a crime reduction toolkit for staff around three years ago, which was identified by GOL as a best practice model. The toolkit is available on the intranet, setting out how section 17 should be operated in practice. This toolkit is available to staff on the intranet site. It is in need of updating to reflect the different emphases of the new directorate structures. A communications plan has been developed for community safety, which supports the section 17 process, but we were informed that this has been difficult to effect due to resource constraints.

### Potential recommendations:

(1) The panel recommends that consideration be given to adding a link for the toolkit or similar guidance for section 17 compliance on the intranet, as a simple means of

increasing the profile of the toolkit. Quick links for health and safety and diversity are already in existence on the staff intranet site.

(2) The panel recommends that the toolkit be refreshed alongside the development of training plans to ensure that up-to-date resources are available to support officers when they are applying section 17 in their day-to-day work.

## **Awareness**

4.11 Councillors' awareness: the panel are mindful that undertaking this project had been the route through which our own knowledge of section 17 has been developed and should prove to be of considerable benefit to the council. We are therefore concerned that other councillors will not necessarily have the same level of awareness of the duty on the authority. We were informed that a bid to the Member Development programme for Section 17 training was unsuccessful; no specific training has been provided at this stage for councillors as a result.

Potential recommendations: The panel recommends

- (3) That reference to section 17 be made within the induction pack for new members
- (4) That reference be made to the duty in the context of specific training for members on key committees for example on licensing, development control, scrutiny.
- (5) That officers work with the Member Development Panel to reflect the duty in member development – particularly in the context of the community call for action and the emerging new expectations and responsibilities on councillors.

4.12 Officers' awareness: Details of a dip sampling exercise to assess compliance with section 17 within committee reports were tabled at our meeting. This presented a very mixed picture of understanding of the duty, although section 17 has only been explicitly required within the committee report template for just over six months. There has, however, been little formal training in section 17 compliance with the toolkit being relied upon to raise awareness. Awareness and compliance from a Service Planning perspective is better developed and specific guidance is included in the service planning guidance and compliance scrutinised. Officers are also able to contact the crime reduction unit for specific advice on section 17. This could be better publicised<sup>7</sup> to encourage report authors to seek advice. Officers reported to us that the auditing process has helped to increase awareness across the organisation.

Potential recommendations:

- (6) The panel recommends that the section 17 steering group undertake future dip sampling and that this group take steps to improve understanding in areas where weaknesses are identified.
- (7) The panel recommends that opportunities to incorporate advice and awareness raising into officer training on areas such as committee report writing and the Harrow Rules training for managers be considered.

## **Engaging partners**

4.13 We were advised that there has been a presentation to partners (the Safer Harrow Management Group) on section 17 compliance. A policy on section 17 has been agreed

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<sup>7</sup> Simple and low cost means of doing this could include a short entry in the Harrow update weekly email to staff on a periodic basis.

by the Safer Harrow Management Group. We are concerned that section 17 may not have been considered at the Harrow Strategic Partnership level, particularly as the importance of engaging partners in section 17 was stressed in correspondence with the Government Office for London.<sup>8</sup>

- 4.14 We also wish to express concern about how community safety themes are reflected in the management groups other than the Safer Harrow Management Group within the strategic partnership and the panel notes that there is considerable risk that organisational silos will prevent consideration of the impacts of decisions on community safety in other Harrow Strategic Partnership management groups.

Potential recommendation: (8) The Panel recommends that section 17 be drawn to the attention of the Harrow Strategic Partnership board with view to increasing the profile of the duty and also overcoming organisational barriers to mainstreaming across the partnership.

### **Section 17 steering group**

- 4.15 The panel was informed that a section 17 steering group was set up approximately twelve months ago in order to progress work at a corporate level. We are pleased to note the role that the section 17 steering group has played in progressing section 17. However we are concerned that it is unclear where ownership for section 17 and compliance within directorates and services lies. Whilst the panel appreciate that section 17 is a corporate duty, the panel is concerned that a lack of clear ownership could prevent the agenda from being progressed. The panel is of the view that whilst specialist advice and support should come from the Crime Reduction Unit, wider ownership should rest corporately, possibly with the current inter-departmental steering group. This raises the question of whether the steering group consists of sufficiently senior officers to ensure compliance across the organisation. Boroughs that are considered to have successfully mainstreamed section 17 also have elected member commitment at a high level. In addition, if the duty is extended to other partners consideration will need to be given to 'joining up' approaches to section 17 across the partnership.

Potential recommendation: (9) The panel recommends that consideration be given to the membership of the section 17 steering group and its extension to partners.

### **Future reporting**

- 4.16 Officers advised the panel that although the 'ten steps' had been shared internally and with the Safer Harrow Management Group, they had not specifically been shared at member level previously.

Potential recommendation: (10) The panel recommends that the Safer and Stronger Communities scrutiny sub committee receive a report back on progress against the ten steps in April 2007 along with feedback from the Corporate Assessment.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The panel is pleased to note that the crime reduction unit has a good awareness of the extent to which the authority has regard to its duties under section 17 and has appreciated the honesty with which information has been presented. It also has awareness of gaps as a result of the use of the ten steps, self-assessment and compliance monitoring process.

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<sup>8</sup> Personal communication, 9 August 2006

- 5.2 Harrow has included section 17 as a mandatory section within committee reports. There may be a risk to the council if the duty is not fully understood regarding crime reduction and wider community safety considerations. Training needs to be developed and we support efforts currently being made to introduce this. Section 17 is core business for the council and the Crime Reduction Unit is actively leading the implementation. However the duties under the legislation are funded solely by external funding e.g. Safer and Stronger Communities Fund. The implications of this are that key developments are limited, for example, training programmes. The crime reduction unit should give consideration to how it will evidence the plans that are in place relating to training and refreshing the toolkit for corporate assessment.
- 5.3 At the departmental level, to build crime and disorder reduction into day-to-day work of departments, Harrow needs to be able to demonstrate how it will build on existing monitoring arrangements and how it will follow up on these. If this does not take place there is a risk that linkages across departments are not realised; decisions in one area with an impact on another are not identified and considered.
- 5.4 At the corporate level, Harrow needs to consider how it will demonstrate that partners have been and will be engaged in section 17 activities. Harrow also needs to consider how it will strengthen corporate ownership.
- 5.5 Community safety needs to be given the same level of attention as other corporate duties such as health and safety and equalities. The challenge is to develop a greater level of corporate awareness and ownership.

## Appendix A – Scope – Section 17 challenge panel

1	<b>SUBJECT</b>	Section 17 – Duty to consider Crime and Disorder implications
2	<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Safer and Stronger Communities
3	<b>REVIEW GROUP</b>	Sub committee members
4	<b><u>AIMS/ OBJECTIVES/ OUTCOMES</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the Council’s self assessment of its effectiveness in having regard to its statutory obligations under s17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.</li> <li>To identify and explore potential gaps in the assessment and to identify areas for further work by the Council.</li> <li>To contribute to preparations for the Council’s Corporate Assessment.</li> </ul>
5	<b>MEASURES OF SUCCESS OF REVIEW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful challenge resulting in the development of a robust self assessment</li> <li>Increased profile of s17 within the organisation</li> </ul>
6	<b>SCOPE</b>	To review the Council’s self assessment of its effectiveness in having regard to its statutory obligations under s17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
7	<b>SERVICE PRIORITIES (Corporate/Dept)</b>	Making Harrow safe, sound and supportive
8	<b>REVIEW SPONSOR</b>	Lynne McAdam, Service Manager Scrutiny
9	<b>ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER</b>	Gareth Llywelyn-Roberts, Head of Community Safety Services
10	<b>SUPPORT OFFICER</b>	Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer
11	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT</b>	Scrutiny team
12	<b>EXTERNAL INPUT</b>	Government Office for London, Metropolitan Police Authority
13	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<p><b><u>Desktop review</u></b> Identifying best practice</p> <p><b>Planning session (21 August)</b> Reviewing self-assessment against models of best practice in order to develop questions for challenge session</p> <p><b>Challenge session (30 August)</b> Meeting with departmental officers and relevant portfolio holder for challenge and question session</p> <p><b><u>Development of findings/recommendations</u></b></p>
14	<b>EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS</b>	The review will consider the extent to which the impact of crime and disorder implications has on all sections of the community.

15	<b>ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS</b>	Time limitation – the challenge panel will be unable to look beyond the scope and aims of objectives.  A detailed audit of compliance at the departmental level is to be carried out by Internal Audit.
16	<b>SECTION 17 IMPLICATIONS</b>	This review is concerned entirely with the implementation of section 17 across the authority.
17	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	For completion by end of September 2006
18	<b>RESOURCE COMMIMTENTS</b>	1 x Scrutiny Officer
19	<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Review group supported by Scrutiny Officer
20	<b>REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS</b>	Outline of formal reporting process: To Service Director            [ x ]    When...by 7 September To Portfolio Holder            [ x ]    When...by 7 September To Committee                    [ x ]    When...28 September
21	<b>FOLLOW UP ARRANGEMENTS (proposals)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Update report post-CPA inspection</li> <li>➤ Potential for further detailed programme of work</li> </ul>

## OUTLINE PROJECT PLAN

Activity	Member Input Who is involved? <u>Estimated time commitment</u>	Officer Resource Who is involved? <u>Estimated time commitment</u>		When	Lead Person
<b>Scoping</b>	¼ day (C&VC)	1 day (SO)	½ day (CRU)	1 Aug	SO/C&VC
<b>Desktop research – identifying best practice and developing descriptors</b>	-	5 days (SO)	-	7-11 Aug	SO
Briefing and planning session	½ day (all Members)	1 day (SO)		21 Aug	SO
Challenge panel (including development of recommendations and thrust)	½ day (all Members)	1 day (SO)	½ day (CRU)	30 Aug	C&VC
Development of findings	-	2 days (SO)	-	31 Aug – 1 Sept	SO
Review group signs off findings	½ day (all Members)		-	By 7 Sept	C&VC
Findings circulated to departmental managers and portfolio holder	-	½ day (SO)	½ day (CRU)	By 7 Sept	SO
Final findings to sub committee for approval	¼ day (C&VC)	½ day (SO)	-	28 Sept (report deadline 14 Sept)	SO
<b>TOTALS</b>	1 ½ days (all Members) 2 days (C&VC)	12 days (SO)	1 ½ days (CRU)		

SO = Scrutiny Officer; CRU = Crime Reduction Unit; C&VC = Chairman and Vice-Chairman

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## Appendix B – Best Practice Framework

**Using this framework:** this framework sets out best practice descriptors – the ideal – of what the council should be doing if it is considering community safety in all its activity (the first column). The second column details the source of the descriptor. The third column details potential questions for assessing performance. The fourth column provides an assessment of what Harrow currently has in place (based on the challenge panel). Where the panel was unable to deal with the descriptor in detail at the panel due to time constraints this is indicated in the fourth column (the council may wish to consider these descriptors in any case).

Descriptor of best practice	Source	Areas of questioning	Harrow current assessment
<b>The minimal level</b>			
<b>Are mechanisms in place to check that crime and disorder implications are considered when policies or changed to services are agreed?</b>			
1. Establish local working definition of community safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.</i> p. 9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Is it defined in the crime, disorder and drugs strategy? How is alcohol reflected?</li> <li>➤ Is it agreed with partners?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The crime reduction unit treated the strategy as a local definition as this was based on local community priorities.</li> <li>➤ Alcohol is reflected within the crime, disorder and drugs strategy as one the key themes; it is led by the Director of Public Health, Harrow PCT.</li> </ul>
2. All reports requiring decisions spell out the impact on community safety.  Compliance with section 17 in decision-making is measured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p 3</li> <li>➤ NACRO/Countryside Agency. (2002). <i>Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: a practical guide for parish and town councils.</i> p. 11</li> <li>➤ SSCKLOE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Who owns the auditing process?</li> <li>➤ Where areas of non-compliance are identified how is this followed up and by whom?</li> <li>➤ How will compliance in other major decision making committees (e.g. Development Control, Licensing) be considered?</li> <li>➤ What evidence do officers use to arrive at the statement – what methodology/criteria are used?</li> <li>➤ How do the council ensure departments understand what they are required to do?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All committee reports have contained s17 as part of the template since November 2005.</li> <li>➤ A simple audit of compliance within Cabinet reports has been carried out, with mixed results.</li> </ul>
3. Decision makers are supported by a programme of training or access to specialist advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 3</li> <li>➤ LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.</i> p. 13</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What plans are in place to introduce training?</li> <li>➤ What plans are in place to increase the profile of section 17?</li> <li>➤ How will officers and Councillors and partners be trained and developed?</li> <li>➤ How is guidance made available to other partners?</li> <li>➤ Have other options for disseminating information been considered – e.g. giving presentations to departmental management teams?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A toolkit is available for officers on the council intranet site.</li> <li>➤ Officers can seek advice on an ad hoc basis from the crime reduction team.</li> <li>➤ So far training has not been delivered.</li> </ul>

Descriptor of best practice	Source	Areas of questioning	Current assessment
<b>The middle level</b>			
<b>Is mainstreaming is taking place in individual service areas? Are individual departments are taking this into consideration in their own plans and activities?</b>			
4. Policies identify and reduce risks of crime to staff, local communities and property.  Examples: personal safety, crime in the work place, support systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i>. p. 4</li> <li>➤ LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i>. p. 12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What policies are in place in Harrow and how are arrangements monitored?</li> </ul>	The challenge panel did not specifically cover this area.
5. A commitment to community safety is included in the recruitment process for senior managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i>. p. 4</li> <li>➤ LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i>. p. 18</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To what extent do senior managers have to exhibit an understanding of the impact of crime and disorder at the recruitment stage?</li> </ul>	The challenge panel did not specifically cover this area.
6. Community safety is built into public consultation.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i> . p. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How will this be demonstrated?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community safety questions are incorporated into the annual MORI survey.</li> <li>➤ The Community Safety link officers group co-ordinates consultation across the council.</li> </ul>
7. The crime and disorder reduction strategy is community driven.	LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i> . p. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How was consultation undertaken for the crime disorder and drugs strategy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consultation was undertaken in determining the priorities within the crime and drugs strategy.</li> </ul>
8. Activity is not time-limited (except for pilot projects) and is funded through mainstream budgets.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i> . p. 4		The challenge panel did not specifically cover this area.

Descriptor of best practice	Source	Areas of questioning	Current assessment
9. Community safety is included in service plans and other planning.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i> . p. 4	➤ How is compliance with the guidance assessed?	S17 is included in the service planning guidance and there is an assessors panel on which the crime reduction unit is represented.
10. Responsibility and reporting arrangements are in place for key initiatives.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i> . p. 4	➤ How does the Safer Harrow Management Group structure deliver key lines of responsibility?	The Safer Harrow Management Group oversees and manages performance. It includes lead members for each of the seven priority areas within the crime, disorder and drugs strategy. These leads chair the sub groups. The Borough Commander provides the formal link between the management group and the rest of the strategic partnership.
11. Performance and risk management techniques are used to ensure that outcomes and savings are achieved.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i> . p. 4	➤ How are performance and risk managed?	Performance is monitored through the balanced scorecard approach. Risk is considered in service planning and also within committee reports.
12. Departments are committed to internal audit and reform.  The audit is aligned to service planning and areas for improvement are identified.	LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i> . p. 18	➤ How have departments been engaged in the process?	A self-assessment framework has been developed along with supporting guidance. The self-assessment is being undertaken by internal audit in August.
13. A steering group with terms of reference leads the process, and ➤ Develops and implements mainstreaming policy ➤ Leads on tools and techniques for mainstreaming ➤ Promotes s17 to staff members and partners ➤ Carries out monitoring and recommends improvements to the corporate management team ➤ Identifying community safety champions	Crime Concern/LB Havering. (no date). <i>Keeping Section 17 on the agenda</i> . p. 3	➤ How often does Harrow's steering group meet? ➤ How will the membership of the steering group be refreshed to reflect changes in staffing? ➤ How will the activity of the steering group be demonstrated?	Harrow has steering group that meets every two months. Its main areas of focus are training, audit, communications and s17 policy, with a champion from each area. It consists of group managers from across the authority.

Descriptor of best practice	Source	Areas of questioning	Current assessment
<b>The corporate approach</b>			
<b>Are crime and disorder implications considered as a “whole organisation” activity and supported at a corporate level?</b>			
14. Community safety is built into corporate plans such as the community strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ NACRO/Countryside Agency. (2002). <i>Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: a practical guide for parish and town councils.</i> p. 11</li> <li>➤ Safer and Stronger Communities CPA KLOE: “community safety priorities have been incorporated into the council’s long term planning cycle.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How will community safety be mainstreamed in the refresh of the community strategy?</li> </ul>	Safer Harrow will appear as a theme within the refreshed community strategy.
15. The Crime and Disorder Strategy complements other plans.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How are plans dovetailed corporately?</li> </ul>	The challenge panel did not specifically cover this area.
16. Community safety is a corporate objective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 16</li> <li>➤ Safer and Stronger Communities CPA KLOE: “...the council can demonstrate improvements in the quality of life of local residents as part of a corporate approach to safer, stronger communities.”</li> </ul>		One of the council’s new priorities is “making Harrow safe, sound and supportive”.
17. Members and staff know about community safety and how they can help achieve it.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How will the profile of s17 be raised?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dedicated scrutiny committee</li> <li>➤ Information on intranet site</li> </ul>
18. There is a safe and secure working environment that reflects the commitment to community safety.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 16		The challenge panel did not specifically cover this area.
19. Corporate decision making processes are developed so that implications are considered for all policy and service developments.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How are officers made aware of the requirements of s17?</li> </ul>	Section 17 is included within committee reports.
20. Information systems are in place to plan and manage, assess risks and cost of crime and analyse expenditure.  Information is shared across agencies and is reliable and up to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety.</i> p. 16</li> <li>➤ Audit Commission. (2006). <i>Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour.</i> p. 4</li> </ul>		The SARA problem solving model is used with information drawn fro across agencies (partnership database).

Descriptor of best practice	Source	Areas of questioning	Current assessment
21. Barriers to joint working with partners have been identified and overcome.	Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i> . p. 16	➤ How will Harrow demonstrate that it has embedded s17 in its working with partners through the Safer Harrow Management Group?	A policy has been adopted by the Safer Harrow Management Group but no further work has been undertaken
22. A clear and targeted community safety communications strategy has been developed to reduce fear of crime and prevent disorder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crime Concern (2000). <i>Mainstreaming Community Safety</i>. p. 16</li> <li>➤ LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i>. p. 18</li> </ul>	➤ What plans are in place to increase the profile of section 17 within the council and among partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A communications plan for community safety has been developed but has been hindered because of resource implications.</li> <li>➤ Recommendations were also made arising from the reducing fear of crime scrutiny review.</li> </ul>
23. Supplementary planning guidance has been developed.	Bexley Council presentation; supplementary guidance document from Hillingdon.		The challenge panel did not specifically cover this area.
24. A corporate approach to addressing ASB has been developed. - Local government takes a leadership role. - Partners tackle ASB at the neighbourhood level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Safer and Stronger Communities CPA KLOE: "it has an effective communications strategy to inform residents of services dedicated to preventing and tackling ASB and case outcomes"</li> <li>➤ Audit Commission. (2006). <i>Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour</i>. p. 4-5</li> </ul>		ASB is one of the seven main priority areas for the Safer Harrow Management Group.
25. Partnership working	Safer and Stronger Communities CPA KLOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How does the Safer Harrow Management Group demonstrate its ownership of section 17?</li> <li>➤ How are key partners developing s17 within their own organisations given the likely extension of the duty?</li> </ul>	The Safer Harrow Management Group has adopted a policy. It has also considered the ten steps.
26. Responsible guardians – frontline staff across departments have the capacity to identify and report problems and are supported and trained in this role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ LGA/NACRO. (no date). <i>Briefing for local authorities on the implementation of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i>. p. 12</li> <li>➤ Audit Commission. (2006). <i>Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour</i>. p. 4</li> </ul>	➤ How does Harrow 'champion' section 17?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The 'trainer the trainer' proposals are intended to build capacity within the organisation.</li> <li>➤ Members of the section 17 steering group act as champions.</li> </ul>

## **Glossary**

CPA	-	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
KLOE	-	Key Line of Enquiry
LGA	-	Local Government Association
NACRO	-	National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (community safety charity)

## **Annex A**

Extract from: Home Office. (January 2006). *Review of the Partnership Provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – Report of Findings*. p. 4

Section 17 of the CDA has worked on the rationale that the socio-economic and environmental causes of crime and disorder can be impacted on by a range of agencies working in the locality and therefore they should regularly consider this in all their operational and strategic delivery decisions. This is still immensely relevant but we believe that the time has come formally to broaden the definition of s17 to require agencies to also take account of anti-social behaviour, behaviour adversely affecting the environment and substance misuse. In addition, the Home Secretary intends to take a power to add to the list of agencies to which section 17 applies by means of secondary legislation.

## **Sources**

- Audit Commission. (2002). *Community Safety Partnerships*.
- Audit Commission. (2006). *CPA Key Lines of Enquiry: CPA 2005 Key Lines of enquiry for corporate assessment*.
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## Appendix C – Crime Reduction Unit Section 17 assessment against Home Office ten point plan

**Indicator Description:** To fully implement Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act in accordance with Home Office ten point plan

**What is Section 17:** requirement of community safety issues to be embedded into the planning, policy and operational day to day activity and service delivery of all the various council services (also the police, relevant health organisations and fire services). It is a legal duty similar to health and safety or equalities legislation and also applies to those who are contracted to deliver services on behalf of the council.

### The ten steps we need to implement to become CPA compliant

Details of standard	Self-assessment
1) Implement a S17 project group to lead on implementation	Achieved.
2) Develop a Section 17 Corporate Strategy	Achieved.
3) Develop a Section 17 Handbook	Partially Achieved. A general toolkit has been developed but this needs refreshed. Additionally, a simple staff handbook needs developed and put on the internet site.
4) Training Module implemented for staff	Not achieved as no funding received by Council. Work has begun on working with a training provider to undertake a train the trainer type programme in order to achieve value for money and sustainability.
5) Remedial support offered to Staff	Achieved. Support has been offered through service planning, committee reports and on intranet site. Further publication of support available is needed to link in with staff handbook, training module etc.
6) Train partnership agencies	Not achieved. A funding bid was put forward to SHMG to develop training module but this was not successful. This will become statutory under the review of the C&D Act that will be implemented from November.
7) Undertake workshops with main statutory partners and develop S17 partnership action plan	Not achieved. This is dependent on the provision of training agencies first.
8) Monitor and review S17 compliance	Partially achieved. Systems are being put in place to audit s17 activity but this hasn't actually been completed.
9) Training for elected members	Not achieved.
10) Implement community safety custodians in each area to act as the champion for this area	Achieved. Members of the S17 project team from each directorate are designated as champions. Further champions will be identified through the development of the training module.
<b>Total standards achieved</b>	<b>5/10 (July 2006)</b>