

Cheltenham Borough Council
Social & Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee -
6th January 2003

Progress on Section 17, Crime and Disorder Act 1998,
Awareness and Implementation

Report of the Community Safety Manager

1. Summary and recommendation

1.1 This report provides members with an update on progress regarding the awareness and implementation of Section 17, Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 within the borough council.

1.2 **I therefore recommend that the contents of this report are noted.**

2. Introduction

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress with the implementation of the Section 17 aspect of the Crime and Disorder Improvement Plan agreed and approved as a result of the best value review carried out over the last two years.

2.2 S17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

2.3 The Cheltenham Crime and Disorder Partnership has obtained Home Office funding for Section 17 and action plan training to include Cheltenham Borough Council. Training for Assistant Directors is currently being carried out by Crime Concern (an independent national crime reduction organisation and registered charity). This commenced on the 10th December 2002 and will roll out into January 2003. In addition, significant activity is also currently being undertaken with the police and other agencies in a 'joined up' approach to the implementation of Section 17.

3.0 Background

3.1 The best value review of crime and disorder was undertaken during 2001 and 2002. Several recommendations followed from that report to include:

- S17 awareness training for staff and members
- establish lead officers in each division
- lead officers to undertake an audit of current work
- staff workshops to be undertaken to formulate divisional action plans
- develop a corporate S17 strategy and action plan

- focus on priority activities.

3.2 As indicated earlier the Cheltenham Crime and Disorder Partnership has secured Home Office funding for S17 and action plan training. The first part of this activity has started with a comprehensive S17 audit of the borough council to identify current policies, procedures and practices that already contribute to community safety and crime reduction. This will serve as a baseline against which the need for additional activities, procedures and initiatives can be measured. In addition, the relevant report will set the legal and administrative context for mainstreaming community safety and conclude with recommendations for the development of practices and procedures which will help to embed community safety in the day to day working of the council. It is anticipated that this will be complete by the end of January 2003.

3.3 In addition to the current audit and awareness training significant 'joined up' working is underway with the police and other interested agencies. Examples are as follows:

- the establishment of a working group between the police and council officers to exchange information with a potential crime and disorder implication
- working closely with the four borough wide Police Inspector Neighbourhood Areas (INAs)
- active involvement with focus groups dealing with specific crime and disorder initiatives eg Substance Action Group.

While this work is aimed at addressing the objectives of the Crime Reduction Strategy 2002-2005 it is intrinsically linked to the overall objective of incorporating S17 throughout the council's activities.

4.0 Implications

4.1 Financial	None arising from this report.
4.2 Legal	None arising from this report.
4.3 Personnel	None arising from this report.
4.4 Equal opportunities, social justice and anti-poverty	None arising from this report.
4.5 Environmental	None arising from this report.

Background Papers	Best Value Review of Crime and Disorder
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Accountability	Cabinet Deputy for Public and Environmental Protection