

CCTV IN BUS SHELTERS TASK AND FINISH REVIEW

FINAL REPORT

Introduction

1. This is the final report of the CCTV in Bus Shelters Task and Finish Review Group, established by the Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to investigate the provision of CCTV in Bus Shelters following the Council's successful bid for Rural Bus Challenge funding to encourage the use of buses in rural areas of the Borough via improvements in the condition of selected bus shelters and the provision of CCTV cameras as required.

Background Information

2. At the meeting of the Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on 16th August, 2005 it was agreed that a Task and Finish Review Group be established to investigate various issues prior to an officer presentation to Scrutiny on 6th December, 2005.
3. At the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 6th December, 2005, Members considered the Council's Rural Bus Shelter improvement initiative. At this meeting, the history of this opportunistic bid for additional resources from Government was outlined and the progress to date. The bid documentation did not access the risks associated with the delivery of the initiative and at that time (2005), 80 per cent of the specified work had been completed however the CCTV element remained outstanding although was scheduled for completion by March, 2006.
4. A wide number of issues have been considered and discussed at the meetings and are referred to in the notes attached (**Appendix 2**). This report describes the outcome of the Review Group, it summarises the work undertaken, the findings from the processes and the subsequent recommendations.

Membership of the Review Group

5. The membership of the Task and Finish Review Group comprised Councillors B Jones and G. Lee.

Acknowledgements

6. The Review Group acknowledges the support and assistance provided in the course of their investigations and would like to place on record their thanks to the following :-

Mr. Owen Wilson and Mr. David Young.

Aim

7. The overall aim of the Review Group was to raise specific issues of concern with regard to the provision of the CCTV element, the allocation of internal staff resource and development of legally sound protocols over access to evidence by the Police and others, and the completion of the Code of Conduct.

Methods of Investigation

8. The Review Group have met with officers on a number of occasions and visited a number of bus shelters to view the quality of pictures produced. Officers have also updated Members of the Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny at the meeting held on 10th October, 2006.

Financial Implications

9. The Review Group have primarily concentrated their investigations on the operational side. However, they feel that the financial aspects in relation to the Grants and the financial implications of the delays should also be examined

Conclusions

10. The CCTV element of the Rural Bus Shelter improvement initiative has taken far longer than originally expected, lights and CCTV camera's at 20 rural stops originally being scheduled for installation in 2005. However, the Group Members do acknowledge the combination of factors which have contributed to this delay.
11. The system eventually went "live" in October, 2006 however there are still many outstanding issues.
12. Youths who 'inhabit' the bus shelters are convinced that the CCTV does not work as the cameras have been installed for some time during which time damage to the shelters have occurred and there has been no prosecution, therefore, the CCTV camera has lost its 'deterrent' affect.
13. Whilst the 'quality' of the image is good, the Group feel that they would not be able to be used in evidence as faces viewed were difficult to recognise, also there is a problem with lighting in the shelters, either too much or too little or the lighting does not work.
14. For the CCTV cameras to be effective, investigations are needed to minimise the affect of different lighting conditions throughout a 24-hour period, therefore, each bus shelter will need to be considered individually.
15. Maintenance Teams are equipped with the transportable display tool so they can check the quality of the image during their routine inspections and report accordingly.
16. There is a general lack of publicity and information available regarding the initiative.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that :-

- (a) Increase staff resource.
- (b) Complete the Code of Conduct as a matter of urgency and circulate to the Police and Police Community Support Officers to ensure they are aware of the accepted procedures, Community Groups and Parish Councils and Members for information.
- (c) Outstanding technical problems which are affecting the continual operation and effectiveness of the system are investigated and solved.
- (d) Continue to examine the effectiveness of the cameras and continually check that they are fit for purpose.
- (e) Publicity be improved and leaflets be distributed at the Town Hall and to all Ward Councillors for distribution in their Wards.
- (f) Laminated posters to be produced and supplied for display in public places e.g. Post Offices, Local Shops, advertising a contact telephone number to enable crimes to be reported and a second number to report breakdowns/vandalism to the CCTV system.
- (g) With regard to the financial implications caused by the delays, this matter be referred to the Resources Scrutiny Committee for their investigations.
- (h) That this Scrutiny Committee receive an update in six months time so that Members can continue to monitor the situation with the CCTV cameras.

CCTV in Bus Shelters Task and Finish Review Group