

## **PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **CCTV – TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

22nd February, 2012

**PRESENT** – Councillors Long (in the Chair); Carson, Cossins, Grundy, Harman, Lawton, Lewis, E.A Richmond and Wright.

**OFFICERS** – Ian Thompson, Assistant Director, Community Services; Steve Petch, Head of Place, Strategy and Commissioning; and Karen Graves, Democratic Officer.

#### **APOLOGIES –**

**Purpose of the Meeting** – Following consideration of the Medium Terms Financial Plan (MTFP), Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee requested Place Scrutiny to further consider CCTV. It was there agreed to investigate the effectiveness of CCTV within the Borough and the potential effects of any reduction in CCTV cameras prior to any changes being implemented.

#### **Points Discussed and Considered -**

The Assistant Director, Community Services circulated a list of camera locations and advised the Group that the initial proposal was to close down the CCTV cameras outside of the ring road area which would achieve a saving of £46k per annum. Camera Nos. 112 to 127 were being reverted to Durham County Council control which meant a loss of £50k, however this had been accounted for in the MTFP. The Group were also advised that 25 cameras located at Bank Top Railway Station were monitored by this council on behalf of Network Rail which generated an income of £20k and that camera numbers 80 to 83 and 89 were externally funded.

Following publication of the proposal Durham Constabulary had raised concerns and offered to provide funding for some CCTV cameras (£1,250 per camera) which would generate an income of £20k. Due to the funding received it was now possible to retain all CCTV cameras until March 2013 when further funding would be sought, however some cameras would be at risk if funding was not available at that time.

The following issues were discussed and considered by the Group :-

- The number of fixed, panned and pan on step-change basis cameras within the Borough which were mostly operated by CCTV staff who had links with the Police via walkie-talkies.
- The need for value for money when cameras were externally funded.
- Confirmation that all cameras would be working until March 2013, at an average cost of £1250 per annum, thereby giving the Authority plenty of time to look at alternative strategies and funding arrangements.
- Data was held as a digital image which the Police could burn onto DVD if required.
- The decision was made to turn off the cameras outside of the ring-road, some had Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) which was needed by the Police had also

identified cameras which were needed by them to combat crime.

- It was suggested that if there were too many cameras in the Town Centre some could be switched off and the money used to fund cameras at other locations.
- Reference was made to a very complex Home Office study undertaken in 2005 on the effectiveness of CCTV and highlighted the need to know what was being looked for and why a camera was necessary in a certain location
- Confirmation was sought by the Group on the amount of cameras in certain locations, some of which were funded by Durham Constabulary.
- It was also stated that microwave could be used as an alternative to BT Fibre Optic and that some cameras were more expensive to run than others. Concerns were also expressed as to the cost to Local Authorities of archiving information for the Police
- Following a question it was stated that Chief Inspector Andy Reddick had great faith in CCTV and would know if there was evidence to show if CCTV was a deterrent and was successful in gaining prosecutions. Reference was made to a Code of Practice which stated that 1300 people were arrested and 3500 tapes were viewed therefore it should be possible to identify needed and more effective cameras.
- The Group were advised that camera nos. 50 to 62 were provided by external funding as the estate was undergoing regeneration at the time, the Police had since identified three which were relevant to them and further funding opportunities were being sought for the remainder, possible from Housing.
- The Group were reminded that the cameras were also used to protect the council's assets and not just for anti-social behaviour issues.
- The cost of installation of a camera was around £30k which included the Pole, BT Fibres and the camera. Many cameras were provided through external funding and running costs were not considered at that time, all running costs now fell to the Local Authority, management staff were no longer employed, a full-time post had been removed and the burning of CD's was now done by the Police.
- It was confirmed that a saving of £46k was required and that the Police had provided £22k. Maintenance and running costs of cameras were varied and it was confirmed that at some point a replacement rather than maintenance would be required for some cameras.
- Reference was made to the possible replacement of CT cameras with microwave as they were more efficient and less costly and it was stated that was seen as an invest to save opportunity.

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That Chief Inspector Andy Reddick be invited to a meeting of this Group to give his views on the provision of CCTV.

(b) That the Assistant Director, Community Services be invited to a meeting of this Group at a later date to advise on any further funding opportunities.