

Report to Safer Cleaner Greener Standing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 25th February 2010

Subject: CCTV Service Delivery Plan

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Committee Secretary: Mr A Hendry



Recommendations:

- (1) To consider the CCTV Service Delivery Plan and associated Code of Practice;**
- (2) To note and agree the following key actions from the Action Plan:**
 - (a) the resource implications;**
 - (b) the reconfiguration of the post of Safer Communities Assistant to CCTV Support Officer; and**
 - (c) the bringing together the management and maintenance of all CCTV under the remit of the Safer Communities Unit; and**
- (3) To recommend to Overview & Scrutiny Committee accordingly**

Service Delivery Plan

1. The 2009/10 work programme has within it the requirement for the production of a strategic CCTV document. Attached to this agenda is the first draft of a Service Delivery Plan ("plan") for the Panel's consideration.
2. The plan is broken down into the following key sections:
 - (i) some background and historical context;
 - (ii) national and local policies;
 - (iii) aims and objectives;
 - (iv) the current position in the Epping Forest District;
 - (v) the delivery plan and resource implications; and
 - (vi) a number of detailed appendices.
3. The plan is intended to pull together within the Safer Communities Unit, most of the Council's CCTV resources, with the exception of that operating in the civic offices, which would be managed by CSS directorate and operated and maintained by ESSD.
4. The use of CCTV has both positive and negative aspects, in that there is an apparent general wish for CCTV to be available to support crime reduction and detection, whilst on the other hand there are understandable concerns around the excessive use of CCTV and its effects upon civil liberties. The plan and its associated Code of Practice are intended to enable the Council to achieve a sensible balance between these two.
5. Historically, the Council has implemented CCTV without any overarching strategy or principles in place, with the result that there are a multiplicity of systems in place, using differing technologies and very variable results in terms of usable recordings. It is critical that, if we are to have CCTV, and justify its use for crime reduction and detection, the systems are always available and able to provide the quality of recorded images which will enable the law enforcement agencies to use those images as evidence.

6. The plan looks to the next 3 years operationally and five years financially, with the operation stage being in two distinct phases:

- Phase 1: reviewing and consolidating existing CCTV systems; and
- Phase 2: developing and integrating systems to ensure compatibility, quality imaging and reviewing new technologies.

The action plan sets out these phases in more detail.

7. Maintaining a modern CCTV system is an expensive exercise. Members will note from the plan that there are no proposals for the introduction of fully monitored systems (i.e. permanently manned facilities), relying instead upon direct data downloads or more often remote data downloads or remote camera feeds. The costs of monitored CCTV are prohibitive, and probably not justified within the context of the Epping Forest District.

8. Members, when they agreed the Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative in February 2008, made financial provision to enlarge the Safer Communities Unit, including within it two Anti social behaviour investigators and a CCTV Operations Officer. Additional Continuing Services Budget provision was made for the new appointments plus £35,000 per annum for the maintenance and upgrading of CCTV facilities.

9. By way of example, the following are typical costs:

- (a) Pan & tilt camera: £1,000 to £3,000 each
- (b) Re-deployable camera: £8,000 to £12,000 each
- (c) Digital data recorder: £1,500 to £2,000 each
- (d) Annual maintenance: £ 500 to £1,500 depending upon number of cameras
- (e) Remote (broadband) access: £ 350 per annum

There are additional central costs around upgrading computers and screens.

A typical new scheme, with say 3 or 4 cameras linked, would therefore cost around £10,000 to £15,000 in capital costs, with on-going revenue costs in the region of £1,000 per annum.

10. The Safer Communities budget for 2009/10 has just under £40,000 revenue allocated for equipment, CCTV etc but no capital allocation. As the plan describes, we have been successful in attracting external funding for capital costs for equipment purchase, from the Safer Communities Partnership (£15,000) and via the Local Strategic Partnership Performance Reward Grant (£35,000 – over 2 years). However, EFDC has had to meet the on-going revenue costs of maintenance and downloading data etc. We are aware of locations where the present CCTV infrastructure is close to failure and in need of replacement, but the estimated costs of full replacement will be significant. Future capital provision will have to be considered for these locations.

11. The Safer Communities Unit has within it a Safer Communities Assistant post, on grade 3. This postholder has, over recent months, been required to devote considerable time to helping the CCTV Operations Officer with respect to system maintenance, downloading imagery etc. Given the continuing expansion of CCTV as envisaged in the Service Plan, it is proposed that this position be permanently reconfigured as a CCTV Support Officer and be subject to evaluation under the Council's Single Status arrangements. In the event that this evaluation results in the grade increasing, this can be accommodated within the existing salary budgets.

12. Whilst the plan deals with operational issues initially over a two year period, resourcing issues are dealt with over an extended five year period, reflecting the need to build in the resource capability to acquire new systems and replace and upgrade existing ones. The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Code of Practice

13. The code of practice is very much a technical working document detailing the operation and use of all CCTV systems under the control of the Council. It is a public document and will be available on our website.

14. It outlines some common definitions and goes on to give a brief explanation of our aims and objectives in relation to CCTV.

15. The main body of the code deals with the way we will handle the data produced by our systems including:

- a. How we deal with request to view data;
- b. Individual subject access requests;
- c. Disclosure of CCTV evidence;
- d. The protection, storage and cataloguing of data; and,
- e. The evaluation, monitoring and audit of the systems.