

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 2 November 2020

Portfolio:	Health and Public Protection
Subject:	Community Safety and CCTV Review
Report of:	Director of Leisure and Community
Strategy/Policy:	Community Safety Strategy
Corporate Objective:	Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities.

Purpose:

This report sets out the results of a detailed review of the Council's Community Safety and CCTV services and provides options for future delivery.

Executive summary:

The Council's Corporate Strategy (2017-2023) includes an action to "*review our approach to Community Safety, including an analysis of CCTV, to ensure that we make the Borough as safe a place as possible*".

This report sets out the results of a recent review into Community Safety and CCTV. A wide-ranging review of the services took place between September 2019 and June 2020. Desk research, statistical research and interviews fed into the analysis. The detailed results of the review can be found at Appendix A.

In summary, it confirms that the work of the Community Safety Team is both efficient and effective and provides a good example of partnership working between the Council, the Police and other local agencies. A recent vacancy within the Team, and a decision by the County Council to take back responsibility for the Supporting Families programme, offers an opportunity to slightly amend the structure and responsibilities of the Team.

The review included an investigation into the impact of the "Access All Areas" event, which aims to divert young people from getting involved in anti-social behaviour during the school summer holidays. Whilst popular with young people, it is difficult to provide direct evidence that the event actually leads to a reduction in anti-social behaviour. However, rather than stopping the event in the future, it is proposed that the Council continues to run the activities as a leisure initiative but that a small fee is charged for each young person who wishes to participate in the event.

The review of CCTV has raised some questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of the current arrangements. A significant number of the cameras provide poor picture quality and have very low usage. In many cases the cameras were installed to deal with a particular problem in a local area which no longer exists. They are, in effect, obsolete.

The main value of a CCTV camera is to provide a record of activity which might subsequently be used as evidence in a criminal prosecution. As such, there is a question over the value of providing a 24-hour monitoring service. In reality, there are very few incidents where the Police are requested to respond to an immediate incident spotted by the CCTV control room.

It is therefore proposed that the Council upgrades its network of CCTV cameras to improve picture quality, reduces the number of cameras, and moves away from 24-hour monitoring, with data being stored on a cloud-based system. It is also proposed to hire temporary re-deployable CCTV cameras to deal with particular "hot spot" problems.

Over the last 12 months, the Council has been experimenting with an increased uniformed security presence in Fareham Town Centre. The trial has proved to be successful. It is therefore proposed that the financial savings created by a smaller CCTV network be used to expand the Council's uniformed enforcement team from 6 to 8 officers. This would result in an increase in uniformed patrols across the Borough.

It is important to note that the Borough of Fareham is a safe place to live, with low levels of crime when compared to other local authority areas. The proposals within this report seek to ensure that the Borough remains a safe place for local residents and visitors, whilst providing good value for money.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Executive agrees that :

- a) 30 of the lower performing, and out of date, public facing CCTV cameras are decommissioned;
- b) 13 high quality CCTV cameras, be positioned in the most effective areas within Fareham town centre, and procured at a cost of £40,000;
- c) a £10,000 annual budget be established to fund re-deployable CCTV camera hire;
- d) live monitoring of CCTV be replaced by a system based on accessible but securely stored recorded footage;
- e) Gosport Borough Council be given notice of the Council's intention to dissolve the CCTV Monitoring Partnership;

- f) "Access All Areas" be treated as a leisure initiative and that a charge of £10 per person be introduced for those wishing to attend; and
- g) two additional Enforcement Officers be employed at an annual cost of £53,264.

Reason:

The transition to recording CCTV and the use of a core group of cameras, sited in the most effective locations, alongside an increased Enforcement Officer presence across the Borough, will help ensure that Fareham remains a safe place to live and work.

Cost of proposals:

The proposals can be contained within the existing revenue budgets for Community Safety and CCTV. The procurement of 13 high quality CCTV cameras would cost up to £40,000 and would be funded from capital reserves.

Appendices:

A: Detailed Community Safety and CCTV Review document (confidential)

Background papers:

Exempt by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date: 02 November 2020

Subject: Community Safety and CCTV Review

Briefing by: Director of Leisure and Community

Portfolio: Health and Public Protection

INTRODUCTION

1. This report sets out the results of a detailed review of the Council's Community Safety and CCTV provision and puts forward options for the future delivery of the services.

BACKGROUND

2. The Council's Corporate Strategy (2017-2023) includes an action to "review our approach to Community Safety, including an analysis of CCTV, to ensure that we make the Borough as safe a place as possible".
3. This report sets out the results of a recent review into Community Safety and CCTV. A wide-ranging review of the services took place between September 2019 and June 2020. Desk research, statistical research and interviews fed into the analysis. The detailed results of the review can be found at Appendix A.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

4. The overall aim of the review was to ensure that Fareham continues to be a safe place to live and work.
5. The review included research into the relevant legislation, discussions with officers, the Police and other Councils (e.g. Havant and Portsmouth), the analysis of local crime statistics as well as operational data such as CCTV views and incident numbers.
6. The main results of the review are as follows: -
7. *Fareham is a safe place to live and work:* In 2019, the Borough was in the bottom 23% for overall crimes recorded within Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in England and Wales.
8. *Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a priority for many residents:* This is evidenced within Fareham town centre by high attendance levels at the two special CAT meetings on the topic in 2019.

9. *The Council plays a key role in delivering community safety initiatives:* The Community Safety Team has assumed a pivotal role locally. For example, amongst other activities they:
- are a key partner, coordinator and implementer of actions within the Community Safety Partnership;
 - chair the monthly Partnership Action Group that supports vulnerable young people at risk of committing anti-social behaviour;
 - undertake 'nip-it-in-the-bud' activities with the Police, such as giving verbal warnings to young people; and
 - are a point of contact for residents with community safety concerns.
10. This approach helps to ensure that the Council's priorities are a key focus of community safety activities locally.
11. *There is an opportunity to restructure the Community Safety Team:* The recent removal of work linked to the Supporting Families Programme, the outsourcing of tenant mediation and the reduction in some of the "nip it in the bud" activities has created some additional capacity within the Community Safety Team.
12. The role of the part time CCTV Officer, who is responsible for managing and maintaining the Council's stock of CCTV cameras, will be reduced if there are less cameras in use, and the Council no longer uses the services of the CCTV Control Room. It is therefore proposed that the vacant Community Safety Officer and existing CCTV Officer posts are combined into a single full-time post.
13. *Many of our CCTV cameras are obsolete with poor picture quality:* 16 of our 43 cameras are more than 20 years old, with a further 17 being between 8 and 14 years old. It is very difficult to find parts for them, because of their age, and the poor picture quality means that it is challenging to identify individuals or incidents in detail.
14. *Most CCTV cameras are rarely viewed:* Many cameras were installed over 20 years ago and crime 'hot spots' have changed since then. Over half of our cameras have less than four views a month and ten cameras have less than five views in a year.
15. *The town centre cameras are the most viewed and result in the most positive outcomes:* Most incidents involving a Police outcome (e.g. detention of an individual), were viewed on cameras within the town centre. Less than 20% of these were instigated by the CCTV Control Room.
16. It is proposed that a core group of 13 CCTV camera locations are retained, as shown in Map 1 below. New high-quality cameras, with High Definition (HD) pictures and longer viewing distances will be purchased, costing £40,000.

Map 1: Proposed locations of CCTV Cameras



17. An annual budget of £10,000 would also be established for the hire of re-deployable (mobile) cameras, allowing us to respond to locations of concern which may emerge. It is proposed that the first location that cameras are hired for is the area of green space known as the Gillies, located south of western way, close to the town centre.
18. *It is difficult to justify the continued live monitoring of CCTV:* Overseen by the Fareham and Gosport CCTV Partnership, the monitoring of live CCTV costs the Council around £80,000 a year.
19. Academic research has generally struggled to show a positive correlation between CCTV monitoring and crime deterrence and detection. Whilst there are some outcomes linked to the core group of town centre cameras, many of these are likely to have been achieved without CCTV monitoring.
20. Many Councils have reduced their level of public facing CCTV provision in recent years and some, such as Havant Borough Council, have stopped all together, with no discernible impact on crime levels.
21. It is proposed that the Council ends its CCTV monitoring partnership with Gosport Borough Council. Recorded footage taken from the new cameras would be stored via a specialised cloud service and securely retrieved and shared if needed (e.g. with the Police). The Information Commissioner Office's (ICO) CCTV Code of Practice and GDPR rules would continue to be adhered to when collecting, storing and sharing footage.
22. *Access All Areas (AAA) should continue as a leisure initiative;* The AAA event was originally set up to provide diversionary activities aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) amongst young people during the summer holidays.
23. Younger people within the targeted 11-16 years old cohort tend to attend AAA. However, national research shows that less than 10% of ASB is committed by those under 14 years old. It is difficult to directly link the AAA event with positive reductions in

ASB during the summer.

24. It is therefore proposed that the AAA event is managed as a leisure initiative in the future. A small fee should be charged for each young person who wishes to participate in the event.
25. *The town centre Security Officer trial has proven to be a success:* In the short period before lockdown the Security Officers dealt with 139 incidents. Many involved begging or rough sleeping. As lockdown eased, the Security Officers have also helped to ensure that social distancing measures are being maintained. Feedback from residents has been very positive and complimentary.
26. The Council's Enforcement Team has been learning many of the face-to-face skills and techniques employed by the Security Officers during the trial. It is proposed that they continue to take on this more pro-active enforcement approach, including Covid compliance and enforcement, and apply it across the whole of the Borough. To aid this, and to build capacity, it is proposed that two additional Enforcement Officers be employed at a cost of £53,264 annually. This would be met from the savings achieved by stopping the 24-hour monitoring of CCTV.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

27. The proposals within this report can be contained within the existing revenue budgets for Community Safety and CCTV.
28. The proposals also include one-off costs of approximately £40,000 to purchase a new stock of high-quality CCTV cameras for the town centre. It is proposed that this is met from capital reserves.

NEXT STEPS

29. If the proposals outlined in the Community Safety and CCTV Review are approved, the Council would need to provide 12 months' notice of our intention to stop live monitoring of CCTV to Gosport Borough Council, the Police, and Hampshire County Council, which make use of some cameras for their ROMANSE traffic information service.
30. The contracts for CCTV monitoring, out-of-hours call monitoring, BT line rental and camera maintenance are all due to expire in Autumn 2021. Procurement of a new provider of out-of-hours call monitoring would begin in early 2021.
31. The new approach to CCTV would be in place for Autumn 2021, with the additional Enforcement Officers being introduced in the following Spring of 2022.

CONCLUSION

32. This report sets out the results of a detailed review of the Council's Community Safety and CCTV services and provides options for future delivery.
33. The proposals for the future have the potential to respond to residents' needs by increasing the amount of visible face-to-face engagement and enforcement taking place across the Borough, whilst ensuring that our CCTV provision is targeted in the most effective locations.

Enquiries: For more information on this report please contact Roy Brown (ext 4489)

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