

Agenda Item No:

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny (Services)

Date of Meeting: 11 December 2008

Report Title: Scrutiny Review of the effectiveness of CCTV as a crime deterrent

Report By: Rasoul Shahilow
Head of Parking & Highways

Purpose of Report

To present the Final Report of the Scrutiny Review of the effectiveness of CCTV as a crime deterrent, including anti social behaviour.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Committee approve the report and action plan.

Reasons for Recommendations

To acknowledge the role played by CCTV in reducing crime and the fear of crime and recommend further improvements.

Background

1. A Scrutiny Review of CCTV monitoring linked to antisocial behaviour was included in 2007/2008 overview and scrutiny annual work programme. The review fell within the focus of the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Councillors Fawthrop (chair), Webb and Chowney were appointed to carry out the review.
2. The agreed terms of reference for the review were to examine the effectiveness of CCTV as crime deterrent including antisocial behaviour by;
 - a. Reviewing the history of the development and introduction of CCTV in Hastings.
 - b. Reviewing historical trends in crime in Hastings with particular reference to public place crime

- c. Identifying any correlation between the introduction of CCTV in Hastings and trends in crime.
 - d. Seeking evidence and opinion from partner agencies on crime trends and the influence of CCTV.
 - e. Considering the cost effectiveness of CCTV
3. The Review Team met on a regular basis, had a site visit to Carlisle Parade Monitoring Room and had detailed investigative sessions with representatives from community groups and police representatives. The review team were supported and advised by officers including Rasoul Shahilow, HBC Head of Parking and Highways and Katrina Silverson, Scrutiny and Development Officer.
 4. The findings and recommendations of the Review Team are set out in the attached report and Action Plan. Whilst there was some initial scepticism about the value and effectiveness of CCTV monitoring in relation to crime reduction, having heard from community representatives and partner organisations the value and significance of CCTV monitoring as a contributor to community safety and well being was recognised.
 5. The opportunity to further enhance its role in the light of the expected expansion of activity as a result of the new college and other town centre developments was also recognised and the Review Team fully supported the proposal to relocate the CCTV Control Room to the new college development.
 6. It was evident from community representatives that in most cases, they were not aware of the good work being done within their community. The review team concluded therefore that it is essential for the community to be informed of all successes and activities in relation to CCTV operations on a regular basis successes of the service as this would lead to a further reduction in the fear and perception of crime.
 7. Community representatives also identified a number of new areas needing CCTV coverage. The review team has therefore recommended that officers in consultation with the police should use all means including external funding to extend CCTV coverage to those locations identified in the report.
 8. As a result of the site visit to the CCTV Control Room the need for improved accessibility to the Police radio communications systems was highlighted. The Review Team therefore recommends that officers should explore at the highest level the possibility of the provision of a digital radio by the police, to rectify this deterioration of the service.
 9. The review also identified the need to resurrect the Lay Visitor Group to monitor the use of the CCTV system and ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act, Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act and Codes of Practice on the use of CCTV. The Review Team has therefore recommended that this group be re-established but that it also includes representatives from the community and from partner crime reduction agencies.



10. In order to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of CCTV the Review Team has recommended that work through the national CCTV User Group to develop benchmarking data and Key Performance indicators be progressed and that consideration be given to further market testing to demonstrate value for money. It also felt that opportunities for extending the service to commercial activity in the town centre be explored after the relocation to the new college building.
11. After considering the views of the community groups, local police and taking into account the evidence presented to it, the Review Team fully supports the continued use of CCTV monitoring as an invaluable tool for deterring crime, combating anti social behaviour and reducing the fear of crime in the community.
12. The Review Team also recommends a number of actions to address the issues identified above and these are set out in the Action Plan attached to the final report as an appendix.

Wards Affected

Castle, Central St. Leonards, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill

Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, South St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Yes
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	Yes
Organisational Consequences	Yes

Supporting Documents

Appendix A - Final Report and Action Plan

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