

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - CCTV Provision

Monday, 27 January 2014

Present: Councillor Robert Finnamore (Chair), Councillor Kim Snape (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Doreen Dickinson, Graham Dunn, Roy Lees, June Molyneaux and Rosie Russell

Also in attendance

Councillors: Councillor Steve Holgate

Officers: Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods), Paul Lowe (Merged Crime and Disorder Reduction Manager) and Carol Russell (Democratic Services Manager)

14.CTV.1 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

14.CTV.2 SCOPING THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CCTV PROVISION IN CHORLEY.

The Chair welcomed Members to the first meeting of the scrutiny task group reviewing CCTV provision. The agenda contained the scoping template and two background documents which would assist Members in deciding the key objectives and broad terms of reference for the review. The Chair suggested that those reports be considered first, and the task group then discuss the scoping of the review.

14.CTV.3 DRAFT CCTV SYSTEM OPERATING POLICY 2013/14

Members of the Task Group considered a draft report detailing the Council's CCTV system operation policy for 2013/14, presented by Simon Clark, Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods. This gave the Task Group an overview of the system, how it is managed, operated and used within the Borough. Extensive regulation governs the use of CCTV surveillance. Members were advised they should be mindful of the policy in determining any change in the provision and operation of CCTV in the future.

RESOLVED – that the information contained within the policy be noted.

14.CTV.4 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

14.CTV.5 REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF CHORLEY COUNCIL CCTV SERVICE PROVISION

Members considered a detailed report submitted by the Director of People and Places which looked at the impact of the current CCTV Service provided by the Council. This had been referred from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 January 2014, following the decision to form a task group to undertake a full scrutiny review to inform future CCTV provision in the Borough.

The report provided the following information:

- The infrastructure of the current system in use in Chorley - the number, location and types of camera; operating times; staffing levels; maintenance costs – and also some options for improving the system.
- Comments on the effectiveness of the system in Chorley. This was currently being audited and a report on this would be available in early March for the task group to consider.
- Some case studies where Chorley CCTV footage had formed evidence in securing criminal convictions or in finding missing persons.
- The potential impact of any change in service, for example a reduced or decommissioned service.
- Information from Blackpool Council where their system is operational but no longer staffed; and also from South Ribble Council which operate a smaller CCTV service, compared to Chorley.

In discussing the issues, Members raised the difficulty in measuring the benefits of CCTV and the role it had in deterring crime or preventing the escalation of crime and how far it contributed to public feelings of safety.

It was felt that the review should result in a range of options for future provision – from a “gold plated” CCTV service to a much reduced service – with the cost implications and the likely impact those options would have. It was also important to speak to stakeholders in the CCTV service – in particular the police and town centre business representatives (the system links through to the police and town centre radio systems). It was reported that a number of parish/town councils had purchased cameras and these were also monitored centrally. It was proposed to undertake a short public survey and try and assess feelings of safety. There was very little national research available which assessed the value of CCTV, and so much information would be anecdotal.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted and the information/discussions inform the scoping of the review.

14.CTV.6 READMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The meeting reopened to the press and public for consideration of the remaining items of business.

14.CTV.7 SCOPING THE CCTV REVIEW

The following elements form the scoping of the review:

Objectives – to review the current CCTV system and inform future provision with a range of options from gold plated, through to minimal/no CCTV provision – including impact and cost implications.

Outcomes

To recommend one level of CCTV provision for the future which balances the needs of stakeholders with affordability for the Council.

Terms of reference

The task group will consider:

- Information on the current system – including current maintenance issues
- View the results of the audit being undertaken
- Receive technical and financial information about other systems
- Look at information from other authorities/system analysis where available
- Consider other aspects of CCTV – eg. benefits to the town centre and night time economy; public feelings of safety etc

Consult stakeholder

Police; RSLs; town centre representatives; representative from West Lancs Council's (or another) CCTV system; undertake a short public survey; receive written views from key parish/town councils.

RESOLVED – that the Democratic Services Manager complete the scoping template on the basis of the above information for approval by the Chair of the task group and circulation to task group members.

14.CTV.8 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.

RESOLVED – that the task group aims to conclude the review for the April 2014 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and hold meetings as follows:

- **Tuesday 18 February at 2.00pm - interviews with stakeholders**
- **Tuesday 25 March at 2.00pm – technical and financial information about alternative CCTV systems; receive audit report.**
- **Tuesday 8 April at 2.00pm – bring together recommendations in a final**

14.CTV.9 VISIT TO THE CCTV BASE AT CHORLEY POLICE STATION

After the meeting, Members of the task group attended Chorley Police station to see the CCTV system in use and view footage of activity leading to police intervention/prevention of crime.

Chair