Briefing Note – CCTV working group outcomes

Chris Wheeler Waste, parking and Fleet Services Manager (Chair)

Background

Current provision and involvement with CCTV

<u>Guildford Borough Council</u>

The Council owns the overt CCTV cameras which are on, but not monitored, 24/7. The council operates further CCTV cameras including body cameras, mobile CCTV unit, refuse vehicles, street scene vehicles, CCTV in various Council owned properties and CCTV in thirteen car park locations.

The Council holds a parking CCTV suite that monitors over 60 cameras and provides additional support to deal with incidents and support the police. The main purpose of Council CCTV operations is customer service and management of property.

The town centre CCTV operates has 64 cameras on an analogue system, with 2/3 of the equipment needing to be replaced or refurbished. The Council has a provisional capital programme for £100,000 to upgrade all overt town centre equipment.

The council also monitors the compliance of CCTV in line with legislation and data protection. An internal CCTV Group is held to monitor Council owned CCTV provisions.

The main Town Centre CCTV system is a partnership between the Council and Surrey Police. The Council owns the system, is responsible for maintenance, improvements and enhancements. This CCTV monitors the town centre and main roads. Its main purpose is to reassure the public, manage instances and gather evidence. A contractor is used to deliver any maintenance.

<u>Surrey Police</u>

Surrey Police are responsible for the monitoring of the town centre CCTV. Due to financial strains CCTV had become the focus of savings by Surrey Police. The police internal review of this was concluded within the timescale of this working group.

Due to a reduction in staff over time, and sick leave, CCTV monitoring was sporadic leading up to the review.

The police were of the view that CCTV can be a useful tool for evidence gathering, but with the rise of smart phones with cameras, more evidence is gathered by the general public than CCTV. Further evidence also suggests that offenders are largely undeterred by the presence of cameras, and the effect of CCTV as a deterrent where alcohol is a factor is largely weak. So its role has developed into more of a reassurance and coordination tool rather than front line detection and prevention.

<u>Pub Watch</u>

Pub Watch's involvement with CCTV included reporting instances during the night-time economy via the town link radio to Surrey Police. Pub Watch expressed concern that CCTV was not monitored 24/7 and police presence during the night-time economy was low leaving door staff and the Street Angels feeling vulnerable. The Pubs monitored their own CCTV and found the Town Centre CCTV useful to track particular individuals who were causing a nuisance in the town.

<u>University of Surrey</u>

The University owns 30 Wi-Fi enabled CCTV cameras on both campuses that were monitored 24/7, along with body cameras on some members of staff. The University had applied for accreditation of its CCTV. The main purpose of the University's CCTV was prevention of crime, protection of property, detection and safety of staff and students.

<u>Experience Guildford</u>

Experience Guildford's involvement with CCTV included reporting anti-social behaviour and shop lifting via the town link radio to be reported into the CCTV operation room at Surrey Police. Experience Guildford has no CCTV provisions of its own.

GAPS

Gaps in CCTV provision were identified to be during the night-time economy for the benefit of the venues in the town centre and the businesses experiencing shop lifting during hours of trade.

Scope of Group

The full terms of reference are at **Appendix 1**, in summary there are two phases needed and the group undertook phase 1:

Phase 1 – Group - It was agreed that the Group should review the locations and need for CCTV. The review would include the effectiveness of CCTV and a map of all CCTV locations (from all partners of the Safer Guildford Partnership). The review would also include how the Council and University could support the main town centre system. The review should include research action taken by other councils such as North Somerset and Harrow. The University of Surrey would confirm whether this review could be carried out by an academic or research student.

Phase 2 – Engineers - Once it had been agreed which cameras would remain, each would need a Personal Impact Assessment to be completed. A procurement process would also be needed to upgrade all CCTV equipment, and compliance for public CCTV to be shared between public and private authorities would need to be investigated.

It was agreed that the night-time economy could be better prepared for busier nights if they knew when CCTV would be monitored. Surrey Police would send hours CCTV was monitored to Pub Watch and Experience Guildford.

Surrey Police had recruited the last CCTV operator, the candidate was just going through vetting and the new shift pattern would go live on 29 September which would be:

Sunday 0700 to 2300

Monday 0700 to 0300

Tuesday 0700 to 2300

Wednesday 0700 to 2300

Thursday 0700 to 0200

Friday 0700 to 0400

Saturday 0700 to 0400

Group Membership

The Group included:

- GBC (Parking, Engineers, Data protection) with Chris Wheeler as Chair
- Police
- Unis, including an academic research student
- Experience Guildford
- Pubwatch

This group was deliberately wide to include providers, partners and potential partners and representatives of the town centre businesses and in particular the night-time businesses.

Review and Findings

The research work included:

1. Academic research on the efficacy of CCTV in crime prevention and detection (**Appendix 2**)
2. Confirmation of police capacity and coverage

3. Survey of town centre business split by day and night-time economy or their perceptions on value and effectiveness of CCTV and commentary on what they would like. (**Appendix 3**)
4. Confirmation of scope of current system
5. Identification of potential additional sites and sites that can be removed
6. Site visit to Harrow.

Key findings

Research key messages

The academic research (**Appendix 2**) in effect confirmed the initial police view that there wasn't strong evidence to support a view that CCTV in isolation was significant in terms of detection and prevention of crime. However, this is in part determined by the way in which it is integrated into use and the resources deployed to support it. There is evidence to show CCTV is a powerful tool in property level protection, in for example, a car park.

What also became clear (**Appendix 3**) that town centre public CCTV was highly valued by the businesses in the town and other groups such street angels. It was also an important factor in public reassurance, in some instances providing a watchful "angel" on the shoulder of individuals in a vulnerable state, with strong linking into the purple flag award.

Police capacity and coverage

The police concluded their review of CCTV during the groups period of review. The Police have confirmed a level of coverage as set out above and that this will continue for the medium term. The police have successfully recruited to maintain provision at this level.

The operating costs of the staffing is £203,000 PA. In terms of comparison, this is challenging as these costs are a function of the hours of coverage determined locally and the cost of staff, which will be in line with an appropriate and pre-determined scale.

CCTV current Network and suggested changes

Currently there are 64 fixed cameras. Taking into account the feedback from town centre businesses the group felt that all the current locations should remain with a further 1 or 2 added in Castle Street as part of the plans to improve the public realm and road layout in that area.

The council has a current revenue budget of £102,000 per annum for the maintenance of the current infrastructure and a provisional capital sum of £100,000 to replace and upgrade the cameras. In terms of comparable costs, the current revenue budget is a function of the kit we have purchased and the need to maintain this in operation. Should approval be given to replacement, this will be procured looking at best practice as well as capital and ongoing costs.

Site visit - Harrow

A visit to the Harrow CCTV facility was arranged and a small number of the group attended. It was clear that the kit and methods of operational were very similar to our operation. The location was different in that Harrow is a larger and significantly different in population and business density. Harrow's review confirmed its need for CCTV and reassurance was a key theme. In addition they are aligning the CCTV with public and private alarm handling, which for them and their demographic circumstances/population density, means that they feel this will generate a significant income to contribute to the cost of the CCTV provision.

Challenges and opportunities

Demand and scope creep for CCTV coverage remains a possibility and increased cameras means more resources to monitor.

Financial considerations are a major risk factor in the medium to long term, other models such as the Woking approach and the Harrow approach could be explored further.

Combining CCTV rooms – this is challenging in terms cost and governance, in that Unis and GBC parking facilities are there for customer services and property level protection and provide a specific function which is different to general CCTV observation. They are embedded in facilities with little or no opportunity to expand and the Town Centre CCTV is an extensive system with a large number of feeds. Co-locating, even if this was technically, operationally and financially viable would not necessarily result in greater efficiency as the quality and effectiveness of monitoring will be influenced by the number of feeds and functions an operator is asked to handle.

Conclusion

The Town centre CCTV system is an extensive system. It is aging and in need of significant update. It is viewed as an important tool for the town centre business providing a significant support and reassurance role, whilst offering the ability to coordinate police and other responses to issues and provide evidence for criminal behaviour.

The Police are committed in the medium term to continue the provision and have set a level of provision that is supported by this group which includes Experience Guildford and representation from town centre businesses.

There is the potential to explore alternative income generation approaches (Harrow), different operating models (Woking), or co-locating (with car parks or Unis) if the operational, governance and financial hurdles can be overcome.

However the base of the service is a reliable, flexible and effective camera system feeding into a control room and this base is in urgent need of replacement, with a minor increase in scope to cover Castle street.

Recommendations

1. That the group, particularly external groups, be thanked for the time and energy invested into this work.
2. That the SGP supports the conclusion that the CCTV continues to have an important role in terms of town centre management and policing and endorses the need for GBC to renew and upgrade the camera system via its capital programme.
3. That the SGP considers a further review of CCTV including different operating and income models in 2-3 years' time at which point the renewed infrastructure will provide an important delivery base.

Safer Guildford Partnership CCTV Working Group
Terms of Reference
Safer Guildford Partnership (SGP) Executive Mission Statement

"All partners contribute to the work of the Safer Guildford Partnership to ensure Guildford remains a safe borough for residents and visitors"

1. Purpose

This group is a short term (length to be determined by the group) task and finish working group to undertake a thorough review of the provision and management of CCTV across Guildford. The group will identify current provisions and options for provision and management in the immediate, medium and long-term. The Group will report its findings to the Safer Guildford Partnership.

2. Aims

- Enhance public confidence through positive use and promotion of CCTV
- Maximise positive outcomes from the deployment of CCTV for prevention, detection, prosecution and public protection purposes
- Use CCTV to provide wider benefits such as supporting economic development, enhancing public safety, promoting security and dealing with major incidents
- Demonstrate the transparent use of CCTV delivering accountability for the maintenance of standards, adherence to CCTV codes of practice and legal obligations to the Data Protection Act and to communicate British Standards and user guidance for CCTV and to encourage affordable innovation
- Identify best practice and the use of appropriate future technologies to assist those managing CCTV faced with austerity
- Ensure best use of available resources across all agencies represented
- Improve partnership working

3. Scope

- Summarise the research into the value of CCTV
- Review current arrangements, including cost, management and provisions (for all partners)
- Benchmark against others
- Investigate options
- Identify cost effective solutions
- Make recommendations to the Safer Guildford Partnership Executive

4. Membership

- Guildford Borough Council - including Community Safety, Environmental Health, Emergency Planning, Engineers and Parking Services.
- Experience Guildford
- Surrey Police
- Surrey University

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Members are expected to:

- be committed to improved outcomes
- be able to represent their organisation

They should also be (whenever possible);

- able to present issues clearly in writing and in person;
- experienced in the work of their organisation;
- knowledgeable about the local area and population;
- able to explain their organisation's priorities;
- able to promote the aims of the Executive;
- able to commit their organisation to agreed actions.

6. Chair

Peter O'Connell, Director of Environment

Vice Chair

To be agreed by the group

7. Governance

The CCTV working group chair will report to the JAG at each meeting. It will provide a progress report. The JAG will report the outcomes of the … to the Safer Guildford Partnership.

8. Frequency of Meetings

Two weeks ahead of each JAG meeting. A schedule will be circulated to all members ahead of the first meeting.