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HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY BOARD

REVIEW OF CCTV

Report by the Economy and Communities Panel

Portfolio Holder: Cllr T Briggs

Scrutiny Lead: Cllr D Keast

Key Decision: NA

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To carry out a comprehensive review and determine the future direction of CCTV in the Borough of Havant.
- 1.2 To obtain and understand residents views on public space CCTV in the Borough of Havant.
- 1.3 To discover if the present CCTV system in Havant represents good value for money.
- 1.4 Seek the views of partners with regards to reducing the net cost of CCTV to the Council.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1. the Scrutiny Board recommends to Cabinet that Council Tax in 2016/17 be increased to cover the cost of CCTV.

3.0 Scope of the Work

- 3.1 Investigate the deterrent value of CCTV
- 3.2 Seek the views of the Police Commissioner with regards to future funding.
- 3.3 Carry out a public survey to discover their views and priorities
- 3.4 To understand the future options available
- 3.5 To discover what action other Councils have taken regarding their CCTV systems.

4.0 Not Included in the Scope

- 4.1 Partnership with other Councils.

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4.2 Bringing CCTV in house at the Plaza.

5.0 Work Undertaken

5.1 By public survey

5.2 By interview with the Portfolio Holder, Head of Service, Community Safety Officer and relative officers

5.3.1 By seeking possible funding from the Police Commissioner.

6.0 Background

6.1 CCTV

CCTV was introduced into Havant Borough in 1999. It is not a statutory service, which means we are not compelled by Government to offer such a service. In 2008 the Environmental & Community Board conducted a value for money review which resulted in annual savings £90k . It was also recommended that the current system be up graded to a digital one. That the number of cameras should be reduced to around 40 with agreement of the police, and that live monitoring should be reduced from 24 hours per day to 16 hours on weekdays and 18 hours at weekends. In 2010 the cameras and control room were up graded to digital with the help of a grant of £50,000 from the Police Authority. The number of cameras was now 46 and the total weekly working hours were reduced from 300 to 148 and the running cost came down from £276,000 to £190,000. In 2012 a new supplier contract was introduced resulting in a further reduction of costs to £154,000 per annum.

6.2 Staffing

During this review we looked at possible further staff reductions in the control room and whilst it might be possible to cut the supervisor position, it would mean that a Council Officer would need to spend time supervising, which rather defeated the object of the exercise.

6.3 Cameras

The current number of cameras was agreed with the police. It was felt to be about the right number at the time of the 2010 review and we believe that this number (40) is still the correct number. We should however review where cameras are sited on a regular basis because needs and hot spots do change. There was a recommendation in 2010 review that the Council should consider purchasing 4 redeploy able systems but this was not actioned by the cabinet as no suitable system could be found.

6.4 Effect of Reduced Hours

The effect of reducing the hours that the control room is manned is reflected in the monthly figures. However, even looking at the 2012 figures, 228 incidents were caught on camera, 312 police visits were made to the control room, 262 arrests were made, another 48 arrests were likely, the police made 327 copies of video evidence and control room evidence was used in 66 court cases.

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6.5 2013 Public Survey

The facts speak for themselves. 82.9% were happy that CCTV cameras were present, 64.6% felt safer with CCTV in the area, 64.6% thought CCTV helped stop crime and 69.4% think HBC should spend money on CCTV. It is clear that the public broadly support CCTV.

6.6 Effectiveness of CCTV

The current position of the 40 odd CCTV cameras is felt to be about right but should always be kept under review. The police were consulted on these positions and agreed them. The upgrade to digital in 2010 greatly improved the quality of CCTV images. Whilst CCTV may act as a deterrent in some cases it's worth is in the recording of incidents and the identification of the law breakers. TV channels are rife with programmes showing crimes being committed. Youths pull up hoodies and cover their faces with a scarf and are almost impossible to identify whilst committing crimes in front of the cameras. Others commit crimes despite CCTV cameras and are caught because of them.

6.7 CCTV Use

The Borough has a duty to look after the safety and security of its residents. The main user however of the Havant Borough CCTV system is the Hampshire Police Force. The Police Commissioner for Hampshire has refused to contribute to all or part of the system costs, which leaves Havant Borough Council picking up 100% of the cost each year, whilst Hampshire Police pay nothing.

6.8 Other Local Authorities

Many local authorities are in the same position as Havant. Many have made cuts just like us. In Powys the County Council has cut CCTV completely and say that it did not result in a significant rise in crime or anti social behaviour. Several other Councils are considering cutting CCTV. Some are putting the savings into "Bobbies on the beat".

6.9 Police

Paul Ford from the National Police Bureau recently said. There are massive consequences for the public if councils switch CCTV off. We are currently seeing an increase in violent crime and sexual offences associated with the night-time economy, so for CCTV to be switched off in towns and cities is a real game- changer. It's been a very important part of ensuring public safety, crime reduction and bringing offenders to justice over the past few years. Some people will say CCTV does not actually solve crime, but it's more complicated than that. It's a vital tool for identifying offenders and bringing them to justice.

7.0 Conclusions

From the report, three options can be deduced:

- 1) The first is to carry on as we are at a cost to the Council of £154,146.
- 2) To cease operating a CCTV system in Havant
- 3) To take note of the residents survey of 2013 in which almost 70% of those surveyed would pay more for CCTV.

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The full recommendation is set out in 2.1 above.

8.0 Implications

- 8.1 **Resources:** There is budget provision in the 2015/16 for CCTV. Continuing to provide a non-statutory service such as CCTV in future years must be viewed in the light of the wider budget position. The Council is working towards filling a £1.4m budget gap over the next 3 years and projects underway will not fill the whole budget gap. The new Government's plans for further austerity could increase the size of the gap through cuts in funding, additional responsibilities or potentially increased demand for statutory services following proposed legislation such as welfare reform and Right to Buy. Because the Council is required to set a balanced budget approving the continuation of CCTV at this time will limit the Council's options for meeting its strategic aims of continuing to provide key frontline services and not increase Council Tax.
- 8.2 **Legal:** In developing recommendations for CCTV, regard has been given to ensuring that these measures comply with all relevant legislation.
- 8.3 **Strategy:** The employment of CCTV within the Borough directly impacts the perception of safety of Havant. This has an additional effect of our mission as a council, making Havant increasingly prosperous and putting customers at the centre of what Havant does.
- 8.4 **Risks:** the lack of CCTV within the Borough could contribute to levels of crime, both petty and serious.
- 8.5 **Communications:** Hampshire Constabulary have been contacted regarding the use of CCTV within the Borough.
- 8.6 **For the Community:** The active use of CCTV benefits community safety.

9.0 Consultation

Discussions regarding CCTV have been undertaken with Havant Borough Council officers and leading councillors.

Agreed and signed off:

Finance: 28/05/2015

Legal Services: 27/05/2015

Executive Head of Governance & Logistics: 28/05/2015

Relevant Executive Head: 28/05/2015

Portfolio Holder: 28/05/2015

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