

**A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
WAS HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2024**

Councillors Chegwyn, Hylands, Pepper, Raffaelli, Mrs Cully, Hammond (Substituting for Hutchison) and Philpott (Substituting for Burgess)

39. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE CCTV: PREVIOUS MONITORING SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Community Safety presented under Standing Order 3.7 of the Constitution outlining the role and cost of the previous CCTV Public Open Space Monitoring Service for noting.

Some Members felt that the complete withdrawal of the monitoring was detrimental and unacceptable.

The Board was advised that there had been a reduction in CCTV Monitoring in July 2021 and that the contract had ended in October 2022 and that the Police at the time had advised the benefit of live monitoring was immeasurable.

A Member advised the Board that they believed that CCTV Monitoring would reduce Anti-Social Behaviour.

Previously a report had been submitted to the CCTV Partnership on the live monitoring, looking at hot spots, begging, criminal activity, missing persons.

A Member advised and proposed an amendment that the Monitoring of CCTV should be reinstated to its previous level of 84 hours per week.

They advised that the infrastructure was still in place, and that the reinstatement of some live monitoring would allow for contact by the Police to better respond to incidents and to allow proactive responses, rather than retroactive.

A Member queried the financial considerations that had been undertaken to propose the amendment, as cost would have increased from the previous years and it was advised that the Community Skips funding would be utilised as it was believed fly-tipping had not reduced. Members advised this had been shown on UNIFORM recording system, it was also advised that Members were more proactive in reporting incidents.

A Member advised that consideration should have been given to not reducing monitoring coverage at all, if it was dealt that its removal was so detrimental.

Members advised that the report previously considered was confidential, and had not disclosed which hours were covered by the live monitoring and that the publication of this report had led to there now being an awareness that live monitoring coverage was not undertaken at all.

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A Member advised that CCTV Monitoring offered reassurance and all the data showed that it was more effective and public support for it was high.

The full coverage had been removed when the partnership had been ended by the withdrawal of Fareham Borough Council, and had reduced from full coverage to 84 hours. This coverage had been provided at peak times and offered reassurance. It was questioned why the safety, and security of the residents was no longer important.

It was recognised that the provision was not mandatory but it was felt that other non-statutory functions such as community skips should be removed and CCTV Monitoring reinstated.

A Members advised that much of the criminal activity, specifically which targeted at women took place in areas not covered by CCTV such as alleyways and cycle tracks. The importance of home cameras was acknowledged in supporting the Police in solving crimes, this included private CCTV and things such as Ring doorbells.

Some Members felt the decision to end the monitoring should have been a board decision and that the monitoring would discourage criminal activity. The report had been requested to allow for the issue to be discussed some time ago but had not been open to input prior to publication.

A Member questioned whether the Police had raised concerns through the Community Safety Partnership regarding the removal of live monitoring and were advised that they had.

A Member also questioned the number of footage requests and was advised that there had been 214 requested, 136 from the police and the rest from the public. Requests were now retrospective and could not help live time with crimes.

A Member questioned whether the removal of Monitored CCTV had impacted on the workload of the Community Safety Team and it was advised that it had significantly.

The Board was also advised that Jan 2021- October 2022 there were 59 footage requests.

Members felt that the Public would prefer to see more Police on the streets to tackle crime, and that whilst they appreciate the benefits of CCTV, presence was important.

The Board was advised that a procurement exercise would need to be undertaken to gain an idea of costings for any replacement monitoring.

The Board was advised that footage remained in place for 28 days for access should it be required, but acknowledge and reiterated that it was often personal cameras that helped to solved crimes.

A Member advised that they were aware that the Police would like 24/7 monitoring coverage, but that recently the Police and Crime Commissioner had turned down a request for a camera in the Grange Ward. In addition it was felt that the cameras better supported in instances such as missing people.

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Additional cameras had been installed in Elson Park and on Jackie Spencer Bridge which had helped address Anti-Social Behaviour as it was a deterrent.

It was recognised that security staff in shops were not able to actively pursue shoplifters and as a result monitoring had previously supported the Police to arrest them.

Members advised that the ability to solve crimes using live monitoring was not measurable, spending money on the reintroduction of CCTV would not have measurable results. It was questioned who monitored the impact of the CCTV monitoring prior to its removal and advised that it was reported to the CCTV partnership before it ended.

Members reiterated that much of the crime took place in areas uncovered by CCTV for which monitoring would be limited use.

It was confirmed that the currently live petition had 87 signatures.
An amendment was proposed that after 'in this report' the following be added

'and approves the reintroduction of the hybrid CCTV operational model referred to at paragraph 1.3 (2) namely retaining Gosport Borough Council ownership with peak time live monitoring as previously approved as a matter at the Policy and Organisation Board Meeting of 21 July 2021.

A vote was taken and subsequently lost.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

40. ANY OTHER ITEMS

There were none.

CHAIRMAN

Concluded at 7.10 pm