

IN-DEPTH SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - CCTV

Scrutiny Committee - 12 November 2019

Report of Chief Officer Finance & Trading

Status For decision

Key Decision No

Executive Summary: An in-depth scrutiny working group is proposed to be set up consider the CCTV service.

Portfolio Holder Cllr Margot McArthur

Contact Officer Adrian Rowbotham, Ext. 7153

Recommendation to Scrutiny Committee: That

- (a) an in-depth scrutiny working group is established to review the CCTV service, consisting of four Scrutiny Committee Members nominated by the Committee and consider reviewing the number and location of CCTV cameras provided across the District and their effectiveness in meeting the aims of the CCTV service;
 - (b) a report on this work of the Member working group and any recommendations be brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
-

Reason for recommendation: To evaluate the effectiveness of the CCTV service in supporting the Community Safety theme within the Council Plan.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council's CCTV system has been in operation since 1997. Currently the Council's six CCTV Operators work shifts to provide cover seven days a week, 365 days a year, with 135 cameras covering Sevenoaks, Swanley, Westerham, Edenbridge and New Ash Green.
- 2 The service supports the Community Safety theme within the Council Plan and the aims and objectives of the Council's Community Safety action plan. This includes the aims to reduce and detect crime and to reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. It does this by assisting the Police and others in the apprehension and prosecution of those committing crime and public disorder and to gather evidence by a fair and accountable method and to improve confidence in law and order.

- 3 The CCTV control room instigates, assists or monitors more than 100 arrests across the District each year. It responded to more than 200 incidents last year relating to missing and vulnerable persons, more than 160 child related incidents and dealt with many domestic violence cases. Working closely with the Community Safety Partnership initiatives in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, where Shopsafe and Pubwatch schemes operate, the control room assists with approximately 300 calls a year.
- 4 The Council's CCTV team is responsible for the Council's out-of-hours emergency telephone service, dealing with about 1,500 calls per year. The team deal with various emergencies across the District including quality of life issues such as noise complaints, lost and stray dogs, clean and waste water issues, dead animals, dangerous structures and debris, flooding and fly- tipping.
- 5 The control room also has daily contact with AA Road Watch and other travel links, helping to keep motorists up to date with travel situations within the District. These are broadcasted regularly on local radio stations, with operators assisting with almost 400 calls a year.
- 6 The Council's CCTV Manager also manages the control room at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and since 2009 the CCTV control room has been responsible for Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's out-of-hours emergency telephone service, dealing with more than 1,300 calls a year.
- 7 In 2017, the Council's CCTV Manager, won a national award for Management and Innovation. During 2018 the CCTV had an upgrade to include a new monitor wall, new recording equipment and a room refit. And in 2019 the CCTV team for achieving two National Certifications. The first against the British Standard (BS7958) CCTV Code of Practice confirmed the high standard with which the CCTV is managed and operated. The second, Certificate of compliance of CCTV surveillance camera systems and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 was by the Surveillance Camera Commissioner. Combined, these certifications show and demonstrate a mark of excellence for our CCTV Control Room and its management.

In-depth scrutiny working group

- 8 Members are recommended to consider establishing an in-depth scrutiny working group to review the CCTV service. As with previous working groups it is suggested that four Scrutiny Committee Members are nominated by the Committee to form the working group.
- 9 In defining the scope for the in-depth working group Members may be minded to consider reviewing the number and location of CCTV cameras provided across the District and their effectiveness in meeting the aims of the CCTV service.

