

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

CCTV

18th September 2019

INTRODUCTION

The Police and Crime Panel have asked for an update on the Surrey Police CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) strategy.

DETAILED REPORT

During the 2019/2020 budget setting process, the PCC pledged to protect policing Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) provision during the financial year 2019/2020.

CCTV provision in Surrey is currently fragmented. There is no overall strategy or agreement on which systems to use, with each borough and district council taking their own approach. Surrey Police do not own any of the public CCTV systems in Surrey. Surrey Police monitor the cameras in the West and East of the county. In the North all the monitoring is done by the local councils.

In July 2017, Surrey Police's responsibilities for CCTV were centralised within the contact and deployment command. The initial objective following the decision by Chief Officers to centralise the governance of CCTV, was to produce a clear police strategy, standardise working practices across the force in relation to CCTV viewing, and start to scope options with key stakeholders around the future provision of CCTV in the county.

In September 2017 Surrey Police hosted a CCTV summit with stakeholders. Options were discussed with stakeholders around the feasibility of forming a central CCTV partnership similar to Sussex, together with the possibility of some borough councils taking over the monitoring of their CCTV systems. However, it was clear that some stakeholders are in very different positions in relation to CCTV, and there are a number of conflicting views and priorities.

Given the strong desire by several key stakeholders to takeover or maintain their own CCTV systems, it is highly unlikely that the possibility of a central Surrey CCTV partnership is achievable. Taking into consideration the significant challenges associated with public space CCTV within Surrey, Surrey Police produced a CCTV strategy. This strategy sought to maximise police access to CCTV, minimising the risk to the organisation in the form of financial liabilities while maintaining partnership working with stakeholders.

At the same time, Surrey Police have been developing ways to make use of more modern technology providing digital images. This has included officer body worn video, the public regularly using their mobile phones to capture crime and anti-social behaviour events and increased public use of vehicle cameras. Surrey Police has

now joined the national new Single On-line Home system for police websites and interaction with the public. This system allows uploading of images and video. This often provides more targeted and relevant information than can be gained from CCTV.

Given this background, and faced with the need to make savings before the government proposals for increased precept were announced, Surrey Police were planning on reducing some spending on CCTV. Whilst CCTV could still be used to investigate crime after the event, provision of some live monitoring of systems was due to be cut. However, the PCC recognises that partners, particularly groups such as the Street Angels, value the reassurance of live police CCTV monitoring.

As a result of the raised precept in 2019/2020, Surrey Police will not be making any savings in relation to CCTV monitoring in 2019/2020, and will maintain existing staffing dedicated to CCTV monitoring and local funding at existing levels this financial year. Provision for future years are yet to be decided as the strategy is to remove police live monitoring of CCTV systems over time.

The force is still proceeding with its 5 year CCTV strategy agreed last year, summarised below.



Surrey Police are currently in discussions with local authorities in West and East Surrey around them taking over the CCTV monitoring from police in exchange for a revenue contribution each year from Surrey Police. During any transition period to local authority monitoring Surrey Police will continue to provide staff to monitor the CCTV cameras at an appropriate level to service demand.

Surrey Police have been working with Woking Borough Council who are planning to take over the CCTV monitoring for the Woking and Surrey Heath areas, with the transition anticipated to be complete by the end of the year. When Woking BC take over the CCTV monitoring, there will be no reduction in service provision from current levels. Longer term discussions are also ongoing with Guildford, Reigate, Mole Valley and Epsom councils to progress them taking over CCTV monitoring from Surrey Police. Surrey Police have committed to continue the current monitoring provisions with these boroughs during any transition arrangements, with the caveat that they would want to see some progress within the next two years.

In summary, there is no consistent public CCTV provision in Surrey. Surrey Police do not own any of the systems. They currently provide staff for some live monitoring, but this is set to reduce over time with the expectation that, where there is a desire of live monitoring, local councils will take this on. Surrey Police will work with local councils to have access to recorded CCTV footage with a funding process in place for this service. Surrey Police are also finding greater benefit from new technology, such as Body Worn cameras and footage submitted by the public.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Police and Crime Panel note this report.

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