

## SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 15 SEPTEMBER 2021

### PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PANEL MEMBER QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

#### 1. Question submitted by Councillor Paul Kennedy (Mole Valley District Council)

Following the Sarah Everard tragedy, there have been widespread calls for measures to make our streets safer - with better street lighting for pedestrians and cyclists, and CCTV to deter and catch offenders and reassure women, girls and vulnerable minorities, as well of course as bringing back more visible police.

The Bookhams Residents' Association have told me how much they value and would like to expand the CCTV in their high street, which has been instrumental in solving a number of serious crimes including a rapid response to a ramraid on a local store. However, in July you reportedly told the Fetcham Residents Association, who want CCTV installed in Fetcham village centre where there has been antisocial behaviour and a recent assault, that cameras are not the "panacea" that many residents imagine. You were reported as saying:

"I would much rather look at solving issues with anti-social behaviour with a community based approach, with our police and PCSOs, making sure we are tackling the problem at the root - to make sure we are tackling it not just from an enforcement point of view but a prevention point of view as well."

We all want to see more community policing. However, residents are perplexed that for example two police officers have been sitting in a marked car at a quiet location in Mole Valley, with its engine running for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, throughout the summer - the equivalent of over 10 FTEs or 0.5% of Surrey's entire force.

Local authorities are currently expected to contribute to the cost of maintaining CCTV on behalf of Surrey Police, even though we are told that increasingly they do not use or value CCTV. Do you see a role for CCTV or other surveillance tools in keeping Surrey safe and in freeing up Surrey's police officers to be more productive, and if so when?

#### **Response:**

In 2018, Surrey Police launched its CCTV Strategy. Its aims were:

- Maintaining police access to CCTV, agreeing a consistent funding process with partners to enable this
- Supporting local authorities and other partners in taking over CCTV service provision within the next five years
- To work in partnership with all CCTV stakeholders to ensure CCTV provision is forward-thinking and compliant with relevant codes of practice

- Maximising efficiency opportunities from CCTV service provision, delivering savings where possible

The strategy was discussed with partners in what is a complex mix of arrangements and funding in different districts and boroughs. It was also set against a time of increased resource pressures across the public sector. It was also recognised at the time by the Force that CCTV was not always the best way to gather intelligence and support communities feel safe and the police started to find ways to capture other intelligence like dashcam footage and mobile phone videos.

However, since I took Office I have been approached regularly by Councillors and residents about CCTV, with many wanting to increase coverage in their areas. I am still of the view that CCTV has a place in our communities, however CCTV alone will not reduce crime and disorder and we need to work together to understand what is causing issues such as anti-social behaviour and find long-term preventative measures in addition to enforcement tactics.

Over the summer I asked my Office to gather information, both locally and nationally on the impact CCTV can have. I have spoken to Surrey Police's lead on CCTV to understand their position and while I am in support of the aims of their strategy, I will be asking for this to be reviewed because, as you have noted, recent events and Home Office initiatives have supported the use of CCTV. I also want to know more about how Surrey Police are taking advantage of new tools and ways to gather information.

In respect of the police officers located in Mole Valley, I am aware that this is part of an ongoing operation and as such, I am not in a position to comment further. I do know however, that the local Safer Neighbourhoods Team has engaged with local residents on this issue.