**MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW - CCTV AND COMMUNITY SAFETY
THURSDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2006**

Councillors   *Davies (Chair), Dobbie, *Mughal and *Portess

        *Member present

Also present;   Mr. M. Pollak (CCTV Coordinator), Ms. R. Fraser (Data Performance
                 Coordinator, Community Safety Team), Mr, S. Sweeney (Police Projects
                 Officer, Community Safety Team).

1.   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2.   URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

3.   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no such declarations.

4.   TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted.

5.   PROGRESS WITH REVIEW

The Panel noted that the consultants that were working with the Council on this issue
– PRCI - wished to meet with the Chair to outline the nature of their work and their
input to the scrutiny review. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged.

Mr Sweeny that reported that relevant residents organisations had been identified
from the west of the Borough for PRCI to interview as part of their research but were
still being sought from the east. It was agreed that Neighbourhood Management
would be asked to suggest appropriate groups. PRCI would be looking at two
incidents as case studies of the effectiveness of the cameras. In addition, they would
be sending out questionnaires to a wide range of people including local residents and
staff. In order to encourage participation, PRCI were proposing to offer entry into a
prize draw with a digital camera as a prize to encourage people to respond, provided
the Council had no objection to this being offered to staff.

Members of the Panel would be visiting the CCTV control room at Woodside House
in order to get an impression of how the system worked. It was agreed that Members
would undertake these visits on 11 and 13 September.

6.   CCTV IN HARINGEY - PRESENTATION ON CURRENT SCHEMES

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Michael Pollak, the Council's CCTV Coordinator and Sean Sweeny, the Police Projects Officer, gave a joint presentation on the main CCTV systems within the Borough and their contribution to community safety.

The Panel noted that CCTV had initially been introduced to the Borough in the 1990s through the CCTV Challenge process. Wood Green and Tottenham high streets as well as two housing estates were covered by a total of 33 community safety cameras. These were all monitored and recorded for 24 hours per day. Relocatable systems were in place in Crouch End and Muswell Hill. These were situated near possible trouble spots. In practice, the cameras were only partially relocatable. These which were not entirely satisfactory as only one of the cameras that were in place in each location could be viewed at a time.

There were a total of 11 parking enforcement cameras in place. These were only used during the daytime or parking regulation hours. Whilst these were not specifically community safety cameras, they were to be integrated into the community safety system shortly. In addition, there were a 9 Transport for London cameras that were there to enforce parking regulations.

In addition, there were 9 mobile cameras that were operated by the Environment Service that were used to address environmental crime. These had hard discs within the camera which could be reviewed by staff. They were generally located within a particular hot spot for two weeks and used to gather evidence.

There were two other CCTV systems within the Borough that were significant. There was a covert mobile system that was used to collect evidence in cases of anti social behaviour and had been successful in helping the closure of brothels and dealing with disruptive youths. In addition, there was an overt van that had been used in a number of locations such as Tottenham Hotspur, Finsbury Park and around schools at the end of the school day. There were also systems that were controlled from outside the Borough such as ones that covered the main transport routes and smaller digital systems, some of which could be worn on the body.

The CCTV control room could undertake work other then community safety for time-to-time, such as assisting with operations by the Environment Service and targeted operations with the Police such as Operation Blunt. Management and coordination were undertaken by a CCTV Steering Group. In addition, there was a Tasking Group that was responsible for looking at how the cameras were used.

The staff who worked in the Control Room were generally security guards and the current contract was with Reliance Security. Re-tendering was currently being undertaken. All operators had to be licensed. The control room would shortly be moving to new premises. This would enable community safety and parking control to be located within the same building, which would improve communication and facilitate the sharing of resources. The control room had police radio so could hear and communicate with officers. This allowed officers to direct cameras to a particular incident.

Mr Sweeny reported that the police had a system in place in Haringey called video sentry. This captured activity on the footway. These cameras were not monitored but film from them could be picked up and reviewed. The system had been particularly effective in the detecting of the false reporting of mobile phone thefts. The cameras

covered the whole of the Borough and worked alongside the local authority system. There would soon be 150 of these in total. Some of the images that had been captured had been published on buses as part of an arrangement with Arriva buses.

Video sentry was relatively cheap in comparison to fixed cameras, which could cost as much as £25,000 per camera. All the cameras recorded and had very large hard discs which could store a large amount of information. Data was not kept for any longer then was necessary. It had been recognised that any instances of any cameras not recording could undermine confidence in CCTV and therefore all cameras had to be fully operational. The video sentry scheme, although not monitored, provided very useful intelligence and complemented the local authority system. Its main use was to gather evidence after a crime had been committed. The tapes from video sentry cameras were collected approximately twice per week. As crimes were generally going down, it was now possible to scrutinise the tapes more thoroughly now and address a wider range of issues.

Cameras were placed according to the where crime levels were the highest. The west of the Borough had lower levels of crime then the east, which was why there were fewer cameras there.

Town centre radio systems worked alongside CCTV. This enabled shop keepers to contact each other and was operational in Crouch End, Wood Green and Tottenham. The Control Room was linked into this system and shops were also able to talk to operators.

Control room operators generally looked for well known offenders. They exchanged information with police officers but more information would help them to target their work better. In particular, regular daily briefing documents could be shared with the Control Room to enable operators to better target their observation. They had found that when police officers had been present in the control room to assist in directing operations, the system had worked better then normal. Police assistance in Operation Blunt had proven to be very successful. Police officers often could predict where criminals would go next and had a feel for the way they behaved.

Mr Pollak stated that there was a need to improve the cameras in Crouch End and Muswell Hill to bring them up to the standard of those used in Wood Green and Tottenham. There were currently no fixed cameras in Highgate as it had very low crime figures with an average of only 15 robberies per year. Consideration could be given to providing some sort of CCTV coverage there but the cost of fixed cameras could probably not be justified by current crime levels in the area. In addition to the cost of the cameras, there were limits to how cameras could be monitored by the control room.

It was noted that housing estates were difficult to cover effectively and a large number of cameras were generally needed. In addition, private windows had to be blocked out.

A new CCTV Control Room would shortly be opening in Ashley Road. This would enable current community safety and parking facilities to be brought together and facilitate better coordination and use of resources. It would also enable better access to Transport for London (TfL) and parking cameras by community safety operatives. A new contract for providing support would take effect from March. It was noted that

the TfL cameras worked during bus lane hours before being shut down. It was possible that agreement could be reached to use these for community safety purposes in their down time.

It was noted that there were a very large number of private and other CCTV installations within the Borough. Film from such cameras could be, if necessary, used by the Police to investigate a crime. One particular weakness of the current systems was the lack of cross Borough co-ordination, although there were currently no High Streets that were shared.

Mr. Pollak agreed to provide details of the running costs of cameras.

7.   NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no such items.

Cllr Matt Davies

Chair