

# **Report of the Scrutiny Review on the Community Safety Role of CCTV**

**January 2007**

## ***Executive Summary***

The use of CCTV cameras within the Borough has increased during the last decade and there are now a number of different systems that have some role in addressing community safety issues. It is used to deter and detect crime as well as to direct an effective response to it when it occurs. It is clear that CCTV makes people feel safer and can be effective in helping to catch offenders. However, CCTV systems have their limitations and should be seen as a useful tool, alongside other measures, in the fight against crime rather than a complete solution.

CCTV coverage across the Borough is variable. A particular cause for concern is the CCTV system used in the shopping areas of Muswell Hill and Crouch End, where coverage is clearly inadequate. Additionally, CCTV needs to have a sustainable infrastructure to support it if its benefits are to be maximised and this requires further development within Haringey. The Borough's CCTV systems need improved co-ordination to ensure the most efficient and effective use of the cameras and the images that they generate.

The CCTV system that has probably the most overall significance in addressing crime is the Community Safety system that is based on a network of fixed cameras that cover the Borough's main high streets, particularly as it is the only system that is monitored for 24 hours per day. Due to its strategic importance, the Safer Communities Partnership should have more direct input into its operation. The Community Safety Control Room spends 90% of its time supporting the Police and this link is critical to its effectiveness. Better communication and stronger links should be developed including the provision of regular briefings for Control Room staff by the Police.

The CCTV Control Room will be moving to new premises shortly which will facilitate closer working between Traffic Enforcement and Community Safety staff. The contract for the operation of the community safety CCTV cameras is also due for renewal in June 2007. These events provide an ideal opportunity to review management arrangements to ensure that they are sufficiently robust to meet the objectives of the community safety system and that operational practices and procedures are in line with best practice.

The Panel was pleased to hear how well the Traffic Enforcement team was regarded and how successful they had been. However, this work will never gain great popularity with the public and the unfortunate side effect of this success is the apparent widespread perception that CCTV is used merely to make money for the Council, to the detriment of community safety. In addition to improving the CCTV systems used for Community Safety, there is a clear need to address the negative perception that the public and traders have of the Borough's CCTV systems and, in particular, the purposes of the different systems.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Community Safety CCTV Cameras:***

#### **Recommendation 1:**

That the Head of Safer Communities Unit be given a specific role in the strategic management of the community safety CCTV function.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

That, following the move to the new Control Room and prior to the renewal of the CCTV operating contract, a full management review be undertaken on the operation of community safety CCTV function and that this specifically considers:

- Practices and procedures
- The option of merging the traffic enforcement and community safety functions
- Improved co-ordination with the traffic enforcement
- Appropriate management structures including the need for a separate manager for the community safety function

**Recommendation 3:**

That, in order to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the Community Safety CCTV system, regular performance monitoring be undertaken by the Safer Communities Partnership and annual independent reviews be commissioned on its overall effectiveness

**Recommendation 4:**

That the Safer Communities Partnership takes specific action to develop further the working relationships between the Police Service and the Community Safety CCTV control room and, in particular, the provision of regular and scheduled briefings by the Police Service for operators.

**Recommendation 5:**

That urgent bids for appropriate funding by the Council and its partners to replace and upgrade relocatable CCTV cameras be strongly supported and that the Executive makes this a priority.

**Recommendation 6:**

That the Head of Parking Services, in liaison with appropriate officers from the Community Safety Team, be requested to enter into discussions with Transport for London to explore the feasibility of their cameras being accessed by Haringey's Community Safety CCTV operators.

**Recommendation 7:**

That the priority of community safety over parking enforcement be clearly articulated to operators and included in the written procedures of the control room.

**Recommendation 8:**

That, subject to the strict maintenance of appropriate security standards, work be undertaken by relevant Control Room staff with appropriate stakeholders to increase awareness of the procedure for obtaining images and consideration given to making the process simpler.

**Video Sentry:**

**Recommendation 9:**

That the Safer Communities Partnership considers the creation of a sustainable support system for Video Sentry.

**Strategic Issues:**

**Recommendation 10:**

That all proposals for the purchase of CCTV cameras by the Council and the key strategic partners represented on the CCTV Steering Group be routinely referred to it for comment prior to approval.

**Resident and Trader Organisation Views:**

**Recommendation 11:**

That the CCTV Steering Group be requested to develop a communication strategy in order to develop greater public awareness of the various CCTV systems in place and their purposes and that consideration be given within this to;

- The involvement of Area Assemblies and the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- The option of setting up a CCTV Lay Visitor Panel
- Appropriate signage

**Recommendation 12:**

That the appropriate Neighbourhood Managers be requested to work with Town Centre Managers and traders to develop options for improving the operation of the radio links between traders.

# 1. Background To Review

## Introduction

- 1.1 The proposal to undertake a scrutiny review on the community safety role of CCTV was originally made by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition and independently, the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety, Councillor Nilgun Canver and the Deputy Police Commander for Haringey, Gerry Leitch requested that the Community Safety Team undertake a review of CCTV. They felt that it should include an independent element so that it could be seen to be impartial. It was therefore agreed that the two reviews would be developed so that they complemented each other, with the scrutiny review providing the element of independent challenge.
- 1.2 The objective for the scrutiny review of CCTV was to determine:
- Whether it was working as effectively as it could towards enhancing community safety; and
  - If it was providing value for money.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Review Panel undertook the following;
- Interviews with relevant stakeholders to obtain their views
  - Consideration of relevant documentary and research evidence
  - A visit to the CCTV control room
  - Reference to best practice elsewhere to ensure that CCTV is being used in the most effective manner.
- 1.4 Whilst this has been in progress, the Community Safety Team has been undertaking detailed work of their own which has included:
- Canvassing the views of CCTV providers, users, tasking group, Members and the public, including a questionnaire for users of systems.
  - An audit of the coverage, purposes and uses of existing CCTV systems.
  - An evaluation of the effect of CCTV on deterring and detecting crime and reducing fear of crime.
- 1.5 The outcomes and recommendations of the scrutiny review aim to complement this work and assist the Safer Communities Partnership in making decisions about future installations, development and resourcing.

## Terms of reference

- 1.6 “To consider the effectiveness and value for money of CCTV in contributing to community safety and to make recommendations on options for improving co-ordination between different systems, future installations and maximising its effectiveness”.

## Members of Review Panel:

- 1.7 Councillors Matt Davies (Chair), Alan Dobbie, Fiyaz Mughal and Justin Portess

## **Advisers to the Panel**

- 1.8 Expert independent advice was provided to the scrutiny review by Perpetuity Research & Consultancy International (PRCI), who are a “spin off” company from Leicester University. They have also been providing general support for the evaluation and review being undertaken by the Community Safety team.
- 1.9 PRCI conducted the national evaluation of CCTV effectiveness for the Home Office. Dr Tim Pascoe and Mr Malcolm Brown provided information and advice to the review panel on behalf of PRCI. Dr Pascoe is the Head of Business Development at PRCI and specialises in carrying out qualitative and quantitative research investigating community safety issues and crime prevention measures. Mr Brown worked for the police for 31 years and was responsible for the North Lynn CCTV initiative in 1986 which became the model for many UK city and town centre schemes. He is also a regular lecturer at the Home Office Crime Prevention Centre on ‘The Co-ordinated Approach to CCTV’. He has extensive experience of all aspects of managing CCTV, from overseeing the technical specifications to the management of the solutions.

## 2. Effective CCTV Use

### Introduction

- 2.1 The use of CCTV as a tool to deter, detect and assist operations against crime has grown enormously in recent years. There were now over 4 million CCTV cameras in operation within the UK and this number has trebled within the last 3 years. Whilst there were great expectations about the dramatic effect that they were likely to have on crime when they were first introduced during the early 1990s, there now appears to be a more realistic view of their likely contribution to reducing crime.
- 2.2 CCTV has been shown to have greater preventative effects on some types of crimes than others. It is far more effective in deterring premeditated crime, such as car park crime, than impulsive crime. It has little effect in deterring disorder but can be effective in assisting an effective response to it. It is most beneficial when used in conjunction with other crime reduction measures and tailored to the local setting. It also appears to have a life cycle as a crime prevention measure. It is necessary to renew and update systems from time to time and to market them rigorously so that the public is aware of their existence otherwise deterrent value will be lost.

### Benefits of CCTV

- 2.3 Despite these qualifications, there is still clear evidence that CCTV makes people feel safer and that they have considerable faith in its deterrent value. In addition, it can;
- Prevent crime from occurring by impacting on risk and opportunity and the early identification of potential trouble spots.
  - Lead to an increased rate of offenders being caught where crime does take place. CCTV pictures can, for instance, be used as evidence for prosecution of offenders.
  - Provide “added value” to other measures that are in place.

### Effective Systems

- 2.4 The recent Home Office National Evaluation of CCTV helped contribute to this greater sense of realism. It showed that CCTV could work but in a lot of cases it did not work as well as it should. The view of PRCI was that for schemes to be fully effective, the following were required;
- Clear objectives for projects. The existence of specific funding for CCTV had created pressure to bid during its early years, often in the absence of reliable intelligence indicating where CCTV would be likely to have the most effect. Its use needs to be supported by a strategy outlining the objectives of the system and how these will be fulfilled. This needs to take account of local crime problems and prevention measures already in place.
  - Good management, including;
    - Access to technical expertise
    - The full engagement of end-users
    - The appointment of a suitable project manager. There is a shortage of suitably qualified people to manage schemes

➤ Independence. This is of particular importance as there can often be tensions between partners involved in schemes.

- Effective operation of the control room.
- Good camera positioning and coverage. Too little coverage tends to prevent efforts to track offenders for detective and evidential purposes. However, systems with a high density of cameras do not necessarily produce a greater reduction in crime. Camera coverage is linked to positioning and needs to take account of the nature of the area to be monitored and the objectives of the system. Police intelligence is invaluable when positioning decisions are taken as well as the input of the operators who are to monitor them.
- “Future proofing” of systems e.g. having sufficient capacity and capability for switching from analogue to digital recording methods. In addition, there needs to be proper maintenance to ensure that cameras continue to work effectively and are not obstructed.

2.5 Regular independent review of schemes is also felt to be important in order to ensure that CCTV systems are as effective as they can be and to help guide future investment. CCTV cameras are expensive and need to be operating to their full potential in order to provide value for money.

### **3. Community Safety CCTV Cameras**

#### **Introduction**

- 3.1 The CCTV system that has the most significance for community safety within the Borough is the network of community safety cameras which are monitored and recorded for 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. Wood Green and Tottenham high streets are covered by a total of 33 CCTV cameras. In addition, two housing estates are also covered. Relocatable camera systems are in place in Crouch End and Muswell Hill, which are situated near what have been identified as possible trouble spots. Although these systems are called “relocatable”, in reality they are fixed cameras and only one in each system can be viewed or recorded at any time.
- 3.2 The budget for the management and operation of the Community Safety CCTV Control Room is £253,000. The funding for this comes mainly from the Environment Service who also manage the service. This includes fibre transmission services, power to the cameras and the control room. There is also a budget for the maintenance of the cameras. However, there is no mainstream budget for the CCTV Co-ordinator which is currently funded by the Community Safety Team using NRF funding. There is also no budget for a specific Community Safety CCTV Manager nor is there sufficient budget for the maintenance of the cameras. A review of the financing of the service is currently being undertaken as part of the Pre Business Plan Review process and a bid has been made for additional resources to establish a post of Community Safety CCTV Manager.

#### **CCTV Control Room**

- 3.3 The current CCTV Control Room is split between traffic enforcement and community safety, with separate teams working on each area and occupying different offices within the same building. The current set up reflects the way that the service has always operated, with community safety outsourced and traffic enforcement undertaken in-house. Monitoring of CCTV cameras is typically undertaken by security firms and all operators have to be licensed. The current contract is with Reliance Security but re-tendering is due in June 2007. Bringing it “in house” would have cost implications for the Council and there are currently no plans to consider such action. The two roles were considered by the Head of the Parking Service to be separate disciplines and staff undertake different forms of training. Traffic enforcement focuses on evidence collection whilst community safety focuses more on prevention.
- 3.4 Operators look for well known offenders and scan areas looking for suspicious activity. They exchange information with police officers but it was felt by the CCTV Coordinator that 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. The Panel heard that the system works better when police officers are present in the control room to assist in directing operations. Police officers can often predict where criminals will go next and have a feel for the way they behave.
- 3.5 Police officers that work with the police video sentry system visit the CCTV control room from time to time and use images gathered by the fixed cameras. They have worked with the Control Room to encourage operators to actively patrol locations. They stated that it is very rare for them to obtain images of sufficient quality from a fixed camera to be used in a prosecution but the Panel was informed that such

experience is not uncommon with fixed CCTV systems. Police officers interviewed felt that the system did not always provide good quality pictures when “zoomed in” on targets. Images can also be too wide and individuals too small and therefore difficult to identify. Police officers also felt that operators could also improve their responsiveness to the police radio that is in the control room. However, it was recognised that the work undertaken by operators was difficult and that it was particularly challenging to maintain concentration during shifts.

- 3.6 It has been recognised that any instances of any cameras not recording could undermine confidence in CCTV and therefore all CCTV cameras must be fully operational. The cost of additional CCTV cameras needs to be justified by current crime levels in the area in question. In addition to the cost of the cameras, there are limits to how many cameras can be monitored by the control room. Housing estates are difficult to cover effectively and a large number of cameras are generally needed. In addition, private windows have to be blocked out.

### **Traffic Enforcement**

- 3.7 In addition to the community safety CCTV cameras, there are a total of 11 traffic enforcement cameras in place. These are used during the daytime or parking regulation hours. The cameras had originally focussed only on bus lanes but the Council has now taken on responsibility for enforcing box junctions. Whilst the main purpose of these is not community safety, they can be used for this out of hours, although this rarely happens. The Police can also take tapes from parking operators for evidence if required. Parking staff can access community safety cameras and tapes but have to obtain permission first. Sometimes the Police use parking cameras for direct surveillance.
- 3.8 There are also 9 Transport for London (TfL) cameras whose function is to enforce parking regulations. These cameras currently work during bus lane hours before being shut down. The Panel noted that it is possible that agreement could be reached to use these for community safety purposes in their down time.
- 3.9 The use of CCTV cameras for traffic enforcement has been very successful and there are now relatively few people who drive or park in bus lanes. This success is shown by the high number of tickets that were issued at the start of the initiative compared with the considerably lower level the following year. They are felt to be very efficient and can capture detailed images of moving cars. The additional income that comes from enforcing these regulations is approximately £3 million but it is not possible to disaggregate the contribution made to this by the cameras.
- 3.10 The traffic enforcement cameras cost £23,000 per year plus maintenance of £20,000. Operators are directly employed by the Council. Consideration had been given to outsourcing the service, but it was kept in-house as it was felt to be performing very well. Operators are all fully trained up to BTEC standard and have a dedicated supervisor, who has also assisted with the community safety team from time-to-time. The Police commented that the parking staff was particularly well trained and effective.

### **Radio Links**

- 3.11 The Control Room has police radio so operators can hear and communicate with police officers. Amongst other things, this allows officers to direct cameras to a particular incident. Town centre radio systems also work alongside CCTV. These

are funded by traders and enable shop keepers to contact each other as well as the Control Room. They are operational in Crouch End, Wood Green and Tottenham.

### **Feedback from Community Safety Review**

3.12 In addition to their work in advising the Panel, PRCI have also been undertaking detailed work for the Community Safety Team on behalf of the Safer Communities Partnership. Although this element of PRCI's work has focussed more on operational issues, it has also referred to some of the key strategic issues. Their preliminary conclusions on the operation of the community safety CCTV system were shared with the Panel. They felt that it would benefit from the following:

- A specific and bespoke procedural manual for Haringey as well as more explicit targets and performance indicators.
- Improved strategic management to assist in ensuring that the control room is to implement such procedures effectively.
- Improved coordination between the community safety and traffic enforcement functions.
- The development of improved links with the Police. This could be facilitated by regular briefings so that operators have a clearer idea of what they should be looking for.

3.13 They also commented on the inadequacy of the relocatable cameras that are currently in operation in some areas of the Borough, including Crouch End and Muswell Hill. PRCI also commented that the parking camera team were very highly regarded and appeared to be highly successful in their work.

### **Enhancing Performance**

3.14 The effectiveness of community safety CCTV cameras is very much dependent on the effectiveness of the Control Room. It will be moving to new premises in Ashley Road in the spring. Staff from the two functions – traffic enforcement and community safety - will be working alongside each other in shared offices. This will facilitate closer working and better communication between the two teams as well as the sharing of resources and good practice. It will also enable better access to traffic enforcement cameras by community safety operators. In addition, the current community safety CCTV contract is due for renewal in June 2007. These two events will provide a very useful “window of opportunity” to address many of the issues that have been raised and improve the effectiveness of the community safety system.

3.15 The purpose of the community safety CCTV cameras is to reduce crime and the fear of crime. The Panel therefore feels that there is a clear need for a management structure that better reflects this and ensures that the system is best able to meet the strategic objectives of the Safer Communities Partnership. The Panel considers that there is a particular need for the Head of the Safer Communities Unit to have some strategic ownership of the community safety system. This will enable the Safer Communities Partnership to have a more direct input into its operation as well as greater accountability.

### **Recommendation:**

- **That the Head of Safer Communities Unit be given a specific role in the strategic management of the community safety CCTV function**
- 3.16 The community safety operators do not currently appear to be equalling the same outstanding levels of performance as the traffic enforcement team. One particular issue appears to be job design. It was acknowledged that the work is challenging due to its monotony and provides a low level of job satisfaction. Operators are often temporary or agency staff so it is difficult to develop them.
- 3.17 The Panel noted the suggestion made as part of the stakeholder consultation by PRCI that the new control room should be staffed by a single team of operators who rotate either through the day or day by day, from a community safety to traffic enforcement role. The Panel feels that the feasibility of this suggestion should be explored. Combining the two roles could provide an opportunity to take greater advantage of the proven skills of the traffic enforcement operators although it is acknowledged that the different shift patterns worked by community safety operators in order to provide 24 hour cover could be an obstacle to complete integration. Although this option may have cost implications for the Council, it may have the potential to provide better value for money if it means that the cameras can be used more effectively. The set up in the new Control Room will entail staff from the two teams working alongside each other on different terms and conditions and employment. The desirability and sustainability of this may also need to be considered.
- 3.18 The present system where the traffic enforcement manager has been “loaned” to community safety and where there is no mainstream permanent budget for the post of CCTV Co-ordinator must be a short term arrangement. CCTV is likely to be an important part of action against crime for the foreseeable future and a more permanent structure that provides stability and meets the needs of the service on a long term basis is required. The Panel notes that a bid has been made, as part of the budget process for 2007/8, for the creation of a post of Community Safety CCTV Manager. In the event of a decision being taken to continue with separate teams for community safety and traffic enforcement, the Panel would support the creation of such a post.
- 3.19 The Panel feels that there should be a full management review of the operation of the community safety CCTV team. This should be undertaken only once the control room move has taken place, so the effect of joint location with traffic enforcement can be taken fully into account. This review should address fully the issues highlighted in the final outcomes of the detailed operational review that has been undertaken by PRCI and which is due to be reported to the Safer Communities Executive Board in February. It should also examine all possible options for development, including the possible combining of the two teams, and feed into the procurement process. In addition, the Panel feels that there is a need for regular and independent review of the community safety CCTV system in order to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the Partnership.

***Recommendations:***

- **That, following the move to the new Control Room and prior to the renewal of the CCTV operating contract, a full management review be undertaken on the operation of community safety CCTV function and that this specifically considers:**
  - \* **Practices and procedures**

- \* **The option of merging the traffic enforcement and community safety functions**
  - \* **Improved co-ordination with the traffic enforcement function**
  - \* **Appropriate management structures including the need for a separate manager for the community safety function**
- **That, in order to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the Community Safety CCTV system, regular performance monitoring be undertaken by the Safer Communities Partnership and annual independent reviews be commissioned on its overall effectiveness**

3.20 The Panel feels that there is a clear need for better communication between the Police Service and the Control Room. 90% of the Control Room's work involves supporting the Police Service and therefore the quality of the interaction with them is crucial to its effectiveness. In particular, regular briefings should be given by the Police to the CCTV operators as this will enable them to be proactive in the use of cameras and have a clear idea of what they should be looking for. This in turn will enable the operators to better support the Police Service.

***Recommendation:***

**That the Safer Communities Partnership takes specific action to develop further the working relationships between the Police Service and the Community Safety CCTV control room and, in particular, the provision of regular and scheduled briefings by the Police Service for operators**

3.21 It appears clear from the evidence received from several sources that the relocatable cameras that are in operation in the Borough are not satisfactory. These, as previously mentioned, are in place in Crouch End and Muswell Hill, where they are the main CCTV cameras addressing community safety. In addition, there are also some in place in Green Lanes and Seven Sisters. The need to upgrade them has been recognised by the Council and its partners and a bid has already been made for external funding resources to replace them. In addition, a bid has been made by the Environment Service as part of the budget process for 2007/8 to upgrade these cameras.

***Recommendation:***

**That urgent bids for appropriate funding by the Council and its partners to replace and upgrade relocatable CCTV cameras be strongly supported and that the Executive makes this a priority**

3.22 The Panel feel that it is important that the use of CCTV cameras already in place is maximised. In particular, traffic enforcement cameras should be fully utilised for community safety purposes outside of their normal working hours. We also note that these cameras can also be used for community safety purposes during the hours when they are normally being used for traffic enforcement, if required. The Panel was pleased to hear that community safety issues should always take priority in the event of any conflict and feel it is important that this is strictly adhered to.

***Recommendation:***

**That the priority of community safety over parking enforcement be clearly articulated to operators and included in the written procedures of the control room.**

3.23 The Panel feel that it is important that the TfL cameras should also be used to assist the local community outside of their working hours rather than simply being switched off. We would therefore recommend that the Safer Communities Partnership enter into discussions with TfL to explore the possibility of their cameras being accessed by Haringey's community safety CCTV operators.

***Recommendations:***

**That the Head of Parking Services, in liaison with appropriate officers from the Community Safety Team, be requested to enter into discussions with Transport for London to explore the feasibility of their cameras being accessed by Haringey's community safety CCTV operators**

3.24 The new Control Room will use digital technology and the Panel considered the suggestion from the Police that community safety CCTV images be networked into their video sentry systems. They felt that, if this was not done, there is a danger that the service will be inundated with requests for images. The Panel felt that, although this was an interesting suggestion, this might detract from the building of a stronger working relationship between control room staff and the Police Service. The level of requests for images should, however, be closely monitored and this suggestion considered further should the need for action become apparent.

3.25 The Panel noted that not all stakeholders who were allowed access to community safety CCTV images found the process for obtaining relevant footage straightforward. The Panel feels that work should be undertaken by the Control Room with relevant stakeholders to increase awareness of the procedure for obtaining images and consideration given to making the system more "user friendly". However, this would be with the proviso that security levels must be maintained so that only those specifically authorised have access.

***Recommendation:***

**That, subject to the strict maintenance of appropriate security standards, work be undertaken by relevant Control Room staff with appropriate stakeholders to increase awareness of the procedure for obtaining images and consideration given to making the process simpler**

## 4. Other CCTV Systems

### Introduction

- 4.1 The Panel also looked at other CCTV systems that have some relevance to community safety. These are separate self-contained systems and are not linked in to the Control Room. They are generally used, in conjunction with other measures, to act as a deterrent and gather evidence against offenders.

### Police video sentry system.

- 4.2 The police video sentry CCTV system is unique to Haringey and captures activity on the footway. Cameras are not monitored, but film from them can be picked up and reviewed. It covers the whole of the Borough and works alongside the local authority CCTV system. There are currently 130 cameras in place, which have been installed within the past five years. They are relatively cheap in comparison to fixed cameras, which can cost as much as £25,000 per camera. The overall cost of the system has been £400,000 in total. The Council has contributed £180,000 of this. The cost of the equipment is coming down in price – the local authority has now spent £50,000 on obtaining 100 more cameras for the west of the Borough where there are concerns about the effectiveness of CCTV coverage.
- 4.3 The cameras have very large hard discs which can store a huge amount of information. They are located in shops, offices and storerooms and cover a range of locations including cash points and road junctions. In areas where it is operational, there is an 80% chance of an offender being caught on a camera walking to or from an incident. There are approximately 50 in Wood Green and 60 in Tottenham. The cameras are now being extended to Crouch End and Muswell Hill.
- 4.4 Evidence collected by the cameras has been used to identify and successfully prosecute over 600 offenders during the past 5 years. These are often serious offences such as robbery, assault, rape and murder. This has coincided with a 50% reduction in street crime in these areas. The scheme, although not monitored, provides very useful intelligence and complements well the local authority system. Its main use is to gather evidence after a crime has been committed. Posters with images of individuals who had been caught committing offences by the system are regularly displayed on Arriva buses in order to encourage people to help in their identification and deter individuals from committing offences.
- 4.5 The system allows photos of offenders to be obtained and circulated very fast, thus enabling quicker arrests. In addition, the improved evidence that the images provides now means that it is rare to have a not guilty plea - 95% of offenders are now pleading guilty. This is enabling large savings to be made in court costs, which can be £10,000 per day. The system has some limitations – it is not monitored and therefore ineffective in enabling a response to an incident and images are also not centrally recorded. One side effect of the cameras has been that a high percentage (up to 40%) of robbery allegations had been shown to be bogus.
- 4.6 The Panel was very impressed with the operation of this system and its clear and demonstrable effectiveness in collecting evidence and convicting offenders. It should therefore continue to be an integral part of the Boroughs crime and community strategy. However, it noted the views of PRCI concerning the fragility of the system. It is staffed by three officers but there is always the possibility that they will be called elsewhere on other police operations. In addition, extending it to areas

of the Borough with lower crime rates than the areas where it currently operates will dilute its cost effectiveness. The Panel is nevertheless convinced by its effectiveness and therefore feels that the Safer Communities Partnership should consider the setting up of a more sustainable structure to support it.

***Recommendation:***

**That the Safer Communities Partnership considers the creation of a sustainable support system for Video Sentry**

**Police overt surveillance**

- 4.7 This has been used in a number of locations such as Tottenham Hotspur, Finsbury Park and around schools at the end of the school day. The rationale behind its purchase was to provide public reassurance and reduce crime and anti social behaviour. The use of the van is therefore primarily to deter disorder and robbery. It is felt to be a very effective deterrent and can cause potentially troublesome groups of people to disperse quickly. There have not been any prosecutions that have relied solely on evidence collected in this way but it has been a contributory factor in many cases.
- 4.8 When the van was bought, the intention was for it to be used 24 hours per day but, in practice, 6 hours a day had proven to be more achievable. It was generally used at peak times – early evenings and weekends. It was bought by the Safer Communities Partnership but has been used almost entirely by the Police. It can be booked by other partners but the Police have priority use and bookings cannot therefore be guaranteed. It cost £75,000 to purchase and £25,000 to maintain over a 5 year period. This works out as being cheaper than the cost of one police constable. It is used sometimes as a replacement for manpower when action is urgently needed.

**Anti Social Behaviour Team (ASBAT)**

- 4.9 The team use CCTV cameras to collect evidence in cases of anti social behaviour. The system has been in operation for four months now and is heavily used, proving to be effective. It has been particularly helpful in closing down several brothels and gathering sufficient evidence to enable an ASBO to be obtained. It has also been used to address fly tipping and has enabled perpetrators to be identified. The service works closely with partners, particularly the police. The use of evidence obtained using CCTV considerably strengthens cases, is often crucial in obtaining ASBOs and helps to prevent the need for residents to go to court. The cameras also save the Council money by helping to prevent vandalism by identifying perpetrators.
- 4.10 The covert nature of the surveillance helps to protect witnesses. The van that belongs to the Safer Communities Partnership would not have been suitable for this purpose as it is designed for overt surveillance, with its main function being to deter crime rather than to collect evidence.
- 4.11 The van and all the associated equipment cost £142,000 to buy. The software is easy to update and action is to be undertaken to double the size of the memory. The only ongoing costs associated with the system arise from staffing costs, particularly overtime and regular maintenance of the van. The service is to be marketed to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and it is hoped that it will ultimately become self financing.

4.12 Images captured through their surveillance operations can be shared with partners such as the Environment Service and Homes for Haringey. The ASBAT team do not normally get access to images captured by other CCTV systems. However, images would need to be of good quality if they were to be of use to them. They had tried to obtain images captured by the fixed CCTV cameras on one occasion but had found the process to be difficult. This may be due to their lack of familiarity with the procedure as this is something that they do not do very often. The Panel noted that there was currently no dedicated CCTV officer in post and the service currently relied on the goodwill of its staff to continue surveillance work.

### **Environment Service**

4.13 They have 9 mobile cameras that are used to address environmental crime. They are generally located within a particular hot spot for two weeks and used to gather evidence. The equipment is intended to act as a visible deterrent to continuous dumping of waste at known problem areas.

4.14 Prior to 2006/07, cameras were deployed at a number of known dumping hotspots. Reductions in the quantity and frequency of dumping were recorded but regular instances still continued. It was felt that there had not been enough follow up after surveillance to sufficiently deter people. Following the launch of the Street Enforcement Team in September 2005 and a planned recall of the camera systems for necessary maintenance between February and March 2006, the camera systems available have been used in conjunction with a series of proactive projects focussed on reducing hotspots. The equipment has now proven to be a much more effective tool when used in conjunction with proactive work rather than a stand alone deterrent.

4.15 Before September 2005, no formal action had yet been taken using evidence gathered from these camera systems. Since the launch of the newly configured Street Enforcement Teams, in excess of 50 reported dumping hot spots have been removed from the hot spot list following intensive surveillance, waste removal and education of the local community. Intelligence gathered from some of these locations have contributed to seven formal investigations concerning alleged fly tipping offences, five of which were being prepared for prosecution and two which had resulted in the offenders receiving written formal cautions.

4.16 The system cost £412,000 to purchase, which was funded by NRF monies. This included both capital and revenue costs. General maintenance of the equipment costs approximately £6,500 per annum. All systems are now outdated and would benefit from upgrade to current technology available. Systems do not necessarily require replacing to do this but an upgrade to the current systems would still cost in excess of £30,000.

4.17 Images captured during an investigation are subject to the usual rules of evidence and generally depict a specific alleged act or offence which is dealt with by the service. However, any images caught while filming that might be of interest to partner enforcement agencies are made available at the time they were captured. It was the intention of the Environment Services to seek ASBOs against offenders found guilty of more serious environmental crimes such as large scale fly posting, fly tipping and graffiti vandals. Images captured through surveillance were made available to the Council's Anti Social Behaviour Team who were keen to support this approach.

- 4.18 Recent discussions with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams had shown an opportunity for further joint working in areas where cameras were to be deployed. If, for instance, a camera had been deployed to detect fly tipping, it might also cover an area affected by anti social behaviour and could therefore also provide support to the Police and the ASBAT.
- 4.19 The use of cameras reduces the need to have officer time used for surveillance, freeing up time to carry out other duties whilst the cameras recorded incidents for later investigation. Cameras can be used to detect “trends” at a given location to either show no investigation was required or resources should be used to pursue an investigation in this area. The equipment can be used to provide a deterrent similar to having a uniformed street enforcement officer patrolling an area.

### **Strategic Issues**

- 4.20 Management and coordination of key CCTV installations within the Borough are undertaken by a CCTV Steering Group chaired by the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety. In addition, there is a CCTV Tasking Group that is responsible for looking at how the cameras were used.
- 4.21 CCTV systems have generally proven to be valuable tools for a range of services but in order for them to be fully effective they require an appropriate and sustainable support structure, included staffing. The experience of the Environment Service clearly showed the considerably improved outcomes from using cameras in conjunction with effective support and follow up.
- 4.22 Although systems have brought clear benefits, the Panel is of the view that the value for money that has been obtained has been variable. It feels that a more robust system needs to put in place to monitor proposals to extend the use of CCTV by the Council and its partners in order to ensure that value for money is obtained. Particular consideration should be given to:
- The setting of clear objectives for projects
  - Cost/benefit analysis
  - Maximisation of opportunities for sharing of resources
  - Compatibility of systems and “future proofing”
  - Ensuring that sustainable structures are in place to support systems, including staffing

### ***Recommendation:***

**That all proposals for the purchase of CCTV cameras by the Council and the key strategic partners represented on the CCTV Steering Group be routinely referred to it for comment prior to approval**

## 5. Resident and Trader Organisation Views

### Introduction

- 5.1 The Panel received evidence from a number of local residents and traders from three locations within the Borough – Muswell Hill, Green Lanes and Tottenham.

### Green Lanes

- 5.2 Residents and traders from Green Lanes felt that they had been misled about the purpose of CCTV cameras that had been installed in the area. They stated that they had been told that their purpose was to help keep bus lanes clear and to promote community safety. Since their installation, people had stopped abusing bus lanes but the cameras were now being used to enforce yellow box junction offences. They said that the camera near Endymion Road was now the 6<sup>th</sup> highest earning camera in London. They felt that the cameras were not there for community safety purposes, but solely to raise money for the Council.

### Tottenham

- 5.3 In respect of Tottenham, traders and residents also felt that cameras were just being used to raise revenue. They had originally been told that cameras would be used for community safety purposes after 7:00 p.m. and at weekends and that they could also be used to monitor any incident that took place during the day. This did not appear to be happening as cameras appeared to be switched off after hours. Cameras that had been placed in car parks had nevertheless proven to be very successful and made people feel safer. Not all cameras were felt to be situated in ideal locations and better positioning would enable greater usage. There had been a noticeable beneficial effect in the West Green Road area although it was possible that some crime had been displaced to side streets. They felt that some of the revenue generated through parking cameras could be used to improve the community safety function.
- 5.4 The radio link between shops and the CCTV control room was considered to be inefficient and it was stated that it could be difficult to get hold of anyone. The system needed good management with operators being more proactive in their approach. They felt that having CCTV cameras was of benefit but community safety needed to be a highest priority and determine their use.

### Muswell Hill

- 5.5 The Panel noted that there had been ongoing pressure from residents for action to be taken and the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association had met with officers and contacted the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety and the Borough Commander. Crime had increased in the area and it was felt that CCTV cameras would provide reassurance, act as a deterrent and help direct Police operations. The current community safety system that operated in the area only allowed the use of one camera at any particular time. This was not satisfactory and it was known that the Police did not feel that it was adequate either. The current system had not met their expectations and had not helped to reduce crime. However, they felt that CCTV should be capable of making a contribution. Not everyone knew that the cameras were there and this meant that people were less likely to be reassured by them or deterred from committing crimes. Amongst those that did, it was felt that the current outcome represents a missed opportunity.

## Communication and Information

- 5.6 Residents and traders requested that there be better information about the various systems. They felt that there needed to be far greater clarity, as well as consultation with residents, although that it was recognised that some information might have to be withheld for security reasons. Information could be given out via Area Assemblies and through Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Residents and traders felt that signage was important so that people knew that the systems were working. In addition, it was important to traders that their radio system worked properly.

## Focus Groups

- 5.7 In addition to the work by the Panel, PRCI undertook focus groups with members of the public. They reported that people were generally unaware that the traffic enforcement and community safety were different CCTV systems. Members of the public also believed that the CCTV system was used purely for traffic enforcement purposes in order to generate income through fines that are issued. They felt that community safety CCTV was of secondary importance to traffic enforcement.

## Conclusions

- 5.8 It is clear that there is a need to improve communication with members of the public and traders on CCTV systems. CCTV can only continue to act as both a deterrent and a reassurance if public awareness is maintained and measures need to be put in place to ensure that this occurs. In particular, the community need to be made more aware of the existence of the various different schemes and the demarcation between community safety and traffic enforcement. Although the use of CCTV for community safety purposes is effective, there are limitations to it and it would also be of benefit if a realistic awareness of the potential benefits was generated.
- 5.9 One option that the Panel would like to see explored is the setting up of a CCTV Lay Visitor Panel. This currently exists in Wycombe and has been tried in the London Borough of Lambeth. There have been mixed results to date but such a mechanism has the potential to assist in helping to better inform the public and monitoring performance, so consideration should be given as to whether this is a suitable option for Haringey.

### **Recommendation:**

**That the CCTV Steering Group be requested to develop a communication strategy in order to develop greater public awareness of the various CCTV systems in place and their purposes and that consideration be given within this to;**

- **The involvement of Area Assemblies and the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams**
- **The option of setting up a CCTV Lay Visitor Panel**
- **Appropriate signage**

- 5.10 The radio systems that are in operation between traders and linked into the CCTV Control is in need of review. They are funded by traders and tend to work better where there are larger retailers who are able to employ their own security guards. The Panel feels that the Neighbourhood Management should be requested to work with Town Centre managers and traders to develop options for how the system can be made more effective. Individual networks each have their own frequencies which

mean the Control Room staff have three different radios to monitor. One option that could therefore be explored is placing the systems on the same frequency.

**Recommendation;**

**That the appropriate Neighbourhood Managers be requested to work with Town Centre Managers and traders to develop options for improving the operation of the radio links between traders**