

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

16 APRIL 2009

**REPORT OF HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY SAFETY
SELECT COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

Housing and Community Safety – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Steve Nelson

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING, NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH AND CCTV

1. Summary

This report presents the findings of the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee following a review of Neighbourhood Policing, Neighbourhood Watch and the Council's CCTV network. The review examined the early operation of Neighbourhood Policing in Stockton Borough, the contribution made by Neighbourhood Watch, and the effectiveness and sustainability of the Council's CCTV network.

2. Recommendations

The Committee request that those recommendations for Stockton Borough Council be approved, in principle, subject to a full assessment of both service and medium term financial planning implications and that recommendations for external organisations be endorsed for submission to them, and recommend:

- R1. that the Head of Community Protection be authorised to work in conjunction with Cleveland Police to investigate the potential for joint work to take place in order to ensure that when non-emergency calls are received by either Cleveland Police (eg. 302930/326326) or the Council's Community Protection services (eg. Neighbourhood Enforcement Service 528439), if necessary, the calls, or the details of the issue, are transferred to the correct service for action, thereby improving customer service;
- R2. that the Committee support the plans of Cleveland Police to undertake further promotional work regarding neighbourhood policing teams, and request that this includes promotion of the 302930 neighbourhood police team number;
- R3. that Democratic Services amend the Member induction programme/packs so that it includes:
 - a) information on the Borough's Neighbourhood Watch schemes;
 - b) details of the relevant Ward's Neighbourhood Policing Team;
 - c) and that this information is kept up to date;

d) and that this information is also provided to all current Members as soon as available;

R4. that the Committee recognises the work undertaken by Neighbourhood Watch, and in order to further improve this work, Stockton Council and Cleveland Police should work with, and encourage Neighbourhood Watch in Stockton Borough to:

a) amend the Ringmaster System so that it sends out crime prevention advice and also 'positive' information in relation to local crime trends, and thereby contribute to reducing the fear of crime;

b) amend the membership forms for the Ringmaster system, so that extra detail can be included, and it is clear as to which scheme the applicant wishes to be a member of;

c) explore and promote better usage of technology to deliver Ringmaster messages (eg. text messaging/email), and in relation to the use of email messages, lower case text is used in order to ensure ease of reading;

d) work with the Council and Cleveland Police to undertake a promotional campaign highlighting the benefits of setting up Watch schemes;

e) support the production of local scheme newsletters by centrally producing templates and sample articles (including crime figures), and investigate the use of volunteers to undertake this work;

f) seek additional sponsors in order to support its work.

R5. that Stockton Council should ensure that the policy of not allowing footage captured by its CCTV network to be sold to media companies is clearly stated in the public domain;

R6. that a comprehensive plan be developed for financial support to the Council's CCTV network, in conjunction with relevant partners, as part of a wider appraisal of the financial sustainability of the Security Centre;

R7. that planning applications for new developments will be assessed for their suitability to contribute towards the funding of additional crime prevention infrastructure (including CCTV), the levels of provision and/or contributions sought being dependent on the size and type of proposed development, in line with the adopted Supplementary Planning Document 6: Planning Obligations;

R8. that in order to contribute to reducing the fear of crime amongst residents:

a) the Council and Cleveland Police should continue to publicise positive news in relation to the reduction of crime in the Borough, but that this should not preclude the provision of common sense crime prevention advice;

b) the Council explore the scope for further inter-generational working between young people and older residents of the Borough.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The topic was identified at a meeting of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum in March 2008, and subsequently incorporated into the scrutiny work programme by the Executive Scrutiny Committee in April 2008. The Council and Cleveland Police work closely together to deliver Neighbourhood Policing, and Neighbourhood Watch has a role to play in terms of reducing crime and the fear of crime. The review was also considered timely due to the need to ensure the continued effectiveness and sustainability of the Council's CCTV network, and it was clear that the fear of crime amongst residents remained relatively high despite a reduction in the overall levels of crime.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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CCTV**

SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee following a review of Neighbourhood Policing, Neighbourhood Watch and the Council's CCTV network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee request that those recommendations for Stockton Borough Council be approved, in principle, subject to a full assessment of both service and medium term financial planning implications and that recommendations for external organisations be endorsed for submission to them, and recommend:

- R1. that the Head of Community Protection be authorised to work in conjunction with Cleveland Police to investigate the potential for joint work to take place in order to ensure that when non-emergency calls are received by either Cleveland Police (eg. 302930/326326) or the Council's Community Protection services (eg. Neighbourhood Enforcement Service 528439), if necessary, the calls, or the details of the issue, are transferred to the correct service for action, thereby improving customer service;
- R2. that the Committee support the plans of Cleveland Police to undertake further promotional work regarding neighbourhood policing teams, and request that this includes promotion of the 302930 neighbourhood police team number;
- R3. that Democratic Services amend the Member induction programme/packs so that it includes:
 - a) information on the Borough's Neighbourhood Watch schemes;
 - b) details of the relevant Ward's Neighbourhood Policing Team;
 - c) and that this information is kept up to date;
 - d) and that this information is also provided to all current Members as soon as available;

- R4. that the Committee recognises the work undertaken by Neighbourhood Watch, and in order to further improve this work, Stockton Council and Cleveland Police should work with, and encourage Neighbourhood Watch in Stockton Borough to:
- a) amend the Ringmaster System so that it sends out crime prevention advice and also 'positive' information in relation to local crime trends, and thereby contribute to reducing the fear of crime;
 - b) amend the membership forms for the Ringmaster system, so that extra detail can be included, and it is clear as to which scheme the applicant wishes to be a member of;
 - c) explore and promote better usage of technology to deliver Ringmaster messages (eg. text messaging/email), and in relation to the use of email messages, lower case text is used in order to ensure ease of reading;
 - d) work with the Council and Cleveland Police to undertake a promotional campaign highlighting the benefits of setting up Watch schemes;
 - e) support the production of local scheme newsletters by centrally producing templates and sample articles (including crime figures), and investigate the use of volunteers to undertake this work;
 - f) seek additional sponsors in order to support its work.
- R5. that Stockton Council should ensure that the policy of not allowing footage captured by its CCTV network to be sold to media companies is clearly stated in the public domain;
- R6. that a comprehensive plan be developed for financial support to the Council's CCTV network, in conjunction with relevant partners, as part of a wider appraisal of the financial sustainability of the Security Centre;
- R7. that planning applications for new developments will be assessed for their suitability to contribute towards the funding of additional crime prevention infrastructure (including CCTV), the levels of provision and/or contributions sought being dependent on the size and type of proposed development, in line with the adopted Supplementary Planning Document 6: Planning Obligations;
- R8. that in order to contribute to reducing the fear of crime amongst residents:
- a) the Council and Cleveland Police should continue to publicise positive news in relation to the reduction of crime in the Borough, but that this should not preclude the provision of common sense crime prevention advice;
 - b) the Council explore the scope for further inter-generational working between young people and older residents of the Borough.

DETAIL

1. The attached report presents Cabinet with the findings of the review of Neighbourhood Policing, Neighbourhood Watch and the Council's CCTV network undertaken by members of the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee. The review examined how each

of these functions contribute towards community safety in the Borough, and also took into account the issue of fear of crime, in the context of an overall reduction in the Borough's crime levels. Members have made recommendations in order to secure further improvements where necessary.

2. Following consideration by Cabinet and appropriate bodies an action plan will be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how approved recommendations will be implemented detailing officers responsible for action and timescales.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3. Recommendation 6 aims to ensure that an all-encompassing plan is formulated in order to ensure that the Council's CCTV network is financially sustainable. Recommendation 7 aims to ensure that contributions towards CCTV provision are secured through Planning Obligations where appropriate.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4. There are no specific legal implications emanating from the review.

RISK ASSESSMENT

5. The review of Neighbourhood Policing, Neighbourhood Watch and CCTV is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

6. This report and the issues contained within have relevance mainly to the Safer Communities theme of the Strategy. The recommendations aim to make a direct contribution towards the following Ambitions: Reduce crime and the fear of crime, and Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour.
7. The report also has relevance to the Children and Young People theme in relation to resident perceptions of young people, and crime as it affects that section of the population. Crime and the fear of crime were also considered in relation to Older Adults. In addition, increased community involvement in Neighbourhood Watch will contribute towards the Stronger Communities supporting theme.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8. Services provided by the Security Centre are to be subject to an Impact Assessment in the near future.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

9. The Committee received evidence from a range of internal and external, including Cleveland Police and Neighbourhood Watch. A survey was distributed to all Members of Council, the Borough's Neighbourhood Watch membership, Parish and Town Councils, and resident groups. The review was discussed at meetings of each of the Renaissance Area Partnerships, and a press release was distributed. The Committee received a good response to its consultation. Relevant results from the 2008 Ipsos MORI Residents' Survey

were considered, and two focus groups were held in order to assess resident opinion in relation to the fear of crime.

10. Senior officers within DNS, the Police and the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing and Community Safety, were consulted on the scope of the review, and the findings and recommendations.

Committee Membership:

Councillor Allison Trainer (Chair)
Councillor Julia Cherrett (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jackie Earl
Councillor Suzanne Fletcher
Councillor Robert Gibson
Councillor Mohammed Javed
Councillor Liz Nesbitt
Councillor Bill Noble
Councillor Bill Woodhead

Name of Contact Officer: Peter Mennear
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Background Papers None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: Not ward specific

Property None