CCTV Scrutiny Review

REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

London Borough of Islington
May 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CCTV Scrutiny Review

Aim
To consider the context for provision of CCTV on housing estates.

Evidence
The review ran from September 2015 until February 2016 and evidence was received from a variety of sources:

1.   Presentations from council officers – Daniel Tomey, Concierge Service Manager and Garrett McEntee, Technical Services Manager

2.   Visit to the CCTV Control Room, 222 Upper Street

Main Findings

1.   The Housing CCTV Service had over 1,000 cameras and 12 concierge sites. 2 of the concierge sited were managed by the tenant management organisations (TMOs) and 10 were managed by the council. There were 6 roof access systems and these included 11 cameras. There were also new build entry systems in place.

2.   When CCTV was being considered there had to be a clear stated purpose for its installation plus consultation and engagement with the public and partners. The solution had to be proportionate and have the potential to meet the stated purpose and there had to be a regard to privacy and family life.

3.   Different sites required different solutions. When designing a scheme it was important to have a clear understanding of security concerns and the options available, the size of the site to have CCTV coverage, equipment specification (which was a changing field), an assessment of operational and managerial implications and clarification on objectives and outcomes to be achieved i.e. crowd control, theft reduction and unauthorised entry. Accessibility and amenity for residents was also an important consideration.

4.   Alternative measures to CCTV included improving lighting and estate visibility, making better use of fences, pruning trees and removing hedge overgrowth, removing congregation focal points and addressing door entry failures.

5.   Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensed officers actively viewed live camera streams. Their work included making statements, attending court, calling the emergency services or anti-social behaviour team when appropriate and writing reports to relevant council teams. The council also had unmonitored CCTV which was logged into each day by staff to ensure the cameras were working. If an incident was reported, the CCTV footage was obtained and sent to the police where appropriate.

6.   Requests for assistance with CCTV came in from the police, anti-social behaviour team, shopping centres and neighbouring boroughs.

7.   Some people were deterred from committing crime as they knew someone could be monitoring the CCTV. For CCTV to be a deterrent in the long term it required monitoring, immediate action, information sharing and third party action.

8. The council had a seven year capital improvement programme. Some projects were being funded by Section 106 money and CCTV priorities were identified in line with the asset strategy.

Conclusions

The committee heard evidence about CCTV provision across the borough, the roles of the Concierge Service, CCTV Control Room, Housing Repair Team and Capital Improvement Team, alternative security measures that could be used in conjunction with or instead of CCTV and future work that the services were planning.

The Committee hoped the scrutiny recommendations would improve the effectiveness of CCTV and alternative security measures across the borough to improve outcomes for residents.

Recommendations

1) That as part of the process to identify appropriate crime prevention measures (particularly in high risk congregation areas) CCTV be considered in conjunction with other security measures such as door entry, estate lighting, landscaping, tree and bush pruning and that these works also be considered in future CCTV capital projects to ensure a more holistic approach was adopted to CCTV security.

2) That following CCTV repair and maintenance works, a plan would be put in place to address other issues such as sightline interference, tree overgrowth and poor lighting in order to improve the CCTV footage. Consideration would be given to tree pruning or camera repositioning before any consideration was given to tree removal.

3) That the Mechanical and Engineering Service (in consultation with officers in Housing Operations, including the Public Protection Team, Housing Investment Team and the Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team) should continue to work closely with partners, to share information and to take appropriate action depending on funding availability where anti-social behaviour/criminal acts were taking place.

4) That the Resident Consultation team in Housing and Property Services and the Service Development Team in the Housing Needs and Strategy Team should work more closely to engage residents and be responsive to residents' comments.

5) That officers monitor technological advances in the area of CCTV and related equipment to ensure this technology was considered when there was a requirement to upgrade existing equipment.

6) That consideration be given to the greater use of mobile CCTV equipment to target problem areas for a specific period of time with the cameras then being removed when the problem had been addressed.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCILLORS – 2015/16

Councillors:
Councillor Court (Chair)
Councillor Diarmaid Ward (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Debono
Councillor Doolan
Councillor Hamitouche
Councillor Heather
Councillor Jeapes
Councillor Russell
Councillor Spall

Substitutes:
Councillor Kay
Councillor Diner
Councillor Alice Perry
Councillor Poyser

Acknowledgements: The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence to the review.

Officer Support:
Zoe Crane – Democratic Services
Lead officers – Garrett McEntee, Technical Services Manager and Daniel Tomey, Concierge Services Manager

1.   Introduction

1.1   The committee heard that the Housing CCTV Service had over 1000 cameras and 12 concierge sites. 2 of the concierge sites were managed by tenant management organisations (TMOs) and 10 were managed by the council. They were open between 16-24 hours a day. There were 33 estates. There were 6 roof access systems and these included 11 cameras. There were also new build video entry systems in place.

1.2   CCTV could be a deterrent for a short time but to be effective it required monitoring, immediate action, information sharing and third party action. The number, location and quality of cameras was important as was lighting. It was also important to work closely with partners, and have visible cameras, signage and the concierge visible.

1.3   Maintaining CCTV helped to support crime prevention measures, helped to address anti-social behaviour, improved the quality of residents' lives, provided a crime and anti-social behaviour deterrent and assisted with crime investigation.

1.4   When CCTV was being considered there had to be a clear stated purpose for its installation plus consultation and engagement with the public and partners. The solution had to be proportionate and have the potential to meet the stated purpose and there had to be a regard to privacy and family life. Home office guidance stated that deployment should not continue for longer than necessary, however it was impractical to remove cameras and the problem could then return.

1.5   It was considered that there had to be a balance between public protection and individual privacy.

2.   Findings

<u>The Concierge Service</u>

2.1   The committee was advised that in the last five years there had been a change of focus in the concierge service. The monitoring of CCTV in the borough and communications had been improved, concierges had been made responsible for their cameras, all housing cameras had been networked, office upgrades had been undertaken, performance indicators had been put in place and there was a focus on staff training. In this time the CCTV contract ended and the service was insourced.

2.2   In terms of monitored CCTV, (Security Industry Authority) SIA licensed officers actively viewed live camera streams. Complimentary systems such as PA, intercom and access control were used and officers undertook investigating and reporting. This included making statements and attending court, calling the emergency services or Anti Social Behaviour team etc. when appropriate and writing reports to the relevant council teams. One in five perpetrators was identified from CCTV. Taking action was a deterrent to those who committed crime and/or anti-social behaviour.

2.3   Unmonitored CCTV was logged into each day by staff to ensure the cameras were working. If an incident was reported, the CCTV footage was obtained and sent to the police where appropriate.

2.4   The committee was pleased to hear that customer satisfaction surveys had indicated that 87.5% of respondents considered the service provided to be good or very good, 88% of respondents were satisfied that the concierge service provided value for money and 94% of respondents considered that the introduction of the concierge service had reduced the number of incidents of crime and anti- social behaviour in their block/estate.

2.5   Performance monitoring included monitoring anti social behaviour, crime reports per office and per person, the number of incidents, where and when they occurred and the number of arrests as a consequence of concierge actions. Every time a request for CCTV was made, this was recorded and a report was entered into the database. The concierge service generated approximately 1,600 anti-social behaviour and crime reports each year.

2.6   Concierge staff built relationships with residents e.g. they took in parcels for residents and arranged repairs where necessary. They were often able to identify those involved in incidents using CCTV footage.

2.7   The sites managed by TMOs received the same funding as the council run sites did. They had chosen to run the sites themselves so the council did not usually get involved in their management.

2.8   Next steps included undertaking a consultation on a restructure, considering how the service engaged with residents which would include increasing the number of electronic noticeboards, more training for staff on anti-social behaviour legislation and information sharing, ensuring all capacity was used, considering the use of technology e.g. movement sensors which would mean not all camera footage would have to be shown on screens at one time, improving three of the offices and improving signage visibility.

<u>The CCTV Control Room</u>

2.9   On a visit to the CCTV Control Room, members heard that the team focussed on crime and disorder and the CCTV was not used to deal with driving offences. In addition there were cameras monitored by the concierge on housing estates and there were also parking enforcement cameras monitored by a separate team based at Old Street. Some of the

cameras were used by both the council's CCTV team and the Parking Enforcement team so there were instances where one team moved a camera when the other team was monitoring an incident. Scotland Yard could also move the cameras.

2.10   The CCTV team and individuals within the team had won a number of awards including an EPIC award and national awards.

2.11   Requests for assistance with CCTV came in from the police, the anti-social behaviour team, shopping centres and neighbouring boroughs. If road traffic accidents or other incidents occurred, the CCTV footage could be examined to work out what happened. CCTV footage was kept for 31 days unless it was saved in which case it would be saved for three months. If it was footage of a serious incident, a copy would be made.

2.12   Some people were deterred from committing crime if they thought someone was monitoring the CCTV. It was not possible for the service to provide meaningful crime data comparisons pre and post CCTV installation as the team mainly focussed on anti-social behaviour rather than other types of crime.

2.13   Trees often presented a problem when they were near to cameras as their leaves prevented the cameras from seeing the area it was meant to be focussed on. This was a particular problem in summer.

Housing Repairs Team and Capital Improvement Team

2.14   Officers advised that Capital Improvement Work involved maintaining the existing equipment rather than implementing new schemes.

2.15   CCTV repair works were carried out by the Housing Repairs Team. Maintenance works included a six monthly maintenance programme and an annual service. Responsive repairs were undertaken to address minor repair works i.e. breakdowns and equipment failure. When repairs work was undertaken, all the equipment was serviced and cleaned i.e. cameras, recording equipment and the PA systems. Breakdown information was recorded and sent to repair officers and data was uploaded into the maintenance programme.

2.16   The CCTV Capital Improvement Strategy considered capital investment availability, the forward improvement plan, any technical need for the proposed works, resident and stakeholder feedback, crime and anti-social behaviour, officer consultation feedback, other capital improvement projects and alternative security measures. The Capital Improvement Strategy allocated resources to the places it was most needed.

2.17   Different sites required different solutions. Scheme design considerations included a clear understanding of security concerns and the options available, the size of the site to have CCTV coverage, equipment specification (which was a changing field), assessment of operational issues, assessment of managerial implications and clarification on objectives and outcomes to be achieved i.e. crowd control, theft reduction and unauthorised entry.

2.18   An example of work undertaken was on the Elthorne Estate, where a wall which had been used by congregating youths linked to gangs had been removed and this had stopped them from congregating there.

2.19 Following a request from residents on one estate to install more CCTV, the Crime Prevention Officer put forward a number of recommendations which included a small increase in cameras plus a number of alternative security measures including an 'A' frame which would allow cyclists through but only if they dismounted. Pushchair and wheelchair access was more restricted but this could be alleviated by having the base a little wider. Another alternative measure was to fit bollards across footpaths which were wide enough to allow wheelchair access. Old fashioned paving stones were irregular and difficult to ride over quickly and helped to slow bikes down. Restrictive seating could act as alternative security measure. It could help to address youths congregating around seating and bin enclosures could be designed so it was not possible to hide. Ladder guards design could be improved to improve security and prevent access to restricted/less secure areas.

2.20 A CCTV dome camera could provide effective CCTV. People on the ground could not see in which direction the camera was pointing. Other ways to improve security included to improve lighting and estate visibility, make better use of fences, prune trees and remove hedge overgrowth, remove congregation focal points, remove non-illuminate areas, install suitable lighting where scaffolding was being used and address door entry failures. Work was being undertaken to categorise cameras with problems eg near trees or poor lighting so they could be managed as a group.

2.21 Concerns were raised that alterative security measures could affect accessibility and amenity for residents. It was important to consider the specifics of each site as well as alternative security measures and this was included in the stakeholder consultation process.

2.22 The council had a seven year capital investment programme, some projects were being funded by Section 106 money and CCTV priorities were being identified in line with the asset strategy. Depending on the specification, each camera cost approximately £3500 to install and there was an ongoing maintenance cost.

2.23 The project delivery process map involved a feasibility analysis/commissioning document, consultation with internal and external crime prevention bodies, a ballot/consultation requirement, scheme design, scheme procurement and scheme implementation.

2.24 Officers advised that more work could take place to make the service more responsive to residents' comments. The service was trying to work more closely with stakeholders, particularly when upgrading installations.

2.25 Some areas and estates had more CCTV than others. Work was taking place with the Geographic Information System (GIS) team to map every camera in the borough.

2.26 As technology improved, CCTV became smarter. More tracking was now taking place and equipment such as trip wires and motion sensors were being introduced. Sherlock was a new system that could search through historical data quickly. This would be an area for more development in the future.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The committee heard evidence about CCTV provision across the borough, the roles of the Concierge Service, CCTV Control Room, Housing Repair Team and Capital Improvement Team, alternative measures that could be used in conjunction with or instead of CCTV and future work that the services were planning.

3.2 The Committee hoped the scrutiny recommendations would improve the effectiveness of CCTV and alternative measures across the borough to improve outcomes for residents.

APPENDIX – SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT

SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)
Review: CCTV
Scrutiny Review Committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee
Director leading the review: Simon Kwong
Lead Officers: Garrett McEntee and Daniel Tomey
Overall aim: To consider the context for provision of CCTV on housing estates
Objectives of the review: • To understand why we have CCTV on some estates and not others. • To consider works currently undertaken to maintain and upgrade CCTV systems and how these are planned and prioritised • To consider resident consultation around CCTV systems on housing estates • To consider available funding for CCTV.

How is the review to be carried out:
 	
Scope of the Review
 	
The review will focus on:
 	
       Understanding how current CCTV systems are used and maintained
       Resident views on CCTV on housing estates
       Whether the installation of new CCTV schemes is feasible
       Whether mobile CCTV cameras are practicable and/or cost-effective.
       Alternative measures to CCTV
       The role of the concierge
 	
Types of evidence:
 	
       A presentation covering the above aspects will be given jointly by the Technical Services Manager and the Concierge Manager.
 	
       Statistics pre and post CCTV.
 	
       Visit to the Brewery Road Site to see the operation in progress *(optional)*