



HILLINGDON

LONDON

Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee Review Scoping Report 2012/13

Crime Prevention Resources provided for Hillingdon Police by London Borough of Hillingdon and the free Older Peoples Burglar Alarms Scheme

Aim of review

The review aims to examine the effectiveness of the equipment and man-power used by the Metropolitan Police which has been funded by the London Borough of Hillingdon and to assess the effectiveness of the Older Peoples Burglar Alarms scheme in terms of crime prevention.

Terms of Reference

- To identify the equipment which the Council helps fund for use by the Police in Hillingdon
- To assess the effectiveness and value for money to the Council on this funding of police equipment
- To assess the impact (if possible) the various types of equipment have had on crime in the Borough
- To understand the relationship between the Police and the Council in terms of the influence the Council has on the deployment of the equipment in the Borough
- To assess the impact the new local policing model will have on the deployment of this equipment
- To assess the role of the Police Officers the Council funds
- To assess the effectiveness of the free Older Peoples Burglar Alarm Scheme

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Background

This Council as a Strategic Partner to the Police provides resources and equipment to Hillingdon Police for crime prevention purposes in the Borough. Detailed information on this is detailed as an appendix to this scoping report.

Reasons for the review

The Committee wanted to review the usage of the equipment which this Council helps fund for Hillingdon Police and to assess its effectiveness in relation to crime prevention and reduction. Also to assess the value this partnership funding gives to the Council and ultimately to the residents of the Borough in the prevention of crime. Included in this would be assessing the impact in terms of crime reduction, the Council's Older Peoples Burglar Alarms scheme as had.

Supporting the Cabinet & Council's policies and objectives

The review will support the Council's partnership with the Police and contribute to the Safer Hillingdon Partnership Plan 2011-14, which is the statutory crime and disorder partnership for Hillingdon.

INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

Key Issues

For purposes of the review it is important to look at the types of equipment and the level of resource this Council funds for Hillingdon Police and whether the Council receives value for money in its use in the Borough.

The Committee also want to ascertain whether the Council as a Strategic Partner to the Police, have any influence on the deployment of this equipment.

Remit - who / what is this review covering?

Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Team
Metropolitan Police

Key information required

Details on the equipment which the Council funds for use by the Police in Hillingdon

The effectiveness of the equipment

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The impact (if possible) the various types of equipment have had on crime in the Borough

How is the equipment deployed in parts of the Borough and does the Council have any influence on how the equipment is used, and where in the Borough it is deployed?

Details on the Police Officers which this Council funds for the Metropolitan Police in the Borough.

What implications will the new local policing model have on this resource and equipment?

Details of the Older Peoples Burglar Alarms Scheme, including numbers, costings and satisfaction of the scheme by recipients.

EVIDENCE & ENQUIRY

Witnesses

Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations Service Manager
Police representatives
An officer from the Council's Transportation Team
Council's Community Safety and CCTV Manager

Consultation and Communications

None at this stage

LOGISTICS

Proposed timeframe & milestones

Meeting Date *	Action	Purpose / Outcome
28 March 2013	Agree Scoping Report	Information and analysis Council's Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations Service Manager
30 April 2013	Witness Session 1	Relevant Police officers and Council's Community Safety and CCTV Manager
28 May 2013	Witness Session 2	Relevant Police Officers
23 July 2013	Consideration of draft final report and recommendations	

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Part I – Members, Public and Press

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** Specific meetings can be shortened or extended to suit the review topic and needs of the Committee*

Risk assessment

Failure to secure witnesses to provide evidence and advice to the Committee will impact on the thoroughness and completeness of the review.

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BACKGROUND

CCTV vehicles

The first of two CCTV vehicles was purchased in 2003. The cost was £55,000 for the CCTV equipment (see cost breakdown. The cost of the vehicle itself was in the region of £30,000 including a service package.

The first vehicle being fully liveried can only be driven by police personnel. After purchase by the Council it was handed over to Met Police who are the registered keeper and cover all maintenance, insurance and road tax costs.

It is a Vauxhall Movano van with Met Police livery and London Borough of Hillingdon logos. Being fully liveried it was found that its usefulness was mainly as a deterrent and tended to have the effect of displacing trouble makers out of an area to which it is deployed. It was of less value in producing evidence for criminal investigations due to its visibility.



Historical documents suggest that it was used to good effect since being purchased by the Council and donated to the police, but there were some initial problems associated with confusion over driving classification and which police personnel were authorised to drive it; lack of 'ownership'; day to day administration; difficulty with garaging.

With this in mind, in August 2005, a Police CCTV van manager was appointed with the task of raising the profile and to increase the use of the van and this was successful with a PC solely responsible for the van and making sure drivers looked after it. Initially only qualified Response Drivers were allowed to drive the van but this changed to allow other Police Staff including PCSOs and Special Constables to act as drivers.

Following the success of the first van, a second van was purchased second hand in 2006 with CCTV equipment already installed. The cost was £32,000 plus £12,000 for 5 years service package.

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It was chosen to be smaller in size and only “semi-liveried” to make it more effective by being less visible and easier to park in small spaces. It is a Mercedes Vito model.

In 2009, Automatic Number Plate Recognition equipment was added to the second vehicle at a cost of £11,500.

The second vehicle’s ownership was retained by the Council which therefore pays road tax and maintenance costs (since the expiry of the 5 year service package in 2012) which are in the region of £1,000 per year, although insurance is covered by Met Police’s fleet policy whilst their staff are driving it. No Council staff have used the vehicle since its purchase.



Crime Prevention Bus

In 2003 the Council purchased a converted Optare passenger service type vehicle to act as a Crime Prevention Bus as a replacement for a previous model. Purchase cost was about £34,000. It was operated by and liveried for the “Hillingdon Crime Prevention Panel” which was a sub-group of Hillingdon Community and Police Consultative Group. The Panel has now wound up as crime prevention is now effectively run by the Council and Police jointly under the Safer Hillingdon Partnership. The Council has taken over ownership of the vehicle and is the registered keeper. Road tax and maintenance are covered under the Council’s fleet management arrangements at a cost of about £1,000 per year.

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The vehicle is heavily used by Police Crime Prevention Officers and Safer Neighbourhood Teams for public events, dispensing crime prevention advice and re-assurance. However, over the last 12 months its use has dropped significantly due to pressures on Safer Neighbourhood Teams and it would be valuable to assess whether it is likely to be useful under the new Local Policing Model to be introduced in 2013. The vehicle is 10 years old and maintenance costs are likely to rise in future years.

Liveries

The Crime Prevention Bus still carries its now out of date livery, so there is a question about whether expense should be incurred to change the livery to reflect the Council and Police's identity, which depends on the future use of the vehicle.




The second CCTV vehicle has been considered for new livery, but this proved problematic to achieve agreement from the Met Police as it does not meet the MPS standard corporate livery requirements, so the design shown below has not yet been

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activated.

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Speed meters

Four speed meters were purchased in 2010 costing £2,000 each. These are in the hands of Safer Neighbourhood Teams to use when speeding traffic is an issue in their wards. They can be used in two ways. One is with the intention of issuing penalty charges and penalty points for speeding. This requires the officers who use the equipment to be formally trained so that enforcement will stand up to scrutiny, and also for the meters to be formally calibrated for accuracy, which has to be done at requisite intervals. This can be a barrier to the meters being used as frequently as might be desired. The current Borough Commander is supportive of using them more often in a second way. This is without the intention to impose the penalties. The meters can then be used by a wider range of officers and without re-calibration. The officer will take a speed reading, a vehicle stop will be executed and “words of advice” will be imparted to the driver about his or her speed. It is hoped that this kind of stop by a uniformed officer would be effective against all but the most hardened law breaker. Police would still have powers which can be used for more serious driving offences such as driving without due care and attention which would not require a speed meter.

Police Officers funded by the Council

The Council funded 11 Police Officers in the Police Tasking Team at a cost of around £450,000 a year. Further information and details on this would be provided during the review.

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Older Peoples Burglar Alarms

The project started in 2008. Initially, an agreement was made with Age Concern to fit the alarms using their Handyman, and a payment was made to Age Concern for them to employ a second person. The popularity of the scheme was high, and the demand for alarms outstripped Age Concern's ability to deliver fittings in a timely manner, so approval for a contracted out service was obtained from year two onwards.

In Phases 1 to 5, 4,000 alarms have been fully installed. In Phase 6, 500 alarms will have been fitted by mid April 2013. For Phase 7, 1,000 alarms have been ordered and will be installed during 2013/14 making 5,500 alarms in total.

Total capital cost for all 7 phases = £753,635 (purchase and installation of alarms)

Total revenue cost for all 7 phases = £143,500 (carry out 18 month service and battery change).

Total: £897,135 or £163 per alarm.

Responsibility for maintenance and battery replacement

The Council has an agreement with the installers to carry out a free service and battery replacement in the internal movement detectors (room sensors) 18 months from the date of installation. After this, recipients of alarms will be responsible for all maintenance of the alarm unit (including battery replacement) and any costs involved and this is explained at the outset.

Maintenance

- The movement detectors (room sensors) will flash a red light when the battery is getting low (this indication will start about 3 months before the battery goes flat).
- The external siren battery is kept charged by the solar panel and this battery will last many years.
- If the outside siren box "beep" starts to sound weak when you set the alarm using the remote control this could indicate the battery in the remote control is low and in need of replacement (this won't apply if you have a control panel).

All recipients of burglar alarms through the Hillingdon Council scheme are entitled to a discount of 10% off of any purchases from Response Electronics and also receive a free Home Fire Safety visit from Hillingdon Fire Service.

Effectiveness

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The scheme was brought in response to concern about a higher than average burglary rate in the Borough and to show a commitment to keeping Hillingdon's older residents safe. Even when 5,500 alarms have been fitted, this is still less than 5% of the households in the borough so it would not be realistic to expect that the burglary rate for the borough as a whole would reduce as a result of the scheme. However, there should be a reduction of burglaries affecting older people now that a substantial number of older people's properties are secured. Each recipient of an alarm is asked to complete a satisfaction survey to which the response is overwhelmingly positive

- **To what extent were you worried about being burgled prior to the alarm being fitted?**
- **How much did this worry impact on your life?**
- **Now the alarm has been installed, to what extent are you worried about being burgled?**
- **What difference has having the alarm made to your life (please tick all that apply)?**
- **Are you happy with the alarm?**