

MARVELL AVENUE, HAYES – PETITION REQUESTING INSTALLATION OF CCTV

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| Cabinet Member | Councillor Douglas Mills |
| Cabinet Portfolio | Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety |
| Officer Contact | Ed Shaylor, Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services |
| Papers with report | None |

HEADLINE INFORMATION

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| Purpose of report | This report seeks to respond to a petition received by the Council requesting that a CCTV camera be installed in the area of Marvell Avenue, Hayes. The petition was received by Democratic Services on 8 February 2011. |
| Financial Cost | Nil |
| Relevant Policy Overview Committee | Residents' and Environmental Services |
| Ward affected | Barnhill |

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member notes the views of the petitioners, and advises that:

1. the local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team has been asked to patrol the location of Marvell Avenue and the footpath that runs the width of Yeading Brook open space between Marvell Avenue and the Greenway;
2. after consultation with the Barnhill Safer Neighbourhood Team, it is suggested that residents might consider starting a Neighbourhood Watch scheme;
3. residents should continue to report incidents to the Police on 0300 123 1212 or the Council on 0800 694 0240 (for non-crimes) to build up an accurate picture of whether incidents are increasing or decreasing; and
4. permanent CCTV at the location is not a practical solution to the problem for reasons outlined later in this report.

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

To address the concerns of the residents.

Alternative options considered

The Council discourages the use of dummy cameras as they give an impression of safety without the ability to provide any evidence if an incident were to occur.

Comments of the Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

Supporting Information

A petition was received by the Council on 8 February 2011 comprising 60 signatories. The petition requests that a CCTV camera be installed in Marvell Avenue due to crime and drugs issues in the area. Furthermore, there was a murder at this location on 24 December 2010. Arrests were subsequently made and suspects were charged with the murder.

Although this incident is not thought to be connected with current reported activities and a similar incident is not thought likely to re-occur, police have agreed that the area has suffered from problems of crime and drugs, and have agreed to pay additional attention to the area. It is anticipated that the most effective solution to the problems in the area would be to increase the direct patrolling and surveillance of the area.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes can be very effective in letting offenders know that residents have organised themselves to look after their area, and can obtain useful information to assist the police to investigate issues.

Regular reporting of issues to the police or the Council is important as it enables an accurate assessment to be made as to whether the situation is improving.

When installing cameras, the Council has to consider necessity, proportionality and the likelihood of intrusion into the privacy of people not connected with the disorderly behaviour. It is the opinion of Council officers that permanent CCTV at the location would be excessively intrusive in a residential area, as so many houses would be near the camera location. Additionally, the lamp column is fairly short so the CCTV equipment would be vulnerable to vandalism.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial consequences for the Council.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The measures recommended should reduce or help to detect incidents.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Consultation has been conducted with Hillingdon Police.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Legal

The Council's Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Code of Practice requires that CCTV is utilised for:

- The prevention and detection of crime.
- Maintenance of law and order.
- To enforce Local Authority regulations.
- Evidence gathering.
- Prosecution of offenders.

Additionally, guidance from the Information Commissioner and Home Office advises that the fact that the deployment of CCTV cameras has public support should not be a deciding factor on whether or not to use CCTV. It is more important to consider the effect on individual privacy and whether less intrusive options are available. This involves a consideration of the necessity, justifiability and proportionality of deploying cameras. It is also necessary to ensure that cameras are sited appropriately to obtain good quality images in a secure manner. The chances of vandalism or unauthorised persons being able to obtain images recorded are serious considerations to be taken into account.

It is open to the Cabinet Member to agree with the request contained in the petition. In the event that a decision is made to deploy cameras, the Member should stipulate that the general public in the area (including residents) are notified by visible signboards about the presence of CCTV cameras, the length of time for the surveillance, whether 24 hour surveillance or specified timed surveillance, who will view the footage and the methods to be deployed to prevent invading the privacy of residents.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.