

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

KILMARNOCK SOUTH LOCAL COMMITTEE – 5TH NOVEMBER 2003

OPERATION OF THE PUBLIC REALM CCTV SYSTEM WITHIN EAST AYRSHIRE

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Kilmarnock South Local Committee on the operation of Public Realm Closed Circuit Television System within East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Local Committee on 10th September 2003, it was agreed that the Director of Community Services, in consultation with Strathclyde Police, would submit a report on the operation of CCTV in East Ayrshire with particular reference to the Kilmarnock South Area.
- 2.2 The initial Public Realm Closed Circuit Television System, operating solely within the town centre area of Kilmarnock was established in 1995. At that time the system was under the control of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Management Initiative. Four operators were employed, utilising an Employment Grants Scheme, and they monitored a total of 10 camera locations. The monitoring station was located within Kilmarnock Police Office.
- 2.3 In 1997, at the conclusion of the Grant Scheme, the system and employees were adopted by East Ayrshire Council. Operators continue to be deployed on a 3 shift basis, with the system being monitored between 9 a.m. and 3.30 a.m. daily, 7 days per week.
- 2.4 In 1998, a smaller monitoring facility was established at Cumnock Police Office with an operator providing cover between 6 p.m. and 2 a.m.
- 2.5 Between 1997 and 2003, making use of a number of capital bid projects, the original 10 cameras in Kilmarnock have been increased to 27, with 22 in the Kilmarnock and Hurlford area and a further 5 cameras located in Kilmaurs, Stewarton and Galston. A total of 11 cameras, located in Cumnock, Auchinleck, Mauchline, New Cumnock and Dalmellington, are monitored at Cumnock Police Office.

- 2.6 In 2002/3 monies from the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF) were allocated to the installation of 2 additional cameras in the Shortlees area together with the employment of additional monitoring staff at Kilmarnock Police Office. Current police crime recording systems do not permit street by street comparisons of crime related statistics or incidents.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The physical presence of Public Realm CCTV has obvious and well documented beneficial effects on security, business viability, public safety and confidence. It has made a major contribution to the Council's Community Safety Strategy and there is clear evidence that it has assisted the police in crime detection.
- 3.2 The mere presence of such cameras, however, does not guarantee that every criminal act or incident of anti-social behaviour will necessarily be noted by the operator at the time. In practical terms, there is still no substitute for a member of the public contacting the police office to report an ongoing incident, thereby prompting the operator to commence pro-active monitoring.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The capital cost of installing the cameras in Shortlees was in the region of £40,000.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has to comply with all relevant legislation (including data protection, public advice etc) when operating Public Realm CCTV Systems.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Nil.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Since taking over an existing CCTV installation in Kilmarnock in 1997, the Council, in consultation with Strathclyde Police, has gradually increased CCTV coverage to a number of towns and villages, primarily using funds provided by the Scottish Executive for the purpose.
- 7.2 The Council has taken advantage of monies available from BNSF funding to install 2 additional cameras in the Shortlees area and recruited additional monitoring staff at Kilmarnock Police Office.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Local Committee is invited to note the report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

1st October 2003

WS/DJ

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

Implementation officer: john.crawford@east-ayrshire.gov.uk