Operating procedure: Deployment of portable CCTV

June 2015

Cabinet Member Councillor Douglas Mills and the council's Community Safety Service Manager have reviewed how Portable CCTV units are deployed in the borough.

Currently the council has 11 cameras that can be moved from time to time to priority locations in the borough. These cameras are not monitored continuously by staff, but recorded images can be downloaded when a request is received following an incident. Recorded images can be passed to enforcement teams in the council and/or police if they are of sufficient clarity to assist with identification and evidence gathering.

When cameras are installed advisory signs are placed on the lamp columns.

How to request a camera

- A request for CCTV should come from police, councillors or residents (through the petitions process) and should specify exactly where the incidents are taking place so we can decide where to place the camera

- A police officer, councillor or local resident ("the named person") should be identified who can contact the council's Community Safety Team to ask for recorded images to be viewed

- The Community Safety Team will then confirm to the named person whether the location is suitable to be entered onto the waiting list for a camera and will contact the named person when the camera has been installed to confirm the final arrangements
Prioritising requests

The council normally has more requests than cameras available so requests need to be prioritised. Locations will be entered onto the waiting list if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The camera has been requested by police as part of a criminal investigation; to detect or deter crime or disorder incidents which have been discussed at a ward panel of residents and councillors; where there is a need to protect witnesses in a criminal investigation, with a camera used for detection or deterrence
- A Members Enquiry has been raised specifying three or more incidents of crime or ASB within the past three months (dates need to be given)
- Residents have requested CCTV through the petitions process and the Cabinet Member has authorised CCTV to be deployed

Cameras can normally only be deployed if:

- The incidences are taking place on public or Council owned land
- The area hasn't had a camera in the past 12 months
- There is a public street lamp in the correct location - this provides the power source for the camera
- The street lamp column must be tall enough to prevent vandalism to the camera and to provide a good line of sight. Normally these are between 6 metres and 12 metres high. Many small narrow residential streets have street lamp columns which are only 5 metres high and older ones are even shorter at 15 feet. If the need is urgent, a 5 metre or 15 feet high column can be used, but there is an increased risk of vandalism and a poor field of vision
- The street lamp column provides a good view of the location concerned - the presence of buildings or trees may obstruct this.

If the above criteria are not met or the Community Safety Service Manager believes that there is insufficient grounds to deploy a camera, this will be communicated to the named person.
Using the cameras

The council intends to leave portable units at locations for a maximum of between 4 and 8 weeks (depending on the seriousness of the issue and whether the incidents have ceased) before moving them to a new location. This is because the cameras are designed to move from place to place to detect or deter crime. If permanent deterrence or detection is required (for example for fly tipping locations) this would require an application for capital funds to be identified and released.

If urgent new requests are received the council may have to move cameras before the 4 - 8 week period expires, but will inform the named person if this happens. Re-deployments of portable cameras are subject to authorisation by the Cabinet Member.

Requests for images to be viewed should be sent to both Fburke@hillingdon.gov.uk and asbinvestigations@hillingdon.gov.uk to advise that an incident has taken place. Images will be viewed and a recording downloaded if it is useful to do so.

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