



DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICE'S REPORT

9th August 2005

DSS14 CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION FILE: 149 (299973) CJL

SUMMARY:

Reporting on Closed Circuit Television.



At Council's meeting of 12 July 2005, Councillor E Green asked "Should Council re-visit a previous offer from the Kempsey RSL Club to install CCTV in York Lane."

In 2000 the NSW Government Policy Statement and Guidelines for the Establishment and Implementation of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in Public Places was produced. The guidelines provide a policy framework and set of underlying principles to assist agencies considering CCTV. The guidelines are aimed at local councils as the most appropriate owners of CCTV schemes in public places.

The following information is from these guidelines and sets out how and why to implement CCTV.

There are nine governing principles:

- 1 The ownership of schemes and accompanying responsibilities – the ownership of public area CCTV must be clear and publicly known and ensure appropriate public accountability.
- 2 Community Consultation – when considering setting up a public area CCTV scheme, the relevant concerns of all parties potentially affected by the strategy should be taken into account through an effective community consultation strategy.
- 3 Setting clear objectives – clear scheme objectives should be set to guide the design, implementation, management and outcomes of public area CCTV.
- 4 Integrated approaches to crime prevention – the implementation of CCTV should be part of an integrated, multi agency approach to crime control and community safety.
- 5 Police Involvement – whilst the NSW Police Service should not fund or operate public area CCTV, it should be closely involved in the assessment and planning phase, including risk analysis and

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evaluation. The Standard Operating Procedures for the scheme should incorporate protocols covering communication and liaison between the scheme operators and the police

- 6 Managing and operating the scheme – schemes should be open and accountable and operate with due regard for the privacy and civil rights of individuals and the community.
- 7 Evaluation – effective evaluation of schemes is essential in order to identify whether their formal objectives are being achieved. Evaluation frameworks should be developed at the planning stage of the scheme.
- 8 Complaints – publicly accountable, impartial and fair schemes should have procedures for dealing with complaints.
- 9 Monitoring and Auditing – audit is needed to provide an account of the operation of the scheme.

Once Council had established whether there was a need for CCTV (a risk assessment audit by the NSW Police would be needed to do this), the guidelines state that the Council would have the following responsibilities:

- Establishing and chairing a Community Safety Committee
- Developing a Crime Prevention Plan which incorporates CCTV strategies (the current Kempsey plan does not incorporate CCTV)
- Appoint a program manager to manage the implementation and operation of CCTV
- Implement a comprehensive consultation program
- Implement a community information program
- Finance the implementation and ongoing costs of CCTV, including independent evaluation of the scheme
- Call for tenders for the provision of CCTV equipment
- Develop, implement and monitor the scheme including complaints and evaluation
- Develop, in consultation, a code of practice, protocols and standard operating procedures
- Provide appropriate installation and operation

This is only a brief summary of the guidelines which are 40 pages long and intricately describe the implementation and operation of CCTV.

Given that introducing CCTV is a time consuming and complicated process, involving a large outlay of person hours and resources, the impact of such schemes should be considered. The benefit of installing CCTV should outweigh the costs involved for it to be considered successful. An audit of the area proposed for CCTV is required before the full benefit can be gauged. However, anecdotal evidence from other areas can be used to gain some idea of the success and costs of other schemes.

The Australian Institute of Criminology recently published an article entitled "Open Street CCTV in Australia", by Dean Wilson and Adam Sutton. Key findings in this report which are relevant to CCTV in York Lane include:

- Once CCTV has been established, Councils are often locked into substantial ongoing expenditures for monitoring and maintenance
- Research into the viability of CCTV is essential to avoid inappropriate installation of CCTV and can identify alternative and possibly more cost effective measures
- The ongoing operational costs of CCTV are significant and the most common form of ongoing funding is through the general revenue of local government
- Monitoring is the most crucial, and most expensive, part of CCTV
- Cooperation of the local police is essential to effective operations
- All managers participating in the study confirmed that the ongoing administration of CCTV is both complex and time consuming.

The preceding information from authoritative and respected sources highlights that CCTV is not something that should be considered without thorough investigation. It is a time consuming process and the operation is expensive and labour intensive. Currently studies have shown mixed success depending on the type of problem being encountered and the location.

Whilst the RSL have previously offered to fund the set up costs and to monitor the system, the NSW government guidelines recommend that monitoring be the responsibility of Councils. The RSL is entitled to monitor its own land and internal areas, but it is not permitted to monitor public space. It is important that CCTV schemes are seen to be independent, transparent and accountable.

With no specific vote allocated for CCTV, consideration should be given to budgetary issues, particularly the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the system. Council does not have a Crime Prevention/Community Safety Officer and the viability studies would need to be allocated to a relevant member of staff on tin addition to responsibilities.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental*

Nil

- *Social*

There are many social impacts of CCTV, both positive and negative. It has been viewed as having a negative impact on civil rights. It can impede people from normal social interactions and make people feel as if they are being watched or like they have no privacy. CCTV can decrease the fear of crime and can improve feelings of safety. The full social impacts would be considered in a viability study, which would be necessary if CCTV were to be investigated for implementation.

- *Economic (Financial)*

The initial viability study, implementation and monitoring would all required funding which has not been allocated in the current budget. Extensive consultation and research would be required to develop a proposal for possible grant funding. Partnerships with the RSL are a possibility but would require a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that Council can meet financial obligations for continued maintenance and monitoring.

- *Policy or Statutory*

There is no current legislation regarding CCTV, however the NSW Government has created a Policy Statement and Guidelines as described in this report.

- *Director's Review*

Should Council wish to proceed to introduce a CCTV scheme, funding and resources will need to be provided.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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K J Finnie
DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES