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## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Tuesday, 5 January 2016 from 6.00 - 6.58 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart (substitute for Councillor Lloyd Bowen), Andy Booth (Chairman), Derek Conway, Mike Dendor, Mick Galvin, Mike Henderson, James Hunt (substitute for Councillor Prescott), Ken Ingleton, Samuel Koffie-Williams, Peter Marchington and Ben Stokes.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Steph Curtis, Jo Millard, Bob Pullen and John Scarborough.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Tina Booth, Andrew Bowles (Leader), George Bobbin, Paul Fleming, Sue Gent, Alan Horton, Ken Pugh (Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Health), Ghlin Whelan and John Wright.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Lloyd Bowen and Prescott.

### **416 FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman drew attention to the evacuation procedure.

### **417 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

### **418 CALL-IN - CCTV EFFECTIVENESS**

The Chairman welcomed the Head of Legal Partnership, visiting Members, the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Health and the Safer and Stronger Communities Officer.

The Chairman outlined the purpose of the meeting which was to consider a call-in of a Cabinet Delegated Decision taken by the Leader on the 2 December 2015 to consult on the decommissioning of the CCTV cameras identified as being 'low effectiveness'. Three of the five non-executive members of the Council that instigated the call-in were present and the Chairman invited them to speak.

A Member highlighted the lack of specific information in the Cabinet report, sought clarification on how the 21 cameras identified as being low effectiveness had been assessed and where they were located, and suggested that the consultation was too limited. He further considered that the resolution did not cover the details in the report.

Another Member agreed that there was insufficient specific information on the cameras identified for decommissioning and spoke of the low incidents of crime in areas where cameras were installed. A Member gave full support for the call-in and considered that more cameras were required, particularly in the western end of the High Street, Sittingbourne.

The Chairman invited the Leader to speak. The Leader explained that Officers had considered the effectiveness of the current CCTV cameras and along with the Community Safety Partnership had agreed it was logical to consult the public. He advised that there was a restricted budget and details of the specific cameras identified would have been released as soon as the consultation had been agreed. A discussion ensued and a Member felt that all details should have been provided in order for an informed decision to be made.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Health advised that information on the low effective cameras could have been requested. Information had been provided by Kent Police and Medway CCTV Control Room that had led to the decision that some cameras were not fit for purpose. There was also a legal requirement for cameras to be reviewed.

The Safer and Stronger Communities Officer added that information received from the CCTV operators and crime statistics were not necessarily enough evidence to justify a final decision on decommissioning of any cameras and that a consultation of the public was required to gain further evidence.

Further discussions ensued and Members made the following points:

- Privacy laws required that if a camera was no longer necessary, it should be removed
- There were minimal costs of removing a camera from a non-effective location to a required location
- Some agreed with the review and consultation
- Levels of technology of individual cameras should be considered - were older cameras sited in ineffective areas?
- Wider consultation was required – i.e. not just with Members in affected wards
- New hotspot areas should be considered for cameras
- The Data Protection 1998 Act Section 29 required a consultation
- There should be more regular consultations and reviews in line with Police changes
- Under the Surveillance Code of Practice an individual must be asked how they would be impacted
- Lack of crime did not necessarily mean cameras were ineffective
- It was confirmed that businesses would be consulted
- The effectiveness of cameras had been reviewed in the past, but on a piecemeal rather than comprehensive basis

During the discussion, one of the Members who had signed the call-in form advised that additional information had been added to the form since he had signed it. The Head of Legal Partnership advised that there had been a breach of procedure since additional information had been added after Members had signed the form but it was open for the Committee to decide that the call-in meeting should continue notwithstanding this procedural breach. Upon being put to the vote, it was agreed that the meeting would continue.

In response to a query from a Member on whether the review included Hawkeye cameras, the Safer and Stronger Communities Officer advised that it did not. The Leader confirmed that the consultation would include wider consultation on hot spots across the Borough and more detail on the technology of the 21 cameras highlighted would be provided.

**Resolved:**

- (i) ***That the Committee refers the decision back to the Leader for re-consideration, as it considers that there should be wider consultation with all Members (not just those in the affected wards), new hotspot areas should be considered for cameras and further details of the non-effective cameras, including their state technology-wise, should be made available.***

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel