

**CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
13TH SEPTEMBER 2012**

SUBJECT: AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION (ANPR) CAMERAS

REPORT BY: KATHRYN PETERS, COMMUNITY SAFETY MANAGER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras following a request by Councillor David Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, that when CCTV cameras are replaced by the Authority consideration is given to replacing them with cameras with ANPR capability.
- 1.2 The report considers the inclusion of ANPR capability within the Local Authority's public open space surveillance system.

2. REPORT

The CCTV System and ANPR

- 2.1 Caerphilly County Borough Council operate 144 CCTV cameras across town and village centre locations within the county borough. The majority of these cameras are directly connected to the BT system with images relayed to the Control Room at Tiryberth Depot. 12 of the cameras operate as microwave link, line of sight cameras either directly to Tiryberth or via connection to the existing system and are referred to as OSCAR cameras that can be positioned in locations across the Authority where they can link to the 'wired' system.
- 2.2 Without exception the cameras are located in urban areas and not deliberately positioned along vehicle routes or external roads. The cameras are moveable via motorised controls. Cameras are moved manually by CCTV Operators or are set on automatic routine tours of the areas they cover. Focal length is adjusted by CCTV Operators adjusting cameras during manual operation.
- 2.3 ANPR cameras are used in tracking vehicle number plates and are commonly seen in entrances to car parks. Computerised data handling stores vehicle details, time entered, duration of stay, etc. to ensure appropriate fees are paid.
- 2.4 The more proactive use of ANPR cameras is in the detection of criminal offences by Police Forces. Cameras are used by Police Forces to track vehicles on the move through monitored areas. This may either be retrospective after a crime has occurred in proving the location of a suspect vehicle or a vehicle's identity may be set as an alert in the system so that a notification is received by the system whenever it crosses an ANPR camera that holds that alert. Data is held at the Police National ANPR Data Centre.
- 2.5 In 2004 the Home Office made available £12m funding to Police Forces for the installation of ANPR systems within their area. An agreement was reached with this Local Authority that a camera would be installed on Mountain Road, Caerphilly, connected via the BT system to the Control Room at Tiryberth from where the data and images would be relayed to Gwent Police Headquarters. Equipment was obtained for installation by Gwent Police however, due to the funding stream coming to an end, along with other issues, the camera was not installed and the equipment was returned to Gwent Police.

3. CURRENT USE OF ANPR WITHIN CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH

- 3.1 As a Force, Gwent Police currently has 27 Cameras through a joint arrangement with Traffic Wales. There are discussions about further investment across the Principality and a Regional Group from the Four Welsh Forces is exploring the options.

From a policing perspective, any increase on the number of ANPR cameras will assist the policing of the area, however, there are additional considerations that would need to be made including server storage implications and costs, data ownership and protection, additional workload placed on Control Room staff as regards monitoring, increased issues surrounding response expectations, and site security.

Gwent Police are currently focussing on ANPR collaborative opportunities with South Wales Police; maintaining, developing and enhancing our existing systems and examining further opportunities from funding from Welsh Government.

4. PRACTICAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF INSTALLING A SYSTEM WITHIN THE CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA

- 4.1 While local authority control rooms can be used to “host” ANPR systems installation of an ANPR system within the Local Authority area would require additional static cameras, as the current roving cameras could not be dedicated to ANPR use. Static cameras are required to maintain a fixed position observing a carriageway with cameras facing each direction of traffic.
- 4.2 Locations of ANPR cameras would be best selected on arterial routes where travelling crime enters or crosses the Authority. Linkages would need to be made to the BT system for image transfer to Tir-y-Berth depot, or elsewhere.
- 4.3 Any ANPR system should be managed by Gwent Police due to the necessary links with the National ANPR Data Centre, the management of data held within the system and the investigation of criminal offences.
- 4.4 The legal controls on the data held within the National ANPR system and the data gathered by surveillance would be owned by Gwent Police. Only Police personnel acting in accordance with the Human Rights Act, The Data Protection Act and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act can access the system.

5. COSTS OF AN ANPR SYSTEM

- 5.1 Locations selected would each need a static camera, connection to the BT network and link up to the National ANPR Data Centre. Where ANPR cameras were located in conjunction with the Local Authority’s roving cameras, the existing BT connection would need to be upgraded to a multi-channel connection. There would be additional running costs in terms of electricity consumption at existing locations. New ‘arterial route’ locations would require new power connections with associated installation costs.
- 5.2 Ongoing costs would include electricity, BT Redcare channel charges and maintenance. Cost from a Gwent Police perspective are summarised above.
- 5.3 Approximate static camera costs: £1200 per camera list. Approximate multi-channel upgrade to existing camera location: £2500.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 While it should be feasible to host a Police ANPR system at the current Tir-y-Berth Control Room a full feasibility study would need to be conducted. Such a system would need also to be aligned with the regional development of the Police ANPR systems in use in Wales.
- 6.2 Camera locations would need to be selected to meet the policing requirement.
- 6.3 The responsibility for the systems management and maintenance would be with Gwent Police.
- 6.4 Installation and ongoing costs would need to be agreed as part of a memorandum of understanding on the use of the system within the Local Authority as part of its existing CCTV installation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the contents of this report are noted.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below. There are no responses that have not been reflected in the report.

Author: Kathryn Peters, Community Safety Manager
Consultees: Superintendent Jon Burley, Chair Community Safety Partnership
Councillor David Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services
Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection
Inspector Kevin Childs, Caerphilly Local Policing Unit Partnership Inspector