

# Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Monday 4 April 2011

6.30 pm.

160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2TZ

Room G01c

## Membership

Councillor Gavin Edwards (Chair)  
Councillor Linda Manchester (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Kevin Ahern  
Councillor Poddy Clark  
Councillor Claire Hickson  
Councillor Wilma Nelson  
Councillor Michael Situ  
Miriam Facey  
John Nosworthy  
Jane Salmon  
Lesley Wertheimer

## Reserves

Councillor Michael Bukola  
Councillor Paul Kyriacou  
Councillor Darren Merrill  
Councillor Martin Seaton  
Councillor Cleo Soanes

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Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

**Annie Shepperd**

Chief Executive

Date: Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011



Item No.

Title

## Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Monday 4 April 2011  
7.00 pm  
160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2TZ

### Order of Business

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	<b>PART A - OPEN BUSINESS</b>	
1.	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
2.	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT</b>	
	In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear working days of the meeting.	
3.	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</b>	
	Members to declare any personal interests and dispensation in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.	
4.	<b>MINUTES</b>	1 - 6
	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the open section of the meeting held on	
5.	<b>INFORMAL NOTES OF VISIT TO CCTV CONTROL ROOMS (SOUTHWARK AND LEWISHAM)</b>	7 - 10
6.	<b>DRAFT REPORT ON UNFINISHED SECURITY WORKS AT FOUR SQUARES ESTATE</b>	
7.	<b>REPORT ON WORK OF TENANT COUNCIL SPENDING PANEL</b>	
8.	<b>FOLLOW UP ON COMMITTEE'S VISIT TO CCTV CONTROL ROOMS</b>	

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**DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER OPEN ITEMS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING.**

**PART B - CLOSED BUSINESS**

**DISCUSSION OF ANY CLOSED ITEMS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING AND ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR AS URGENT.**

Date: Friday 25 March 2011



## **HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 1 February 2011 at 7.00 pm at Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Gavin Edwards (Chair)  
Councillor Linda Manchester  
Councillor Poddy Clark  
Councillor Stephen Govier  
Councillor Michael Situ

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:** Miriam Facey  
Non Nosworthy  
Jane Salmon  
Lesley Wertheimer

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Anood Al-Samerai  
Councillor Ian Wingfield

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Gerri Scott, Director of Housing  
Gill Davies, Director of  
Jonathon Toy, Head of Community Safety & Enforcement  
Margaret O'Brien, Head of Housing Management  
Shaun Regan, Finance and Performance Manager  
Debbi Gooch, Principal Lawyer  
Karen Harris, Scrutiny Project Manager

### **1. APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Claire Hickson. Councillor Darren Merrill attended in her place.

### **2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

2.1 There were none

### 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

### 4. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January be agreed as an accurate record.

### 5. FOUR SQUARES SCRUTINY

5.1 The Chair introduced the 4 Squares issue, reminding members of the sub-committee that this was a continuation of the discussion held on 11 January. He welcomed the residents to the meeting, and Councillor Ian Wingfield, cabinet member with responsibility for housing.

5.2 Councillor Wingfield was invited to make some introductory comments on the 4 Squares issue

5.3 He began by stating that there was still a serious issue to be addressed and how unhappy he felt with the way residents felt misled.

5.4 He summarised that there are 3 main issues that he intended to address

- The paucity of the decision-making process
- Inclusion and meaningful consultation with the residents
- Contract management

5.5 He also explained that there was a large funding shortfall of some £313 million for housing maintenance overall, and he had a responsibility to look across the whole borough at priorities. The full information from the stock condition survey would be available in April and this is the time when decisions on funding for schemes can be made.

5.6 Members of the sub-committee reminded Councillor Wingfield that the outstanding work was not "decent homes" work.

5.7 The Chair invited members of the sub-committee to ask questions to Councillor Wingfield.

5.8 **What work is underway to get a cost-effective solution to security on estates?**

In one instance it was windows rather than doors that are the issue. The residents explained the other security issues on the estate and the benefits that have been seen at the 2 blocks which have had the work done. The Council needed to involve residents when devising solutions and in the future would be doing so on an

ongoing basis.

- 5.9 **It is important that the Council does not make promises that it can not keep. It is clear that in this instance the tendering process went wrong. What lessons have be learnt from this?**

In the future contract management needs to be a lot tighter, and a better key performance indicator framework will be used.

- 5.10 **Why is the leftover money from the original £8million not allocated to the estate?**

It was only ever an indicative allocation. When the decent homes priority was established the amount available for other works was diminished.

- 5.11 **Can you give some indication that 4 squares will be a priority once the resource levels are known in April?**

We will be giving 4 Squares special consideration but can not make an absolute commitment at this stage. The Council will be looking at it closely.

- 5.12 **Can we be reassured that the new director of housing will have a tight grip on the contract management?**

We will ensure that the process is much more open in the future and be looking at 2 aspects of 4 Squares, what needs to happen now, and also what went wrong in terms of the contract overspend, communications with residents, and communications between officers and councillors.

The overspend on the first contract was signed off by the director under delegated powers.

The council accepts that the main issue was the lack of openness about the decision-making processes. This can be improved in the future.

- 5.13 **In 2009 it was not clear that work at 4 Squares would not be progressed. What has changed?**

By April/May we will be able to publish the results of the 2010 stock condition survey and will be able to take things forward.

- 5.14 **Why was there no progress on 4 Squares last year when correspondence with the local councillor said it would be looked at again after the contracts process had been resolved?**

Until the stock condition survey becomes available there is no real baseline of the level of resources necessary to deliver the overall housing investment need. Difficult choices had to be made because there was a gap between need and the resources available.

**5.15 Is there a way of taking action against the contractors?**

The contractors do still do some work for Southwark. The issue is one of contract management which will be strengthened in the future. Legal advice will be taken about the first contract tender which was so much lower than the final cost of the work.

**5.16 There is a strong feeling that there should still be £1.5 million available to be spent on 4 Squares. What assurances can be given that this resource will be made available?**

We need a comprehensive solution to the 4 Squares issues, it may be that it costs more or less than the original amount indicated for the project. We need to wait until April/May for the Stock Condition survey report before a decision can be taken.

**5.17 When the council makes its decisions in April will they look not only at the costs of the scheme but also at the savings which will result from not having to constantly repair the vandalism on Marden and Layard?**

All factors will be taken into consideration.

**5.18 Things on the estate are bad; does the Council recognise the urgency of the situation?**

We do, and we have processes underway for improvements in contract management. We will make a decision as soon as the stock condition survey becomes available.

**5.19 The Chair thanked the residents and Councillor Al-Samerai for their attendance and undertook to keep those at the meeting updated on progress on this issue over the coming months.**

**6. FORMAL AGREEMENT OF THE DRAFT REPORT ON HOUSING REPAIRS KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

6.1 The Housing Repairs KPI scrutiny report was agreed and will be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration on 7 February 2011.

**7. POSSIBLE SCRUTINY OF HOUSING REVENUE BUDGET PROCESS**

7.1 Shaun Regan, Finance and Performance Manager introduced the report on the HRA Budget-Setting process, outlining that the report had been written from a financial perspective.

- 7.2 He explained that the council had a statutory obligation not to set an HRA budget in deficit
- 7.3 As a result of the process set out in the paper, the cabinet agreed rents and charges and the council must give residents 28 days notice of changes.
- 7.4 The Finance and Performance Manager explained that the figures are largely pre-determined by Government through the calculation of the rents increase figure and the subsidy. In addition there is a sum for Thames Water charges, meaning that up to 75% of HRA income was determined by external factors.
- 7.5 It was explained to the sub-committee that for 2011, the process of agreeing the HRA had changed to facilitate greater transparency, with the formal consultation taking place with the Tenants Council, Area Housing Forums and the Homeowners Council during January.
- 7.6 In addition to the formal consultation a Savings Panel had been established and is considering the HRA in terms of service provision and priorities, including members from both the Homeowners Council and Tenants Council.
- 7.7 The sub-committee discussed what intervention they could make which would be helpful in enhancing the HRA process.
- 7.8 Lesley Wertheimer informed the sub-committee of the work already underway through the Tenants Council looking into 2 issues
- Total Recovery Cost
  - Double-Charging
- 7.9 It was agreed to request a report from the Savings Panel for the meeting of the sub-committee on 4 April.

## **8. POSSIBLE SCRUTINY OF CCTV**

- 8.1 Jonathon Toy, Head of Community Safety and enforcement presented the CCTV strategy which was adopted by the Council in January 2010.
- 8.2 He outlined the overall purpose, which is to achieve the most effective CCTV we can in the borough, by delivering in the 5 priority areas of the strategy
- A Safer Southwark – in support of the Safer Southwark Partnership priorities
  - Working in Partnership
  - Effective Council CCTV
  - A Proportionate approach
  - Communication – to deter offenders and reduce the fear of crime
- 8.3 The Head of Community Safety explained that the council has 20 re-locatable cameras which are operated within the code of practice, and these have facilitated a good record in covert surveillance.



- 8.4 Members of the sub-committee enquired about the control room, and were informed that as a vital part of the strategy it is hoped to move to a digital recording system from the current non-digital one as this would allow fixed time and date retrieval of images. The cost of this upgrade would be £320,000.
- 8.5 It was highlighted that Lambeth has a digital system already and there may be a possibility of Southwark linking with this.
- 8.6 The sub-committee discussed some alternative approaches including cabling, which could be built into the public realm strategy and capitalise upon the opportunities of the growing business community in the borough. There was recognition of a need to link up better with major developments such as More London.
- 8.7 The sub-committee requested some data on the effectiveness of the cameras and agreed that a site visit to the control room where this could be presented would take place at the next meeting.
- 8.8 The sub-committee discussed several issues which could make an effective scrutiny review:
- The importance of building an effective network across the public realm, including the views of other stakeholders and partners
  - How we can get the CCTV where it needs to be
  - How the whole strategy and actions flowing from it are easy to access for residents

## **9. PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEW WITH COUNCILLOR JOHN FRIARY, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY**

- 8.1 This item was deferred until the next meeting of the sub-committee as there had been a recent change in responsibility for Community Safety within the Cabinet.

## **10. HOUSING BENEFIT**

- 10.1 Councillor Govier circulated a draft report. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next meeting of the sub-committee.

The meeting ended a 9.30pm



## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

INFORMAL NOTES of the Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee visit on Monday March 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 at 6.00 pm at Southwark Police Station, 323 Borough High Street, London SE1.

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors Gavin Edwards (Chair), Linda Manchester (Vice-Chair), Kevin Ahern, Claire Hickson, Wilma Nelson, Michael Situ, Mariam Facey (Co-opted Member) and John Nosworthy (Co-opted Member).

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Richard Livingston – Cabinet Member  
Eden Geddes – CCTV & Coordination Manager  
Ian Gentry – CCTV Operations Manager  
Caroline Thwaites – Metropolitan Police  
Christine Macmaster - CCTV & Coordination Manager  
Fitzroy Williams – Scrutiny Project Assistant

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Poddy Clark.

### 2. SOUTHWARK AND LEWISHAM CCTV CONTROL ROOM VISIT

#### 2.1 Southwark Police Station

The timetable for the visits was as follows:-

- 2.2 18:00 p.m. – Meet in the reception of the Borough Police Station
- 18:10 p.m. – Welcome and introductions
- 18:15 p.m. – Overview of Southwark Community Safety CCTV & Digital Upgrade
- 19:00 p.m. – Mini bus to depart for Lewisham
- 19:30 p.m. – Visit to Lewisham CCTV (recent upgrade)
- 21:00 p.m. – Close
- 21:15 p.m. – Minibus leaves for the Borough/Tooley Street
- 21:45 p.m. – End.

- 2.3 This was an informal visit to the CCTV control rooms of Southwark and Lewisham, members were allowed access to the facilities and asked questions of the managers in charge of the control rooms.
- 2.4 Members were welcomed to the control room, Eden Geddes and Ian Gentry introduced themselves and provided members with the following information. There were 160 town centre cameras which were in operation 24 hours, 7 days of the week. Images were recorded on VHS tapes which would soon become obsolete and some monitors were starting to fail and needed replacing. The way forward would be to replace old monitors with flat screen monitors which are used to capture digital images. Members were also informed that data captured would not be held for more than 31 days.
- 2.5 The Community Safety CCTV began in 2009/10 and implemented a new management system which is monitored from August to August each year. There were 5,000 incidents recorded last year and are currently involved with 60-70 reviews with partners, which included community safety, community wardens, trading standards, health and safety, housing and the police.
- 2.6 Members were informed that there were presently 3 live links to the police station, which are used to alert them of any incidents, it was also reported that 40 recordings were released each month to go to court in prosecution cases.
- 2.7 The control room also has access to 71 TFL cameras in Southwark which can be used to link the borough up from north to south. TFL own these cameras but have given access as the images produced provide clear images for the purpose of prosecution cases. Cameras on buses are a future project which could also be linked to the control centre and the police.
- 2.8 Cameras on the underground are not available to CCTV but they will be in the near future due to the working partnership programme. Members were also informed that cameras were not linked to any underpasses in the borough.
- 2.9 Officers informed members that reported crime and anti-social behaviour was presently being mapped and upgraded to the unit and valuable evidence can be collated and used at a later date for prosecution purposes. It was also reported that officers were checking cameras to see if they were in the correct positions to capture any crimes.
- New recorders have been positioned in the north of the borough and currently awaiting BT to provide the connections.
- 2.10 CCTV is also used for parking enforcement in this borough, where cameras pick up vehicle details committing any parking violation, this information is used to issue the offender with a ticket. Images captured can be changed from one monitor to another with ease.
- 2.11 In response to cameras on estates, it was reported that housing directorate presently have 101 cameras covering 400 estates in the borough. Officers are presently auditing all the cameras and so far it has come to light that only some of the cameras are recording

images. It was further stated that presently it is a mass of different systems which should be pulled together and upgraded in the next 12 months, with a digital upgrade the system could take up to 800 cameras. The cost of installing a new camera is presently £25,000 and that does not include monitoring.

- 2.12 New technology is directed at flat screen monitors and digital images, new cameras are flexible and can be moved pretty easily and last up to 7-10 years depending how they are used, it has been proved that cameras last longer with regular use. A new system would last for up to 10 years.
- 2.13 The initial system was funded by the Home Office and match funded, this is no longer available to local authorities. Members were informed that a consultant had been appointed to provide a cost and appraisal for this service which is estimated at £400,000.
- 2.14 Members were informed that a digital upgrade and general requirement was essential to maintain the service. Parking funding could be used for these aspects of CCTV as no budget had been allocated for these works.
- 2.15 The Sub-Committee were informed that the CCTV team provides training for small groups regarding the overview of the system and how to monitor the cameras. It was also noted that the CCTV team were advertising their telephone number for the general public to contact with regards to crime and cameras placements.

### **Recommendation**

**The chair with the agreement of the Sub-Committee agreed to bring this item to the next meeting of the Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee.**

### **Lewisham CCTV Control**

Members were then transported via minibus to Lewisham CCTV control room, where Christine Macmaster introduced herself to members and informed them that this control room was the same as Southwark's 6 months ago, but it has recently been upgraded with a spacious cool room fitted out with more flat screen monitors.

With the introduction of new technology the system could use any cameras for recording purposes. Lewisham was ready for the digital switchover. It presently uses 180 cameras in the borough of Lewisham. The total cost of the upgrading was £450,000. This was raised through capital revenue and council reserves, New Cross contribute for two cameras.

The officer reported that rail stations (inside, outside) and walkways were covered by CCTV cameras. Members were informed that the funding was provided by capital revenue and council reserves, New Cross also contributed for 2 cameras.

The officer reported that the police required access to the CCTV unit, but there were rules such as the police would not be allowed to download themselves, they would have to

arrange with a CCTV operative for any downloading, which would prove them with a master copy. Members were also informed that data would not be held for more than 31 days. Members were also informed that the police had not contributed to this particular system, but 200 discs were provided to the police each month. Under the old system, tape management used to take up to 20% of operators working day. Now the police provide hard drives to the control room operatives to capture the evidence from cameras.

The robbery squad were allowed to attend the control room for monitoring purposes, where the unit would download data requested for their information. Where digital recording had been introduced the recording quality was greatly improved, easy to use for clear pictures and straightforward to download specific times and incidents. The control room also holds a backup system where discs are included and coded; the system was also proving to be cost effective.

The operation manager informed members that authorised users can request recordings, which is a new move which required a review of facilities for this kind of work. The control room also provides data for environmental services, fire brigade, ambulance services, police and businesses particularly in regards to shoplifting.

The informal meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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