

PROJECT CHAMPION AND EAST BIRMINGHAM CCTV/ANPR SCHEME

Report of the Chief Constable

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report updates members on the financial implications and the Equality Impact assessment of options of the scheme considered by the Authority at its meeting on the 25th October 2010.

BACKGROUND

2. The Police Authority has previously received a number of reports on Project Champion and, subsequently, the East Birmingham CCTV/ANPR scheme .
3. In the report to the meeting on 25 October, a range of options were set out for a possible transition between the outcome of Project Champion and any potential revised arrangements. The available options were as follows:
 - 1) The current scheme to be left in situ, unused but covered.
 - 2) The current scheme to be withdrawn and all cameras/poles removed.
 - 3) A reduced scheme to be implemented, using some of the cameras/poles in situ but supported by a business case and community consultation.
 - 4) A new pan Birmingham scheme(s), using the existing cameras and poles, based on crime and antisocial behaviour issues.
 - 5) A mix of the reduced option 3 scheme, with the remainder then distributed in the manner of option 4.
4. The Chief Constable's view was that his professional operational advice would be to remove the current scheme as identified in option 2 above., and use this as an opportunity to re-build the trust and confidence of the community.
5. The Police Authority then considered and concurred with that view. The minutes of the meeting were as follows:

“RESOLVED

That the Authority support, in principle, the proposal to remove all of the Project Champion cameras subject to receiving from the force and considering:

- *An equal and human rights impact assessment*
- *An analysis of the financial implications of removing the Project Champion cameras.”*

FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

6. Depending on the option, there are three factors which need to be considered in assessing the financial appraisal of the options:
- The costs of removing and relocating equipment, including the associated relevant infrastructure, which would be a mixture of capital and revenue expenditure
 - Ongoing maintenance, license and monitoring costs, which would be revenue expenditure
 - The possible repayment of part of the original Champion Home Office Grant
7. Subject to the agreement of final accounts, the total cost of Project Champion will be just under £3.3m, for which the Home Office awarded grant of £3m. The additional spend including the cost of removal of the covert cameras can be met from appropriate specific grant support.
8. The financial information contained in the remainder of this section of the report is based on estimates provided by the consultants who were engaged to project manage the original scheme, and is based on best professional assessment of the potential requirements for the option.
9. The cost of the preferred option, Option 2 - the Removal of all of the cameras and associated equipment-is estimated to be £630,000, including storage costs. This option has considered the costs of removing all poles and cameras within the relevant wards, together with removing the capability for the scheme to be re-connected in the future. This involves not only the physical removal of the poles and cameras, but also the relevant cabling/ connections for operating the cameras in situ. This would be a revenue charge, because no asset acquisition would be involved.
10. For comparison purposes the following table summarises the costs of the other options which were included in the report to the Authority meeting on 25 October. Option 2 will disable the current scheme and remove all relevant equipment. However, that will not then preclude the further options for future consideration. This would need to be identified within a range of parameters for crime reduction and prevention and anti social behaviour, but may allow further installations in appropriate cases.
11. Some additional work has been undertaken to identify an estimate of the costs involved. These are set out in summary, in the table below:

Option	Description	Capital £'000	Revenue £'000	Max Total Cost £'000	Ongoing Revenue £'000
Option 1	Do nothing – leave scheme insitu but decommissioned	nil	nil	nil	67
Option 3	Reduced scheme East B'ham	523	374 #	897	218
Option 4	Relocated scheme(s) in Birmingham	3000 - 4,000 *	630 #	4,650 *	538
Option 5	The mixed scheme approach	2,550 - 3,000 *	374 #	3,400 *	538

NB * These represent "in the order of" costs as they depend on a more precise specification of a scheme and location - including total equipment requirements
Cost of removing Cameras and poles

12. It should be noted that, although a cost estimate has been provided for Option 3, given the disconnection of the reduced scheme from other similar arrangements, there would be practical difficulties in its operation that would preclude it (and potentially Option 5) becoming a viable option.
13. The figures given for both option 4 and 5 represent one of a number of scenarios that could be adopted in practice. Varying the assumptions of the usage of the equipment and its actual location will give rise to a variation in actual cost. However the figures shown above are likely to be the higher end projection of costs. It currently excludes any amount for a notional cost of usage to be reimbursed under paragraph 15 below.
14. The ongoing costs in column three above, reflect a range of ongoing support costs. This includes maintenance and annual communication charges, together with additional costs of monitoring images in relevant facilities. These are additional costs which are not currently budgeted for.
15. Depending on the option which is finally agreed, it is possible, based on informal discussions at officer level, that the Home Office may require the repayment of part of the original grant. It can be argued that a proportion of the expenditure continues to provide a wider benefit and some relates to “sunk” costs (e.g. project management fees) and neither element should be repaid. On the other hand if, for example, some or all of the equipment was reused elsewhere for local policing, the Authority would probably be required to make a refund based on the agreed notional cost of the equipment which was reused. If it were possible to resell the equipment, and there is only a very limited resale market, the Home Office would probably expect to receive the receipt. It is difficult to put a firm figure on these notional amounts at this stage, which in any event would be subject to further detailed discussions with the Home Office.
16. None of the costs set out in the table above are currently included in the Authority’s budget or Medium Term Financial Plan. It would therefore represent an additional investment cost, together with associated support costs, which would need to be considered in future Policing and Financial planning.
17. The Authority’s Treasurer has been consulted about the financial information contained in this report and is satisfied that it represents the best information currently available in relation to the costs of the various options. He also concurs with the comments in the financial implications section.

EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

18. There is a legislative requirement to assess the impact that a public body’s function has on employees and service users, particularly (under the Equality Act 2010) those with protected characteristics. WMP will need to ensure that their services are suitable for the needs of diverse individuals and communities and will alleviate differential treatment where it is identified. In order to do this the force has a robust process to involve and consult as widely as is necessary to inform the design of the project or policy involved.
19. The Human Rights issues form an integral element of equality. In addition to the equality impact the assessment group also looked at the human rights component as part of the overall assessment process.

20 The Project Champion options have been fully equality impact assessed by a panel of experts and practitioners employed by WMP. The group was particularly designed to ensure that it was diversely represented from a variety of ethnicities and backgrounds.

The equality impact assessment provides an analysis of the objectives incorporated in the paper and where necessary:

- highlights potential differential treatment
- outlines where consultation should take place to inform the process from the community perspective
- provides recommendations that will improve the fairness of the project

21 The project team can therefore formulate a process to ensure that the chosen option is appropriate and implemented fairly. The EQIA recommendations should be considered as good practice however options may be chosen in the absence of those recommendations, if there is objective justification for doing so.

22 A copy of the EQIA for Option 2 is attached as Appendix 1 . A similar exercise has been undertaken for all identified options. As a result of the work, the option 2 is strongly supported as the preferred outcome of the assessment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

23 The cost of the preferred Option 2-the removal of all of the cameras and related equipment -is estimated to be £630,000 including storage costs. This would be a charge against the 2010/11 Revenue Budget. Subject to the actual costs of the separate Voluntary redundancy scheme for police staff and spending levels in the later part of the financial year including additional costs identified in this report, it may be necessary to call on the Initiatives Reserve to balance the budget at the year end.

24 None of the costs of the other options are currently included in the Authority's Revenue Budget, Capital Programme or Medium Term Financial Plan. They would therefore have to be considered with other spending issues and priorities in what is, of course, going to be a period of severe financial restraint.

25 The total costs of the Project Champion scheme to date, which are expected to be approx £3.3m, have been funded from Home Office specific grants.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

26. Section 6 of the Police Act 1996 requires the Police Authority to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force for its area.

27. Under Section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Police Authority can acquire land for the purposes of its functions and under Section 123 of the Act may dispose of land held by it.

CONCLUSION

28 From the financial appraisal above, the lowest cost option is Option1. However from the work already undertaken in a Community Impact assessment, consultation processes to date and the Equality Impact work recently completed, this is no longer a viable option. Option 2 then is both the lowest available cost approach and also the option supported by the Equalities Impact assessment.

RECOMMENDATION

27. The Authority is recommended, subject to consideration of the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment and the financial implications set out in the report above, to agree that the scheme known as Project Champion should be withdrawn and all remaining cameras, poles and relevant equipment should be removed.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None