

Report of: Head of Oxford City Homes
To: Executive Board
Date: 21 April 2008 **Item No:**
Title of Report: Foresters Tower CCTV Pilot Results

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To update the Executive Board on the affect that the installation of CCTV at Foresters Tower has had on anti-social behaviour in the block and to present proposals for the other tower blocks in the City.

Ward(s) affected: Blackbird Leys, Churchill, Headington Hill and Northway

Key decision: Yes

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Patrick Murray.

Scrutiny Responsibility: Housing Scrutiny Committee

Report Approved by:-

Portfolio holder: Councillor Patrick Murray
Director: Tim Sadler
Legal: Jeremy King
Finance: David Higgins

Policy Framework: More housing, better housing for all.

Recommendation(s): That the Executive Board notes the result of the CCTV pilot in Foresters Tower and approves the proposal to extend the scheme to Plowman, Windrush and Evenlode Towers.

Background –

1. A proposal to install a pilot CCTV system in Foresters Tower Woodfarm to monitor the effect that it might have on anti-social behaviour was approved by Members for the financial year 2007/08.
2. The installation's six cameras are movement operated and cover all entrances to the block, internally and externally, as well as one in each lift. The images are saved and can be monitored live or retrospectively following a reported incident. Currently the images are viewed at Oxford City Homes via a stand-alone personal computer, in a secure room with access to only three approved staff and the police. The pilot went live in October 2007.
3. There is evidence to show that anti-social behaviour is also occurring at other tower blocks and there is a need to monitor this and to cover a wider area by linking with other system e.g. Windrush Tower, Blackbird leys with the Blackbird Leys Road shops.

Pilot results

4. The results of a survey of Foresters Tower residents has shown that the perceived incidents of anti-social behaviour within the period have reduced. The results of the survey are shown in Appendix 1 attached.
5. The pilot has produced more evidence of the type of anti-social behaviour that occurs and this is shown in Appendix 2. It should be noted that recorded evidence of incidents where the perpetrators were tenants have been acted upon and the tenants warned as to their future behaviour.

Options

6. There are effectively three main options:-
 - Extend the scheme to incorporate three other tower blocks – excluding Hockmore Tower.
 - Retain the scheme in Foresters Tower only
 - Do not proceed with the scheme and either remove the equipment or retain the equipment as a deterrent but do not monitor or record.
7. If the option to extend the scheme is adopted, there are further options for the recording and monitoring of the system. These are:-

- Record and monitor within Oxford City Homes – the pilot is being managed in this way but, if the scheme is extended, this would not be practical. A full time post would need to be created and it would not allow 24 hour monitoring.
- Record and monitor within the Police CCTV Control Room in St Aldates – has the advantage of 24 hour monitoring and a quicker response rate to incidents. It would still need funding for a full time employee but spread over the 24 hour period which would provide better value for money and the advantage of working closer with existing partners.

Financial Implications

8. The total installation costs for the pilot scheme, including recording equipment, computer/monitor and all links to date is £52,137.
9. A budget sum of £300,570 was approved in the 2007/08 financial year and £215,000 of this has been requested to be carried forward to the current financial year.
10. The Capital cost of the installation of similar schemes to another three blocks is estimated to be a total sum of £100,000. The annual revenue cost of servicing and maintaining the systems after the first year, the first year would be under guarantee, is still to be estimated. It is envisaged that it would be included within the existing CCTV service contract.
11. In addition, the sum of £25,000 would be needed to fund a full time employee (FTE) at the Police CCTV room.
12. There is provision within existing leases to recharge leaseholders and further investigation will be undertaken to decide to what extent they can be recharged.
13. With the estimated costs, shown above, the requested carry forward would cover these and allow for a contingency sum which will be needed for any additional costs should the existing links between the blocks and the monitoring suite be found to be inadequate.

Legal Implications

14. There are no specific legal implications for the installation of CCTV systems.

Proposals

15. Owing to the reduction in anti-social behaviour in Foresters Tower, it is proposed to extend the pilot scheme to three other similar blocks. Hockmore Tower is in a unique setting as part of the Templar Square shopping centre and as such it is not proposed to include it as part of the larger scheme.

Consultation

16. Consultation with tenants and leaseholders within Foresters Tower has been extensive and the scheme has also been discussed with tenants and leaseholders via the Housing Advisory Panel and the Repairs and Improvements Topic Panel. A Foresters Tower tenant was a member of the panel which chose the contractor for the initial pilot.

Timetable

17. The indicative timetable for the installation of CCTV systems in the other tower blocks is:-

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Invite quotations - | beginning of July 2008 |
| Appraise quotes and accept - | end of August 2008 |
| Start on site (following consultation with residents) | October 2008 |
| Completion | January 2009 |

Recommendations

18. That the Executive Board notes the result of the CCTV pilot in Foresters Tower and approves the proposal to extend the scheme to Plowman, Windrush and Evenlode Towers.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Responses to residents' survey
- Appendix 2 - Incidents of anti-social behaviour

Name and contact details of authors: Chris Pyle, tel; 335411,
Email: cpyle@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers: None

