

**“WE’VE GOT SOMETHING  
YOU MIGHT LIKE TO SEE”**

**CCTV and our overall partnership approach to  
Community Safety**

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
23 September 2021**



# 1. Background

- Full Council on 26 January 2021 considered a public petition regarding the need for enhanced CCTV/safety measures in Oxhey Park.
- Presentation to OSC on 23.09.21 looking at the role CCTV plays in our overall partnership approach to Community Safety, and the low levels of crime, in Watford.

## 2. Presentation scope

- An understanding of:
  - role of CCTV in crime prevention and detection
  - how the council determines where CCTV cameras are located
  - joint working undertaken between the council's community safety team and the police
- How we balance privacy, freedom and safety considerations.
- A review of:
  - current crime figures
  - the number of CCTV cameras in place and the coverage they provide
  - cost of current CCTV coverage and how this is funded.
- Suggestions for any changes to the town's CCTV arrangements

### 3. Role of CCTV in crime prevention and detection

The system is used to:

- reduce both the real and perceived level of crime
- improve confidence in the rule of law
- provide security coverage for the council's own premises
- assist in the apprehension and prosecution of offenders in relation to crime and public disorder
- assist in the protection of vulnerable persons or victims of crime
- provide security cover and monitoring for town centre events
- gather evidence by a fair and accountable method
- create a safer community, improving the quality of life for all

## 4. How the council determines where CCTV cameras are located

- All cameras are currently in fixed locations, some wall mounted and others pole mounted.
- The installation of new cameras is strictly regulated and controlled by Home Office Guidance and the council's own objectives on tackling crime and disorder.
- Cameras are justified by changing crime trends and if the council chooses to install cameras to protect its assets and property, or in the interests of public safety, subject to funding.
- Each camera proposal is authorised by the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety
- Locations are also periodically audited and reviewed against their original operational requirement to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose.

## 5. Joint working between WBC and the police

- Strong local links between Police & WBC Community Safety
- Local data reviewed and actioned accordingly
- Community Protection Group meet every month, a wide range of agencies share information and work to deliver community safety at the local level.
- CCTV is just one aspect of the joint working between WBC and the Police

## 6. How we balance privacy, freedom and safety considerations.

- Each camera has an Operational Requirement Statement which sets out the stated purpose and key areas for observation.
- Developed in conjunction with Herts Police or the asset owner who provides the operational statistics to support its siting.
- There is a Privacy Impact Assessment to ensure that the council does not breach it's duties under Data Protection and Human Rights legislation, and cameras have privacy zone settings whereby a window or doorway can be obscured to prevent intrusion.

## 7a. Current crime figures

Crime figures Apr -20 Sept compared to 2019/2020

	2021	2019/2020	
All crime	3868	4807	-19.5%
Burglary	147	199	-26.1%
Robbery	49	75	-34.7%
Sexual Offences	117	137	-14.6%
Vehicle Offences	384	595	-35.5%
Assaults	1323	1377	-3.9%

Watford crime levels 5th in the county

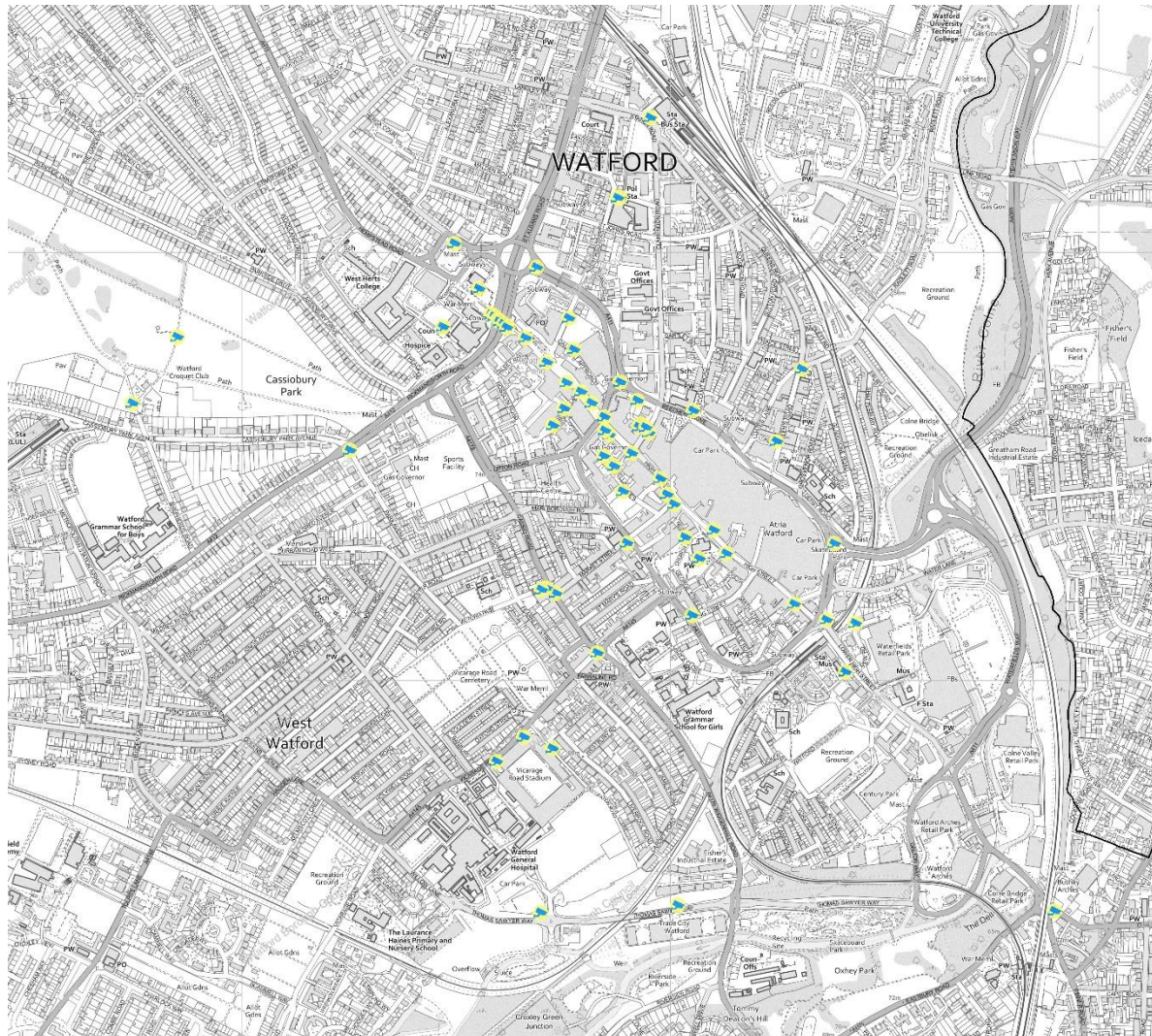
## 7b. CCTV Case Studies

- Prolific cycle thefts – offences captured on CCTV
- Sexual assault – traced via CCTV

## 8a. The number of CCTV cameras and their coverage

- Currently 282 cameras, 78 of which are movable 'pan-tilt-zoom' (PTZ) and 204 are static / fixed.
- Monitored across 30 screens within the control room.
- Since the start of 2021 there have been 8 cameras added (3 PTZ and 5 static).
- The cameras provide comprehensive coverage of the town centre and surrounding streets, plus other key outlying areas (location plan attached).

## 8b. The number of CCTV cameras and their coverage



## 9. Cost of current CCTV and how this is funded.

- £236k for 2021/22
- Funded by WBC revenue budget, plus a £15k annual contribution from Watford BID and £2k from Warner Bros.
- £170k for staffing the control room and the other £83k covers maintenance and general running costs.
- New / Additional / Upgraded cameras may be the subject of / linked to capital projects (such as Woodside)

## 10. CCTV comparisons

Local Authority	Number of Cameras	Approximate Cost (£)
Dacorum	Over 500	500,000
East Herts, Hertsmere, North Herts, Stevenage, Three Rivers	Run through the Herts CCTV Partnership	If same number of cameras as Watford then would cost £270,000
St Albans & Welwyn Hatfield	370 spread across both council areas	300,000
Watford	282	236,000

## **11. Suggestions for any changes to the town's current CCTV**

- Need to consider the impact of the Police Station relocating.
- A full review of the CCTV operation, looking at future use, staffing, mobile cameras and possible commercialisation has commenced.

# QUESTIONS ?