



**CABINET REPORT**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Body-Worn Video Policy</b>
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**AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC**

<b>Cabinet Meeting Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2016
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Within Policy:</b>	No
<b>Policy Document:</b>	Yes
<b>Directorate:</b>	Customer and Communities
<b>Accountable Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Alan Bottwood
<b>Ward(s)</b>	Borough Wide

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 To seek approval of the proposed Body-Worn Video Policy.

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**2. Recommendations**

2.2 That Cabinet approves the Body-Worn Video Policy appended to this report.

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**3. Issues and Choices**

**3.1 Report Background**

3.1.1 As part of a comprehensive approach to improving the safety, cleanliness and maintenance of the town centre, and wider town, it is intended to introduce body-worn video to be used by selected employees in specified circumstances or on specified occasions.

- 3.1.2 Before introducing body-worn video, it is necessary to have a comprehensive and legally robust policy in place to ensure the effective deployment of these devices and to ensure legal compliance.
- 3.1.3 Employees who will utilise the body-worn video will mainly be those who work outdoors in the town centre or, on occasions, in other parts of the town, carrying out activities such as enforcement, security and regulation.
- 3.1.4 Such staff to potentially include, but not limited to, Neighbourhood Wardens, Park Rangers and Town Centre Operatives.
- 3.1.5 The main purpose of introducing body-worn video is to make staff safer and more effective in their roles by preventing, diffusing or reducing anti-social behaviours or by providing a source of additional evidence to support escalated action.
- 3.1.6 Training will be provided on an ongoing basis to maximise the impact of the body-worn video.
- 3.1.7 Overview and Scrutiny Panel undertook a review of the Impact of Anti-Social Behaviour in the town between July 2015 and March 2016. Recommendation 8.1.7 of their report dated March 2016 was that Neighbourhood Wardens responsible for the town centre are issued with a body worn CCTV camera on a trial basis of six months, following which their effectiveness is assessed; with a view to extending the trial further, outside the town centre, to include parks and open spaces.

#### General Purposes Committee

- 3.1.8 On 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016, General Purposes (GP) Committee was asked to approve the implementation of body-worn video, having considered the employment implications of their implementation.
- 3.1.9 GP Committee's considerations included health and safety, risk assessments, equality impacts assessments and staff and trade union consultation.
- 3.1.10 GP committee were advised that the main purpose of introducing body-worn video is to make staff safer and more effective in their roles by preventing, diffusing or reducing anti-social behaviours or by providing a source of additional evidence to support escalated action. It was explained to the committee that where equipment is already in use by Local Authorities, the equipment has been shown to improve safety, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour as well as improving the delivery of warden and ranger services through improved efficiency and better management of complaints and investigations.
- 3.1.11 GP committee were further advised that working within the town centre brings wardens into regular contact with the public sometimes in highly charged circumstances. The introduction of body-worn video allows the interaction and contact they have with the general public in certain situations to be recorded in an indisputable format.

- 3.1.12 Also wardens and park rangers are also sometimes subject to varying degrees of abuse whilst carrying out their duties. Some of the abuse can be serious e.g. physical or racial. Whilst wardens and rangers are fully trained to diffuse difficult situations, there are still unfortunately a number of reported incidents each year. The use of body-worn video is anticipated to reduce this. The Council has a duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its employees.
- 3.1.13 It was discussed with GP Committee how documented evidence of conversations with the public will improve fairness, transparency and accountability in the management of complaints. It will also provide objective evidence of controversial events offering protection to both the general public and the wardens/rangers.
- 3.1.14 GP committee were assured that training will be provided on an ongoing basis to maximise the impact of the body-worn video. Training will cover not only the use of the cameras but the legislation which applies, including the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). The cameras will only be deployed in an overt manner by fully trained officers.

## **3.2 Choices (Options)**

- 3.2.1 Cabinet can approve the Body-Worn Video Policy as proposed in this report.
- 3.2.2 Cabinet could defer its decision and seek further information to allay any concerns it may have.
- 3.2.3 Cabinet could decide not to approve the proposed policy and, by implication, decide to not implement body-worn video for council employees.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **4.1 Policy**

- 4.1.1 If agreed, this report will make the Body-Worn Video Policy appended to this report an approved policy of the Council.
- 4.1.2 The proposed Body-Worn Video Policy is fully consistent with and aligned to the council's RIPA policy, as approved by cabinet on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

- 4.2.1 There are no resource implications directly arising from this report.
- 4.2.2 A key purpose of the Body-Worn Video Policy is to reduce risks from legal challenge or from inefficient and ineffective use of body-worn videos that would be likely to arise if such a policy was not put in place.

### **4.3 Legal**

- 4.3.1 Detailed legal advice has been sought in developing the Body-Worn Video Policy and confirmation has been received from council lawyers that the policy is legally compliant and has been drafted in accordance with best practice.
- 4.3.2 Particular regard has been paid to Data Protection implications to ensure the Council is legally compliant in what would otherwise be an area of high risk.

### **4.4 Equality and Health**

- 4.4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the use of body-worn video by council employees as set out in the proposed Body-Worn Video Policy.

### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

- 4.5.1 Affected staff and trade unions have been consulted on the use of body-worn videos in accordance with the proposed Body-Worn Video Policy.

### **4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes**

- 4.6.1 Staff who will utilise body-worn video such as Neighbourhood wardens contribute to 'Creating Empowered Communities' in Northampton by making the town centre and other parts of the town safer, cleaner and more welcoming. Body-worn video will help keep these staff safer and will therefore enable them to do their jobs more effectively.

## **5. Background Papers**

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Staff Implications of Body-Worn Video Policy  
Report to General Purposes Committee  
29 September 2016

**Julie Seddon, Director of Customers and Communities**