



Project Champion Review

An independent review of the commissioning, direction, control and oversight of Project Champion; including the information given to, and the involvement of, the community in this project from the initiation of the scheme up to 4 July 2010.

The Purpose of this review is to identify areas for organisational learning to ensure that West Midlands Police is more effective in protecting communities and securing their trust and confidence.

**Sara Thornton QPM
Chief Constable
30 September 2010**

Foreword

There is nothing more important to policing than its legitimacy in the eyes of the public. The concerns of the community need to be a central pre-occupation of policing and transparency needs to be a constant consideration. In the course of this review I have met members of the community and have read the press reports and it is clear that many people feel that their civil liberties have been disregarded. As a consequence, the trust and confidence that they have in the police has been significantly undermined.

There is a real opportunity to learn from Project Champion about the damage that can be done to police legitimacy when the police are seen to be acting in a way which prizes expediency over legitimacy. Importantly these lessons need to be learned from a counter terrorism project where the need to maintain public support is even more acute.

The review has been completed in a relatively short period of time because of the need to take immediate action to restore confidence. However, this has necessarily limited the extent of my enquiries but hopefully not my conclusions. In reviewing events I have tested several hypotheses which might explain what happened. Was the threat so severe and was the activity in the West Midlands so intense that the normal considerations of policing were ignored? Or was the consultation with the community and the marketing of crime reduction benefits just a cynical ploy to cover up counter terrorist activity? Or was there a more mundane explanation – that the project was poorly conceived and managed and while there was an intention to use the technology to reduce crime nobody ever ensured that this happened? I have weighed up the information collected and drawn the conclusions in Section 4 on the balance of probabilities.

When the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police and West Midlands Police Authority asked me to carry out an independent review of Project Champion I thought carefully about how to ensure that the review was genuinely independent. I therefore established a small independent reference group to provide a level of challenge and external perspective. This group consisted of; Lord Errol, Member of the House of Lords with a special interest in databases and privacy; Professor Ben Goold, law lecturer with a special interest in CCTV and surveillance law; and Ms Saima Afzal MBE, Equality and Diversity Executive Member of the Association of Police Authorities and a Police Authority Member for Lancashire. I should like to thank each for their time and counsel, which has proven invaluable.

You will note that I make reference to the 'Review Team' throughout the main body of this report. Much of the information that was gathered for me was brought together by a small team of Thames Valley officers and we worked closely together, often side-by-side, throughout the review process. The conclusions are, however, my own.

I am confident that this review succeeds in its principal task of identifying areas for organisational learning so that West Midlands Police can be more effective in both protecting communities and securing their trust and confidence. I also hope that it contributes to more effective governance and oversight from West Midlands Police Authority.

Sara Thornton QPM,

Chief Constable; Thames Valley Police

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Glossary

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| ACPO | <p>The Association of Chief Police Officers</p> <p>ACPO is an independent, professionally led strategic body.</p> <p>ACPO leads and coordinates the direction and development of the police service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in the public interest and in equal and active partnership with Government and the Association of Police Authorities.</p> <p>In times of national need ACPO - on behalf of all chief officers - coordinates the strategic policing response.</p> |
| ACPO (TAM) | <p>Terrorism and Allied Matters (TAM) is a Business Area of the Association of Chief Police Officers.</p> <p>ACPO (TAM)'s primary functions are to develop, implement and maintain a national police counter terrorist strategy and to advise the Home Office on the distribution of counter terrorist grants and monitor expenditure on its behalf.</p> |
| ANPR | <p>Automatic Number Plate Recognition</p> <p>A system that uses a camera to take an image of a vehicle number plate that is then used to identify the vehicle.</p> |
| BOFII | <p>Back Office Function for ANPR, the gateway system for the national ANPR database.</p> |
| CPIA | <p>Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996</p> |
| CT | <p>Counter Terrorism</p> |
| CTU | <p>Counter Terrorism Unit¹</p> <p>CTUs provide coordination and specialist support to police across the country, and particularly to forces in their own ACPO region, outside of London there are four CTUs.</p> <p>They are responsible for gathering intelligence and</p> |

¹ For more information see: <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/sop/2009/090305/11/#h1000>

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| | evidence to help prevent and disrupt terrorist activities. |
| DPA | Data Protection Act 1998 |
| EHRC | The Equality and Human Rights Commission |
| HRA | Human Rights Act 1998 |
| NDM | National Decision Model. An aid to decision making for the police service. |
| NPIA | The National Policing Improvement Agency |
| PLANE | An aid to value based decision making that takes account of the Proportionality, Legitimacy, Authority, Necessity, and Ethics of a course of action. |
| SRO | Senior Responsible Owner: “The Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) is the individual responsible for ensuring that a project or programme of change meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits. They should be the owner of the overall business change that is being supported by the project. The SRO/PO should ensure that the change maintains its business focus, has clear authority and that the context, including risks, is actively managed. This individual must be senior and must take personal responsibility for successful delivery of the project. They should be recognised as the owner throughout the organisation.” (Office of Government Commerce guidance on project/programme management). |
| TVM | Trans Visual Media, a convergent technology platform that brings several databases together. |

Key Individuals

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Chief Constable Sir Paul Scott-Lee | Chief Constable of West Midlands Police until 30 April 2009 – retired. |
| ACC Stuart Hyde | ACC West Midlands Police until 31 May 2009 – promoted to Cumbria Police. |
| ACC Anil Patani | ACC West Midlands Police and the Senior Responsible Owner of Project Champion. |
| ACC Suzette Davenport | ACC West Midlands Police with territorial responsibility for Birmingham until June 2010. |
| ACC Sharon Rowe | ACC West Midlands Police with territorial responsibility for Birmingham from July 2010 and current strategic lead for Operation Champion. |
| DCS Matt Sawers | Head of West Midlands CTU and the Project Executive for Project Champion. |
| Chief Constable Chris Sims | Chief Constable of West Midlands Police from 1 June 2009. |
| Bishop Derek Webley | West Midlands Police Authority Chair from 25 June 2009. |
| Ms Jacky Courtney | West Midlands Police Authority Chief Executive. |
| Ms Jackie Russell | Director, Safer Birmingham Partnership. |
| Mr Stephen Hughes | Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council. |

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to Project Champion

On 29 June 2007 two unexploded car bombs were discovered in London. The first device was found in a car parked near the *Tiger Tiger* Nightclub in Haymarket. A second device was subsequently found in a car that had been left nearby. On 30 June 2007 a terrorist attack was made on *Glasgow International Airport* when a Jeep was driven into the main terminal and burst into flames.

As a result, on 30 June 2007, the *Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre* raised the National Threat Level to 'critical', the highest of five possible levels, considering that a terrorist attack was expected imminently².

Earlier in the same year West Midlands Police had thwarted a plot to kidnap and behead a Muslim soldier. The investigation, known as Operation Gamble³, was focussed on a number of mostly British-born Pakistani men living in Birmingham. The investigation was centred on the areas of Alum Rock and Sparkhill.

It was in this context that in late 2007 West Midlands Police began to create Project Champion, to enable the West Midlands Counter Terrorist Unit to⁴:

“Create a vehicle movement ‘net’ around two distinct geographical areas within the city of Birmingham, namely Alum Rock and Sparkhill. These areas were the focus of a large percentage of their counter terrorist operations.

Capture valuable CCTV evidence to compliment the vehicle data.”

² See the Security Service website: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/news/threat-level-increased-to-critical.html>

³ See report in The Times, 1st February 2007:
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article1308572.ece>

⁴ Taken from the West Midland Police Project Champion funding application.

The system was needed in order to carry out surveillance operations against identified suspects without having to follow them into and out of residential areas and therefore risk being compromised.

The project began with a scoping exercise⁵ and a request to ACPO (TAM) to advise the Home Office to support the funding of the project to the anticipated cost of £3m.

The funding was approved in March 2008 and more detailed analysis undertaken to produce a specification for the system⁶ intended to install a joint ANPR / CCTV network that would support CTU Operations and provide benefit to general policing⁷.

In April 2009 ACC Hyde chaired a 'Project Champion Briefing Session' for local Councillors and Safer Birmingham Partnership staff⁸ where the crime reduction and community safety benefits of the scheme were explained.

The project team began to install the cameras in January 2010 but by April 2010 questions were beginning to emerge from the community around the positioning of the cameras⁹.

Following enquiries by members of the public and their local representatives into the reason for this work, it emerged that this was a counter terrorism project and the cameras began to be spoken about as "anti terrorism spy cameras"¹⁰.

⁵ Known as the 'ACPO TAM Funding Application and Business Case' produced by ACC Patani.

⁶ Produced by Olive Group and known as 'Project Champion Phase 1 Report'.

⁷ As indicated in the 'ACPO TAM Funding Application and Business Case' submitted by ACC Patani where one of the key benefits is recorded as: "Intelligence and/or evidential product could be of use to non CT policing where appropriate and where the location of the equipment can remain undisclosed".

⁸ Minute of meeting held on 29th April 2009 at Lloyd House.

⁹ Birmingham Mail 17th April 2010: <http://www.birminghammail.net/news/birmingham-news/2010/04/17/mystery-cctv-lamp-posts-spark-outrage-in-moseley-97319-26259572/>

¹⁰ Birmingham Post 6th July 2010: <http://www.birminghampost.net/news/west-midlands-news/2010/07/06/police-told-obey-rules-over-anti-terrorism-spy-cameras-65233-26791438/>

The subsequent interest and adverse comment that this generated led to a public meeting on 4 July 2010, at the Bordesley Centre in Sparkbrook. During this meeting a commitment was given by West Midlands Police to halt the project and commission an independent review into the matter¹¹.

Chief Constable Sara Thornton QPM was asked to conduct the review by the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police and by the West Midlands Police Authority and agreed the terms of reference for the review on 13 July 2010.

¹¹See BBC News Report for detail: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10616576>

1.2 Terms of Reference

To: CC Thornton

On behalf of the Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police and West Midlands Police Authority it is requested that you carry out a review to examine the role of West Midlands Police and Police Authority in the commissioning, direction, control and oversight of Project Champion; including the information given to, and the involvement of, the community in this project from the initiation of the scheme up to 4 July 2010.

The purpose of this review is to identify:

- Areas for organisational learning to ensure West Midlands Police is more effective in protecting communities and securing their trust and confidence.

This review is requested to specifically:

- Examine the commissioning of the project and the involvement of West Midlands Police and Police Authority in this work.
- The compliance of the scheme with any relevant local and national policy.
- The programme management arrangements in operation for Project Champion within the West Midlands Police and Police Authority and any implications from this for other programmes within the Force.
- The oversight of this scheme by West Midlands Police and the Police Authority.
- The consultation arrangements undertaken by West Midlands Police with partners, community members and elected representatives.

The review is not:

- Aimed towards the allocation of blame or the imposition of sanction, it is principally focused on improvement, learning, and development.
- Intended to review the broader Safer Birmingham Partnership (SBP). However the review may wish to assess the inter relationship of the Force with SBP on areas of the programme.
- Intended primarily to review the oversight of the scheme by the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism or Association of Chief Police Officers Terrorism and Allied Matters committee, but will not be silent if issues come to light in these areas.
- Intended to be used for misconduct proceedings. Clearly where matters of a very serious nature were identified then this would be communicated to the Deputy Chief Constable of West Midlands police (or the Chief Executive of West Midlands Police Authority if a Chief

Officer was involved) action would then be considered. The aim of the review is to learn.

Arrangements for the review

- It is intended that the review will be completed and a written report passed to the Chief Constable of West Midlands Police and the Chief Executive of the West Midlands Police Authority by 30 September 2010.
- As the review is aimed at building trust and confidence then it is requested that the review team would meet regularly with nominated community representatives to discuss the work.
- West Midlands Police will make arrangements for accommodation for the review team.
- West Midlands Police Authority will meet the financial costs of the review.
- West Midlands Police will identify the Deputy Chief Constable as the contact point for the review. The West Midlands Police Authority Chief Executive will act as the contact for the West Midlands Police Authority.
- West Midlands Police will make available task-able resources to support the review to assist with document collection. These capabilities will work to the direction of the Review Officer when conducting work relating to this review.
- Any media statements relating to the progress of the review will be jointly agreed by West Midlands Police and the Police Authority and the review team.
- As West Midlands Police remains engaged in actively managing issues emerging from Project Champion the Review Officer is asked to consider how a factual chronology and early learning points can be disclosed to the Force and the Authority at stages of the review or in response to future events.
- The final review document and any interim reports from this review will be made publicly accessible.

2. Project Champion Timeline

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
|---------------|---|--|
| October 2007 | <p>The initial feasibility study was completed by <i>North West Consultants</i> who had been tasked by West Midlands Police to evaluate the configuration of ANPR and video cameras needed to create a surveillance ‘ring’ around parts of Birmingham.</p> <p>Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Anil Patani was the West Midlands Police lead chief officer for the project and its Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), supported by the Head of the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit Detective Chief Superintendent (DCS) Matt Sawers.</p> | North West Consultants document ‘initial feasibility study’ |
| January 2008 | West Midlands Police made a bid to ACPO (TAM) for Home Office funding for the Project. | ACPO (TAM) Funding bid and business case |
| February 2008 | On 12 February 2008 ACC Patani met with Birmingham City Council Officers; ACC Patani recalled that the Chief Executive (Stephen Hughes), the Leader (Councillor Mike Whitby), the Deputy Leader (Councillor Paul Tilsley) the Cabinet Member for Transportation (Councillor Len Gregory) and the Director of the Safer Birmingham | Briefing Report from West Midlands Police dated 5 July 2010 and titled “Summary of Events” prepared by Sgt. Kate Jeffries, and information from a discussion with ACC Patani |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>Partnership (Ian Coghill) attended to discuss the Project. This meeting was held in the West Midlands CTU, and included a presentation on the terrorist threat, but was not minuted. ACC Patani told the Review Team that this was the first time the added crime reduction benefit of the system was discussed, but the project remained focussed on its CTU purpose.</p> | |
| February 2008 | <p>West Midlands Police Authority met on 14 February 2008 and Project Champion was discussed in private session. The open minutes show that the Project was being considered for inclusion in the capital programme.</p> <p>The report, considered in the private part of the Authority’s agenda, states “Discussions have been held with Birmingham City Council who has agreed in principle to fund capital costs in the region of £500,000.” and that “Ongoing revenue costs of some £400,000 will be shared between Birmingham City Council and West Midlands Police Authority”.</p> <p>During the Birmingham City Council Scrutiny evidence gathering session on 23 August 2010: “[Stephen Hughes] advised that he had first become aware of the Project some time in 2007 when a presentation</p> | <p>West Midlands Police Authority Minutes from 14 February 2008</p> <p>West Midlands Police Authority “Project Champion – Report of the Chief Constable and Treasurer” from 14 February 2008</p> <p>Local Services and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 August 2010 and report in The</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>had been given by Assistant Chief Constable Patani. The briefing given was that the Project was being initiated in response to intelligence regarding possible terrorism and the opportunity to bid for additional funding. The City Council was asked if it would support such action. He was next aware of the Project when it was raised as an issue in national and local newspapers. The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Transportation had been present at that high level briefing and the then Director of Community Safety had been present also. No funding input from the City Council had been mentioned and the Police had been preparing to bid for appropriate funding. He had understood that Police Officers would then take forward the matter with appropriate Divisions of the City Council.”</p> <p>The Police Authority gave approval for the Chief Executive of the Authority and the Chief Constable to have joint “delegated authority” for the commissioning and procurement of Project Champion in consultation with the Police Authority Chair, a police authority member, Treasurer and Legal Adviser.</p> | <p>Guardian: http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/au-g/27/birmingham-police-inquiry-muslim-cctv</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| March 2008 | An ACPO (TAM) funding board - the Finance and Workforce Planning Board, which oversees the allocation of Home Office Counter Terrorism funding to the police service, advised the Home Office to allocate a £3m capital grant for Project Champion. This was based on CT threat and risk and was “predicated on the funding being committed this year and significant financial contributions being received from partner agencies/authorities.” | Finance and Workforce Planning Board decision log |
| April 2008 | <i>Olive Group</i> (a specialist Project Management consultancy) was commissioned to conduct detailed initial scoping for the Project, referred to later as “Phase 1” of Project Champion. | <i>Olive Group</i> Phase 1 Report, December 2008 |
| October 2008 | <i>Olive Group</i> was commissioned, under the delegated authority process approved on 14 February, to manage Project Champion with <i>Prince2</i> project management methodology. This was awarded as a single tender due to <i>Olive Group’s</i> specialist knowledge of the market. | |
| December 2008 | The <i>Olive Group</i> Phase 1 Report was submitted to West Midlands Police: “In consultation with WM CTU it has been agreed that the Champion | <i>Olive Group</i> Phase 1 Report, December 2008, page 9 |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>system will remain independent of the existing Local Authority CCTV environment with the possible exception of sharing power supplies and the mounting of CCTV cameras on existing Council CCTV poles. In these instances, the CCTV cameras will operate over the WM CTU transmission solution”.</p> | |
| January 2009 | <p>The project governance framework was agreed, with DCS Sawers as the Project Executive overseeing the project management team. DCS Sawers remained as the Project Executive throughout and reported to the CTU Executive Board, chaired by ACC Patani (and attended by a Police Authority member).</p> | <p><i>Olive Group</i> Project Initiation Document ver. 1.1</p> |
| January 2009 | <p>A meeting was held on 21 January 2009 between ACC Patani, ACC Hyde and other senior officers, the actions List included: “ACC Patani, OCU Commanders and CI Marriott to formulate a narrative to support Project Champion. This must include high crime areas.”</p> | <p>West Midlands Police document titled: Project Champion Actions, 21 January 2009</p> |
| February 2009 | <p>On 3 February 2009 ACC Stuart Hyde and ACC Patani met with local</p> | <p>Minute from West Midlands Police</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>police Commanders to discuss Project Champion. The minute of this meeting recorded that:</p> <p>“ACCs Patani and Hyde stated that they wanted a storyline on which to hang the project”</p> <p>“A discussion was then had around how to use the data to specifically support the need for cameras in Alum Rock along the Stratford Road Corridor”</p> <p>An Action in these minutes recorded that:</p> <p>“WM CTU badge NOT to be included on any Project Champion documentation”</p> <p>As such the involvement of the CTU took a back seat and the Project moved forwards as a Safer Birmingham Partnership crime reduction / community safety initiative. CTU insignia were replaced by the Safer Birmingham Partnership (SBP) logos and an ‘open document’ was produced as a brief on Project Champion – titled “Project Champion Considerations”.</p> | <p>document “Project Champion” prepared by Sgt. Kate Jeffries</p> |
| <p>March 2009</p> | <p>A story appeared on the ‘About Brum’ weblog with concerns about the</p> | <p>Email string within Project Champion</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | rollout of ANPR and CCTV in Birmingham. The Project Champion team realised that these concerns were not about their system but that the issue of public disclosure “will have to be fronted and a strategy put in place to cover as we are not going to install 150 plus cameras without questions being asked, may need a secure person in the press office being briefed.” | 25 March 2009 |
| April 2009 | <i>Olive Group</i> Phase 2 Project Initiation Document Final ver. 1.4 published. | <i>Olive Group</i> Phase 2 Project Initiation Document Final ver. 1.4 |
| April 2009 | On 16 April 2009 ACC Hyde met with Jackie Russell, the Director of the Safer Birmingham Partnership, and Cllr Ayoub Khan (Cabinet Member for Community Safety) to brief them on Project Champion. The paper “Project Champion Considerations” was used for this briefing. | Report prepared by Safer Birmingham Partnership for the Local Services Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 13 July 2010 and Safer Birmingham Partnership Briefing: Project Champion, 22 April 2010 |
| April 2009 | On 29 April 2009 ACC Hyde chaired a “Project Champion Briefing Session” at West Midlands Police Headquarters with several city Councillors and the Director of the Safer Birmingham Partnership, | Minute from West Midlands Police document “Project Champion Briefing Session” prepared by Sgt. Jenny |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>Jackie Russell, present.</p> <p>The minute of this meeting stated that: “ACC Hyde welcomed all to the meeting, and thanked them for their attendance. ACC Hyde stated that this briefing session was a scoping exercise with the view of gaining opinion of the Councillors in regards to the proposed expenditure of Home Office funding that had been made available to the Safer Birmingham Partnership. ACC Hyde explained that the proposed expenditure would be on CCTV and ANPR in the identified areas which would bring a greater sense of safety for local residents and increase revenue into the area by promoting small businesses into the locality.”</p> <p>It was noted that during the Briefing Session: “Cllr Auyob Khan did state that Birmingham City Council does not have the funding available to contribute or match this Home Office money. ACC Hyde reassured Cllr Khan that this was a Home Office Special Grant and no funding was expected from the Council however there would be a cost implication regarding the interoperability of the technical systems however this is</p> | <p>Skyrme</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>something that can be looked at later.”</p> <p>“Cllr Idress advised the group of the need to reassure the wider community that there is nothing to worry about in terms of this project. Cllr Ansar Ali Khan voiced concerns around Islamaphobia and that reassurances must be made that this project is not targeting the Muslim community and how will these issues be tackled to get the balance right.</p> <p>When Cllr Yaqoob “declared she believed that this meeting was regarding Preventing Violent Extremism and if the funding was for tackling the extremism agenda this would breach the very little trust that has taken so long to build in the community and that it will be viewed as targeting the Muslim community.” ACC Hyde responded: “if he said that additional CCTV and ANPR facilities would not have any benefit around Counter Terrorism then he would be lying and that is why this element was included in the briefing note however the reassurance and crime prevention benefits are far greater.”</p> | |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>Later: “Jackie Russell stated that this project was a Safer Birmingham Partnership approach to CCTV and the presentation gave the basis of why those constituencies had been chosen, as in to increase small businesses and improve the local economy and reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime however recognised that there would be challenges.”</p> | |
| <p>April 2009</p> | <p><i>Olive Group</i> Project Initiation Document (latest version 1.4) from Project Champion stated:</p> <p>“The clients requirements for output from the system at a high level is: CCTV coverage to aid surveillance ANPR movement information Imaging of vehicles both still and moving Deliver ANPR data to the WMP Police BOFII system Deliver ANPR data and CCTV imaging to the CTU TVM environment”</p> <p>“It is understood that the CCTV images captured by the Champion CCTV system are not going to be accessible to partners such as Birmingham City Council as such access could result in an operation</p> | <p><i>Olive Group</i> Phase 2 Project Initiation Document Final ver. 1.4</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | <p>becoming compromised.”</p> <p><i>Olive Group’s</i> remit was to connect the CCTV into the CTU only. Any further dissemination of the images was a matter for West Midlands Police to resolve. Although there were signs that senior managers intended for this to occur, it never happened.</p> | |
| May 2009 | <p>Chief Constable Sir Paul Scott-Lee retired and was replaced by Chief Constable Chris Sims, from Staffordshire Police.</p> <p>ACC Stuart Hyde promoted to DCC Cumbria Police.</p> <p>ACC Davenport took over the partnership liaison role from ACC Hyde.</p> | |
| June 2009 | <p>Chief Constable Sims launched a major organisational change programme “Programme Paragon”.</p> <p>Project Champion was never raised into Programme Paragon:</p> <p>“As programme manager for Paragon I have had no knowledge about Project Champion and indeed only found out about the cameras when the public row ensued. Their installation, monitoring and purpose has not formed part of Paragon.” C/Supt Emma Barnett, Programme Manager, Programme Paragon.</p> | <p>Email from C/Supt Barnett to Review Team dated 25.08.2010</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| July 2009 | <p><i>Olive Group</i> supplied the Safer Birmingham Partnership and Birmingham City Council with details of the location of every overt camera in Project Champion in a document titled "Site Location Information". This included the information that some cameras were to be sited in wards outside the main areas of focus.</p> | Review Team interview with Project Manager James Cartwright on 19.08.2010 |
| November 2009 | <p>On 3 November 2009 the Safer Birmingham Partnership held their Strategic Local Delivery Group meeting. The minute of this meeting stated:</p> <p>"Chrissie Garrett [Service Director – Inclusion Services, CYP&F Directorate] asks why these specific areas have been chosen.</p> <p>Colin Murphy [CCTV Coordinator – Safer Birmingham Partnership] confirms that statistically the performance data shows they flag up as areas of need/high crime and therefore justify the prioritisation of CCTV investment.</p> <p>"Kevin Borg [Partnership Police Liaison Officer WMP Inspector at Safer Birmingham Partnership] says drug dealers, youths hanging around and</p> | Safer Birmingham Partnership Strategic Local Delivery Group Minutes of the Meeting 3rd November 2009 |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | ASB are all key issues for these communities.” | |
| November 2009 | Jackie Russell met with: Sharon Lea (BCC Strategic Director of Environment and Culture), John Blakemore (Head of Highways Department), and Peter Ryans (Highways Department). A report prepared for Project Champion stated that several issues were discussed, including monitoring, and reassurances given that: “live images and recordings from these cameras would be accessible in ‘real time’ at local police stations in accordance with existing practices.” | Report of Meeting prepared by Insp Kevin Borg titled “Safer Birmingham Partnership Project Champion”. Progress Report February 2010 |
| November 2009 | <p>On 11 November 2009 Colin Murphy sought clarity on CCTV monitoring from the CTU Project Manager, James Cartwright, and received the following reply:</p> <p>“The monitoring arrangements are up to the individual OCU's concerned. They are aware that the images/feeds are available via Steelhouse Lane and can access these as and when they require. As you may be aware these OCU's are being restructured between now and April and I would suggest that this level of detail may not be the</p> | Email from Colin Murphy to the Review Team 24.08.2010, original email dated 11.11.2009 |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
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| | highest priority item for the new management teams being assembled but that it will become clearer nearer the time for the implementation of Champion and the launch of the new units.” | |
| November 2009 | Inspector Kevin Borg coordinated a consultation and communication plan to highlight Project Champion to the community between November 2009 and February 2010. Meetings were held in Hodge Hill and Hall Green, leaflets and newsletters were delivered and the local media was briefed. The message was: “These cameras... have been proven to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour”. | Document prepared by Inspector Kevin Borg: ‘Project Champion Outline of Involvement of SBP Team’ Inspector Kevin Borg: ‘Media Update’ 7 December 2009 |
| January 2010 | Installation of street furniture began. The creation of “two ANPR security cordons around the Sparkhill and Allum Rock areas... supported by CCTV cameras” meant that wards around Sparkhill and Alum Rock had to host cameras. Rather than just two wards being affected, in total nine wards had cameras installed in them. | <i>Olive Group</i> report 19 July 2010 Project Champion |
| March 2010 | Chief Superintendent Surjeet Manku (Police Commander of the affected areas) spoke to ACC Davenport to express his concerns regarding the camera scheme, following complaints from residents and Councillors to the neighbourhood police and the Safer Birmingham Partnership. | Discussion between C/Supt Manku and the Review Team |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
|---------------|---|--|
| April 2010 | <p>17 April saw concerns expressed in the local media about the cameras by residents of Moseley.</p> <p>News Headline: "Mystery CCTV lamp posts spark outrage in Moseley"</p> <p>Local Councillor Martin Mullaney received complaints from locals and together with other Councillors began investigating the positioning of CCTV cameras within their ward.</p> <p>Public protest websites emerged to gather local opinion and lobby. Prominent amongst these was Steve Jolly's 'Birmingham Against Spy Cameras' (BASC).</p> | <p>Birmingham Mail 17 April 2010</p> <p>http://www.birminghammail.net/news/birmingham-news/2010/04/17/mystery-cctv-lamp-posts-spark-outrage-in-moseley-97319-26259572/</p> <p>http://martinmullaney.blogspot.com/2010/06/public-meeting-on-wed-7th-june-to.html</p> <p>The Guardian article re Steve Jolly</p> <p>http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2010/jun/23/birmingham-spy-cam-scheme</p> <p>BASC website:</p> <p>http://spyonbirmingham.blogspot.com/</p> |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
|---------------|---|--|
| May 2010 | On 6 May the Project 'Risk Register', which had previously only contained health and safety risks, was updated to include a project risk: 'Following the installation of the CCTV poles public and political reaction and pressure has become pronounced. This pressure includes calls for poles to be removed or relocated for numerous reasons, including big brother concerns and aesthetics.' | <i>Olive Group</i> Risk Register for Project Champion, under the heading: 'Political and Public Pressure' |
| June 2010 | On 4 June 2010 <i>The Guardian</i> published an article titled "Surveillance cameras in Birmingham track Muslims' every move". | The Guardian 4 June 2010: http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jun/04/surveillance-cameras-birmingham-muslims |
| June 2010 | West Midlands Police commissioned an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on 14 June. The assessment noted: "The documents showing the consultation process were requested but it appears that there were no other papers associated with Champion", | West Midlands Police Cohesion Log; Project Champion |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
|---------------|---|--|
| | <p>i.e. there were no consultation documents.</p> <p>[Because of the return to consultation and the uncertainty regarding the future of the project the EQIA process has been halted. It will recommence when there is a new plan in place for the project.]</p> | |
| June 2010 | On 14 June 2010 local MP Roger Godsiff laid an Early Day Motion regarding Project Champion, calling for a public consultation into the use of the cameras. | http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=41135&SESSION=905 |
| June 2010 | On 16 June 2010 ACC Davenport chaired a meeting between West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council, and the Safer Birmingham Partnership. Following this a joint statement was issued reporting that the CCTV cameras would be hooded until further consultation took place. | <p>West Midlands Police Project Champion Meeting minutes and joint statement</p> <p>BBC News report:</p> http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10337961 |
| July 2010 | On 4 July 2010 ACC Rowe (having taken over from ACC Davenport following her promotion to Northamptonshire Police) attended a public meeting at the Bordesley Centre, arranged by “Birmingham Against Spy Cameras”. | <p>Birmingham Mail report:</p> http://www.birminghammail.net/news/birmingham-news/2010/07/05/police-apologise-for-spy-camera-outrage-97319-26787014/ |

| Date of Event | Summary of Event | Source of information |
|---------------|---|---|
| | An independent review of Project Champion was promised. | BBC News report: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10501704 |
| July 2010 | On 13 July the Terms of Reference were agreed between the West Midlands Police, West Midlands Police Authority, and Thames Valley Police regarding the conduct of the review. | Project Champion Terms of Reference |

3. Analysis and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

There were two separate elements to Project Champion and to aid clarity these are set out below.

3.1.1 Crime reduction purpose

“To bring a greater sense of safety for local residents and increase revenue into the area by... contributing towards a cleaner and safer area, reducing anti-social behaviour and drug dealing activity, creating a secure and comfortable environment for residents and supporting the wider development of the area in revenue and business terms”¹².

The project was configured so that ANPR data would feed into the West Midlands CTU server and from there into the West Midlands Police corporate server before being forwarded to the national ANPR database. Therefore the ANPR element was linked into the wider crime reduction strategy in West Midlands Police.

All the chief officers interviewed have stated that CCTV would have been ‘made available’ to local policing, with feeds being suspended during CTU operations.

What was missing was a plan to deliver on this intention. When the cameras went live at the completion of Project Champion (scheduled for May or June 2010) there would have been no local facility to view the cameras and nobody in place to monitor them¹³.

¹² From the minutes of the West Midlands Police briefing to Councillors on 29 April 2009.

¹³ Review Team interview of the Project Champion project manager 19 August 2010.

3.1.2 Counter terrorist purpose

“To improve the capability of the CTU to conduct surveillance operations in and around Sparkhill and Alum Rock”¹⁴.

The *Olive Group* paperwork¹⁵ makes it clear that a general policing model for CCTV and ANPR was considered but it was decided to follow a model that would have greater benefit for counter terrorist operations and therefore decided to produce a “security cordon”¹⁶, which in fact required more cameras.

The Review Team concluded that the project plans were never amended to take account of the wider crime reduction purpose that was being marketed by the Safer Birmingham Partnership, with the result that the crime reduction benefits would not have been delivered at the completion of the project¹⁷. In simple terms, the CTU built a system to provide them with enhanced operational capability and this privileged position was not matched by a similarly robust structure to ensure the delivery of the community benefits that had been promised to the people of Birmingham; it was a one-sided plan.

It necessarily flows from this that the emphasis placed on community benefits was not sufficiently followed through by the project executive team, with the result that those in charge over promised and under delivered.

At the start of the wider consultation process, on April 29 2009, the system had already been designed and the project team to deliver it was in place. There is no indication that the consultation process had any impact on the objectives or

¹⁴ From the project team papers.

¹⁵ From Olive Group letter titled “PROJECT CHAMPION Covert Site Rationale – Consolidation” dated 19.07.2010: “The original operational requirement for Project Champion was a security cordon supported by internal area cameras formed of overt and covert cameras. Notwithstanding this two deployment options were considered... as part of the early site review process”.

¹⁶ From Olive Group letter titled “PROJECT CHAMPION Covert Site Rationale – Consolidation” dated 19.07.2010.

¹⁷ Exemplified by the number of camera locations that Olive Group refer to as being positioned in a “Site of value from the perspective CT surveillance but of limited value for normal policing”. Olive Group Covert Rationale spreadsheet dated 19 July 2010.

the structure of the project as originally drafted. In essence the consultation can be summed up as too little too late.

The project manager explained how this came about by stating that the project was divided into three distinct functional areas¹⁸:

- Political, including stakeholder management, partnership liaison and community 'buy in'¹⁹ ;
- Technical, including system specification, system installation and system functionality;
- Contractual, including pre-tender, tender and purchase.

The project manager reported that 'political' issues were managed outside of the project by senior officers and were not subject to project management methodology. This may explain why some of the advertised benefits were never converted into practical plans.

3.2 Terms of Reference

The Review Terms of Reference sought analysis in five distinct areas: Commissioning, Compliance, Programme Management, Oversight, and Consultation.

3.2.1 Commissioning

Examine the commissioning of the project and the involvement of West Midlands Police and Police Authority in this work.

During 2007 the West Midlands CTU identified an opportunity to obtain funding that could provide a solution to some problems that had surfaced in their

¹⁸ Interview with Review Team 09.09.2010

¹⁹ The Review Team took the position, after seeking clarification from those involved, that the processes in place to speak to Councillors and others was to obtain their approval (i.e. 'buy in') of the project and not to ask them for their views about its deployment or use (i.e. 'consultation').

surveillance based investigations during the previous year²⁰. In this commissioning phase it was clear that Project Champion was a counter terrorism project. It is also clear that the product from the ANPR/CCTV system would be potentially of value to general policing. The vast bulk of the ANPR data was configured to feed into the national ANPR database²¹, and would therefore be available to all forces in the UK. However there were no specific plans to link the CCTV to general policing, and there were no plans detailing how the additional ANPR data would be used to combat crime. This operational CTU focus resulted in insufficient thought being given to the concerns that the community would have when the nature of the project inevitably became public²².

The Police Authority considered the project on 14 February 2008 as an adjustment to their capital programme²³ and the opportunity was missed to provide a level of scrutiny and oversight of the risks to fairness and equality and the impact on human rights that the project presented²⁴.

Both the force and the Police Authority, like all public bodies, have legal duties to provide services in a fair and equal manner. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) explain these duties as:

While each duty places distinct legal obligations on public authorities, collectively the duties have the common aim of ensuring that the public authorities work to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in their activities.

This means that when developing proposals and making policy decisions, including those about finance and service provision, public authorities must comply with their statutory equality duties.

²⁰ From WMP document 'Summary of Events' (produced 5 July 2010): "During 2007 it became clear that ACPO TAM would under spend and monies would be returned to the Home Office. Officers from the West Midlands CTU (DCS Matt Sawers and ACC Anil Patani), post Operation Gamble saw the opportunity to enhance surveillance capability in two areas of Birmingham which had previously proved to present real operational problems."

²¹ *Olive Group* PowerPoint presentation: "Project Champion briefing to BCC" February 2010.

²² "This capability will be met without harming community relations." in the 'ACPO TAM Funding Application and Business Case' submitted by ACC Patani in January 2008.

²³ Minutes of WMPA meeting on 14 February 2008.

²⁴ Risk not mentioned until it arrived on the *Olive Group* risk register on the 6 May 2010.

Public authorities must ensure that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness, and do not have a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, and men and women²⁵.

The procurement of the project was delegated to the Chief Constable and Chief Executive of the Police Authority, acting in consultation with the Police Authority Chair, a Police Authority member, the Treasurer and Legal Adviser. The waiver of standing orders was granted on the specific grounds of alleged 'special security requirements and urgency'. Although it may be necessary for a covert scheme to withhold information about how technology is being used, the Review Team does not believe that the same level of secrecy needs to be applied to procurement. In addition the Review Team was not convinced that the authority need have been delegated in the first place. Moreover, and in hindsight, there was no obvious reason why the selection of *Olive Group* as the project management consultancy for Project Champion was necessarily secret in the light of the fact that most senior officers argued that the project had an overt crime reduction purpose and would be used in general policing.

If this was an extension of Birmingham's public ANPR/CCTV network for a crime reduction purpose why was it necessary to waive standing orders to procure it? As a result, the opportunity for the Police Authority to examine the business case, and perhaps ask this obvious question, was missed when the commissioning of the project was delegated away from the full Authority.

As the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership commented in 2008, "there needs to be greater recognition that reducing and preventing crime is not easy and that ill-conceived solutions are unlikely to work no matter what the investment"²⁶. This was sound advice which was regrettably ignored.

²⁵ EHRC publication "The Public Sector Equality Duties and financial decisions" available to download at: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/psdgen.pdf

²⁶ Birmingham Public Space CCTV Strategy 2008, page 31.

Conclusion

The very practical problem regarding the surveillance of suspected terrorists during CTU investigations was considered to have been addressed by establishing a permanent surveillance capability in a semi-residential area of predominantly Asian ethnic groups²⁷. This thinking should have been challenged by strong ethical and strategic leadership right from the start and questions should have been asked about its proportionality, legitimacy, authority, necessity, and the ethical values inherent in the proposed course of action²⁸.

Recommendations

1. Decisions about service delivery and policy²⁹ should take account of the EHRC's Equality Impact Assessment Guidance³⁰ and policy writers and decision makers should clearly set out how those considerations along with the principles of the Human Rights Act have been applied. Those decisions should support the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy for the Police Service³¹.

3.2.2 Compliance

Examine the compliance of the scheme with any relevant local and national policy.

Project Champion was a complex system which bears on the issue of compliance. Essentially there were three parts:

²⁷ The Office of National Statistics records 65% Asian population.

²⁸ Taken from the ACPO National Decision Model (NDM) and its PLANE component.

²⁹ 'Policy' needs to be understood broadly to embrace the full range of functions, activities and decisions for which the organisation is responsible: essentially everything [that West Midlands Police and Police Authority] does. This includes both current policies and new policies under development - from EHRC Equality Impact Assessment Guidance (2009 p.5).

³⁰ Available to download at:

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/eiaguidance.pdf

³¹ Available to download at:

http://www.acpo.police.uk/asp/policies/Data/EDHR_Strategy_English_Version.pdf

- ANPR Cameras. 106 traffic lanes covered by multiple ANPR cameras (some with overview CCTV to record vehicle details) all feeding into the open system.
- CCTV Cameras. 38 CCTV cameras feedings into the CTU only.
- Covert Cameras. 47 ANPR cameras (some with overview CCTV to record vehicle details) and two CCTV cameras with a wide street view.

In the context of Project Champion, covert cameras are cameras that are hidden from view but are still viewing public space. That is, they are not focussed on any individual or premise.

While different accounts have been given to the Review Team about the stated purpose of the scheme and the actual purpose of the scheme, the Review Team concluded that it was a combination of open and closed schemes with some data always flowing into the open network (the data from overt ANPR cameras), some data only flowing into the CTU (all of the CCTV data), some data being censored before onward transmission to the open network (all covert ANPR data would have had the location details removed) and some data being withheld by the CTU during live operations (all CCTV data would have been blocked by the CTU during their operations).

In broad terms, a public space CCTV scheme run by the police or another public body (including, in certain circumstances, ANPR schemes³²) should comply with the *CCTV Code of Practice 2008* published by the Information Commissioner's Office³³ and the development of such a scheme in 2008-2010 should have been guided by the National CCTV Strategy (published by the Home Office in 2007) and latterly by the NPIA *Practice Advice on the Management and Use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition* (2009).

³² The CCTV Code of Practice 2008 states: "This code provides good practice advice for those involved in operating CCTV and other devices which view or record images of individuals. It also covers other information derived from those images that relates to individuals (for example vehicle registration marks)."

³³ Available to download at:

http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/detailed_specialist_guides/ico_cctvfinal_2301.pdf

The Code requires, amongst other things, that an assessment be made of the proposed scheme's impact on people's privacy³⁴ taking account of the size of the scheme, its proportionality and justification. It suggests the issues to cover in any impact assessment, which include; the purpose and benefit of any scheme, less intrusive alternatives, and the views of those under surveillance³⁵.

There is no indication that the above research was carried out, indeed the first stage of consultation did not begin until late April 2009 with a meeting between ACC Hyde and Councillors. There is no indication that this process continued after ACC Hyde left West Midlands Police the following month and ACC Davenport took over. The decision to introduce the scheme was made to solve a particular operational problem and was therefore designed for use as an aid to discrete surveillance operations by the CTU and was not conceived or constructed as a public space CCTV system³⁶. As such the CCTV Code of Practice was not followed. There is equally nothing to indicate that the guidance in the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership's *Birmingham Public Space CCTV Strategy 2008* document was followed. The Review Team did consider whether to examine the implications of the Birmingham City Council *CCTV Camera Guidelines for Planning Control* but this is outside the scope of the review and should be revisited by the appropriate body.

Part of the project created a closed system, for use in proactive police operations only, and the Review Team therefore took the view that its use should have been governed by the procedures set down by the *Regulation of Investigatory Procedures Act 2000* (RIPA). Some of the cameras may have been able to operate outside of the RIPA authorisation process insofar as they did not gather personal information. There was, however, nothing available to the Review Team that demonstrated that the authorisation process for the use

³⁴ Going forward ACPO have commissioned a Core Narrative on Privacy and Security that could influence policymaking in this area.

³⁵ From the CCTV Code of Practice 2008 p.6.

³⁶ As evinced by the Feasibility Study by North West Consultants, Initial funding bid and business case to ACPO (TAM), Olive Group PID, and Olive Group Covert Rationale spreadsheet.

of the cameras had been considered, and there was no policy, plan, or procedures in place for their management in compliance with RIPA or other applicable legislation, codes, or guidance³⁷. It is theoretically possible that the appropriate authorising body under RIPA could have considered that the system being created by Project Champion held too much collateral information and its use could have been rejected for that or any other objective reason (e.g. its proportionality).

Conclusion

There is very little evidence of consideration being given to compliance with the legal or regulatory framework.

Recommendations

2. All force projects must consider any relevant local and national guidance³⁸ at the earliest possible stage. Consideration should be given to a formal procedure to examine and 'sign off' compliance within any project methodology which is being used, whether or not it is *PRINCE2*.

3.2.3 Programme Management

Examine the programme management arrangements in operation for Project Champion within the West Midlands Police and Police Authority and any implications from this for other programmes within the Force.

Following exercise of the delegated authority the West Midlands CTU arranged for *Olive Group* to manage the project and employed a professional project manager to provide the link between the CTU and *Olive Group* as a member of the Project Board. At some point in the project, chief officers describe the purpose as being widened to include community safety but this significant request to change the project's scope was never communicated nor was the

³⁷ For example the Code of Practice for the Management of Police Information 2005, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 or the Data Protection Act 1998.

³⁸ It is implicit in this recommendation that those responsible for projects follow due diligence and understand what guidance is relevant to their area of work.

implication for any broader programme management considered. While there was a link between *Olive Group* and the CTU no similar link existed with West Midlands Police Local Policing Units and this resulted in the links to the Safer Birmingham Partnership forming no part of the delivery plan.

There was insufficient senior oversight given to the project. Such oversight might have identified the fact that there was a significant gap between what was being promised by chief officers and what was being delivered. Keeping key partners consulted and informed was considered to be an external element of the project and not as integral to the project. Nor was the Police Authority represented on the Project Board, having devolved their oversight of the project with the view that it was an operational matter outside of their remit.

There was no overarching programme management mechanism to manage force projects and Project Champion was therefore principally overseen through the capital monitoring process by the Police Authority Finance and Resources Committee. In discussions between the Review Team and senior members of the Police Authority it is clear that this Committee focussed on questions regarding adherence to budget and timescales rather than on project dependencies and other broad risks (including equality issues and whole project risks³⁹). The lack of a mechanism to draw force projects together is reflected in Project Champion's invisibility to Programme Paragon. This large scale force reorganisation had an impact on Project Champion deliverables (according to the project team), but there was no means to identify or manage these risks.

³⁹ Even though it has a requirement in its Terms of Reference: "To have due regard, in exercising its responsibilities, to equal opportunities generally and the requirements of all equalities and anti-discrimination legislation, including implementation of the equalities schemes of both the Authority and the force ." http://www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk/terms_fas.asp

Conclusion

Project Champion was a CTU project that developed an ambition to contribute towards a more general crime reduction and community safety agenda. When these ambitions began to develop, and the CTU started to work in partnership with Birmingham City Council and the Safer Birmingham Partnership (SBP), the project plans should have been amended to reflect the new purpose - but they were not. Consequently the crime reduction benefits that were being marketed by the SBP would not have been delivered.

Recommendations

3. West Midlands Police should review the structures it has in place to oversee and manage projects. They should ensure those involved in managing force projects are suitably skilled and supported to carry out the role expected of them. This is of particular importance in the areas of equalities and human rights.
4. West Midlands Police Authority should review the important role it plays in providing governance for force projects. Consideration should be given to providing Police Authority members with the right level of support, training and guidance to ensure they can perform their role as effectively as possible. Specific guidance should be considered which covers members' duties and obligations. This is of particular importance in the areas of equalities and human rights.
5. West Midlands Police should ensure that the key role the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) plays in ensuring projects deliver what they set out to achieve is understood by senior officers. The force should ensure that Senior Responsible Owners are suitably experienced, qualified and supported.

6. West Midlands Police should ensure that genuine engagement with stakeholders is a key consideration within every project, and that it is seen as central to the successful management of projects rather than something which is added on as an afterthought.

3.2.4 Oversight

Examine the oversight of this scheme by West Midlands Police and the Police Authority.

The Review Team has taken the term oversight to refer to the intrusive and participative activity by senior officers and governance bodies which challenges policy and strategy development and implementation. In other words, the checks and balances in the system. *PRINCE2* methodology suggests that processes are needed which monitor, challenge and validate progress in order to provide information to senior officers and help them to exercise oversight.

The Team spoke to senior members of West Midlands Police and the Police Authority, including the previous Chief Constable Sir Paul Scott-Lee (who retired in May 2009), as well as local Councillors and community representatives. It was apparent that effective oversight was undermined by a lack of a commonly recognised picture regarding Project Champion among all the key players and by weak systems for commissioning and project management.

The Project Champion timeline, in Section 2 of this report, highlights some key opportunities which, if taken, could have brought the kind of oversight to the project that may have changed the outcome. The following should be read in the context that from its early days the system was viewed by senior managers

as an extension of the Birmingham public ANPR/CCTV system that would bring general crime reduction benefits⁴⁰:

1. October 2007 – Initial feasibility study. This was one of the first opportunities to ask: is this the right thing to do, do we really want to place a semi-residential area under permanent surveillance? If some of these value-based and ethical questions had been asked they could have brought in a different perspective.
2. 12 February 2008 – Consultation with Birmingham City Council. ACC Patani recalls that this was the first time that the crime reduction aspect of the project was discussed; this was an opportunity to review the goals of the project and obtain guidance on its implementation. If the project was to move ahead in partnership it could have been considered in open session, with more opportunities to discuss its impact and benefits.
3. 14 February 2008 – The project was considered by the Police Authority and this was a chance for the equality impact to be considered in the light of the threat assessment. The Authority had an opportunity to ask, on balance, and in our informed position, is this the right thing to do? The role of the Police Authority in providing a point of view from the people of the West Midlands was absent from this meeting and no challenge was made.
4. March 2008 – ACPO (TAM) advised the Home Office to fund the project “predicated on... significant financial contributions being received from partner agencies/authorities.” This was not followed up and no financial contributions were received from partner agencies or authorities who may have provided another level of oversight (e.g. through the application of the clauses within the *Birmingham Public Space CCTV Strategy 2008*).
5. June 2008 – *Olive Group* produced their first version of the “Project Initiation Document” (marked GPMS – SECRET), which clearly explained that the purpose of the system was to: “enhance the West Midland CTU’s capabilities in the detection and tracking of vehicles of interest to, from and in the Sparkhill and Alum Rock areas”. Senior officers could have

⁴⁰ From Review Team discussions with senior staff.

questioned why a system being designed to aid general crime reduction was being referred to in this manner and why the documentation was marked “SECRET”.

6. December 2008 – *Olive Group* produced their “Phase 1 Report”, which stated “that the Champion system will remain independent of the existing Local Authority CCTV environment”. The project was still being described as a CTU system and therefore there was no oversight from partners, at that point, which could question its direction and compliance elements.
7. January 2009 – The Project Board was set up under DCS Sawers (whose function was to be “ultimately responsible for [the] operational use of [the] delivered system, ensuring [that the] project is delivered in accordance with [the] funding provision”⁴¹). There was nobody on the Project Board to monitor the espoused local policing benefits or the equality impact on the people of Birmingham. There was nobody to manage stakeholders or to facilitate consultation. The Project Board’s oversight functions seem limited to delivering a suitable product for the CTU, on time and on budget.
8. 29 April 2009 - a briefing session⁴² chaired by ACC Hyde provided an opportunity for challenging oversight. It was attended by a Police Authority member (albeit the Police Authority did not know he was attending and he was not therefore briefed or debriefed by the Authority) and many other Councillors who did raise important concerns. The questions raised by Councillors should have been noted by senior officers as critical elements that required further discussion and a response. This briefing was also attended by Jackie Russell, the Safer Birmingham Partnership Director and although outside of the remit of this review there are likely to be some opportunities for the Safer Birmingham Partnership to improve their oversight procedures.
9. May 2009 – change in strategic management within West Midlands Police, a chance to re-brief those in charge and an opportunity to bring a new viewpoint and further scrutiny.
10. July 2009 – *Olive Group* supplied Birmingham City Council and the Safer Birmingham Partnership with details of the position of every camera they

⁴¹ From the Olive Group Project Initiation Document

⁴² See the West Midlands Police minutes for this meeting.

intended to install. This was an opportunity for these bodies to take a close look at what was going to be installed and to examine its impact and the extent of the consultation required.

11. January – June 2010. The Project began to unravel as the public and news media began to ask questions. This was an opportunity to identify a potential Critical Incident and to ensure a suitable level of oversight. However the risks were not identified until after they emerged and no Critical Incident contingencies or management plans were put in place at an early stage to deal with the resultant public outcry. This was only addressed when the project was removed from the CTU and handed over to local policing under the command of ACC Rowe in July 2010⁴³.

Conclusion

There were opportunities for senior officers and the Police Authority to provide challenging oversight at the conception of Project Champion, and throughout its life, especially following the community meeting on the 29 April 2009 which should have been a red flag to senior officers indicating a need to step back and think through the plans. When problems began to surface in early to mid 2010 they should have been recognised as presenting West Midlands Police with a potential Critical Incident, they were not and did not therefore receive a proportionate level of attention until after the Critical Incident had matured.

Recommendations

7. Use the opportunity presented by the development of the refreshed Critical Incident Policy to ensure that all officers and staff recognise potential Critical Incidents and that they flag those incidents up so they are considered at an early stage and proportionate action taken.

⁴³ Review Team interview with ACC Rowe 22 July 2010.

3.2.5 Consultation

Examine the consultation arrangements undertaken by West Midlands Police with partners, community members and elected representatives.

The Birmingham Community Safety Partnership produced a CCTV Strategy in 2008, which states that, “All proposals for new, or extensions of, existing public space CCTV schemes will be required to consult with the community and fully consider their views in any decisions made” (*Birmingham Public Space CCTV Strategy 2008*, Page 10). The West Midlands Police Authority also has its own consultation mission statement and objectives⁴⁴ which said that, “our mission is to obtain the views of local people and communities in the West Midlands about matters relating to the policing of the area.” Local bodies were therefore committed to consultation.

However there was no clearly defined consultation strategy or plan for Project Champion and no acknowledgement that proactive community involvement was necessary. It is clear that there are several methods whereby consultation can take place in advance of a policy decision⁴⁵. These can be placed into three categories⁴⁶; notification (which can be a first step to consultation), consultation (the active seeking of information) and participation.

While the briefing session held on 29 April 2009 could be viewed as the start of the ‘notification’ phase of consultation when ACC Hyde stated “that the whole purpose of this meeting was to gain the views and perspectives of those present and for the Councillors to take it back into their communities to gain their views” this was not really followed up. While there are times when engaging in broad consultation would be inappropriate because of issues of security the combination approach (ie an open and closed system) taken to this scheme made consultation unavoidable.

⁴⁴ Available to download at: <http://www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk/publicconsultationmission.asp>

⁴⁵ For further guidance on methods of consultation see:
<http://www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Home>

⁴⁶ Adapted from the OECD background document on public consultation, available at:
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/43/36785341.pdf>

This was an opportunity to test the feelings of the community and the minutes reflect the very real concerns of some of those present, that the project may be perceived as targeting the Muslim community and an explicit reference to the meeting being focussed on Preventing Violent Extremism. Whilst West Midlands Police accepted that Project Champion would be of value to counter terrorist operations they went on to say that the reassurance and crime prevention benefits were greater.

This was a critical opportunity to explain the nature of the system and how it would be used to combat the very real threat of terrorism and then to contextualise it with the greater benefits that some of the cameras may have offered. The response, however well intentioned, was the tipping point in the relationship between the police and the communities that they sought to protect. It is absolutely clear to the Review Team that this lack of transparency in respect of the purpose of the cameras has caused significant damage to community relations, with many suggesting that the only solution is the removal of all the cameras.

ACC Hyde left West Midlands Police on promotion the following month, handing over to ACC Davenport⁴⁷, and there is nothing to indicate that the consultation process ever progressed beyond the notification phase. Inspector Kevin Borg, who had been nominated as the day-to-day link between the police and the Safer Birmingham Partnership, continued to coordinate communications regarding the 'open version' of Project Champion and organised a series of ward meetings, leaflets, media briefings and newsletters concerning the community safety and crime reduction benefits of the proposed installation but he was never tasked with consultation.

The Project Initiation Document for Project Champion was finalised on 22 April 2009 (seven days prior to the commencement of consultation) and was therefore not influenced by the consultation process. From the information

⁴⁷ ACC Davenport was not briefed on the project until 24 July 2009 (source: timeline from DCS Sawers).

available to the Review Team and following conversations with key members of the project management team there were no changes made to the project during its life time as a result of the consultation process. The project continued in a straight line, from its launch in 2008 until it was suspended in 2010, untouched by any wider consideration.

Conclusion

The consultation phase was too little too late, and the lack of transparency about the purpose of the project has resulted in significant community anger and loss of trust. As one community leader stated to the Review Team, “this has set relations back a decade.”

Recommendations

8. West Midlands Police and Police Authority need to ensure that well intentioned strategies on public consultation are followed.
9. Consultation needs to be seen as a key aspect of every project rather than as an adjunct. It should be included within any formal project methodology, such as *PRINCE2*, that is being used.

4. Conclusion

Any review has the benefit of hindsight and I have been very conscious that I have reviewed Project Champion in the knowledge that it has led to significant community concern and that all the cameras are currently non-operational. I have therefore tried to analyse the events on the basis of what could reasonably have been done or known at the time. Most of the review has been based on the considerable number of documents that are available and key members of staff have been interviewed to obtain further information.

During 2007 the threat level in the United Kingdom was critical and there were many covert counter terrorist investigations being carried out by the Security Services and the police. The situation was grave and there were practical difficulties with the surveillance of suspected terrorists during CTU investigations in the Sparkhill and Alum Rock areas. A proposal was made to establish a permanent surveillance capability in the area. While such a security ring exists in the City of London, this proposal was to create something similar in a semi-residential, predominantly Asian area⁴⁸. This thinking should have been challenged from the start and questions should have been asked about its proportionality, legitimacy, authority and necessity; and about the ethical values that underpinned the proposal.

Moreover the use of CCTV and ANPR is subject to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act in respect of covert cameras and Codes of Practice in respect of overt cameras (arguably overt cameras that are used for a covert purpose could also fall within RIPA in certain circumstances). Yet I found little evidence of thought being given to compliance with the legal or regulatory framework.

It was very clear from the documentary evidence that Project Champion was initiated as a counter terrorist project but that senior officers saw the opportunity

⁴⁸ The Office of National Statistics records 65% Asian population.

to improve the camera coverage in the area to reduce crime and disorder and improve community safety. The force began to work in partnership with Birmingham City Council and the Safer Birmingham Partnership (SBP) but the project plans were not amended to reflect the new purpose. Consequently the crime reduction benefits that were being marketed would not have been delivered by the project.

While I appreciate that senior officers in West Midlands Police cannot be engaged in the detail of every project, there were opportunities for senior officers and the Police Authority to provide challenging oversight to Project Champion, but these were missed. This was particularly the case following the community meeting on 29 April 2009 which should have been a red flag to senior officers, indicating a need to step back and think through the plans.

Overall the consultation phase was too little too late, and the lack of transparency about the purpose of the project has resulted in significant community anger and loss of trust.

When I discussed the Review Team's preliminary findings with my independent advisors they were clear that I needed to suggest how the difficulties could be avoided in the future. That is a fair challenge but I think that the very simple answer is that the Police Service needs to look to the law and regulations that already exist and use them to guide decision making while at all times applying a human rights perspective. Accountability, consultation and transparency need to be considerations at the core of a project.

There is no doubt that the security situation in 2007 was very grave, and the threat intense, however the response that was developed under Project Champion raised significant human rights concerns and has undoubtedly led to a loss of trust and confidence in the community. The response to violent extremism needs to have the support of all communities and West Midlands

Police and its Police Authority must address the restoration of confidence as a matter of urgency.

Sara Thornton QPM,

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