

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2019

Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

Title of Report:	Body Worn Video Implementation – Interim Update
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Chief Officer:	ACC Andy Prophet
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Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	T/Supt Ed Wells
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1.0 **Purpose of Report**

To provide an interim update on the implementation of Body Worn Video, ahead of a full Post Implementation Review.

2.0 **Recommendations**

That the board notes the report.

3.0 **Executive Summary**

Following a significant investment, Essex Police has now deployed 2715 Body Worn Video devices across frontline policing, and continues to embed its effective use into every day policing. The devices are effective and well received by officers and staff; some infrastructure issues have frustrated the use of BWV footage in interviews with suspects, but those issues are now resolved.

The benefits framework which has been developed considers a range of anticipated benefits under the following categories:

- Public
- Operational
- Criminal Justice
- Organisation

Having been delayed in making full use of BWV footage, a Post Implementation Review is now scheduled for the autumn once the implementation is felt to have completed, allowing for a more meaningful and accurate review of the implementation.

4.0 Introduction/Background

Essex Police completed phase one of Body Worn Video (BWV) roll out in November 2018, this means 2500 devices were distributed to frontline officers and staff. This initial distribution was reviewed after three months to ensure allocation met operational need. A further 215 devices were purchased following the 2018/19 precept officer uplift. Of these, approximately 100 have been distributed to student officers graduating from the Essex Police College.

A benefits framework has been developed to consider the broad range of expected benefits from BWV:

Public
• Social media and Public confidence
• Complaints data
• Perception of public safety
Operational
• BWV user perception of safety
• Interviews where BWV footage is used
• Roadside prosecutions & BWV evidence
Criminal Justice
• Anticipation of Guilty plea (GP) at Magistrates Court
• Actual guilty plea rate (Benefit to wider partner CJ process)
• Evidence led prosecutions (Regina)
• Successful evidence led prosecutions
• Not Guilty mags cases requiring disclosure (SDC) completed by CJ
Organisational
• Use of BWV to reduce time spent on Post Incident Management
• Number of assaults on emergency workers (assault police)
• Conduct matters (internal)
• Civil claims
• Civil claim payments
• Lessons learned/Training
• Hardware Savings

Effective deployment and use of BWV across Essex Police is monitored through the Body Worn Video Board which is chaired by ACC Prophet.

The Post Implementation Review (PIR) due this summer has been re-scheduled to allow some of the infrastructure supporting the implementation to be fully instigated. The PIR will then assess implementation against the benefits framework. The PIR is scheduled to commence in September to report to the December Performance and Resources Scrutiny meeting.

5.0 Current Work and Performance

The activation of BWV to capture policing activity has steadily increased in Local Policing Teams (LPT) and Community Policing Teams (CPT), with 110,000 recordings uploaded onto *evidence.com* in June 2019. The feedback from front line officers and staff is that officers love the simplicity of the devices and the easy upload process.

However, one of the primary benefits of BWV is its use as evidence, and the implementation programme has faced two key challenges. Various technical issues with a WiFi-dependent download process in custody, and insufficient use of footage as evidence, particularly in an interview setting due to a lack of confidence in the technical solution to download footage, or frustration at the time and practicality of doing so.

In June 2019, a review of the custody viewing tablets and evidential download options led to the wholesale replacement of the tablets. Furthermore, the technical solution for downloading footage was switched from WiFi to a hardwired solution. This allowed for greater download speeds and a more robust 'copy/paste' process; early indications are that this is improving the use of BWV in interview.

In support of this, and promoting use to realise the other expected benefits, briefings and direct engagement with frontline officers continues.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

Since the introduction of BWV in Essex, the legal view around the storage requirement of footage has developed, specifically the retention of unused material. This now requires additional storage capacity and the challenge faced by all forces is how to accurately quantify future storage requirement. With no baseline from which to work the storage issue will remain under the review of the BWV Board.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

Body Worn Video links directly to the 'Effective Use of Technology' which supports the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.

6.2 Demand

Effective use of BWV can help manage demand, by reducing time spent investigating and/or attending court. The degree to which this is realised will be considered in the PIR, however it is not understood yet the extent to which this will

be measurable given the significant variation in the scale and nature of demand the Force now faces.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

Risks relating to Body Worn Video are recorded with mitigating actions on the Force Risk Registers.

The usage of BWV footage in custody and therefore the impact on securing early guilty pleas and successful outcomes at court has been very limited due to the technical challenges of playing that footage in the custody environment. A clear plan is now in place to address that.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

Effective use of BWV supports a number of Human Rights Act Articles in ensuring Essex Police are accountable for the actions of officers and staff which may impinge upon an individual's rights; specifically around use of Force and the justification for it.

Its use also allows greater accountability around the treatment of the public and whether individuals have been treated fairly.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

None identified.

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

None – paper is an interim update.

8.0 Actions for Improvement

Actions for improvement have been covered in Section 5.0 as a substantive issue for this paper.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

The continued embedding of good BWV practice will seek to realise benefits for the public, for operational policing, and for the organisation in line with the benefits framework. The Post Implementation Review will provide a measure of the extent to which the anticipated benefits have been realised, and this is scheduled to be reported on at the Performance and Resource Scrutiny meeting on 20th December 2019.