

AGENDA 11, Enc vii) DRAFT REPORT of CCTV meeting held on Tuesday 12th November 2025

Present

Cllr Lynne Grimshaw, Cllr Steven Roberts, Cllr Caroline Ball, Sarah Eden, Inspector Wayne Daniels (NP), David Knox (AW), Chris Duncan (AW), Kyle (AW), Neil Pacey (PS)

1. AGREEMENT OF CHAIR

It was **AGREED** that Cllr Lynne Grimshaw would chair the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Scott Amery, Sgt Kath Smith

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

4. REPORT OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was agreed to receive the report of the meeting held on 9th July 2025 as a fair reflection.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

a) System Performance and Reliability

Kyle reported two brief system outages during the reporting period:

- A brief outage on Main Street occurred during street lighting installation works, and also when the CCTV camera outside Bubbles was temporarily removed from the pole. The system was quickly restored.
- A very brief internet-related outage at Hirst Park CCTV. The system was restored promptly.

Otherwise, the system is functioning at 100% capacity.

b) Incidents Discussed

Project Shield - 7th November, Hirst Park

Following one of several fire-setting incidents in Hirst Park, all young people involved were successfully identified through CCTV footage. The matter is progressing with police involvement, with letters being sent to families and interviews being arranged. The same youths were also identified causing disorder on Station Road, entering and exiting shops. Referral to Fire Services Extinguish Programme.

Assault on Station Road

Asset Watch (AW) were the only callers to report an incident involving a male and female assaulting another female on Station Road. Police attended and both suspects were detained. The male was

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identified from CCTV footage. This incident highlights the value of Asset Watch monitoring in ensuring swift emergency response.

Burglary on Station Road

Two people were arrested following a burglary on Station Road but have been released on bail. While there has been considerable speculation on social media about the suspects identities, the CCTV footage provides the evidential basis for the investigation.

Youth Anti-Social Behaviour - Town-wide

Project Shield has identified numerous youths involved in anti-social behaviour across the town. Home visits have been conducted and referrals made to appropriate pathways, including the fire service education programmes.

Fireworks - Town-wide

Members discussed what has been the worst period for firework-related incidents. Intelligence gathering did not identify shops as the source; rather, fireworks appeared to be coming from residential properties. Asset Watch identified a white vehicle suspected of transporting fireworks, which upon investigation was found to be a mother visiting park to keep an eye on young people, not someone engaged in illegal sales.

Fortunately, no injuries were reported. There was discussion about the challenge of balancing public safety with the reality that some residents will set off fireworks regardless of restrictions. Members noted a similar approach taken in Choppington where a concrete base was provided to enable safer community displays. The principle of harm reduction was discussed - supporting what will happen anyway in as safe a manner as possible.

It was noted that there are complaints from both sides of the debate - some residents appreciate organised displays while others object. Members acknowledged the Asset Watch control room conducts extensive enquiries and responds very quickly to reports.

It was clarified that fireworks can be legally sold as they may be used on private land, though this creates enforcement challenges.

Off-Road Bikes/E Scooters

Significant CCTV footage has been gathered of off-road bikes being ridden illegally. A multi-agency approach is being employed, including deployment of drones by police, fire service, and Asset Watch to identify riders and track them to their addresses. The strategy avoids pursuing riders on bikes (which can become dangerous) and instead uses aerial observation to follow them home.

Each operation has improved upon the last, though there is still progress to be made. Intelligence indicates riders come from different areas and travel about. Substantial intelligence is being built to enable targeted enforcement action.

Housing associations, particularly Bernicia, are being proactive in enforcement. Storing off-road bikes in social housing can constitute a breach of tenancy. There are also fire safety concerns associated

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with storing fuel and bikes in residential properties. Tenants would be given warnings before eviction action.

Members discussed expanding education to include fire safety education. While there are complexities around multi-agency coordination and local authority agreements, there was support for a Northumberland-wide approach. Operation Shield currently provides multi-agency education in schools on a weekly basis. Members noted that ignorance of the law is no defence, and a proactive education strategy is essential from a public health perspective. Reference was made to a successful campaign initiated by a Manchester mother that is being rolled out more widely.

Fly-Tipping - Commercial Waste

Significant interference with commercial waste has been reported behind Station Road, at St Johns car park, and on Woodhorn Road. As well as issues identified with those businesses who are properly disposing of their waste, it appears some businesses are not paying for proper commercial waste collection. Members noted that all business premises should be registered for waste disposal and declare how they manage their waste. County Cllrs would follow up with relevant enforcement authorities.

6. TECHNICAL MATTERS

F334 Commando Socket - Station Road

A request was made for an F334 commando socket behind Station Road with anti-tamper and breaker protection. Asset Watch will scope out the technical requirements and then we can submit a formal request to Street Lighting for installation.

Smart Technology

Members discussed the potential for smart technology that activates with detected activity, sounding an alarm when movement is detected. This would function as a virtual trip wire and could provide valuable intelligence for police operations.

7. QUALITATIVE INFORMATION

Kennedy Clark (NP) is working on developing positive news stories that demonstrate the benefits of CCTV to the community. These will be shared in due course.

8. FUTURE MEETINGS AND REPORTS

The next meeting is scheduled for 18th February.

Cllr Lynne Grimshaw thanked everyone for their attendance and a productive meeting.