

Report to: Community Protection Panel
Date: 21 January 2008
Subject: The Alley Gating Programme
Report of: Director of Environmental Services
Contact officer: John Hutchison Telephone: 01942 827440

Purpose/summary: The purpose of the report is to report progress on the alley gating programme and outline proposals for future delivery.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: The alternative would be to cease the alley gating programme.

Recommendation/decision: That Panel note the progress of the alley gating programme and support its continuation subject to available finance.

Key Decision: This report does not involve a key decision. The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before

Risks/Implications:

Financial:	None
Staffing:	None
Policy:	Community Safety
Equal Opportunities - has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	No
Wards affected:	All

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property officer?

N/A

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **No ***

Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **No ***

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No ***

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only:

Categorisation of the report:			
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
			X
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
21 January 2008			

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer M. Kimber

Date 21 January 2008

1. Background:

- 1.1 An alley gating trial focussing on two trial areas within the Borough was undertaken from April 2004. An evaluation of the trial was carried out and found the outcomes of the trial were significant in terms of improved public satisfaction, for example 20% of people in gated areas reported feeling worried or very worried about burglary compared with 88% in the same area before gates were installed. Similar satisfaction results were obtained with regard to fear of anti-social behaviour. There is also clear evidence that alley gates assist in the reduction of crime
- 1.2 The trial period revealed several difficulties with the process which had been established. One of which was the requirement for 100% approval from householders affected by individual schemes. This aspect also affected other areas in the Country which resulted in the introduction, by Government, of new legislation contained within the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 which effectively allows Authorities to install gates where there is evidence of crime and disorder.
- 1.3 In November 2006 Cabinet agreed a revised approach to Alley gating utilising the new legislation. They also agreed prioritisation of those locations which were hot spots for burglary and anti-social behaviour.

2. Progress

- 2.1 In line with policy analysis is carried out by the Research and Information Section of the Community Safety Team of those locations subject to the highest levels of domestic burglary and anti-social behaviour. This analysis is regularly updated to ensure emerging problem locations are identified. The analysis is then used to establish a priority location list, which are then in turn surveyed with regard to their suitability for alley gates.
- 2.2 From the start of the programme limited funds for alley gates have been provided from Community Safety Partnership resources and other discreet sources. During the current year significant additional funds have been made available through the Housing Capital Programme, which has enabled additional temporary staff to be employed resulting in significant progress with installation.
- 2.3 A standardised application template for the processing of Gating Orders has been introduced which has helped to speed up the process. To date a total of 318 gates have been installed at 149 sites and a further 110 sites have had feasibility work started on them and new schemes are being commenced at the rate of 8 per week

3. Proposals

- 3.1 There is widespread public satisfaction with the alley gating programme. The demand for alley gating remains exceptionally high amongst communities within the Borough. It is intended to meet this demand as far as possible however this will be subject to the availability of financial resources which we will continue to explore.

- 3.2 Although progress has been good to date we intend to further examine opportunities to reduce the average time from request to installation by gaining efficiencies within the process that has been developed with a view to reducing the time gap to 12 weeks.
- 3.3 Cabinet have previously agreed budget provision should be set in hand for on ongoing maintenance of alley gates. The first 12 months following installation are covered for any faults or defects by the contractor. However beyond this point we undertake to manage and fund any defects, faults or minor damage that occurs. To date there have been relatively few, and only, minor demands for maintenance however it is important that gates are maintained in good condition. It is proposed that this responsibility is incorporated into the duties of the developing Neighbourhood Teams with a view to protecting the substantial investment in crime reduction and the gains made in community confidence.
- 3.4 A further evaluation of the impact of alley gating to date is currently underway. This includes a survey of residents who have had gates installed in their neighbourhoods and an analysis of the impact on reported crime and disorder.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The alley gating programme is delivering well and further significant progress can be anticipated with the current available financial resources. Continued longer term progress will be dependant on further finance being identified.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that the current evaluation will provide further evidence of the effectiveness of alley gates. Both reduced crime and disorder and increased residents' satisfaction and perceptions of safety can be counted among the benefits.