

**REPORT TO:** CABINET MEMBER - CORPORATE SERVICES

**DATE:** 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009

**SUBJECT:** POLICY ON THE INTRODUCTION AND USE OF C TRACKING DEVICES IN COUNCIL VEHICLES

**WARDS AFFECTED:** All

**REPORT OF:** PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

**CONTACT OFFICER:** MARTIN MURPHY  
PRINCIPAL HR MANAGER

**EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL:** No

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY:**

- (i) To secure agreement on a policy for the introduction and use of C Tracking systems in Council vehicles

**REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:**

- (i) There is no currently agreed policy to cover the introduction and use of these devices, particularly in relation to matters of employee conduct.

**RECOMMENDATION (S):**

- (i) That the Policy attached at Annex A is adopted.

**KEY DECISION:** No

**FORWARD PLAN:** Not appropriate

**IMPLEMENTATION DATE:** Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the meeting.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:** None.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

**Budget/Policy Framework:** None

**Financial:** None

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2006/ 2007 £</b>	<b>2007/ 2008 £</b>	<b>2008/ 2009 £</b>	<b>2009/ 2010 £</b>
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<b>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</b>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? When? Y/N				
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

**Legal:** The Council is legally obliged to ensure that any information gathered on employees through the use of such systems is held in a safe and secure manner.

**Risk Assessment:** The absence of a policy renders the council at risk of a challenge at Employment Tribunal, should information gathered from the system be used to terminate an employee's contract

**Asset Management:** None

<b>CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS:</b> LEGAL DIRECTOR FINANCE DIRECTOR
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**CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:**

<b>Corporate Objective</b>		<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Neutral Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>
1	Creating a Learning Community		✓	
2	Creating Safe Communities		✓	
3	Jobs and Prosperity		✓	
4	Improving Health and Well-Being		✓	
5	Environmental Sustainability		✓	
6	Creating Inclusive Communities		✓	
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		✓	
8	Children and Young People		✓	

<b>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT</b>  None
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## **BACKGROUND:**

1. In 2009 a decision was taken to introduce Tracking devices into a number of Council vehicles in the Security Force and Environmental Protection Departments. The tracking system, known as C Tracking, uses GPS satellite technology to track the whereabouts of a vehicle fitted with such a system. As well as supplying real time vehicle location and historical movements, the system provides the following benefits:
  - Departments are able to obtain significant performance management information on the performance of their fleet.
  - Information can be provided that can be used to prove that core work has been carried out, if complaints are received, and information can also be made available to the public, via the Council's Contact Centre, should disruption of operational activities arise.
  - Information can be provided which can help to identify the most practical, economical and therefore financially beneficial solution to service delivery for the benefit of the Council and residents.
  - The system can also be used to substantiate claims for external funding where such projects are entered into by the Council.
  - The system provides a mechanism for identifying and locating the whereabouts of Council staff that may need to be contacted in an emergency.
  - Information is provided which can be used to diminish the vulnerability of lone workers.
  
2. Concerns were expressed by the trade unions that such systems were being used without the cover of an appropriate policy, and it was agreed at the Joint Trade Union Forum that management would draw up a suitable policy to cover the introduction and use of such devices. It has not been possible to reach an agreement with the trade unions about the wording of such a policy, and the matter has therefore been brought to the Cabinet Member for resolution of this issue. Management in Environmental Protection are keen to extend the use of tracking devices to as many vehicles as possible, where this is operationally and economically viable, (e.g. the Dog Warden service) but do not want to proceed with such installations until an appropriate policy is in operation.
  
3. At the heart of the trade union concerns is the issue of whether evidence gathered from such devices can be appropriately used in misconduct hearings involving their members. It is the view of management that if evidence of potential misconduct comes to light from information gleaned from a tracking device, this cannot be ignored and is a legitimate part of any misconduct investigation and subsequent hearing. The policy, which is attached at Annex A, seeks to make this clear, and builds in appropriate safeguards to ensure that information gathered from such devices is used responsibly and with appropriate restraint. The Policy also seeks to ensure that all employees whose movements might be monitored by such systems are made fully aware of the system, and are enabled to view the system in operation.

4. Despite these safeguards being built into the Policy, it has not been possible to reach an agreement with the Trade Unions. The Unions have therefore been invited to submit their own comments and reasons for disagreement to the Cabinet Member.

5. **Recommendations**

The Cabinet Member is requested to agree that the Policy attached at Annex A is approved with immediate effect.