CCTV Plan
2013 - 2017

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Foreword

CCTV has become a familiar feature of modern life and is commonplace in both public spaces and those privately owned areas to which the public has ready access. It can be seen in operation daily in our high streets, on public transport, at stations and airports, and in banks and shops.

Images from CCTV are frequently seen in our own homes, via television, in appeals for information on serious crimes, or when reporting on major incidents, and whilst CCTV images are perhaps most commonly associated with the police, the majority of publicly owned, public place CCTV systems are local authority systems.

CCTV in Central Bedfordshire continues to make a significant contribution to reducing crime and anti social behaviour in our communities, and this plan sets out how it will continue to do so in an ever challenging financial and legislative framework.

Councillor Brian Spurr.
Executive Member Sustainable Communities - Services

Introduction

CCTV makes a significant contribution to community safety and crime prevention as a tool that helps to detect crime and disorder whilst providing a level of reassurance to individuals, communities and businesses where CCTV is located.

CCTV is used to identify trouble, enabling the police to be directed quickly to where they are needed. CCTV images can be of significant evidential and forensic value in criminal investigations and as evidence used in court.

Requests from members of the public for CCTV information about road traffic collisions have increased, as has the use of CCTV to identify potential hazards or accidents. CCTV continues to support the tracking of vulnerable members of the community (such as missing persons) and alerting emergency services to someone requiring assistance.

CCTV is also increasingly used in a very wide range of institutions and businesses (some public and some private) e.g. libraries, bus stations and retail parks, often being used for a wide variety of security and safety reasons.

National Perspective

In its most recent consultation on Codes of Practice relating to Surveillance Cameras the Government has set out its commitment to ensuring that the tools and technology that contribute to public security, the prevention and detection of crime, and that serve to reassure the public, remain fully available for these purposes.

The Government has introduced provisions in the Protection of Freedoms Bill providing for a new regulatory framework for surveillance cameras, giving effect to the Coalition Agreement commitment to further regulate Closed Circuit Television (CCTV). The Governments approach also encompasses other types of camera surveillance – in particular Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology given its many similarities to CCTV – providing scope to deal with other emerging technologies as necessary.

The Government does not intend that anything in their proposals should hamper the ability of the law enforcement agencies or any other organisation, to use such technology as necessary to prevent or detect crime, or otherwise help to ensure the safety and security of individuals.

The Governments approach to establishing a new regulatory framework is therefore intended to provide a means through which public confidence in CCTV, ANPR, and other such systems, is improved by ensuring that there is proper transparency and proportionality in their use.

Statutory Duties

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their policies and practices. Local authorities need to consider the implications of Section 17 on their decision making process and ensure that it is a routine consideration in all decisions.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 also gave local authorities in England and Wales the responsibility to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder in their area. A key part of many of these strategies has been the installation and/or up grading of CCTV systems.

The CCTV Service in Central Bedfordshire supports the Council and its partners in addressing the community safety priorities for Central Bedfordshire which include reducing anti social behaviour and reducing re-offending. The CCTV Service also supports the Council priority to enhance local communities by reducing crime and anti social behaviour.

Public Space CCTV in Central Bedfordshire

A significant part of the public space CCTV provision in Central Bedfordshire is owned and managed by Central Bedfordshire Council, operating 7 days a week throughout the year.

The Council system comprises of 99 cameras located in Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, Shefford, Biggleswade and Sandy

Key elements of the CCTV Service work include:
- Pro-active monitoring of cameras to prevent and detect crime and disorder including environmental crime
- Provide evidence for criminal prosecutions
- Provide support for businesses through the provision of Radiolink
- Provide traffic reports for Traffic Link
- Work in partnership with Bedfordshire Police by supporting specific operational requirements
- Provide advice and guidance with regard to CCTV to the public and partners
- Provision of monitoring services for commercial organisations

The service is funded by Central Bedfordshire Council with some income generated through monitoring of commercial premises including retail business parks and Town Centre Shopping Precincts.

In addition to the CCTV provided by the Council, Town Councils in Ampthill, Biggleswade, Sandy and Shefford provide CCTV in their towns and Caddington Parish Council in Caddington Village.

Challenges

The key challenge facing the CCTV Service is to continue delivering an effective and efficient service in a climate of austerity. The service has already reduced its operating costs by £95K in 2011/12 and will need to continue to look for opportunities to deliver its services in the most cost effective way.

It is clear, from both a financial and legislative perspective, that the service faces a number of challenges. These include:

- The continuing need to make the service more efficient
- Identifying opportunities to generate income
- The need to continue to maintain and update the system and its technology to meet evidential standards required for criminal prosecutions
- Implementing changes from new regulatory frameworks at a national level
- The impact of further restructuring of policing resources
- Managing the needs of the rural and urban areas in Central Bedfordshire
- Public perception of CCTV and its impact on local communities

Our overall aim

We will use CCTV to reduce crime and anti social behaviour affecting residents, visitors and businesses bringing reassurance that Central Bedfordshire continues to be a safe place to live and work.

Intelligence Led CCTV Provision

Public space CCTV in Central Bedfordshire uses static cameras, which, once installed, usually remain in the same location. In addition, the Council has four re-deployable CCTV cameras that, subject to feasibility, can be moved to different locations.

To ensure that CCTV is operating effectively, targeting the areas in Central Bedfordshire where there is most need the Council will:

- Complete a review of incident demand for crime and disorder across the area.
- Map incident demand against the Councils existing static CCTV camera locations to ensure these locations provide optimum benefit
- Review all existing pre-sets on cameras to ensure that the camera is providing optimal coverage

For CCTV cameras in areas where there is low incident demand the Council will:

- work with the Town or Parish Council in the areas where the cameras are located to look at alternative options, including the possibility of the transfer of ownership and costs of the cameras to Town and Parish Councils.
- Where this is not an option, re-locate static cameras to areas where there is greater incident demand and where the existing CCTV infra-structure supports re-location at minimal cost.
- If full relocation is not an option the camera heads, dependent upon suitability, will be used to replace older camera heads in other locations.

Redeployable CCTV Cameras:

To enable the Council to provide a more flexible and responsive service it will use its re-deployable cameras to provide CCTV coverage in areas where there is no CCTV. In most cases the need for re-deployable CCTV cameras is short-term (4-12 weeks) to assist in gathering evidence for specific criminal activity, disorder and anti social behaviour.

- The deployment of Council owned redeployable CCTV cameras will take an evidence led approach. This will ensure that cameras are placed where they will have the most impact on crime and disorder.

- The deployment of cameras will comply with CCTV legislation, and the Council will develop procedures setting out the criteria for use of these cameras in Central Bedfordshire.

- Where partner organisations wish to purchase re-deployable cameras for their own use the Council will provide advice and guidance.

Technology:

CCTV technology continues to develop, providing opportunities to make systems more cost effective.

- The Council will work with existing CCTV service providers to seek alternative technological options networks that may reduce service operating costs e.g. converting traditional fibre optic connections to wireless
- The Council will look at how new technology may be used to add value to the CCTV Service provided. This will include looking at the

use of Automated Number Plate Recognition already being used by the Council for parking enforcement.

Installation of new Public Space CCTV

Central Bedfordshire will see significant growth over the coming years. By 2026 it is anticipated that 27,000 new jobs will be generated, and 26,000 new homes will have been built and there will have been infrastructure improvements to town centres, community facilities, roads and countryside.

Whilst the design of public space areas will ensure that the risk of crime and disorder is minimal, it is likely that there will be additional demand for CCTV provision.

- The Council will work closely with key partners to ensure that the installation of any new CCTV provision is based on identified and predicted need in a given area and that CCTV is only installed where there is clear and supported evidence to do so.

Performance Management

The value of a CCTV system cannot simply be measured on the number of cameras in any given area. CCTV Operators actively monitor live incidents in real time, report incidents to the police, support the police in tracking and identifying offenders in addition to providing evidence for investigation of incidents that often lead to prosecution. The CCTV Service also receives numerous requests from members of the public and businesses requesting information.

- The Council will review existing CCTV Key Performance Indicators with an up-dated set made available to the public and partners via the Council website.

Collaboration

Both of Central Bedfordshire's' neighbouring local authorities operate public space surveillance systems. This provides the opportunity to work collaboratively with these, and other local authorities, to identify potential economies of scale by working together.

In addition to working with other local authorities, national CCTV providers have introduced new areas to their business whereby they work in partnership with local authorities to provide an outsourced or managed services.

- The Council will, where appropriate, work with other local authorities and interested parties to identify opportunities for reducing costs (For example joint procurement of service contracts) and making the CCTV Service more efficient and sustainable

Review

The CCTV Plan 2013-2017 will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that service developments are reflected within the Plan.

Summary of actions

Action	Activity	Timescale	Action Owner
Intelligence Led CCTV Provision	Review incident demand for crime and disorder across the area	April 2013	Community Safety Operations Manager
	Map incident demand against the Councils existing CCTV camera provide optimum benefit	April 2013	
	Review all CCTV camera pre-sets to ensure optimal coverage	April 2013	
Redeployable CCTV Cameras	Produce procedures setting out criteria for use of redeployable CCTV cameras	May 2013	Community Safety Operations Manager
Technology	Work with existing CCTV Providers to seek alternative technological options	On going activity (2013 to 2017)	Community Safety Operations Manager
	Identify new technology to add value to the CCTV service		
Installation of New Public Space CCTV	Work with partners to ensure that the installation of new CCTV provision is based upon identified and predicted need.	On going activity (2013 to 2017)	Head of Community Safety
Performance Management	The Council will review existing CCTV Key Performance Indicators with an up-dated set made available to the public and partners via the Council website	June 2013	Community Safety Operations Manager
Collaboration	Work, where appropriate, with	On going activity (2013 to 2017)	Head of Community Safety

	other local authorities and interested parties to identify opportunities for reducing costs		