

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

4 April 2017

CCTV Review

Report of Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Executive Member for Community Services
(ian.dalgarno@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Advising Officer: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services
(marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

This report relates to a Key Decision

Purpose of this report

1. The report sets out proposals and recommendations for the future of Central Bedfordshire Councils public space CCTV system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

1. **agree that the Council invests in a new multi-functional CCTV control room at Priory House, procures new HD cameras utilising wireless technology to improve image quality and reduce signal transmission costs, whilst also offering other complimentary services to generate whole Council efficiencies and increase income.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. The CCTV review was considered by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 March 2017. The Committee recommended:

That the Council invests in a new multi-functional CCTV control room at Priory House, procures new HD cameras utilising wireless technology to improve image quality and reduce signal transmission costs, whilst also offering other complimentary services to generate whole Council efficiencies and increase income.

Reasons for Decision

3. The Council's Public Space Surveillance CCTV provision includes 129 cameras operating and monitored from the control room based at Watling House, Dunstable.
4. The 129 cameras (both fixed and re-deployable) include those operated and monitored on behalf of town councils and other third parties and there are also 10 cameras monitored around the Watling House offices.
5. A further 19 cameras are recorded locally at the Leighton Buzzard Multi-Storey car park. In addition 12 cameras are monitored by the Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership in Stevenage on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) for CBC and for Biggleswade, Sandy and Shefford Town Councils.
6. The CCTV system has developed in stages since 1995. The last significant investment in the system was prior to the formation of Central Bedfordshire Council in 2009, with some spend on camera replacements, including re-deployable cameras, and essential replacements in more recent years.
7. CCTV is monitored by 4 CCTV Operators but not on a 24/7 basis. The system does record on a 24/7 basis and live CCTV images can be forwarded by an operator to Bedfordshire Police HQ to assist the police in responding to an on-going incident.
8. The system is now at full capacity and key elements of the system are nearing the end of their useful life, with manufacturers indicating they will be withdrawing technical support from some in the near future.
9. CCTV technology has advanced considerably in recent years and these advances offer opportunities to develop the existing system to maintain the current provision and support future opportunities to develop services offered by CCTV.
10. Advances in technology also give the Council the potential to reduce its reliance on third party transmission supplied by BT/Virgin Media and migrate suitable cameras, where there is Line of Sight (LOS), to the use of wireless equipment to transmit images to the CCTV control room. Cameras that do not meet LOS criteria would remain on the BT or Virgin Media fibre optic network.
11. Discussions about the longer term future of Watling House continue and decisions about its future may well impact on the location of the CCTV control room. But in view of the end of life challenges, the decisions about the CCTV systems future need to be made outside of any timescales for decisions about Watling House.

12. CCTV acts as a 'capable guardian' both in terms of identifying disorder and criminality as well as providing evidence to support prosecution. It also supports the Council's response to safeguarding, general public safety and emergency incidents in the locations where it operates.
13. CCTV works with colleagues across the Council providing advice and a camera monitoring service. Recent collaborations include the provision in the last 18 months of CCTV for the Priory View independent living development in Dunstable and the refurbished Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) at Leighton Buzzard, Ampthill and Biggleswade.
14. Due to system capacity being at maximum and not compatible with High Definition (HD) technology, recent collaborations have utilised separate stand-alone systems (computer processors and monitors) located around the CCTV control room.
15. In May 2017 plans are in place to accept new cameras from the Thorn Turn HWRC and depot, and when built from the Council's new independent living development in Houghton Regis.
16. CCTV is fully funded by the Council and receives income from CCTV monitoring from third parties.

Consultant Review

17. In 2016 Global MSC Security was commissioned to examine and report on the options available to the Council to migrate the CCTV system from hard wired system using BT and Virgin fibre optic circuitry to a system:
 - using wireless connectivity to link cameras together within each of the towns and for the wireless backhaul of data to the control room
 - using wireless connectivity to link cameras together within each of the towns and either wireless back haul of data or use of the corporate Wireless Area Network
 - consider the removal of the complete CCTV camera and control system and the associated costs.
18. The consultants approach was to:
 - Review the as-is state, including core functions and services, staff operations, spatial requirements and relationships, and technology
 - Define a broad operational vision for the Council service delivery with a view to "future proofing" affected systems and services

- Develop an architectural and technological concept for the facility whether it is retained at Watling House or moved to Priory House.
19. The full set of review recommendations are set out in Appendix A with the key development recommendations being:
- Migrate existing CCTV cameras to wireless transmission where this is feasible in preference to existing fibre optic cabling and reduce annual revenue costs
 - Where it is possible, the CBC IT network is used for the transmission of CCTV images
 - Purchase of new CCTV Command and Control software/hardware and Network Video Recorders
 - Enhance the CCTV control room to provide additional services

Options for consideration

20. Having considered the detail of the review, current status of the CCTV system and potential changes at Watling House three options have been identified for consideration:
- a. **Invest in a new multi-functional CCTV control room at Priory House, procuring new HD cameras utilising wireless technology to improve image quality and reduce signal transmission costs, whilst also offering other complimentary services to generate whole Council efficiencies and increase income**

This option proposes investing in wireless and digital transmission of CCTV images for a fully digital system. Linking cameras wirelessly using LOS technology (instead of fibre optic cable) significantly reduces signal transmission costs as there is little on-going cost in ownership e.g. the typical rental of a fibre cable for one camera per year is £1000. Wireless transmissions can be fully encrypted for network security, do not need expensive civil works i.e. digging trenches for cables, and allow for system extension quickly and with little disruption. A feasibility study by a specialist wireless network installer confirms that a majority of current camera locations would support wireless technology.

A wireless system links cameras to a hub points locally where images are stored. Potential hub locations – mostly existing Council buildings - have been identified in all the major towns where cameras are currently located.

Storing information locally allows for only data actually needed at a particular moment to be transmitted back to the control room, thereby reducing costs. Where data from the hub location cannot be sent wirelessly a single fibre optic cable with may be utilised. Alternatively, with agreement of the ICT department and where the bandwidth demands are minimal, use could be made of the Council's own data network.

HD cameras capture significantly more detail than standard analogue cameras. Images can be magnified up to four times which has benefits when trying to confirm vehicle index numbers or identify a suspect.

New control room hardware and software creates the opportunity for a 24/7 Council CCTV Operations Centre, providing benefits and new services for a range of other users, both internal and external:

- It would allow for all of the Council's public space cameras to be centralised and monitored in one place – Council cameras in Sandy and Biggleswade are currently monitored by Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership in Stevenage
- The opportunity to consolidate and centralise other remote Council CCTV systems across the area into one control room e.g. libraries, Priory House, and some Housing facilities
- Out-of-hours call handling
- School CCTV and alarm monitoring
- Care Line vulnerable persons alarm monitoring – currently outsourced to Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline
- Streaming of HD evidential images to police custody suites removing the need to produce DVDs and the time taken for police officers to travel to collect
- Monitoring of Council staff using Body Worn Video (BWV)

b. **Continue operating the CCTV control room without additional investment until the system reaches the end of its life and cannot be technologically supported**

The existing CCTV control room software and hardware is over 8 years old and nearing the end of its useful life.

The software is no longer supported by the manufacturer as it has been superseded by newer versions, and the recording equipment is now deemed 'End of Life' and should it fail spare parts may be difficult to source although our current maintenance contactor has assured us that he would expect to be able to locate any required for the next 2 years.

The ability to grow the system by monitoring additional cameras or offering additional services is severely restricted by the age, size and inflexibility of the hardware and software. It is an analogue based system set in the context of new products and solutions that are fully digital.

Where system growth has occurred in the last 2 years it has been through the use of stand alone technology working completely independently from the main system. This lack of technological integration is very inefficient from a monitoring perspective for the CCTV operator i.e. having to view different monitors located around the control room, as well as being more costly.

c. **Cease public space CCTV monitoring, decommission the CCTV control room and remove the camera infrastructure**

The provision of public space CCTV supports the following statutory requirements:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires local authorities to do all they can to reduce crime and disorder and promote community safety
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides local authorities alongside the police with new tools and powers to tackle anti-social behaviour
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 creates offences in relation to waste management e.g. fly-tipping, householder duty of care for disposal of waste, and littering, for which the local authority are the enforcement body not the police

Although the removal of the Council's CCTV capability would provide a significant saving, the service commands wide public support and withdrawal of it would be detrimental to our communities' sense of safety and security.

In the last two years the service has developed its in-house camera monitoring capability e.g. Priory View and HWRCs. If the Council was not able to offer camera monitoring internally, there would be significant extra cost in finding an alternative commercial solution.

Bedfordshire Police's Chief Superintendent for Crime and Community strongly supports the continuation of CCTV as both a deterrent for potential criminals and a valuable investigative tool. The police would be opposed to the Council removing CCTV in Central Bedfordshire.

Removing the system would involve decommissioning the CCTV Control Room, removing each camera and camera column, disconnecting power supplies and fibre connections, and civil works to restore the ground to its original condition. The cost to do so is significant and once removed would be prohibitive to restore.

Costs

Estimated Capital Costs

Option	Capital cost	10% contingency	Total including contingency
1 Design and build a new CCTV Control Room at Priory House with new HD cameras utilising a mainly wireless transmission system	£640,090	£64,009	£704,099
2. Continue operating the current CCTV facility at Watling House with existing camera infrastructure	Unknown and dependent on the cost of a particular replacement part	N/A	Unknown
3. Decommission the CCTV Control Room and remove the camera infrastructure	£208,000	£20,800	£228,800

Revenue costs

Option	2016/17 CCTV net revenue budget (including salaries)	Estimated Revised net CCTV Budget (including salaries)	Potential Revenue Saving per annum
1. Fitted new Control Room at Priory House, CCTV operating hardware & software, new HD cameras , with wireless & BT transmission	£251k	£171k	£80k
2. Continue operating the current CCTV facility at Watling House with existing camera infrastructure	£251k	£251k	Nil
3. Decommission the CCTV Control Room and remove the camera infrastructure	£251k	£0	£251k

Recommendation

21. The Councils infrastructure is now at the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced. Trying to maintain the current system poses a significant risk of an unexpected catastrophic failure that we cannot make any realistic contingency plans for.
22. If replacing the system is not approved the only other possible option is for the Council to stop providing CCTV in Central Bedfordshire and begin plans for decommissioning the entire system within the next 12 to 18 months.
23. Terminating the Councils CCTV provision poses unknown risks in terms of the impact on crime and disorder, safeguarding and general community safety.

24. Investing in CCTV will deliver revenue savings, utilise more flexible technology allowing for a CCTV service to be delivered in any area across Central Bedfordshire where there is a pressing need, and open up the opportunity to develop new services leading to additional income streams which may, over time, enable the service to become self funding.
25. As such it is recommended that:

The Council invests in a new multi-functional CCTV control room at Priory House, procuring new HD cameras utilising wireless technology to improve image quality and reduce signal transmission costs, whilst also offering other complimentary services to generate whole Council efficiencies and increase income.

Council Priorities

26. The proposed action will support the following Council priorities:
- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
 - Great resident services
 - Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
 - Creating stronger communities
 - A more efficient and responsive Council

Legal Implications

27. The Surveillance Camera Commissioner has issued a Surveillance Camera Code of Practice under the Freedoms Act 2012. It provides guidance on the appropriate and effective use of surveillance camera systems by relevant authorities. The Council is defined as a relevant authority by Section 33 of the Act, and as such must have regard to the code when exercising any functions to which the code relates.
28. The stated purpose of the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice is to ensure that individuals and wider communities have confidence that surveillance cameras are deployed to protect and support them, and ensure there is no misuse or abuse. That wherever overt surveillance cameras are in a public place, the cameras are placed in pursuit of a legitimate aim, necessary to meet a pressing need, and compliant with legislation.
29. The code of practice sets out 12 guiding principles, creating a framework to ensure operators and users of surveillance camera systems do so in a proportionate and transparent manner, and systems are, whilst capable of providing good quality images and other information which is fit for purpose, consistent with a legitimate aim and pressing need. Any system should achieve the most appropriate balance between public protection and individual privacy.

Adherence to the code significantly supports legal obligations under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998 and to adherence of Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998– right to respect for private and family life.

30. Upgrading the CCTV control room, systems and equipment can offer the opportunity for greater security and more flexibility, both in terms of accessibility for e.g. the police and in terms of cameras being only deployed where necessary (and so can be easily withdrawn where there is no longer a necessity). However, to comply with the Code and the legislation, consideration must be given to:

- The effect any new technology has on individuals and their privacy.
- Expanding the use of a new camera system must always be for a specified purpose which is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and necessary to meet an identified pressing need.
- For the Council to retain operational, technical and competency standards, consideration should be given to updating:
 - security systems (particularly for storage of data) as any security must be accredited to a level of at least 'RESTRICTED' under the Government Protective Marking Scheme (GPMS) (which CBC currently use) as well as in accordance with guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers;
 - protocols particularly regarding accessibility, data protection, and ensuring accuracy of systems in cross referencing data;
 - procedures (and to take account of contingencies if the new system has a problem e.g. atmospheric conditions on wireless connections can slow download speeds);
 - and training operators and officers.

It is also recommended that a Privacy Impact Assessment is completed as part of assessing what upgrades are appropriate under the Data Protection Act 1998.

31. One of the 12 principles of the Code concerns the effectiveness of the system i.e. “it should then be used in the most effective way to support public safety and law enforcement with the aim of processing images and information of evidential value”. Keeping an ageing system which is going to result in equipment no longer being maintained to manufacturer standards puts the Council at risk of no longer operating at a capacity to capture, process, and store images and information at a quality which is suitable for its intended purpose.

If the purpose of a system includes crime prevention, detection and investigation, keeping an ineffective system also puts at risk any action taken by the police or other enforcement authorities (including the Council) because any captured images may no longer meet criminal evidence standards.

32. Although there is no specific law requiring a Council to have CCTV, it supports the Councils statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. CCTV is particularly useful for prevention of crime and disorder and removing CCTV may make it difficult to demonstrate the Council is doing all it reasonably can. It may also impact on the ability of the police or other enforcing bodies (including the Council) to investigate crime and, as CCTV will be seen to be withdrawn, there would be a risk that removal causes an increase in crime in the area. If it was considered by the Committee that the Council should remove all CCTV, it is recommended that consultation is undertaken with those people affected by it, particularly members of the public, but also residents, business owners, and employees which CCTV currently covers. It would also be recommended to consult partners such as the police and housing associations. Such consultation may need to identify whether other measures can be put in place where there is a pressing need to be addressed to support prevention of crime and disorder e.g. part removal of CCTV.

Financial and Risk Implications

33. There is a capital budget of £200k in 2016/17 capital budget for CCTV development. £15k of this funding was used for the feasibility study. It was also agreed that £48k of the slippage for the CCTV development would be used for purchasing new car park payment machines for the Council. The remaining £137k has been flagged for slippage into 2017/18 for CCTV development.
34. A further £560k, £360k in 2017/18 and £200k in 2018/19 are included in the capital MTFP which is due to be approved subject to budget approval. An Outline Business Case has been submitted for this additional capital funding which is for further feasibility work.
35. The revenue MTFP includes an efficiency saving for CCTV which starts in 2018/19 at £100k increasing to £140k in 2020/21. The proposed development generates revenue saving estimated at £80k per year and the remaining saving will be generated through additional income streams from using it to deliver other services. Services that could potentially offer income streams:
- CareLine/Social/Community Alarms
 - Sheltered Housing response
 - Coordinating first responders
 - Floodline/Snowline
 - Car parks – barrier monitoring

- Lone worker monitoring
 - Control of rising bollards
 - Intruder/fire alarm response
 - Out of hours call handling
 - School CCTV/Alarm monitoring
 - Environmental monitoring stations
36. Any new development would, as far as possible, be 'future proofed' to ensure that capital investment of £697k is maximised and it is anticipated that the system would not need any further significant investment for approximately 10 years if well maintained. The revenue expenditure savings made over a 10 year period are estimated at £800k without the addition of alternative income streams.
37. CCTV cameras with ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) capability may be utilised to support public safety and law enforcement. Potential exists for the Council, where it can be reasonably justified and subject to legal advice, use ANPR cameras to enforce decriminalised road traffic offences e.g. bus lane enforcement, HGV weight restriction, and stopping within school keep clear areas.
38. The proposal mitigates the risks of:
- Catastrophic failure of the current system, resulting in
 - Failure to deliver the Council's priorities, and
 - Failure to discharge statutory responsibilities.

Equalities Implications

39. The Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
40. CCTV monitoring provides evidential support to potential or actual victims of hate crime in public areas, where crimes or incidents are motivated by prejudice, hostility or hatred based upon a protected characteristic. It can also provide important evidential support relating to the night time economy where there may be incidences of violent crime (a greater risk for young men) and rape and sexual assault (a greater risk for women)
41. Young people and vulnerable adults can be subject to more anti-social behaviour and crime than other members of the community. National evidence highlights that there is also an under reporting of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and serious acquisitive crime by vulnerable members of the community. Changes to camera numbers, and the levels of pro-active monitoring and recording, are likely to have an impact on the experience of crime.

Priorities for pro-active monitoring need to take into account the safety of vulnerable groups and those at greatest risk such as taxi drivers.

42. Changes affecting Council staff including changes to shift patterns and work location, should be made in accordance with legal requirements and HR policy and procedure.

Implications for Work Programming

43. None noted.

Conclusion and next Steps

44. The Council's infrastructure is now at the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced. Trying to maintain the current system poses a significant risk of catastrophic failure that we cannot make any contingency plans for.
45. If replacing the system is not approved the only other possible option is for the Council to stop providing CCTV in Central Bedfordshire and begin plans for decommissioning the entire system within the next 12 to 18 months.
46. It is recommended that the Committee supports the recommendation to invest in a new CCTV system for Central Bedfordshire Council.
47. The Committee's recommendations will be included in the CCTV report going to Executive in April 2017.

Appendices

Appendix A – Key and supplementary recommendations from Global MSC CCTV consultants

Appendix B – CCTV revenue budget 2016/17

Appendix C – Supporting information for consultants' recommendations

Background Papers

None