

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

4 SEPTEMBER 2019

Title: Newcastle Town Centre CCTV Review Report Update

Submitted by: Head of Housing, Assets and Regeneration; Partnerships Manager

Portfolios: Community Safety and Wellbeing

Ward(s) affected: Town

Purpose of the Report

To update Cabinet on the work and recommendations of the recent CCTV Review, which was led by the Borough Council, including anticipated costings for updating the system and to seek approval to proceed to procurement and implementation of new equipment and the monitoring service.

Recommendation

- a. That Cabinet note the BID's agreement to provide £40,000 towards the cost of upgrading the CCTV for Newcastle's town centre;
- b. That Cabinet authorise Officers to procure a CCTV system upgrade and monitoring for Newcastle town centre.
- c. That the Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing is authorised to finalise the specification for the CCTV system upgrade with Stoke-on-Trent City Council then undertake a direct award without a call for competition, utilising the Stoke-on-Trent City Council's compliant framework.
- d. That the Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing is authorised to finalise the specification for the monitoring, assess the proposals from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and enter into an agreement for an Inter Authority Contract.
- e. That the Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing is authorised to extend the current contract with the CCTV monitoring service until the new service is operational.

Reasons

The current CCTV system was originally installed over 20 years ago and as a consequence the system has become outdated. As the town centre has evolved there is no longer a comprehensive coverage to contribute towards reducing crime and disorder, reducing fear of crime and assisting in attracting additional inward investment into the town centre. This initiative contributes to the Council's overall strategy to create a "Town Centre for All".

1. Background

- 1.1 The primary objective of the CCTV system in Newcastle town centre is to reduce the fear of crime and provide a safer, more pleasant environment for those people who live, visit and spend their leisure time in the town centre without compromising an individual's right to privacy.
- 1.2 Other key objectives are:
- To improve public perception regarding the safety of the town centre.
 - To prevent and deter crime and disorder, including anti-social behaviour.
 - To improve detection of crime in the town centre and aid in the prosecution of offenders.
 - To assist with counter terrorism work.

2. Current CCTV capacity

- 2.1 There are currently 18 cameras linked to the current CCTV system in key areas of the town centre. These operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.
- 2.2 The majority of the original CCTV cameras have pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) functionality and give a wide, vertical range of coverage. 2 of the cameras are static, which means they can only focus on a fixed area. The majority of the existing cameras are analogue, which means that the quality of the images is below average compared to their modern digital counterparts. 3 cameras, based on Liverpool Road near the North Staffs Justice Centre, were installed in 2017, 1 PTZ & 2 static, and have digital capability. There are also approximately 24 cameras within the Midway car park, which are not currently linked to the CCTV centre and would need to be upgraded. The CCTV system was last significantly overhauled in 2007.
- 2.3 A combination of CCTV Volunteers and a paid SIA accredited CCTV operatives, working for a private security company currently monitor the CCTV system in the town centre within specific timeslots.

3. Issues identified with current CCTV system

- 3.1 A thorough review has been undertaken by the Borough Council of the existing CCTV provision, with the assistance of key stakeholders, including the BID. The review sought to examine the current capacity of the system and consider the opportunities for future development.
- 3.2 Overall the review concluded that the existing system is outdated and as a consequence not as effective as it could be both in relation to the system itself and the way it is monitored.
- 3.3 The main issues identified in the review;
- With the exception of the digital CCTV camera near the North Staffs Justice Centre, the CCTV cameras produce below average image quality. Footage is extremely grainy and unclear which is not ideal for evidential purposes.
 - Fifteen out of eighteen CCTV cameras are over twenty years old, therefore are outdated and prone to malfunction, which places a burden on maintenance budgets.
 - The CCTV control room has limited visibility with only ten monitors on desktop monitors. This type of viewing platform has been superseded by modern large screens, which are capable of numerous configurations to suit the operative and incident being observed and responded to.

- There are currently a number of ongoing issues with the recording of the data captured and how it is retained.
 - There are a number of blind spots with the system in high traffic areas. The monitoring of the system is limited and could be more responsive.
- 3.4 The recent CCTV review also identified a number of locations in the High Street, Ironmarket and Grosvenor Roundabout, where trees obstruct the line of sight and overall effectiveness of the current CCTV cameras. It is intended to undertake a survey of camera locations and potential obstacles and a programme of tree management to identify suitable solutions where the line of sight is obscured in each case wherever possible.
- 3.5 If the CCTV system is changed or upgraded, permission may need to be sought from the owners of properties where the equipment is currently installed (located) for any changes in positioning or upgrading of equipment.
- 3.6 If the CCTV system is changed or upgraded it would be advisable to consult with the Council's Planning Team and in particular the Conservation Officer, in order to ensure that the installation of equipment and associated works does not conflict with Council Policies.

4. Options considered and recommendation for the future CCTV provision

- 4.1 A number of options were considered in the CCTV Review, including;
- 4.1.1 Remove the existing CCTV system and have no CCTV capacity within Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre. For the avoidance of doubt, this is not recommended.
- 4.1.2 Keep the current CCTV system, making no upgrade to the equipment and retender the monitoring contract for the paid service when it expires in October 2019 – not recommended.
- 4.1.3 Procure a CCTV system upgrade (without monitoring) and present further recommendations with capital costings, clearly identifying proposed funding and partnership contributions – not recommended.
- 4.1.4 Procure a CCTV system upgrade, including its monitoring arrangements, via a commissioned service and present further recommendations with capital and revenue costings, clearly identifying proposed funding and partnership contributions – not recommended.
- 4.1.5 Procure a CCTV system upgrade, including its monitoring arrangements, via a partnership arrangement with a neighbouring authority - **recommended**.
- 4.2 The option highlighted in 4.1.5 above is recommended as the preferred solution because this would provide a specialised service from a central location with a direct link to the Safenet and Police radio networks. This would provide opportunities for significantly quicker responses to incidents and more effective monitoring using state of the art equipment. This would also offer an opportunity to develop the system further in the future, subject to the availability of additional funding.
- 4.3 In recent weeks the Business Improvement District (BID) has consulted with its members regarding the CCTV system and the responses have been collated. There is considerable support to continue the service and to invest in improving the current service provision. The BID have agreed to make a one off capital contribution to the project of £40k – see Section 9 below.
- 4.4 Following the upgrading of the town centre CCTV, the Council will review opportunities to secure enhanced CCTV coverage for other parts of the borough. This will enable a more comprehensive approach to community safety, and community reassurance to be put in place.

5. Approximate costing of the preferred option highlighted in 4.1.5 above

- 5.1 The costings below are approximate at this stage and will only become fully known once procurement has been undertaken.
- 5.2 Capital Costs – £80k pa - this is the anticipated overall cost for upgrading the required equipment and includes the supply and installation of cameras (upgrading the existing 18 and an additional 4 in current blind spots), project management, licences, and likely transmission and receiver devices to the town centre and including 24 replacement cameras in the Midway Car Park. In order for the project to proceed, contributions have been sought from partners as there was no available budget in the capital programme at the Council.
- 5.3 Revenue Costs - £35k pa - this is the anticipated cost to replicate the current capacity of the monitoring service by a partner authority, which is 48 hrs per week using trained PSS level 2 staff, with systems maintenance, management of Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) etc. It also provides the opportunity to request and agree reactive cover in the event of an incident outside the agreed monitoring hours.

6. Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities

- 6.1 Delivering an effective CCTV in the Town Centre contributes to meeting the Council's Corporate Priorities of; a Healthy, Active and Safe Borough and a Town Centre for All.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 7.1 There is no statutory duty for the Borough Council to provide a CCTV system, but the Borough Council are keen to support the operation of a local system, as it is recognised that there are many benefits of having an effective system in place, such as attracting inward investment, contributing towards a safer town centre and reducing the fear of crime.
- 7.2 If the Council pursues the option highlighted above in 4.1.5, Officers will undertake a direct award without a call for competition, utilising the Stoke-on-Trent City Council's compliant framework (the Borough Council having been named on the contract notice as a potential user) once the procurement is complete and the preferred provider identified.
- 7.3 If the contract for the monitoring of the CCTV service is awarded to an alternative provider, there would be Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) implications for three part time individuals currently employed by the existing provider, Olympian Security Services Limited.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is being developed for this area of work.

9. Financial and Resource Implications

- 9.1 Financial Information for the preferred option highlighted in 4.1.5 above;
- 9.1.1 Capital – total cost - £80k - funding sources;
- Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council - £28k
 - Business Improvement District (BID) - £40k

- Section 106 contribution - £12k
- 9.1.2 Revenue - an upgraded system will cost approximately £7.5k per annum more than the existing Council CCTV revenue budget. It is proposed that the revenue costs are met using the existing Council budget (£27.5k per annum), with a contribution from the Section 106 (M & S) of £7.5k per annum until it expires in 2022. The Council will then need to take the additional £7.5k per annum into account for the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), for future years to support the additional revenue costs from 2022.
- 9.2 There are resource implications for Council Officers who have already been involved in the CCTV Review and who would co-ordinate any further development work for the CCTV system and monitoring of the contract for the service with the provider. This will involve use of existing resources including Officers from the Housing, Regeneration and Assets service with support from the Business Improvement and Legal teams, to co-ordinate partnership working and any potential procurement activity.
- 9.3 There would be additional costs of tree management in the town centre to facilitate the CCTV system upgrade, which have not been taken into account for the purpose of this report and would need further consideration from the Operational Service Directorate to assist in facilitating the project.

10. Major Risks

- 10.1 Failure to take appropriate action regarding the future development of the town centre CCTV system may result in a failure of existing systems and insufficient coverage leading to the Council being unable to sufficiently deliver its strategic priorities;
- Local Services that Work for Local People
 - Growing our People and Places
 - Healthy, Active and Safe Borough
 - A Town Centre for All
- 10.2 There is also a risk of reputational damage to the Council if it does not achieve the benefits often associated with having an effective CCTV system in place, such as attracting inward investment, a contribution towards a safer Town Centre and reducing fear of crime.

11. Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

- 11.1 No implications

12. Key Decision Information

- 12.1 This report can be considered key because it results in the Borough Council committing existing and additional resources for the function to which the decision relates.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

- 13.1 Newcastle-under-Lyme Town Centre CCTV Review Report Update – December 2018

14. List of Appendices

- 14.1 None.

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 Newcastle-under-Lyme Town Centre CCTV Review Report 2018 – available on request from the Partnerships Team.