



## Approve Changes relating to Public Area CCTV

### SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report describes the critical issues relating to the operation of the public area CCTV scheme following detailed analysis and appraisal of the current system by external consultants. The analysis, which considered the public area CCTV system against the priorities and standards set out in the Home Office National Strategy (2007) and the CCTV Data Protection Code of Practice (1999), highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and urgent action is now needed to address the issues which have emerged.
- 1.2 The analysis indicated that a significant proportion of the current 185 CCTV cameras contribute very little to the core purpose of the scheme – detecting crime and reducing the fear of crime. Almost all cameras, together with essential control room equipment, are reaching the end of their useful life and need replacing and updating to keep pace with technological development.
- 1.3 The immediate recommendation is to concentrate on providing active and targeted monitoring of city centre cameras, where activity is highest and the system has proved to be of value. This group of cameras, identified in Section B1 of Appendix B, and the recording equipment need to be replaced in the next 12 months. Replacing the recording equipment is essential to allow any CCTV coverage to continue. A bid for an LPSA 2 grant of £250,000 has been made to fund these upgrades and is recommended for Cabinet approval on the same cabinet agenda.
- 1.4 The report highlights that some cameras identified in Sections B2 and B3 of Appendix B, are likely to need replacement during the next few years. Decisions on whether to invest in camera replacements in these locations will need to be made in future years. Continuing operation of these camera locations will need to consider whether the cameras contribute to the core purpose of the CCTV scheme and whether funding is available.
- 1.5 The report also advises that many cameras no longer contribute to the core purpose of the public area CCTV scheme and it is proposed that these cameras are decommissioned. The camera locations are identified in Section B4 of Appendix B.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Council's public area CCTV system be concentrated on those locations where levels of activity are highest. These locations are indicted in Section B1 of Appendix B. A formal steering group will be established to guide the future role of the service.
- 2.2 Subject to LPSA 2 funding of £250k being granted this will be invested in upgrading the control room and the city centre cameras in 20 09/10.
- 2.3 That the continued use of CCTV in city outskirts and identified in Sections B2 and B3 of Appendix B be the subject of further consideration as and when replacement becomes necessary.
- 2.4 That those camera locations which do not contribute to the core purpose of the CCTV system and which are identified in Section B4 of Appendix B, be decommissioned.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is important that the service focuses attention on crime and disorder issues and that available resources are targeted in the areas of greatest need. The steering group will ensure that future purposes and priorities for CCTV are clearly defined and will explore and coordinate alternative solutions to problems where the use of fixed CCTV cameras is not appropriate.
- 3.2 The core and most important elements of the public area CCTV scheme are the city centre cameras and the control room equipment. The equipment associated with these areas is out of date and can no longer be sustained. It is essential for the continued operation of the system that these elements are renewed now.
- 3.3 Significant costs are likely to arise as some camera equipment becomes unsustainable in its current form. The need for and costs associated with these camera locations will need to be examined in detail in order to ensure that the service gives priority to those areas of greatest need. Other services areas and partner organizations will also need to examine future costs and benefits to determine if CCTV will be a priority given the other considerations of delivering their core services.
- 3.4 To ensure that resources are targeted at areas of priority.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The public area CCTV scheme consists of 185 cameras. It was developed between 1997 and 2001 when central government created funding opportunities for the purchase of equipment. Since 2001 government funding has not been available for large-scale schemes.
- 4.2 Since 1999 there has been growing criticism of the amount of CCTV in public areas and the development of a 'surveillance society'. As a result, government has recommended that CCTV schemes should be reviewed to ensure that cameras are only deployed and maintained in areas where there is a specific need.

- 4.3 Implicit in recent CCTV policy has been a criticism of the way in which public area surveillance was encouraged to grow. The Home Office research in 2001 identified that local authorities had been stimulated to apply for CCTV funding, without rigorous justification; consequently schemes were often implemented without reference to robust local research and long-term objectives. The Home Office researchers reported that most scheme managers claimed that cameras contributed to a reduction in the fear of crime and acted as a deterrent to potential offenders. The researchers found little evidence to support these claims and suggested that any deterrent effect or reduction in the fear of crime lasted for approximately 12 months.

The effectiveness of CCTV has been further questioned by research carried out by the Campbell Collaboration, an international group of criminologists, that were commissioned by the Home Office. The outline of the study was reported in the Guardian (May 18 2009) and suggests that CCTV has a beneficial effect in car parks and other closely managed environments, however there is little positive effect on crime numbers, but there is an increase in the reporting of crime. The report suggests that CCTV should be narrowly targeted at reducing particular crime types or targeted at particular locations.

- 4.4 The CCTV scheme in Derby is typical of many schemes established during the late 1990s. Successful bids were made to central government, state of the art equipment was installed and in the case of Derby the scheme received good feedback from the Home Office. Like the majority of local authorities encouraged to establish CCTV systems we have found the long term costs to be significantly higher than expected and that CCTV technology is becoming out of date or obsolete. The revenue budget for CCTV has always been under severe pressure, however, the escalation of costs in recent years and the withdrawal of contributions from scheme partners has resulted in a situation where the actual scale of future CCTV operations needs to be determined with an objective focus on operational and resource factors.
- 4.5 The current revenue budget underpinning the CCTV scheme in Derby originally assumed contributions from partners including City Centre Management, Castle Ward businesses and Parking Services. As the scheme expanded Environmental Services, NHS Trust and Derby Homes became key contributors to the on-going costs but Derby Homes withdrew from the scheme at the end of 2008 and Environmental Services are concerned at the costs they are being asked to meet in relation to CCTV within Arboretum Park. We are considering options to reduce the annual costs by seeking to extend the wireless transmission links to the Arboretum and in future we will recommend any changes in technology that will assist with cost control and maintenance of coverage of the area.
- 4.6 The total operating cost for public area CCTV in 2009/10, if the current level of operation is maintained, is predicted to be approximately £446k while capital replacement costs for all equipment is estimated at almost £1 million at today's prices. The effect of Derby Homes withdrawing from the scheme has been significant and has further highlighted the need to address this matter. In the near future the contribution from Environmental Services and Parking Services will need to be reviewed, as the costs for these services will continue to grow. The provision of CCTV in these areas will need to be determined by operational priorities and available resources.

- 4.7 In April 2009 we ended a contract for the supply of monitoring staff and brought the service 'in-house'. The previous contract cost approximately £230k per year. The 'in-house' service will eventually allow for greater flexibility in the way in which we can deploy staff and the hours that we monitor the CCTV scheme. At present the scheme is monitored 24 hours everyday partly to provide remote barrier control and system management functions for the Assembly Rooms and Chapel Street multi-storey car parks. Parking Services are aiming to deliver a car park management solution that will remove this operation from the CCTV control room, hopefully by the end of the current financial year. The monitoring staff costs for 2009/10 will be £210k but this will reduce by £55k once Parking Service functions are removed and the operation of the CCTV control room is concentrated on those times when there is greatest need.
- 4.8 The majority of current CCTV cameras are linked to the control room by some form of fibre optic cable. Most of these links are leased through network companies BT and Virgin Media. These leased arrangements are becoming more expensive, in some cases significantly so. An alternative transmission option may be available using the council wireless network. This, combined with some small amounts of council owned fibre optic cable, will provide a lower cost and more sustainable option. These options are currently being explored and a test is currently being organised to trial two sites within the city centre. The predicted costs include an allowance for the additional cost of changing transmission technology. The saving from making these changes is estimated at £120k over the next two years.
- 4.9 During early 2008 a working group consisting of Council Officers and representatives from key partners including the Police and Community Safety Partnership was formed. The group recognised the operational and financial matters facing the service and engaged and briefed a specialist CCTV consultant to examine the CCTV operation and equipment using the Home Office and Information Commissioner's operational criteria and code of practice as a model to measure existing scheme performance. Several operational and system weaknesses were identified particularly lack of prioritisation and clear operational definitions. Also, a large group of cameras, those in Section B4 of Appendix B, contribute very little or nothing in terms of actual incident identification or post-incident evidence.
- 4.10 The key results of the operational research are that in 2007
- 23 cameras (12%) were responsible for 70% of recorded incidents, an average of 44 per camera
  - 82 cameras (44%) recorded 3 (or fewer) incidents
  - 31 cameras (16%) have recorded no incidents

Data for the years before 2007 is not robust, but it does suggest a similar pattern of use. The recommended scheme, set out in Appendix B is based on the research findings and discussions within the working group.

- 4.11 The deterioration of and consequent urgent need to replace much of the existing equipment has also been brought into focus during this work. Some of the equipment is critical to the continued function of the service regardless of service scope. Recording equipment urgently requires replacement as the age and type of equipment currently in use means that some information cannot be taken away by the police or shown in court. An application for a £250,000 grant from LPSA 2 has been made. Most of the camera equipment needs to be replaced within the next 5 years, with the priority being given to the high use cameras, most of these will need replacing in the next 3 years. Some minor changes could also be undertaken to enhance the coverage and support for police, shop watch and pub watch schemes within the city centre but these need to be considered against any prioritisation of the services.
- 4.12 Continuing with the current level and scope of public area CCTV operation wouldn't be in line with current government guidance and is in any case unsustainable. Reinforcing the primary priorities of the service, to assist with the detection of crime and help reduce the fear of crime, would suggest reducing the scope of the service, to concentrate resources on areas of high priority but the degree to which this can be achieved will depend on the availability of resources both capital and revenue. The current budget will only support the operating costs of the priority cameras identified in Sections B1 and B2 of Appendix 2. If other cameras, those in Section B3 of Appendix B, are to be retained then additional resources for revenue and replacement costs will have to be found. Appendix A indicates the cost of operating the current scheme and the effect of the proposals on future years costs.
- 4.13 When these other cameras are considered for retention now or renewal in the future consideration should be given to replacement with mobile and re-deployable technology. These can offer more flexible operational deployment and may have significant benefits over fixed CCTV particularly in providing a targeted response to specific issues. The council, through the Community Safety Partnership is currently increasing the capability to deploy this type of CCTV. The intention is to use these cameras for a limited period at each site, typically one month or less if the problem is resolved. The expanded scheme is currently being brought into operation.
- 4.14 Considering all factors and with full engagement of key partners, arising from the activities of the working group and the options developed, the following recommendations are offered:
- That the number of cameras is reduced with only the city centre cameras, identified in Section B1 of Appendix B, being routinely actively monitored at key times. The other retained cameras will record and collect evidence and be available for Police use for special operations
  - That the £250k LPSA grant be used in 2009/10 to enable the replacement of essential CCTV equipment particularly the data recording equipment and the cost of removing on street equipment subject to approval of the grant.
  - That a formal steering group be established for public area CCTV building on the start made by the existing working group. The Steering Group will include representatives from the Community Safety Partnership, from the police and from operational staff within Regeneration and Community. The group would continually evaluate and reprioritise CCTV operations responding to change as and when necessary.

- That the continued operation of cameras in the city outskirts identified in Sections B2 and B3 be considered in future years taking account of the value of the cameras to the core scheme and the resources available together with likely replacement costs.
- That mobile and re-deployable cameras are considered for future CCTV developments in neighbourhood areas.
- That future CCTV proposals are assessed carefully against the key objectives of public area CCTV and that only those proposals where long term funding can be identified will proceed.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Maintaining the level of cameras included within the current system. This would not address the issues raised by Home Office research and would be unsustainable due to rising operating costs and significant replacement costs.
- 5.2 Removal of all public area CCTV. Such a step would be difficult to justify given the evidence that many cameras are effective.

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**Background papers:** Various reports available for inspection on request  
**List of appendices:**  
 Appendix A – Cameras forming the core service & costs  
 Appendix B – Recommended scheme and use of cameras

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

- 1.1 As outlined within the main report.
- 1.2 Subject to LPSA 2 capital funding of £250,000 being granted by Cabinet that this be invested to fund the replacement of recording systems and priority cameras during 2009/10 as outlined in the report.

**Legal**

- 2.1 None.

**Personnel**

- 3.1 None.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 None.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 5.1 The proposals work towards the Council's priorities and associated outcomes of:
  - Creating a 21<sup>st</sup> Century City Centre
  - Leading Derby towards a better environment