

Committee: **Executive Committee**
 Date of meeting: **11th March 2020**
 Report Subject: **Position Statement on the Council's CCTV system**
 Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**
 Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer Resources (SIRO for CCTV)**
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Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	w/c 27.01.20	26.02.20			12.02.20	11.03.20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To provide a position statement on the Council's new overt CCTV system.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 **Service Review 2018/19**
 As part of the Council's budget setting process for 2019/20 a review of the CCTV arrangements was undertaken. On 24th October 2018, the Council agreed an option to continue the provision of a CCTV service in Blaenau Gwent. This involved a move away from the existing Service Level Agreement with Newport City Council and the development of a sustainable solution.
 - 2.2 The option agreed by Council changed the monitoring arrangements. This meant moving the system from a 24/7 monitored system with Newport City Council to a 'record only' system. Footage is available for download on request of authorised agencies via a local unmanned control room, with no 'live' feeds being monitored.
 - 2.3 The new system uses digital technology with new high definition cameras utilising wireless technology to improve quality of the imagery and reduce connectivity costs.
 - 2.4 As part of the review, work was undertaken with Gwent Police on the camera locations, the aim being to reduce the estate to 32 cameras providing coverage, with a focus on town centres based on evidence of crime and anti-social behaviour. The new arrangements would also allow for improving flexibility of CCTV coverage by adding new or relocating existing cameras where the infrastructure, site location and data networks are suitable and available. Cameras may be easily removed with no implications to the functionality of the system. The use of deployable cameras for crime hot spots can be added to the system as and when required.

2.5 **Location update**

There are currently 53 CCTV cameras installed on 33 specific posts in seven CCTV zone areas. These zones cover Ebbw Vale, Abertillery, Brynmawr, Tredegar, Cwm, Blaina and Llanhilleth train station. Each zone is legally compliant through Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) in-line with the expectation of the Surveillance Camera Commissioner.

2.6 This is an increase in the number of cameras agreed in the Council report in 2018. This due to on-site surveys and the pre-tender design process which identified technical restrictions associated with wireless transmission, site lines at specific locations, and camera fields of view to ensure effective coverage.

2.7 It has not been viable to put cameras in all of the locations initially identified due to technical and financial challenges. These challenges included the remote locations of sites which resulted in no direct line of sight between the camera locations and main recording equipment. This would result in the need to install extensive additional wireless infrastructure to serve a small amount of cameras. Provision of additional 4G network cameras was considered, however, these have limitations due to local signal strength and would require additional works to ensure operation that could ultimately be unsuccessful. As a consequence, to date no new cameras have been installed at Rassau Underpass and there are less cameras in Cefn Golau (two as opposed to four). Four cameras have been installed as a result of consolidating CCTV requirements at the new school site in Six Bells, and is being funded by the School Programme.

2.8 As part of the new arrangements, four deployable cameras were purchased and a testing phase has been implemented which has highlighted a number of key issues. This included solving software issues for downloading footage, and preparatory work aligned to Health and Safety for camera deployment which has included the fabrication of heavy duty brackets for deployment on standard street lighting columns.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The report was considered by the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12th February 2020 and the Committee supported Option 2. An all Member Briefing Session was also requested by the Committee and noted as part of the Action Sheet.

3.2 **Option One** - That the Executive:

- Considers the position statement on the overt CCTV function;
- includes the draft Policy and Strategy Framework for CCTV on the 2020/21 Forward Work Programme for endorsement; and
- receives the annual monitoring report.

Option Two - That the Executive:

- Considers and provides comment on the position statement on the overt CCTV function
- includes the draft Policy and Strategy Framework for CCTV on the 2020/21 Forward Work Programme for endorsement; and
- receives the annual monitoring report.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The provision of a CCTV service is non-statutory function and not required under legislation, however the CCTV system is one of a range of tools the Council uses with its partners to tackle crime and disorder, in-line with the requirements of its community safety partnerships (CSP) powers.

In utilising CCTV to tackle crime and disorder the Council is contributing to the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan Objective for Safe and Friendly Communities.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

The provision of the new CCTV system, led to financial savings for the 2019/20. i.e. the termination of both the BT Contract (£68,000) and the Service Level Agreement with Newport City Council (£81,000).

The capital cost for implementing the new CCTV system as described was £150,000 and the additional cameras were covered by contingency sums, provisos in the tender contract and therefore the final outturn costs for the project were within the agreed budget.

The overall increase in number of cameras deployed (note above) has not impacted on the operational revenue costs required to run and maintain the equipment and will be covered within the current allocated revenue provision.

The 2019/20 operational revenue budget for CCTV is £83,000, which incorporates the provision for power (£8,000), annual running and maintenance (£25,000) and revenue requirements for monitoring and the provision of footage (£50,000).

As of month nine of 2019/20 the budget is forecasting a small underspend. This is as a consequence of reduced costs for maintenance (as it is a new system still under warranty), and staffing (not full year costs), but increased costs for unlimited power supply to the camera system (metered power supplies are being investigated to reduce this cost for 2020/21).

To ensure continued efficient operation of the system the budget should also provide allowance for planned preventative maintenance including regular replacement of components such as Recording media (hard drives), Cameras, Wireless transmission equipment, and ICT equipment such as server and PC's. Without this the system will degrade and become obsolete due to its location within the external environment and future technological and software changes.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 **Legal Compliance**

There is risk associated with non-compliance of good practice guidance provided by the Surveillance Commissioners and GDPR requirements

This risk will be mitigated by the appropriate policies / strategies being in place ensuring compliance with legislation and best practice.

5.2.2 **Revenue Implications moving forward**

There is a risk that unforeseen revenue costs related to dealing with operation of the CCTV arrangements will exceed the agreed budget.

This will need to be kept under review and corrective action taken as appropriate as part of normal budget monitoring.

5.2.3 **Technical Issues**

There has been a number of technical issues as the system has been installed and implementation and operational use has begun. There is a risk that there may be on-going technical issues.

To mitigate these issues technical services will be regularly monitoring the system for faults and working closely with the contractor to remedy these. Technical Services will be holding regular meetings with the contractor to discuss the status of the system, any future works remedial works required and what future improvements will need to be considered.

Due to the reduced data transfer rates resulting from removing the high cost rental fibre lines from the previous scheme, there are operational issues with retrieval in some instances of extremely large volume of video images when requested by the police. Options to mitigate this have been investigated with the contractor.

5.3 ***Legal***

The Council when operating a surveillance camera system needs to operate within the appropriate legislation e.g. Human Rights and Data Protection laws. The Surveillance Camera Commissioner provides guidance via the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice to support appropriate compliance.

A crucial step to ensure that the Council is operating in-line with these expectations is the completion of Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for our CCTV cameras and supporting systems. DPIAs help to ensure that the Council is lawfully operating systems, and establish and identify the 'pressing need' to capture CCTV images.

The Control Room where images captured by the system can be checked and transferred is restricted to authorised people. The Council has an obligation to guard against unauthorised use, access or disclosure.

There is a requirement for the Council to regularly review the CCTV system to ensure it remains justified, with an expectation from the use of the DPIA process on an annual cycle.

5.4 **Human Resources**

The Council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) is the Chief Officer Resources, aligned to the responsibilities via the General Data Protections Regulations (GDPR).

The Council's Technical Services Team has project managed the tendering, design, and implementation of the Council's new CCTV's system.

The Policy Team (Community Safety) has provided policy support to ensure that the Council is taking into considerations the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, and has been providing operational support to enable to transfer of imagery to responsible authorities such as Gwent Police.

Out of hours cover for the CCTV system, for major emergency incidents is provided by the Emergency Duty Team.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The CCTV system is operational and has been actively providing high quality digital imagery to appropriate responsible authorities, such as Gwent Police, to aid the detection and prevention of crime and disorder across the local areas.

Following the installation of the new system there have been a number of technical issues which have presented as the process moves into operational delivery. The technical and external issues have included security and stability of the local Low Voltage power supplies, use of existing columns and their condition, local wireless interference, outages in broadband lines, vandalism, adverse weather conditions and premature failure of equipment. The issues may continue into the foreseeable future, however Technical Services will be implementing procedures to regularly monitor the system status and undertaking remedial works. The result of these issues has been and may continue to be that the transmission and recording of images has been and maybe interrupted at some periods. As a consequence of these issues, Technical Services and the contractor continue to liaise to ensure that the system is operating effectively.

The Council has received 42 requests for CCTV footage from all seven camera zones (30-Jul-19 to 15-Jan-20):

- 26 requests from Gwent Police in relation to the prevention and detection of crime;
- Four from Insurance companies in relation to road traffic accidents;
- Eight from members of public relating to road traffic incidents, potential crimes and subject access requests.
- Four incidents reported by local Councillors.

Footage has been shared with the Police on 16 occasions, for a variety of incidents including serious violence and disorder, burglary, criminal damage, drink-driving and road traffic incidents. This footage is provided in an evidential format for the Police to use to investigate and prosecute offenders, and to share as appropriately within the criminal justice system.

When appropriate footage from incidents reported by councillors and members of the public have been passed to the police, as the responsible authority.

Some incidents reported have been outside the scope and view of the CCTV system so no footage has been captured. Also, there has been a small number of occasions (four requests) when footage has not been available because of operational issues with cameras or system.

Compliance update

The cameras that are recording in each of the zones have been subject to the necessary DPIAs and have been approved and signed off by the Council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO).

The CCTV Policy and Operating Framework for the Council is being revised in-line with the new GDPR Privacy Commissioner expectation.

6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

The provision of CCTV is in place to assist with the prevention and detection of crime and disorder. The DPIA process described above ensures that appropriate consideration is given to the pressing need for surveillance to ensure that the Council is lawfully breaching people's rights under relevant legislation such as human rights and data protection.

6.3 *Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)*

As part of the implementation of the new CCTV system, there was extensive involvement with Gwent Police who also represented views from town centres traders. This dialogue included discussions on the camera positions to identify overlaps and obsolete positions.

Support for the continuation of a CCTV service in the local areas was also provided by correspondence from the local MP.

In terms of the DPIAs process supporting evidence was utilised to establish the pressing need for cameras, e.g. crime statistics.

Moving forward, proactive involvement will be a key part of the annual review process of the CCTV system.

6.4 *Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)*

The new CCTV system utilises up-to-date hi-tech equipment and software which will provide a long-term CCTV solution, as long as there is appropriate investment in the running, upkeep and maintenance of the overall system. An annual review process will support this process, and

allow for forward planning and technological advancement to be regularly considered.

The CCTV Policy and Operating Framework for the Council is being revised in-line with the new GDPR Privacy Commissioner expectation.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The CCTV system provides a service which is focused on reactively providing evidence to police in relation to crime and disorder which will have already occurred.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

There has been extensive collaboration with Gwent Police in relation to the implementation of the new CCTV system, and this continues in relation to the exchange of imagery as evidence.

The Council remains in discussions on the opportunities at regional basis with partner organisations and neighbouring local authorities for greater collaboration in relation to CCTV. However, currently there are no definitive proposals for any regional collaborations.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The new policy and strategy framework for CCTV for the Council, taking into account the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, will look to take wider consideration of CCTV as a whole, which is utilised by the Council.

6.8 ***EqIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

As this is a progress report there is no requirement to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment. Equality Issues are considered as part of the operational delivery of the service.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The Surveillance Camera Code of Practice outlines considerations for monitoring arrangements for CCTV systems noting there should be effective review and audit mechanisms. This will inform the Council's new CCTV Policy and Operating Framework.

The Council's SIRO will establish an officer group to monitor the arrangements to ensure compliance.

An annual monitoring report will form part of the committee forward work programme.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

N/A