

Meeting date: 14th March 2023

Report to: Stronger Communities and Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board

Report title: CCTV Review

Report from: Head of Highway Management

Report author/lead contact officer: Paul Tovey ptovey@solihull.gov.uk
James McNeil jmcneil@solihull.gov.uk

Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood | Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle | Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South | Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege
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Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: Not exempt

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report reviews the Council's Public Realm, Traffic Management and Car Park CCTV systems and provides commentary on the benefits of providing the service, the condition of the assets and recommendations for future service delivery.
- 1.2 The CCTV service is managed by the Council's Urban Traffic Control team, in partnership with Transport for West Midlands' (TfWM) Safer Travel Team.
- 1.3 Services are provided 24/7 and have a wide and varied remit, covering crime detection and prevention, safety and security, and traffic management.

2. **Decision(s) Recommended**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Board is asked to note the update on the Council's CCTV service and provide comments in respect of any changes they would like evaluated in line with the Council Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy objectives.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Board may wish to consider the following:
 - (a) Given the current financial pressures, should the Council continue to invest in and retain the CCTV service?
 - (b) Are there any elements of the service which should be reduced or no longer provided?
 - (c) Given the Council's Growth agenda, are there any other areas of the Borough that should be considered for additional CCTV coverage?

1. **Matters for Consideration**

- 1.1 The CCTV service is not a statutory requirement. The service forms part of a customer care and security package, delivered through partnership working.
- 1.2 Operating a CCTV service in Solihull is valued by the Police, public and local businesses. The principal objectives form the lawful basis for capturing and processing personal data and are as follows:
- 1.3 **The prevention and detection of crime and disorder and protecting public place.** The CCTV service helps to enhance community safety, reduce the fear of crime and protects the health, safety, wellbeing and welfare of the public. It is difficult to precisely record the impact CCTV has on crime reduction, but anecdotal evidence suggests it has great value and effect. CCTV also plays a crucial role in providing evidence to support Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) and assists the Police in combatting anti-social behaviour.
- 1.4 In Solihull, the CCTV service is valued and seen as an important tool by the Police, our town centre partners and Solihull Business Improvement District (BID). It is integral to partnership working and meeting town centre safety and economic objectives. Similar relationships exist in Shirley.
- 1.5 The service also assists in the general management of areas, including controlling access via 'Hostile Vehicle Mitigation' barriers to pedestrianised areas of Solihull town centre. It is also used to monitor Council House security and manage public events affecting the public realm, the most recent being the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay in summer 2022.
- 1.6 **Partnership Working.** The CCTV service interfaces with the Emergency Services, Town Centre management teams, the Solihull BID, Pub Watch, Town Hosts and works closely with the Touchwood CCTV control room. The service has an important role in safeguarding and personal safety matters, e.g., assisting in locating lost

children or missing persons.

- 1.7 **Traffic Management and Public Transport.** The service originally only monitored town centre car parks, but then extended to Solihull and Shirley town centres and is now an invaluable tool for the Urban Traffic Control (UTC) Centre in Solihull and the Regional Traffic Co-ordination Centre at TfWM, monitoring congestion, assisting with traffic flow and responding to incidents on the highway network.
- 1.8 In 2016, the CCTV service contract was transferred to TfWM, who are responsible for monitoring and maintaining Solihull's CCTV systems. The TfWM operators cover the following duties and functions:
- Active visual patrol regimes, providing Police intelligence and meeting customer requirements 24 hours per day.
 - Monitor and record incidents to provide high quality evidential footage.
 - Provision of communication procedures for Police and retail radio, video links, emergency services, customer advice and responding to operational requests.
 - Evidence management including reviewing, storing, retrieving, and erasing evidential footage, overseeing review and operation by operators and third parties, copying and issue of footage.
 - Equipment maintenance – reporting and repair of street furniture and back-office systems.
 - Formal Police and customer reporting procedures, including assisting with Police and Crown Prosecution Service statements.
 - Out of Hours emergency call centre for Council services.
- 1.9 The CCTV service helps maintain the confidence of town centre partners and is a key part of the positive reputation of the Council.
- 1.10 Our Town Centre partners and Solihull BID feel very strongly that the CCTV is integral to maintaining and enhancing the vitality of Solihull's town centre.
- 1.11 **Asset Management.** The CCTV asset is significant and has seen substantial investment since 2016, with improvements to both the back office and street equipment to enable Internet Protocol (IP) based digital operation. The equipment list is detailed in Appendix 1, with a plan showing camera locations in Appendix 2. The UTC centre in Lode Lane is the focal point for the Council's private fibre network and houses the server and other control room equipment.
- 1.12 **Funding Plan.** The service's annual revenue budget is £148,000, which funds TfWM operations and maintenance, energy, and the replacement of the control room equipment not covered by the service contract. The CCTV reserve is currently at £169,270 and is available for emerging system issues and planned asset upgrades.

2. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 2.1 Although many of the assets have been upgraded since 2016, there is still a large proportion of equipment that is out of warranty and potentially cannot be effectively maintained due to shortages of spare parts.
- 2.2 The cost of replacing this equipment with digital IP based equipment would require an investment of approximately £140,000 which would enable the service to continue for 3 to 5 years.
- 2.3 As this service is not a statutory requirement, annual revenue savings could be made by discontinuing the Public Realm monitoring element. However, this would mean that the Council's Out of Hours customer telephone call handling service, car parks and Council House security would need to look for alternative solutions.
- 2.4 Previous reviews have explored the options around communication costs. No savings were identified due to the significant capital investment in previous years, whereby the Council has, in Solihull town centre, installed a private fibre optic network which has minimal operating cost. This also provides the cheapest solution and a direct link to the TfWM control room. Most of the CCTV communications costs are free, with a small annual fee for the rental of private circuits at outlying sites.
- 2.5 Ceasing CCTV provision would require one off dismantling and disposal costs.
- 2.6 Key areas for growth in the Borough have been identified in the Council's draft Local Development Plan. The UKC development zone around the Airport, Arden Cross Development, HS2 and N.E.C sites are the highest priority site for CCTV coverage. Most of the investment required will come through the associated development agreements but there will be annual operating cost pressures that will require additional revenue funding to be identified or the current service reduced.

3. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to share with Scrutiny Board the latest position regarding the CCTV service, and there are no specific recommendations requiring approval. Questions to be addressed are whether the service should cease, contract, or explore growth options. Are there any elements of the service that the Board considers should be reduced or no longer provided?
- 3.2 Given the Council's Growth agenda, are there any other areas of the Borough that the Board would like the service to explore and evaluate.

4. Implications and Considerations

- 4.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
People and Communities:	Better and wider coverage CCTV creates an environment that reduces the fear of

Priority:	Contribution:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull. 2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it. 3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 4. Enable communities to thrive. 	<p>crime and where people feel safer when undertaking everyday tasks, which also encourages walking and cycling.</p>
<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Develop and promote the borough's economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres. 6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2. 7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable. 	<p>Maintaining a good CCTV asset as a UTC tool allows more control over the network and a reduction in congestion due to stop/start movements, facilitating growth within the Borough.</p>
<p>Environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions. 	<p>Maintaining a CCTV system in good working order will improve quality of life for both road users and pedestrians alike in the form of reduced congestion and delays, improved journey times, reduced pollution along the key routes and an environment where pedestrians feel safe to undertake their daily business without the fear of crime.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Promote employee wellbeing 	<p>N/A</p>

4.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

4.2.1 None required.

4.3 Financial implications:

4.3.1 The current revenue budget for providing the CCTV service is £148,000 and there is a CCTV reserve in place with a current balance of £169,270 which is available for emerging system issues and planned asset upgrades

4.3.2 Any recommendations that arise because of this report which have additional revenue or capital budget implications will need to be subject to further consideration and decision as to how they will be funded as part of a future service development and funding strategy.

4.4 Legal implications:

4.4.1 None as not a statutory duty.

4.5 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

4.5.1 None as not a statutory duty.

4.6 Equality implications:

4.6.1 None.

4.7 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

4.7.1 Linkages to work with the WMCA (TfWM) is covered in section 1 of the report.

5. List of appendices referred to

5.1 Appendix 1 – CCTV Asset register summary

5.2 Appendix 2 – CCTV Location Plan

5.3 Appendix 3 – UTC Centre

6. Background papers used to compile this report

6.1 None.

7. List of Other Relevant Documents

7.1 None.