

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
20 JANUARY 2020

PUBLIC SPACE CCTV

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides Members with an update of public space CCTV and future issues facing the public space CCTV system within Newark & Sherwood.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Public space CCTV was first introduced into the district in 1999. Its primary objectives are to:

- Reduce the fear of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB);
- Assist in the detection of crimes and ASB (often through the identification of offenders);
- Deter people from committing a crime or participating in ASB, and;
- Disrupt criminal activity.

When the system achieves these primary objectives it will assist in protecting vulnerable persons and increase public confidence when accessing public spaces.

2.2 **Stakeholders and Partners** - The Council has a partnership arrangement with Broxtowe Borough Council and Ashfield District Council to share the costs and responsibilities of the provision and staffing of a shared control room facility, sited at Nottinghamshire Police Headquarters, Sherwood Lodge. This partnership also jointly commissions and allocates the maintenance and servicing contract.

2.3 In addition to the formal partners at 2.2 above there are numerous other stakeholders involved in the CCTV system, namely:

- Nottinghamshire Police;
- Newark, Ollerton, Southwell, Clipstone, and Balderton Town and Parish Councils;
- Newark and Sherwood Homes;
- Southwell Leisure Centre;
- Internal Business Units e.g. Asset Management, Parks and Open Spaces; and
- A small number of commercial contracts.

2.4 **Assets** - There are several assets associated with the system such as the Control Room itself which is supplied rent free by Nottinghamshire Police, although we incur some overhead costs. Monitoring, viewing and communication equipment is contained within the control room including the data recording system, storage servers and data retrieval system. Nottinghamshire Police has access to remote viewing stations at Newark Police Station, Broxtowe Community Safety Hub (Beeston), Hucknall Police Station and the Kirkby in Ashfield hub. There is also a viewing facility in the Control Room and live images are also fed directly into the Police control room on three separate screens (one for each district).

- 2.5 **Cameras** – There are currently seventy four (74) cameras within the Newark & Sherwood district which are located mainly in Newark (57 cameras), Southwell (7 cameras), Clipstone (6 cameras) and Ollerton (4 cameras). The location of cameras around the district are shown at **Appendix One**. The distribution of cameras within Newark and Sherwood largely reflects the geographic distribution of crime and anti-social in the district. The Council also has a small number of re-deployable cameras that can be fixed onto a suitable column or lamppost for a limited period of time to monitor an area that may have emerged as an ASB hot spot. These cameras are between 5 and 10 years old and would benefit from upgrading. These cameras store data onto an integral hard drive (as opposed to transmitting data to the hard drive servers at Sherwood Lodge) and therefore require ongoing data packages (akin to a mobile phone) to allow the data to be downloaded.
- 2.6 The Council's fixed camera network is a mixture of models and ages which is a reflection of the piecemeal manner in which the system has been set up over the years. Some cameras have been running since the conception of the system in 1999 and are long overdue for replacement, however, whilst they have continued to function they are now unsupported and it is not possible to get spare parts to repair them. Nineteen (19) of our cameras fall into this category and a replacement programme is being developed so that funding can be considered for their scheduled replacement. Advancements in technology have meant that cameras are now of a far better picture quality than before and with increased demand for cameras, purchase prices have also reduced.
- 2.7 A seven year capital replacement programme for the replacement of all the cameras was approved by Policy & Finance Committee in April 2019.
- 2.8 **Monitoring and Staffing** – The cameras are currently monitored through a shift pattern on a 24/7 basis as agreed by the partnership and the contract is currently delivered by Profile Security Ltd. At times of high demand there are 2 operators on duty and this reduces to a single operator during quieter periods.
- 2.9 The total number of cameras to monitor across three districts is 167 and at times this can become very challenging, especially if a single operator is dealing with a live incident or an incoming call from the public. The new operating system that was purchased during the relocation to Sherwood Lodge has assisted operators to access individual cameras more efficiently which has helped, however, staffing levels and shift patterns are kept under review through the partnership and is balanced against the cost of the contract.
- 2.10 The contract with Profile Security is currently managed on behalf of the partnership by Broxtowe BC and reported to the partnership. Our Emergency Planning and CCTV Officer deals with day to day issues that arise, supported by the CCTV Support Officer (part time). The Public Protection Business Manager also allocates some of his time to managing the service and maintaining an effective partnership whilst reporting into the Director - Communities and Environment.
- 2.11 **Finance** – The monitoring costs (i.e. CCTV control room) are shared across the Partnership and are calculated proportionately based upon the number of cameras that are monitored for each authority with the arrangement being reviewed on an annual basis. The breakdown is currently:

- Newark and Sherwood DC 44% (74 cameras)
- Broxtowe BC 39% (65 cameras)
- Ashfield DC 17% (29 cameras)

- 2.12 Income into the CCTV budget comes from the internal contributions of benefiting Business Units e.g. parks, Lorry Park, car parks and a small number of private contracts.
- 2.13 In the past when the public space CCTV network was being developed and expanded there were requests from Town and Parish Councils to have cameras with their jurisdiction. The Town and Parish Councils were asked to contribute towards the cost of maintaining and monitoring the cameras. Over the past few years a number of Town and Parish Councils have withdrawn their commitment to make a contribution and this is having a noticeable and adverse impact on income
- 2.14 A detailed report on the finances on the CCTV service will be presented to committee with an options appraisal later this year.
- 2.15 **Recording Incidents** – The staff in the control room record all incidents to allow analysis of incidents, actions relating to individual camera locations, requests for footage and arrests made via CCTV footage.
- 2.16 Set out at **Appendix Two** is data showing the incidents recorded for 2019. It can be seen that the public space CCTV is used for a wide range of incidents. It can also be seen that some cameras are used very infrequently and the continued usefulness of these cameras has to be questioned.
- 2.17 The use of CCTV by local authorities is subject to legislation and oversight by the Office of the Surveillance Commissioner. The associated guidance and legislation is intended to balance the legitimate aims and objectives of Public Space CCTV and the public concern that on occasions surveillance may be disproportionate and unnecessary. The authority must be able to demonstrate it has adequately considered alternative measures and regularly assess the on-going necessity.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 The presence of public space CCTV does provide a feeling of safety to our communities. However, this does need to be balanced with the requirements of the offices of both the Information Commissioners Office and the Surveillance Commissioners. Both of these bodies impose requirements that must be met.
- 3.2 The cost benefit analysis of CCTV also has to be considered and particular the cost of sustaining cameras that appear to provide little benefit to the recording of incidents.
- 3.3 Taking into account the above it is proposed to undertake a full review of the public space CCTV system. This will involve the assessment of each camera and the cost benefit analysis of keeping as part of the system.
- 3.4 It is further proposed to review the CCTV Policy and Procedures and to produce a revised policy ensuring there is full compliance with the relevant codes of practice.

3.5 An equitable system for calculating charges for cameras installed at the request of Town and Parish Councils has not been undertaken and it is proposed to review the financial contributions currently being made and to develop a new system and with options for consideration.

3.6 It is anticipated that all the above proposals will be brought back to committee for consideration.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 The CCTV network provides reassurance to members of the public that their safety is important and removal of cameras may have a disproportionate impact on the more vulnerable members of society. Protected characteristics such as 'age' and 'disability' may be affected by changes to the system in either a positive or negative manner. The removal of cameras from an area may mean that people are less likely to visit an area, particularly vulnerable members of society. Equally the addition or improvement of cameras in an area may mean that people are more likely to visit as feelings of safety increase. This impact is not possible to quantify.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 None directly from this report.

6.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

6.1 Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase feelings of safety in our communities. This is supported by the following actions:

- Improving intelligence gathering regarding crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Maximising the use and coverage of Close Circuit Television (CCTV) to increase feelings of safety.

6.2 The actions proposed will assist in the delivery of this element of the Community Plan.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- a) **Members note the current activity recorded by the public space CCTV network in Newark & Sherwood;**
- b) **review the whole system including each camera with a further report to Homes & Communities Committee;**
- c) **undertake a review of the CCTV Policy and produce a revised Policy for consideration at a future meeting of the committee; and**
- d) **review the financial contributions made to CCTV and to present options to a future meeting of the Committee for a future financial model.**

Reason for Recommendations

To update members on current issues around CCTV provision across the District and to consider the future issues arising from the service.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Alan Batty on Ext 5467

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