

**COMMUNITY PDG  
20 AUGUST 2019  
CCTV ANNUAL UPDATE**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Simon Clist.  
**Responsible Officer:** Andrew Jarrett Deputy Chief Executive (151).

**Reason for Report:** To provide Members with an update to the Tiverton Town Centre CCTV system including an operational overview.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That members note the action plan attached as Annex A regarding the upgraded CCTV facilities and the benefits of the system to the Tiverton Community.

**Financial Implications:** The one off purchase and implementation of the CCTV System was funded by capital funds. The ongoing maintenance and servicing of the system is, however, a revenue cost which will be funded through the revenue budget partly offset by the financial contributions which are received annually from Tiverton Town Council. On occasions the police and community safety are also able to provide funding.

**Legal Implications:** As part of the action plan, see 7.0, the Council will conduct a review to consider whether or not to use a surveillance system and evaluate whether it is necessary and proportionate to continue using it. The Council will need to meet the latest practice requirements, which are attached to this report as Annex A. There are 15-16 signs around Tiverton displaying that member(s) of the public are being recorded on CCTV.

**Risk Assessment:** If the CCTV is not operating the police have less evidence to identify and pursue individuals who have been involved in criminal activities in the area, therefore crime could potentially rise. There is wider coverage of the town centre area and more incidents and criminal activity can be monitored and images provided to the police when required. The need will be assessed as part of the action plan review.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** No equality issues have been identified.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Property services are committed to ensuring the wellbeing and safety of Mid Devon communities. The way that the Council manages the CCTV has a direct impact on the safety of the community so it is therefore important to ensure that the CCTV is operating correctly and efficiently.

**Impact on Climate Change:** The environmental impact is considered to be low, however the operation of the CCTV will be included when calculating our carbon footprint.

## **1.0 Introduction/Background**

- 1.1 The Tiverton Town Centre CCTV is a discretionary service to which the Council has a limited budget to maintain the system. The monitoring of the CCTV system is based on a voluntary basis with additional hours when necessary to protect the Multi Story Car Park (MSCP), the Council pays the volunteer 7 hours per week towards the monitoring of the CCTV. The Tiverton Town Centre CCTV system is regularly used for crime prevention and improving community safety. The police service regularly contacts the CCTV volunteer to aid officers in policing activity. The Tiverton Town Centre CCTV was an initiative from June 2011 when a working member's group review of the CCTV led to some of the CCTV systems being upgraded during the 2016/17 financial year. Currently that investment means we have an operational system however repairs can be costly and are subject to vandalism that puts pressure on this discretionary service.
- 1.2 The CCTV system continues to be frequently used by the Tiverton Policing Team in liaison with the CCTV supervisor.

## **2.0 Tiverton Town Centre System**

- 2.1 The system has a total of 26 cameras covering the Tiverton Town Centre and the Pannier Market area. In addition there are also some operational camera monitoring the entrances and exits of the MSCP, this monitoring area is likely to be upgraded under the MCSP improvement project once the tenders that have been received are evaluated.
- 2.2 When the system was upgraded in 2016 the Council consulted with the partner agencies including the Police, Highways and Devon County Council to identify the best location for the cameras to ensure the best possible coverage of the town centre key areas. These are areas where there is most public footfall or known hotspots for criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. Several of the cameras are radio linked so need to be in line of sight of others in order to transmit the images back to the control room. This needed careful planning in order to get the best possible vantage points.
- 2.3 The Council obtains permissions from the private property owners to install camera equipment on their premises and arranges for the power from nearby street furniture.
- 2.4 The CCTV control room has monitors and a larger hard drive to store the footage, for up to 30 days, from the cameras. Software is in use and the CCTV operator has had the relevant data protection training to view, retrieve and add footage to secure memory devices as required, by the Police Authority, following a strict protocol for chain of evidence.

## **3.0 CCTV Surveillance**

- 3.1 The CCTV supervisor is employed for 7 hours per week; however he increases these hours considerably in a number of ways, additional hours to cover school and public holidays, police requests for weekend operations support and voluntary monitoring of the Town's CCTV systems. On average

the cameras are currently 'manned' in excess of 40 hours per week and this will most often include a Saturday evening / overnight. During busy periods such as bank holidays and school holidays, during evenings in the town centre or police operations the hours are increased to 50 hours per week. The Property Services team will work with the volunteer to analyse demand.

- 3.2 The CCTV supervisor works very closely with the local policing team and can on occasions be called out when an operation is planned and when a particularly serious crime has occurred in the area and where CCTV can play an important part in identifying suspect individuals or vehicles that has been in the town centre on that evening.
- 3.3 In order to support the police the CCTV supervisor will change or increase his hours to help with any police operations. Recent operations have included targeting public order offences, anti-social behaviour (ASB), assault, violent attacks involving hand held weapons/chemicals, drug related offences and shop lifting. This time is re-charged accordingly to the Police, which is time and date dependent upon receipt of the request.
- 3.4 It was identified that some of the tall trees and bushes in the town centre, around the multi-story car park and the Market car park are impeding the vision of the cameras. Work has been completed to reduce the branches and foliage in order to allow for better views and tracking of individuals, vehicles or activity.
- 3.5 As part of the operational review we intend to ensure that the CCTV operator receives payment for services where applicable. We will as well establish where the boundary for voluntary work starts and finishes. The CCTV operator has recently won two separate awards in recognition of contribution to policing in Devon.

#### 4.0 **Incidents**

- 4.1 In the last 12 months the police have made 65 formal requests and daily live requests which are not captured under the formal system for CCTV footage in relation to incidents that have occurred in the Town Centre area. Time is also spent searching for any useful evidence relating to criminal activity or vehicles that can assist police investigations. Gaining intelligence regarding the movement of known individuals and their associates' helps give the police a good overview of their activities and can assist when planning warrants or operations.
- 4.2 During this reporting period there have been authorised requests from the CCTV operator relating to a traffic incident for insurance purposes, a number of serious assaults, some including weapons, a rape, and a missing person incident, that was captured on the cameras.
- 4.3 Regular phone calls are received by members of the community asking for footage relating to damage to their vehicles but these are then routed via the Police and their insurance company. The CCTV operator will review the information required and will release CCTV images in accordance with data protection requirements.

4.4 It is not easy to identify how many cases go to court where CCTV footage has been requested by the police as it is not always possible to get the information from the CPS or the courts. However if the CCTV Operator has witnessed any incidents in 'live view' he will provide a statement to the police at the same time as providing the footage. In these cases we may get notification of the case results directly from the court.

## 5.0 Stakeholders

5.1 Mid Devon continues to liaise with other agencies that have an interest in the town CCTV system. This includes the police, Town Council and local traders.

5.2 At the Environmental Policy Group meeting on Tuesday 6 August 2019 the Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets received a public question regarding mobile CCTV units following reports of Anti-Social Behaviour and littering at the West Exe Recreational ground. The costs of providing mobile CCTV units would be circa £4k for one unit. There would be an ongoing cost of circa £1.8k per annum for 4G air time. There is an option for a free trial. There is no budget planned for mobile CCTV units in the 2020/21 budget.

## 6.0 Financial

6.1 The operation budget for the Tiverton Town Centre CCTV system in the 2019/20 financial year is £8,310 with an annual contribution from Tiverton Town Council of £6k.

## 7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The cameras in the town are proving their worth against crime and identifying local criminal activity, however this has been on the increase and a number of traders are concerned about crime prevention particularly in Gold Street, Tiverton.

7.2 The Property Services team will conduct an assessment to ensure that the Council is operating its CCTV system in accordance with the latest Information Commissioners Office (ICO) guidance and to update existing procedures to determine how the CCTV system is used in practice

7.3 The Council will be liaising with Police Representatives to review procedures on time allocation for when the services of the CCTV operator is required.

7.4 The Property Services team will also investigate if our CCTV systems could assist with environmental enforcement investigations such as fly tipping.

**Contact for more Information:** Andrew Busby, Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets. Email: [abusby@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:abusby@middevon.gov.uk) Telephone: 01884 234948

**Circulation of the Report:** Cllr Simon Clist, Leadership Team.

**List of Background Papers:** None.