

**CCTV ANNUAL UPDATE**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Dennis Knowles, Cabinet Member for Community

**Responsible Officer:** Andrew Busby Group Manager for Corporate Property and Commercial Assets

**Reason for Report:** To update Members on the performance of CCTV systems and provide an operational overview.

**Recommendation:** For Members to note the report and recommend to Cabinet the adoption of the action plan shown on Annex A.

**Financial Implications:** The CCTV system for Tiverton Town Centre was upgraded from capital funds in 2015/16. Contributions are received on an annual basis from Tiverton Town Council towards the maintenance and management of the system. On occasions, the Police and community safety are also able to provide funding. All other Council CCTV systems are funded by operational revenue maintenance budgets.

**Budget and Policy Framework:** The CCTV code of practice and policy are currently being reviewed as shown on Annex A.

**Legal Implications:** There are various pieces of legislation that must be adhered to when considering the continued use of CCTV cameras, including the Data Protection Act 2018, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.

**Risk Assessment:** If Council CCTV systems are not operating, the Police have less evidence to identify and pursue individuals who have been involved in criminal activities in the area or cause damage to Council owned assets. There is wider coverage of Tiverton town centre and more incidents and criminal activity can be monitored and provided to the Police when required. If the CCTV systems are not operational or compliant the police cannot do this.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** None identified

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** None directly but there are implications for community safety.

**Impact on Climate Change:** None identified

**1.0 Background**

1.1 The Tiverton Town CCTV system continues to be well used by the local Police who rely on the CCTV supervisor to respond and provide vital information that can be used for future prosecution. The CCTV supervisor is an employee of the Council and gives their time to be a volunteer to assist with the Police.

- 1.2 The Council has instructed the CCTV Supervisor that requests for additional time to assist the Police are to be met from either volunteering or must be chargeable.
- 1.3 The Council operate a total of 159 CCTV cameras across 9 sites including leisure centres and corporate.
- 1.4 Property Services are in contact with Crediton town council regarding there TC CCTV and will offer assistance specifying to seek funding for bringing this system back on line. We have not had correspondence with Cullompton Town Council with regards to their CCTV to date.
- 1.5 Property services have instructed a suitable qualified consultant to review the CCTV system in Tiverton and to ensure ongoing compliance there will be a number of actions required and therefore funding. We will be submitting a bid to the police commissioner in partnership with Crediton to seek capital funding for addressing any shortfalls in our town centres.
- 1.6 Property Services are aware of a request to consider the use of mobile cameras including body cams for our CCTV supervisor as well as district officers. Our revised code of practice and policy will capture these changes and will need to be adopted prior to use.
- 1.7 The revised code of practice and policy will also need to include use of any CCTV within our fleet.
- 1.8 The CCTV system for the Multi Story Car Park is also being reviewed as part of the refurbishment. This is to address on-going Anti-Social Behaviour and to give confidence to the user.
- 1.9 The council has limited maintenance budgets for ensuring on going compliance for our CCTV systems. There is currently no additional budget for capital budget for any CCTV system.
- 1.10 In addition to the above, Property Services are also exploring alternative methods of monitoring in order to reach the potential funding criteria.

## **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 cameras monitoring the entrances and exits of the Multi Story Car Park.
- 2.2 When the system was upgraded in 2015/16 the Council consulted with the partner agencies including the Police, Highways and Devon County Council to identify the best locations 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 arranging for the power from nearby street furniture.

2.4 The CCTV control room has monitors and a larger hard drive to store the footfall from the cameras. Software is in use and the CCTV operator is trained to view, retrieve and burn off any images required in accordance with relevant legislation.

### 3.0 **CCTV Surveillance**

3.1 The CCTV supervisor is employed for 7 hours per week; however he increases these hours considerably in a voluntary capacity. On average the cameras are 'manned' for around 14 hours per week and this will most often include a Saturday evening / overnight. During busy periods such as bank holidays, events in the town centre or police operations the hours are increased to 20-25 hours per week.

3.2 The CCTV supervisor works very closely with the local policing team and can on occasions be called out 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 have 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 shop lifting and drug offences. This time is cross charged at £25 per hour.

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 started to reduce the branches and foliage in order to allow for better views and tracking of individuals, vehicles or activity.

### 4.0 **Incidents**

4.1 In the last 12 months the police have made more than 5 requests 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 wanted individuals or vehicles that can assist police investigations. Gaining intelligence regarding the movement of known individuals and their associate's helps give the police a good overview of their activities and can assist when planning warrants or operations.

4.2 There has been one authorised insurance request in the last year relating to a traffic incident that was captured on the cameras within the Tiverton Town Centre.

4.3 Regular phone calls are received by members of the community asking for footage relating to damage to their vehicles but these are routed via the Police and their insurance company.

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 Property Services 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 As part as the funding agreement with Tiverton Town Council a meeting will be arranged when safe to do so to review the recommendations of the condition audit of the Town Council CCTV and to seek feedback on the Multi Story Car Park installation.

## 6.0 Annex A

6.1 Attached to this report is annex a where officers from various services are working together to ensure our code of practice and associated policies are fit for purpose and are compliant.

6.2 Officers are aware that the policy and code of practice needs to include the use of mobile cameras and this has been scheduled to be completed at the end of September.

## 7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The cameras in the town are proving their worth against crime and identifying local criminal activity.

7.2 Members are asked to note the action plan CCTV facilities, as shown as Annex A, and the benefits of the system to the Tiverton Community.

7.3 Given the on-going financial pressures, without a successful bid on improving the Town Centre(s) CCTV systems, the Council would have to reconsider the risks for their continued operation. The annual contribution of £6k made by Tiverton Town Council continues to be vital for the on-going operation of the Town Centre CCTV system. The budget for the indirect costs were circa £12k.

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**Circulation of the Report:** Cabinet Member Cllr Dennis Knowles, Leadership Team

**List of Background Papers:** None