

# **POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

**15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

## **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – K.JONES**

### **SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION**

**WARDS AFFECTED** - Aberavon, Briton Ferry East, Briton Ferry West, Bryn and Cwmavon, Glyncorrgwg, Neath East, Neath North, Neath South, Port Talbot, Sandfields East, Sandfields West, Seven Sisters

### **CCTV SERVICE – OPTIONS**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

The report to Policy and Resources Cabinet Board dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015 set out the current position of the CCTV service and the options available to sustain the service whilst adhering to the savings targets outlined in the Authority's Forward Financial Plan for 2016/17 and 2017/18. The purpose of this report is to set out for Members:

- A summary of the consultation responses received over the period of the consultation process which closed on 15/06/2015;
- A summary of an Independent Consultant's Report carried out by MSC Global Security in July 2015; and
- The options for the service in the short and medium term.

#### **Executive Summary**

A detailed analysis of the number and location of cameras within the county borough and the control room infrastructure was undertaken and can be summarised as follows:

- The number of Public Space Cameras, excluding those in Multi Storey Car Parks is Ninety Eight. Analysis of the camera use and to comply with the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 concluded that the number should be reduced to fifty two – a reduction in cameras is necessary, regardless of the financial savings targets, to meet legal duties. The reduced number of cameras would be principally located in the Neath and Port Talbot town centre areas together with the promenade area on the Aberavon seafront. The savings in line rental costs would be in the region of £30K per annum. There will be one-off decommissioning costs. This technical appraisal accords with views of consultees.
- It was concluded that the control room equipment is approaching the need for replacement. It is estimated that the existing infrastructure should be replaced in about four years' time and funding to achieve this will need to be planned into regeneration budgets.
- Although the staff resource was reduced in 2014/15, the current level of staffing is not efficient as resourcing is not based on demand but more to sustain an out-of-hours telephone service. As a result there are large periods of down time in the Control Room which needs to be addressed.
- From the external review undertaken by the consultant, the responses to the public consultation and following visits to the City and County of Swansea and the City of Bristol local authorities, a short list of options has been developed for Members' consideration;

#### Short Term (1-3 years)

- NPT Withdraws its CCTV Provision entirely;
- NPT moves to a passive CCTV service only.
- NPT moves to a demand-led CCTV Services
  
- Alternative arrangements to deal with out-of-hours telephone calls to be made in respect of each of these options.

#### Medium Term (3 years plus)

- NPT combines its CCTV service with the City and County of Swansea to operate a joint service, with the option of expanding the scope of the existing CCTV services (subject to business case) to include other complimentary services such as alarm monitoring.

## **Background**

On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Members of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board authorised a period of public consultation on a long list of options that had been developed regarding the future of the Council's CCTV service.

The options presented in the report included:

- Do nothing
- Provide a passive service
- Reduce the number of cameras
- Close the service
- Income generation
- Diversify the service
- Outsource
- Collaborate

The decision taken by the Cabinet Board was to authorise the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services to develop the options further in order to put CCTV onto a sustainable footing and to consult relevant stakeholders in so doing.

This report summarises the consultation responses received and proposes a "short list" of options, within which officers identify a preferred option, that it is proposed be subject to a further period of public consultation with a view to making final decisions concerning the future of the service in December 2015.

## **Consultation Summary**

One hundred and nine responses were provided to the public consultation exercise on the options contained within the Cabinet Board report considered by Members on February 19<sup>th</sup> 2015.

- 88% of people who responded felt that all of the available options open to Members were identified in the report;
- 83% of respondents identified themselves as being a resident in the county borough;
- 90% of respondents were not prepared to contribute financially to the service, although the Police and Crime Commissioner identified that he was to conduct a CCTV review across the wider South Wales area;

- 72% of respondents felt that CCTV coverage was more important in some areas than others. Expanding on the responses, people identified town centres, industrial areas, the beach and hotspots as areas where CCTV would be most important; and
- Some respondents commented on the age of the existing infrastructure, arguing that it needed to be brought up to date.

In addition to the on-line consultation exercise, officers have also approached town and community councils to ascertain if they would be prepared to make a financial contribution to the running of the service. None of the councils have indicated that they would be prepared to make a financial contribution.

The analysis of data clearly identifies the Criminal Justice System benefitting significantly from the CCTV service, reducing the police, prosecution and court costs through the availability of CCTV evidence. South Wales Police have stated that they are not in a position to make a financial contribution to the cost of the CCTV service, however, they have strongly argued to retain a CCTV service in the county borough albeit they accept this might need to be on a reduced scale.

## **Technical Assessment**

MSC Global Security were invited to review the existing service, following a competitive procurement process.

Their appraisal indicated that the Council needs to reduce the number of cameras significantly to ensure that the service is compliant with relevant legislation and well governed. Additionally, the current policy needs to be updated to reflect the requirements of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice which became operational in August 2013.

MSC Global Security noted that the existing infrastructure is reaching the end of its life. It will therefore be crucial that the need for CCTV in the medium to long term is examined carefully and funding secured for requirements beyond 2019/20. Given that the necessity for public space CCTV is focused in the Neath and Port Talbot town centres, plus the seafront, it would seem appropriate that the funding of replacement infrastructure is built into the regeneration plans for those areas.

In making recommendations as to the operation of the service, MSC Global Security concluded that the existing service is not operationally efficient as there is insufficient demand during the week to justify the existing level of resource. The Council could identify other work that could be located with the CCTV operators to optimise the use of available capacity. Alternatively, the Council could make alternative arrangements for handling the out-of-hours telephone service during the week and move to a demand-led service which would principally operate on weekends and over bank holidays.

MSC Global Security identified additional income generation opportunities to those included in the report of February 19<sup>th</sup> 2015: use of s106 monies; licensing levy; increase in third party fees:

- a. Consultation has taken place with the Planning Service and due to the demands on s106 monies, this is not seen as a feasible strategy to support the sustainability of CCTV.
- b. Consultation has also taken place with the Licensing Manager and there are considered to be a number of problems with the introduction of a licensing levy the most significant being: the evidence of crime and disorder generated by licensed premises in the county borough having a significant impact on resources is weak. Problems tend to be concentrated on a relatively small number of premises. Consequently, the likelihood of legal challenge by premises who do not generate crime and disorder as a result of their activities who would fall within the ambit of the levy is likely to be high. CCTV requirements have however, been strengthened in the Licensing Policy recently approved by Council for public consultation.
- c. An increase in third party fees is feasible, although the small amount of income generated from fees is fairly insignificant in the wider context of the service.

MSC Global Security offer comments on options to collaborate with other authorities and on the options available to diversify the service to include alarm monitoring services. Following receipt of their report, officers met with their counterparts in the City and County of Swansea to discuss the emerging findings. That Council has also been reducing the cost of its CCTV service and has already significantly reduced the number of cameras operating in the county and was beginning to consider the potential for diversifying the service operations. It was clear from those discussions, that the reduced scale of the two operations would strongly suggest that a combined service would offer better value for money going forward.

Officers from Neath Port Talbot and Swansea councils also visited the control room at Bristol City Council who were identified as a good practice site that had already significantly diversified its CCTV operation. During the visit we observed the service providing Lifeline support, intruder and fire alarm monitoring and response as well as CCTV services. The service is also to extend its scope further by monitoring smart meters, other community alarms such as pollution monitors as well as the temperature in particular buildings such as ICT server rooms. To deliver a service at this scope, however, requires investment to bring the infrastructure up to a suitable standard, including resilience in the event of service failure. On the face of it, this option merits further consideration as both councils will be incurring alarm costs in terms of their respective property portfolios and there would appear to be scope to provide services on a wider footing too. A full business case would however need to be prepared to ensure that costs associated with the infrastructure of a wider service is made out. That analysis is beyond the scope of this report.

Officers have also contributed to the South Wales-wide review of CCTV services commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Regrettably, the report has not been produced within the timescales that were agreed with the Commissioner with the draft report received on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Officers will approach the Commissioner to seek his agreement to share the conclusions of the work at Committee.

## **Option Appraisal**

Having undertaken the public consultation and had more detailed discussion with key stakeholders it is clear that, whilst CCTV is not a service the council must provide, there is support for a continuation of the CCTV service. Having received the independent assessment of the service it is clear that the current arrangements over-provide public space CCTV in the county borough and that the number of cameras needs to be significantly reduced. It is also clear that the operational service is not efficient and therefore does not offer good value for money.

Consequently, the following short list of options is put forward for Members to consider:

### **i. NPT withdraws its CCTV provision.**

This option is presented as the Council does not have to provide a CCTV service. However, there is strong support for continuing the service amongst the general public and also amongst key stakeholders.

Withdrawing the service would introduce a significant cost in the short term as the current BT contract commits the Council to buying a service until 2019 and there are significant financial penalties for early withdrawal. It has not been possible to renegotiate this contract. Added to the camera decommissioning costs and any financial compensation applying to affected staff, the costs would be significant in the short term although ultimately, if the service was fully decommissioned it would be possible to deliver recurring savings of circa £200,000.

Decommissioning costs in 2016/17 would include:

- Termination of transmission Contracts to 2019 - £210,000.00
- Staff redundancy/redeployment costs
- Camera decommissioning costs – circa £100,000

Consequently, on financial grounds it is not recommended that this option is progressed.

In addition, other factors would be needed to be taken into account:

- Cost of outsourcing of Out of Hours Calls
- Impact on crime and disorder
- Impact on public confidence
- Impact on inward investor confidence

## **ii Passive CCTV service**

This option would mean that a reduced number of cameras would continue to operate across the county borough, but there would be no staff resource available to carry out proactive monitoring or to react to events.

The benefit of this option is that the county borough would continue to have some benefit from its fixed term contract with BT until it lapses in 2019.

The existing maintenance and transmission fees would continue to be paid, an out of hours service would need to be out-sourced or re-arranged at cost. A staff presence would still be required to comply with any requests from third parties for footage reviews. It would be feasible to provide the police with a direct link to the CCTV footage to obviate the need for council officers to facilitate access to the footage.

This option would deliver savings of £107k in 2016/17, rising to circa £150k in the following two financial years and reaching a maximum saving of £190k in year four. (note: buying in the out-of-hours telephone service is not included in these figures but is not considered to be significant).

The other factors listed above would still be relevant but with less impact:

- Impact on crime and disorder
- Impact on public confidence
- Impact on inward investor confidence

### **iii NPT moves to a demand-led CCTV service**

This option would see the number of cameras reduce to what is necessary with staff monitoring taking place only when demand so warrants – in essence weekends and bank holidays. The service could operate using four staff to cover the peaks in demand of the CCTV service. Adopting a demand-led CCTV service would realise savings of £9k in 2016/17, rising to circa £55k in the following two financial years and £93k from year 4. (Note: these figures do not include buying back an out of hours telephone service and staff termination costs)

The impact on crime and disorder, public confidence and inward investor confidence would be far more limited as the service would be fully functional at times when there is greatest demand. In the short term, this is considered by officers to represent the best value for money option, balancing the support for a continuing CCTV service with the need to achieve value for money and contributing to the Council's savings targets.

### **Financial Appraisal**

The financial appraisal of the three options described in this report is set out at Appendix 1. The financial appraisal identifies the option of reducing the number of cameras and moving to a demand-led model as being the best value option for the short term. The projected savings will achieve the £160k target identified in the Forward Financial Plan for the CCTV service, however the profile of the savings to be achieved will need to be adjusted to reflect the outcome of the financial appraisal.



## **Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment was included with the February 19<sup>th</sup> Report to the Cabinet Board. The on-line consultation questionnaire asked respondents to comment on the equality impact assessment that had been undertaken. 90% of respondents did not consider there were additional equality impacts to consider beyond those contained within the impact assessment. Where respondents felt there were additional impact to consider, these included: comments on the age of the infrastructure and queries as to whether the level of investment needed to upgrade the system would enable a service to be sustained over the longer term; a further assessment of the cost-benefits of the system to reflect savings in the Criminal Justice System was suggested as another factor that could be considered; the human rights of victims and innocent persons was another suggestion put forward for inclusion in the Impact Assessment.

None of the suggestions put forward suggests the duty on the Council to assess the impact on people with protected characteristics had not been discharged. The demographic profile of respondents was captured in the survey and the Impact Assessment has been updated to reflect the profile of respondents. Otherwise, there has been no material change to the Equality Impact Assessment presented on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015. The amended Equality Impact Assessment is included at Appendix 2.

## **Crime and Disorder Impact**

The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with “due regard to the need to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area”.

CCTV makes a contribution to the prevention and detection of crime and disorder in the county borough. The preferred option recommended in this report is based on establishing the number of cameras that should be maintained based on an assessment of necessity and to comply with the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice 2013. There is risk that the prevention and detection of crime and disorder in areas where cameras are proposed to be removed and during periods where staff will not be proactively monitoring cameras will be negatively affected. However, the data suggests that the risk is low. Monitoring of the position will be undertaken and reported to Members at regular intervals so that the position can be kept under review.

## 6. Conclusion

The operational need for CCTV across the county borough has been assessed and it has been concluded that the county borough needs a smaller number of public space CCTV than is currently in place. To comply with legal duties and to ensure good governance, the Council needs to reduce the number of cameras in operation.

An assessment of the operational efficiency of the service has been made. There is significant downtime amongst operators at some points during the working week, consequently, the service is not efficient at the present time. Opportunities to bring income into the service in the short term have been explored but are very limited. To increase the efficiency of the operational service the council could move the monitoring to a demand-led model which is the preferred option, or explore the potential to locate suitable work into the CCTV service to optimise the benefits from the investment current made.

Longer term, combining the CCTV operation with the City and County of Swansea would enable both councils to identify a more sustainable model for the service. The scope of a combined service could either be confined to CCTV or the scope could be extended to include other community monitoring activities, such as alarm monitoring. A full business case would need to be developed to test this option further. Investment in replacement infrastructure also needs to be considered in the medium term and this needs to be planned as part of wider physical regeneration programmes.

### Recommended

1. That Members authorise the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services to consult with key stakeholders and the wider public on the preferred option to reduce the number of cameras across the county borough and to move the monitoring service to a demand-led model which would ordinarily mean monitoring taking place on weekends and bank holidays only. The consultation to run for a period of six weeks with a further report to be presented to Members describing the outcome of the consultation in December 2015.
2. That Members authorise the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services to develop a full business case with the City and County of Swansea that tests the cost-benefits of establishing a joint CCTV service on a:
  - i) CCTV only scope;
  - ii) CCTV plus other monitoring scope.

3. That Members authorise the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services to identify alternative options for delivery of the out-of-hours call handling services in the event that the preferred option is supported.

### **REASON FOR PROPOSED DECISION:**

To develop further the proposals set out in the Council Budget 2015-16 – 2017-18 to make further savings in the cost of CCTV to the Council and provide the Best Value for Money Option.

### **Officer Contact:**

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### **Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 - Financial Appraisal
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 – Map of cameras proposed to be decommissioned

### **Background Papers**

1. Policy and Resources Cabinet Board 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015 – CCTV Service – Options
2. MSC Global Security – A Strategic Review of the Public CCTV System in Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council