

Future CCTV Provision

Purpose of report		
To provide committee with an update on recent consultations concerning the future of CCTV, and to provide recommendations to council for to consider making to council.		
Recommendation: That in the absence of evidence of any beneficial impact of the existing CCTV committee should recommend to council		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that the support for the existing system should cease, 2. that the existing equipment should be disposed of unless a suitable partner wishes to take on the costs of its maintenance, and 3. that council should promote the benefits of wider partnership working in the town (to address any new threats from retail theft) and 4. that council should seek to support the police and NCC in partnership working to address any identified alcohol related anti-social behaviour, whether arising from off sales or the night time economy. 		
	Yes	No
Does the decision involve new expenditure? – Not initially but some decommissioning expenditure may arise.		No
Is there an existing budget for the proposed expenditure (insert code)	N/A	
What procurement level is required?	N/A	
Are there equalities impacts / an equalities assessment required?		No
Does this require a full council decision? (Reports for full council decision should still be sent to the relevant committee where possible.)	Yes	
Is there a background paper or papers? (provide links below).		No
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Northumberland County Council chose, in 2015, to discontinue support for legacy CCTV systems that were acquired by its predecessor district councils. This included the CCTV system in Berwick town centre. Parish and Town Councils were invited to take over the stewardship of these systems if they wished. BTC chose to do so in 2015, and various upgrades have been made to both the installations, and their supporting infrastructure at Berwick police Station since then. The current system comprises of a network of cameras, some connected by wired networks and some by wifi, connected to a recorder at the police station, from where cameras can be monitored or recordings played back. There is no regular monitoring of the cameras. 2. Town Centre CCTV was one component of a partnership approach to retail theft prevention in Berwick, which also included a Shopwatch scheme where premises were also in contact via radio. 3. Town Centre CCTV also had a role to play in preventing anti-social behaviour arising from the night time economy, in conjunction with a Pubwatch scheme that relied upon communications between member premises and the police. A background paper explaining this history, which extends back to 2000, is appended. 4. Officers have been asked by council to review the efficiency of the CCTV system. 5. The review has been conducted via dialogue with Northumbria police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and by consultation with the general public. Responses received from the public are attached as a background paper. 6. Despite repeated inquiries, no data appears to exist that demonstrates a link between the CCTV system and detection of crime, and police do not appear to record this data in any meaningful way. The Office of the 		

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Police and Crime Commissioner appear to have no opinion as to whether CCTV should be publicly funded and regard its use as an operational matter in which they do not interfere.

7. The elements of the Pubwatch and Shopwatch schemes described in the background paper (e.g. radio connections) no longer exist. There have been significant changes in the nighttime economy since the inception of the scheme, and the prevention of crime and disorder objective required for any premises licence application under the Licensing Act 2003 is routinely addressed by the license applicant installing CCTV.
8. The cost of installing and monitoring CCTV has changed radically; in the course of preparing this report a local business was identified which supports 24 business customers in the local area, using a mix of technologies including mobile phone apps. Discussions with this company were a sharp reminder that the current system is approaching the 25th anniversary of its inception and included a brief demonstration of the way in which feeds or recordings could be aggregated. The only conclusion that could be reached is that, if we were to consider establishing a CCTV system today it would look nothing like the existing system.
9. Council is liable for any costs arising from the installation of cameras and ancillary equipment on private buildings; this has given rise to an instance where we've had to seek quotes for the removal and re-installation of a camera to allow building works to take place, at a cost of approx. £4.5k.
10. For all these reasons officers have formed the conclusion that the current system does not represent value for money, and that a scheme more like the one set out in the original police report attached as a background paper would be the best solution, managed and funded by an appropriate partnership.

Issues arising from proposal

None.

Rationale for recommendation.

Council is required to be an effective steward of public funds, to demonstrate a focus on value for money, and to seek to ensure the best possible outcomes for residents and visitors.

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