

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 1 st July, 2019
Report Subject	The Councils CCTV Service and a shared service with Wrexham
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Assets
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing & Assets)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CCTV system is monitored from a dedicated and secure monitoring suite in Phase 3 of County Hall, Mold. There are a total of 120 public realm cameras on the current network together with ancillary equipment i.e. screen wall, recording equipment, servers

Issues surrounding CCTV can be emotive, with members of the public generally comforted by the camera installations and knowing that there is someone 'looking out for them' as they go about their daily business in our towns. However, austerity has forced Local Authorities to seriously consider the role of CCTV.

The report considers a number of options relating to CCTV installation and these are set out within the report. Relocation of the service to Wrexham has continued to be explored for some time; this option would provide a joint CCTV service managed by Wrexham. Flintshire would remain responsible for Fibre costs, camera maintenance and replacement

Wrexham's facility in Rewither Tower is modern with an layout which always envisaged additional partners, in fact there is a space for a screen wall, such as is used by Flintshire CCTV and desk provision is already in place, although some minor work to integrate the systems will be required as will the necessary connectivity between County Hall and Redwither Tower. The option to merge services will provide the necessary resilience for both partners and assist both partners manage costs more effectively.

Developments with CCTV have seen increased use of deployable cameras to areas or hot spots of high crime and anti-social behaviour. These have been highly effective when used alongside the existing fixed camera network and increased use of these cameras is being further considered.

Cabinet supported the proposal, set out within the report, on 18 June 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Organisational Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the merging of the CCTV monitoring function with Wrexham having been assured over service continuity.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE COUNCILS CCTV SERVICE AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE
1.01	The CCTV system is monitored from a dedicated and secure monitoring suite in Phase 3 of County Hall, Mold. There are a total of 120 public realm cameras on the current network together with ancillary equipment i.e. screen wall, recording equipment, servers.
1.02	The service was set up a number of years ago as part of an initiative led by the United Kingdom and Welsh Governments linked to Community Safety. This resulted in an extensive programme of CCTV control rooms being installed throughout Wales with the major capital costs being met by Welsh Government and ongoing revenue costs being met by County Councils and partners. In terms of revenue there is a small contribution provided by North Wales Police, circa £17k with Town Councils contributing circa £100k.
1.03	The camera network monitoring was, until very recently, provided through an external service provider. Camera maintenance and replacement is carried out through an external contractor on an ad hoc basis.
1.04	There has been very little capital investment in the CCTV control room. The most recent work, which is currently in progress, is the replacement of the data/image recorder, earlier work has involved the replacement of the screen wall, a critical necessity with replacement needed due to the failure of many of the monitoring screens. In addition, a total of 15 cameras have been purchased over the last three years to replace defective stock.
1.05	The monitoring contract has now naturally expired and the monitoring service has now been taken in house and staff transferred under TUPE in the interim period.
	Consideration of Future Service Provision and Options
1.06	Issues surrounding CCTV can be emotive, with members of the public generally comforted by the camera installations and knowing that there is someone 'looking out for them' as they go about their daily business in our towns. However, austerity has forced Local Authorities to seriously consider the role of CCTV, more particularly because the major user and service which derives the most benefit (North Wales Police) also contribute the least financially. In this context, it is understood that within North Wales, two monitoring centres are currently unstaffed and four are staffed but operating various limited shift patterns.

1.07	As noted above, the current location of the CCTV suite is problematic in that it is located in phase 3, an area to be demolished under the County Hall rationalisation plans. If the facility is to continue then it needs to be relocated, do nothing is not an option.
1.08	Relocation to Phase 1 or 2 is an option, but considered unviable as the capital set up costs are high, and the facility would have to be relocated again in any case due to the demolition of phases 1 and 2 at some point in the future.
1.09	Relocation to Ewloe was considered early on in the development and refurbishment stage and still remains a potential solution but capital costs again are high.
1.10	<p>Relocation of the service to Wrexham has continued to be explored for some time; this option would provide a joint CCTV service managed by Wrexham. Flintshire would remain responsible for Fibre costs, camera maintenance and replacement.</p> <p>Wrexham's facility in Rewither Tower is modern with an layout which always envisaged additional partners, in fact there is a space for a screen wall, such as is used by Flintshire CCTV and desk provision is already in place, although some minor work to integrate the systems will be required as will the necessary connectivity between County Hall and Redwither Tower. The option to merge services will provide the necessary resilience for both partners and assist both partners manage costs more effectively.</p>
1.11	The provision of a public realm CCTV services are not a statutory service, however, as has been noted above there is substantial and positive community benefit and reassurance derived from having such systems in place. Many organisations have been adopting innovative ways of delivering the service and as noted above the Council has been actively discussing with Wrexham a shared service solution.
1.12	Developments with CCTV have seen increased use of deployable cameras to areas or hot spots of high crime and anti-social behaviour. These have been highly effective when used alongside the existing fixed camera network and increased use of these cameras is being further considered.
1.13	There is very little performance information flowing from NWP into the use or otherwise of the system, but it is clear that they rely heavily on such systems to monitor the public realm and derive substantial benefit from it. In addition, there is evidence that reductions in policing are creating pressures on CCTV operatives through the increased tasking of image reviews in support of their work, activity that they (NWP) would normally undertake. It is only right that as part of this work, we reopen discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and North Wales Police on a sustainable funding model for the future.
1.14	There are a number of additional benefits that could be grown from a joint approach with Wrexham. This includes the provision of a key-holding service and alarm monitoring service.

	Conclusion
1.15	CCTV is seen in many communities as a significant contributor in the fight against crime, and to this end many town Councils fund its ongoing use. However, to run a facility and maintain it is expensive and economies of scale need to be reflected in any future service model. The joint provision of CCTV services through Wrexham is seen as positive in evidencing joint working, cost sharing and securing a sustainable service.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The current monitoring contract delivered through the external service provider has ended. Staff who delivered that service have now transferred into the Council under TUPE and the service is being directly managed by the County Council.
2.02	In terms of the financial impacts, a joint CCTV monitoring service with Wrexham has a number of clear benefits including increased resilience and the sharing of costs. Financial information is set out in the attached appendix A

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Discussions have been taking place with Wrexham to understand service scale and dimension.
3.02	A report was presented to Cabinet on 18 June 2019 and subsequently supported.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The joint approach with Wrexham does not progress and Flintshire is then left with no CCTV service. In terms of mitigation the Council could either close the facility or engage agency operators through its agency arrangement or retender, however the fundamental issue relates to where it could be relocated.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Financial modelling.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Neal Cockerton, Chief Officer, Housing and Assets Telephone: 01352 703169 E-mail: neal.cockerton@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) – A video surveillance system that is not openly transmitted.
7.02	TUPE - The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/246) and are the United Kingdom's implementation of the European Union Business Transfers Directive. It is an important part of UK labour law, protecting employees whose business is being transferred to another business.