

Report of the Executive Director

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA UPDATE1. Purpose of report

To provide the Committee with various updates and information regarding the review of surveillance cameras owned and operated by the Council. Specifically, those monitored as part of the share service with Ashfield District Council and Newark and Sherwood District Council.

2. Detail

At its meeting on 16 September 2021, and following two Task and Finish Group meetings, the Community Safety Committee considered a report which proposed the Council reduce the number of cameras being monitored 24/7 but maintain coverage by upgrading to more modern technology where this was required. It was agreed that it was important to improve the quality of images in accordance with police requirements, to upgrade and modernise the Council's camera systems in order to create resilience for the future and provide security to help ensure that people feel that Broxtowe is a safe place to live, work and visit.

The Council has 64 cameras continuously monitored in public places. These are mostly in town centres; the remainder being located at a housing site in Chilwell. These 64 cameras are managed and monitored centrally as part of a shared service arrangement with Ashfield District Council and Newark and Sherwood District Council. Following the review, the number of town centre cameras will be reduced by 23. However, with more modern cameras having greater capabilities and achieving better depth of field with supportive analytics, coverage will be maintained.

The Council manages additional surveillance camera systems. These are located at various sites including for example, Council building and some fleet vehicles, Leisure, and video badges. The systems are managed locally from the facility in which they are based or corporately within the Surveillance Camera, Parking and Security team. These surveillance camera systems will be reviewed separately during 2022/23 in line with the Surveillance Commissioner's Code of Practice.

3. Financial implications

The financial implications are set out in appendix 1.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX 1

Broxtowe Borough Council Surveillance Cameras

Currently, 64 Broxtowe cameras are in public places such as town centres. These are monitored centrally by a private contractor (Profile) as part of a shared service arrangement with two other local authorities. Broxtowe takes a lead role in the procurement and management of both the surveillance camera monitoring and maintenance contracts.

The arrangement includes a 24/7 control room based at Police HQ. Broxtowe Borough Council recharges the other two authorities proportionately, based on the number of centrally monitored cameras as of the 1 April each year.

Local Authority in the shared service	No. of cameras
Newark & Sherwood District Council	74
Ashfield District Council	29
Broxtowe Borough Council	64

The total monitoring cost for 2020/21 was £149,045 – which approximately amounts to £900 per camera per year or a cost to Broxtowe of approximately £58,000. Under the terms of the Partnership Agreement, any reduction in the number of cameras being monitored requires:

“The partnership shall meet in September of each year to discuss the respective proposals of each party with regard to the number of cameras they will be monitoring from 1 April of the following year.

The other partners must be given a minimum of six months’ notice if any partner decides to increase or decrease their number of cameras by 25% or more. If agreed by the parties, a small or insignificant change in a party’s camera numbers will be recorded but may not require a change in contribution rates.”

Effectively this means that any reduction in the number of Broxtowe’s 64 continuously monitored cameras by more than 25%. Following the review, the other parties were notified prior 30 September 2021 for implementation to take place by 1 April 2022. Financial savings will begin to accrue April 2022.

The re-calculation of percentages is as follows based on the proposed camera upgrades:

Local Authority in the shared service	No. of cameras	% of cameras
Newark & Sherwood District Council	74	51.5%
Ashfield District Council	29	20.0%
Broxtowe Borough Council	41	28.5%
Total	144	100%

Estimated overall cost

The details contained within this report in terms of the upgraded units will cost and estimated £41,000 (capital). The total cost of upgrades anticipated during the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) period from 2022/23 to 2024/25, including capital upgrades and ongoing maintenance, is £95,000. This also includes the commitment from the capital programme 2022/23 to upgrade and relocate the town centre wireless network from the old town hall to a more central location (Beeston Cinema rooftop) and the purchase of a borough wide re deployable surveillance system to tackle any areas of concern.

There is a potential saving on monitoring costs of around £20,000 per year. Should that saving be achieved this will equate to £40,000 over the MTFS and £20,000 plus per annum thereafter.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

	Upgrade Costs (Capital)	Potential Revenue Savings
2022/23	£85,000	£5,000
2023/24	£10,000	£20,000
Total (Two-year)	£95,000	£25,000

With a total capital outlay of around £95,000 (including the cost of migrating the wireless network from the old Town Hall to the Cinema) and potential savings of £20,000 per annum from 2023/24 this will see a pay-back period on the capital investment within 5 years.

The other Broxtowe and LLeisure Equipment

The other 192 Broxtowe and LLeisure CCTV cameras and video badges are in a variety of other locations, some managed locally from the facility in which they are based, and some managed corporately. The 192 cameras are summarised below:

Location	Cameras	2020/21 Costs*
LLeisure facilities (Bramcote, Chilwell, Kimberley Leisure Centres)	48	£1,422
Car parks, parks and video badges	30	£11,365
Housing & Community buildings	25	£3,307
Other council offices (e.g. Foster Avenue)	18	£744
Kimberley refuse vehicle	56	£1700
Bramcote Crematorium	15	£258

***Note:** These costs are not a like for like comparison with each other. For example, some are self-contained systems with no comms or dedicated monitoring costs; some budgets include an element of repair and replacement, and others do not

Usage of Broxtowe public place Cameras 2020 (the 65 town centre cameras)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Reactive incidents viewed	8	6	17	2	2	4	3	11	6	14	19	9	101
Proactive incidents viewed	9	4	8	16	13	5	11	13	7	10	10	5	111
Total incidents viewed	17	10	25	18	15	9	14	24	13	24	29	14	212
Arrests made	2	2	2	2	2	0	4	7	0	2	6	2	31
Police viewings	14	4	4	1	3	3	7	16	5	15	20	6	98
Discs produced	5	3	3	0	1	1	2	9	1	3	5	2	35
Out of hrs calls taken	77	114	78	68	103	96	74	80	96	126	86	116	1114

Future work

In addition to the upgrades to the current surveillance suite, a range of other surveillance camera work is planned to be completed during 2022/23 for example:

- The implementation of a new Broxtowe Learning Zone training course focused on surveillance camera systems and specifically the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.
- The embedding of a new guidance document to support managers who are responsible for surveillance camera systems in their service area
- Relocating the wireless backhaul transmission system from the Town Hall roof to the new Beeston town centre cinema site, which includes the realignment of the Beeston town centre wireless system.
- Procurement of a mobile surveillance camera system to enable the Authority to deploy the camera in locations where there is justification to do so.

APPENDIX 2

Considerations for the installation, operation or removal of surveillance cameras

The main principles are outlined in the “Surveillance Camera Code of Practice” published in June 2013 and to which “relevant authorities” (such as local authorities) “must have regard”.

The 12 guiding principles:

1. *Use of a surveillance camera system must always be for a specified purpose which is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and necessary to meet an identified pressing need.*
2. *The use of a surveillance camera system must take into account its effect on individuals and their privacy, with regular reviews to ensure its use remains justified.*
3. *There must be as much transparency in the use of a surveillance camera system as possible, including a published contact point for access to information and complaints.*
4. *There must be clear responsibility and accountability for all surveillance camera system activities including images and information collected, held and used.*
5. *Clear rules, policies and procedures must be in place before a surveillance camera system is used, and these must be communicated to all who need to comply with them.*
6. *No more images and information should be stored than that which is strictly required for the stated purpose of a surveillance camera system, and such images and information should be deleted once their purposes have been discharged.*
7. *Access to retained images and information should be restricted and there must be clearly defined rules on who can gain access and for what purpose such access is granted; the disclosure of images and information should only take place when it is necessary for such a purpose or for law enforcement purposes.*
8. *Surveillance camera system operators should consider any approved operational, technical and competency standards relevant to a system and its purpose and work to meet and maintain those standards.*
9. *Surveillance camera system images and information should be subject to appropriate security measures to safeguard against unauthorised access and use.*
10. *There should be effective review and audit mechanisms to ensure legal requirements, policies and standards are complied with in practice, and regular reports should be published.*
11. *When the use of a surveillance camera system is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, and there is a pressing need for its use, it should then be used in the most effective way to support public safety and law enforcement with the aim of processing images and information of evidential value.*
12. *Any information used to support a surveillance camera system which compares against a reference database for matching purposes should be accurate and kept up to date.*

As per the Highway Code it is not directly an offence to fail to comply with these guiding principles and the details set out in the Code of Practice, but failure to comply could be a material matter in any legal proceedings:

“A failure on the part of any person to act in accordance with any provision of this code does not of itself make that person liable to criminal or civil proceedings. This code is, however, admissible in evidence in criminal or civil proceedings, and a court or tribunal may take into account a failure by a relevant authority to have regard to the code in determining a question in any such proceedings.”

Principle 2 is especially important when it comes to any proposal to implement or review a camera system: -

*This principle points to the need for a **privacy impact assessment** process to be undertaken **whenever the development or review of a surveillance camera system is being considered** to ensure that the purpose of the system is and remains justifiable, there is **consultation with those most likely to be affected**, and the impact on their privacy is assessed and any appropriate safeguards can be put in place. Where such an assessment follows a formal and documented process, such processes help to ensure that sound decisions are reached on implementation and on any necessary measures to safeguard against disproportionate interference with privacy.*

Switching off cameras

Switching off cameras (whilst leaving them in situ) requires “*consultation with those most likely to be affected*” and therefore cannot be done “secretly” in the hope of achieving most of the benefits at a much smaller proportion of the ongoing costs (structural and electrical testing would still be required). Effectively they become false cameras which then either require dishonest signage implying they are still functional, or honest signage saying they are no longer working. In the case of dishonest signage: -

“If there is a false sense of security implied, people have the right to rely on that security and may very well expose the responsible party for the false sense of security.”

Thus it can be seen that switching off cameras, having followed due process, and with honest signage, is a cost-reduction option. However, as detailed at the start of appendix 1, the central monitoring cost-reduction benefits for Broxtowe would take a while to filter through; a replacement out-of-hours call-taking function might be needed; and due process would be required before they could be switched back on. If cameras were left off for a pro-longed period of time they might not work again if rotating mechanisms etc. had seized up.