

CCTV MONITORING – MOTION TO COUNCIL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Margaret Sherrey
Portfolio Holder Consulted	yes
Relevant Head of Service	Head of Community Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Key Decision N/A	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 At the meeting of Full Council on 18th January 2012 the following motion was put forward by Councillor McDonald:

“That this Council no longer monitors CCTV coverage outside of Bromsgrove and Redditch and gives due notice of this to those it may concern.”

- 1.2 The outcome of the debate at Full Council was that Members voted in favour of referring the issue to Cabinet for consideration as part of the budget process so that relevant facts and figures could be reported and taken into account.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the facts relating to the current arrangements whereby the Council operates CCTV cameras on behalf of Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) under a Service Level Agreement, and to highlight the implications that would be associated with terminating that arrangement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Cabinet consider the motion to council and determine whether to continue to provide CCTV services outside of Bromsgrove and Redditch, subject to suitable agreements being in place:

2.2 That Cabinet determines whether to re-negotiate the CCTV services SLA with Wyre Forest District Council.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 In 2004 Bromsgrove District Council agreed to start providing CCTV services for Wyre Forest District Council. That arrangement is currently subject to a Service Level Agreement between the Council and Wyre Forest District Council under which Bromsgrove is funded and has responsibility for monitoring the Wyre Forest CCTV cameras.

The purpose of the 3 year Service Level Agreement is to provide control, monitoring, and recording of CCTV.

- 3.2 If the Council was to withdraw from the current arrangement this would result in a loss of income starting from April 2012. As the contract was initially set up by Bromsgrove Council, this income is and will continue to be paid solely in to this Council's budget, without any apportionment to Redditch.
- 3.3 The income from the contract brings about economies of scale and subsidises the fixed cost for the service, including salaries. If the contract is terminated and income is withdrawn the fixed costs would still have to be found by Bromsgrove District Council.
- 3.4 Financial Services have been consulted on this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The current arrangements for Bromsgrove District Council to monitor the CCTV cameras of Wyre Forrest District Council date back to October 2004 when Cabinet gave approval for the service to be provided following a request made by Wyre Forest. The background at the time was that Wyre Forest had been recommended to enter into a sharing arrangement by Government Office West Midlands in line with the Government's Shared Policy facility.
- 4.2 The original proposal was to monitor 7 cameras for Wyre Forest. The scheme was renegotiated and expanded by a further 10 cameras in 2007. The current SLA for 17 cameras runs for three years from April 2009 and will expire in April 2012. Officer's are currently in contact with colleagues at WFDC to actively re-negotiate the contract with WFDC, with a view to the service continuing to be provided on the same terms as at present.
- 4.3 There is no provision in the current SLA for early termination of the agreement by BDC and therefore the Council would be in breach of contract if it ended the arrangement before the expiry of the SLA in April 2012. To terminate early would lead to a claim for damages/ compensation. The current SLA is drafted on the basis that the term of agreement cannot be extended. Therefore the legal team would be looking to enter into a new SLA with Wyre Forest on the same terms as the current agreement starting in April 2012.
- 4.4 The Senior Solicitor has been consulted with regard to the legal implications.

5. Service/Operational Implications

- 5.1 The contract requires the Council to monitor 17 public space CCTV cameras in Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport. This compares to 97 cameras in Bromsgrove and 50 in Redditch.
- 5.2 It should be noted that not all cameras are on display on the monitor wall at all times. The wall can be configured to various plans and operators have defined the optimum viewing for both day time and night time, showing up to 72 images at one time (more than that means the images become too small for effective monitoring). The monitors run through a sequence of cameras which changes every 2 minutes. However all cameras are recorded at all times and play back is instant when a review is required. All cameras are set to look at predefined locations and automatically move when not being controlled by an operator. Operators work to a 'proactive monitoring timetable' to ensure that all locations are monitored and not just high traffic areas.
- 5.3 Staffing of the monitoring centre is profiled to meet the peaks and troughs of the work demand. Officers regularly monitor call response times to ensure the staffing levels are appropriate and can easily map out the activity of a shift to establish that sufficient staff are in place. All operators are trained and competent in all aspects of the operation, and no individual is assigned to WFDC only. The cessation of the WFDC contract would not result in a change in the staffing levels required for CCTV, Lifeline and Out of Hours services.
- 5.4 As set out above, from an operational point of view the provision of the service to Wyre Forest is managed as part of the overall CCTV service. There are no reasons operationally, legally or financially why officers would consider changing the arrangements. As referred to at para 4.2 discussions are taking place with Wyre Forest with a view to the current arrangements continuing under an updated Service Level Agreement.

6 Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

CCTV reduces the fear of crime for those living in, working in, and visiting the areas covered. It helps deter crime, detect crime and prevent crime. CCTV is used to assist in the apprehension of offenders, to produce evidence for prosecution, maintain public order and enhance community safety.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The risk to BDC is financial loss of income from April 2012.
- 7.2 Members should also consider the risk to partnership relations with WFDC in the future. WFDC would have a large capital out lay to

redirect their camera fibres to another organisation. As a minimum it would be advisable for withdrawal of services to be carried out as a planned and staged process to allow WFDC sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix – None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- a) Executive Cabinet Report 13 October 2004.
- c) Minutes of Executive Cabinet 13 October 2004.

10. AUTHOR OF REPORT

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