

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

DECISION

meeting date: TUESDAY, 9 MARCH 2021
title: RIBBLE VALLEY CCTV - OPTIONS
submitted by: JOHN HEAP – DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: ADRIAN HARPER HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To present options for how the Council can support village or parish requests for CCTV coverage in their areas.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To ensure best use of council resources.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At your last committee meeting on 5th January it was agreed that options should be examined for the expansion of the Town Centre CCTV scheme following numerous requests for cameras from other parishes.

2.2 The current Town Centres scheme comprises 34 cameras. 7 in Longridge, 3 in Whalley and 24(25 incl Whalley Road) in Clitheroe. All cameras are fed back via secure fibre links to the CCTV suite. They are monitored 24hrs a day, 7 days a week by a CCTV monitoring contractor.

2.3 There are also 3 stand-alone cameras in the borough. These cameras are not monitored in the CCTV suite. One overlooks the car park at Sabden. One covers the car park at Chipping and one overlooks the toilets in the castle field. The car park cameras are the responsibility of the respective parish councils and were funded by the Community Safety Partnership. The control points for the 2 cameras are the Sabden toilets and the Chipping Village Hall.

2.4 Since your last meeting the installation of two other stand-alone cameras have been approved by Policy and Finance committee. These are at the bowling green in the castle grounds and the Riverside barrier. Both of these cameras will have a mechanism for interrogation built into the base of the columns.

2.5 There are presently a number of parishes now requesting more cameras.

2.6 At a meeting of the Ribble Valley Crime and Reduction Partnership held on 25 February 2021, the topic of stand-alone CCTV systems for rural villages was discussed. The partnership expressed support, in principle, with further work to follow and the possibility of financial contributions.

3 ISSUES

3.1 In most cases the starting point for those requesting new CCTV coverage is an assumption that adding more cameras to the Councils existing infrastructure is both simple and affordable.

- 3.2 It was explained to Committee at your last meeting that those assumptions are inaccurate but officers undertook to look in a little more detail at what might be involved if Committee is minded to support the community requests.
- 3.3 The options available fall broadly into two methods: expansion of the existing linked and monitored network or more, local, stand-alone installations.
- 3.4 Committee resolved at your last meeting to support, in principle, any bids from parishes for funding support from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership or from the Police and Crime Commissioners office for stand-alone solutions.
- 3.5 Expansion of Existing Offering
- 3.5.1 The Councils current equipment is licensed to facilitate up to 64 cameras. This can be expanded to up to 128 by adding single licences when each camera is added. Licence £75
- 3.5.2 However, the existing building where the CCTV suite is located is extremely basic and not suitable for expansion. The current contract for monitoring the Councils system requires a single operative to be on duty at all times and the existing monitoring suite was created to accommodate that.
- 3.5.3 Should the decision be made to increase the number of cameras to be installed and fed back to the CCTV suite it is considered that a new building would be required as the existing location could not be expanded adequately.
- 3.5.4 The town centre cameras are all cabled using fibre optic cables back to the suite so, the new building would ideally need to be located in Clitheroe close to the existing suite. It may be that the council could lease or purchase a building with the associated costs. (est. £30000 refurb costs)
- 3.5.5 The building would require furnishing and the CCTV equipment in the existing suite would need to be transferred.
- 3.5.6 The connection to the new building could be done by several methods:
- i) A street cabinet Installed and fibre optic cables spliced from the existing monitoring suite into the cabinet and then extended to the new location using existing town centre ducting networks. This has a limited range of 2km. (est £20000)
 - ii) Maintain some equipment within the current building and lay fibres to the new location. (est £17000)
 - iii) A street cabinet installed to the front of the existing building containing some of the equipment from the existing suite and use of a wireless connection from one of the existing camera poles to the new building location. Assuming a line of sight. (est £17000)
- 3.5.7 As discussed previously, the number of monitoring staff would need to be increased. Based on the existing contract cost of one operative being £96800. An increased requirement to two staff at all times could feasibly be expected to add a further operational cost of up to £75000 per year.

3.6 Stand-Alone Cameras

- 3.6.1 Any requests made by parish council be directed initially towards funding from CSP or parishes might consider precepting to fund a scheme. The Council may choose to offer support. Once funding is approved the Engineering Section could oversee the contract process for the installation of the stand-alone cameras. Once installed the cameras would then be handed over to the respective parishes.
- 3.6.2 Training would be included in the CCTV installation contract for the parish CCTV coordinators. Help would be provided by council staff for the parish council to adopt the necessary CCTV policies required to operate the system.
- 3.6.3 Once installed the system could be interrogated by the parish operatives as and when necessary, so that images can be downloaded and supplied to the police.
- 3.6.4 Under this system – as in Sabden and Chipping currently - the cameras are not permanently monitored. However, should there be an incident the camera can be interrogated for evidence leading to the possible prosecution of the perpetrator

3.7 Possible Future Developments

- 3.7.1 Expansion of the Council's existing system is unlikely to be achievable quickly for many reasons, but the requests from parishes for whatever security is offered by CCTV coverage are already being made.
- 3.7.2 Expansion by means of standalone systems is flexible, relatively inexpensive in terms of capital and very inexpensive in terms of revenue costs, and once the capital funding is in place, a system can be commissioned very quickly.
- 3.7.3 If, in future, the Council were to resolve to relocate and expand the capacity of the CCTV monitoring suite, then it would be possible – technically – quite simply to transmit the feeds from standalone systems to be included for monitoring in real time.
- 3.7.4 This can be done using a variety of methods:
 - i) Depending on whether there is line of sight between the camera and the CCTV monitoring suite, a small aerial mounted on the top of the new building could receive microwave transmissions from the camera. (est set up costs of £1,000 plus £40 per month broadband costs.)
 - ii) Installation of a phone line to the camera location would enable broadband to transfer the images. (est £1,000 set up costs and £55 per month broadband costs.)
 - iii) Installation of a 4G router (signal dependant) providing unlimited data usage. (est £1,000 set up costs and £45 per month broadband costs.) This system does not require the line of sight and was used on the Whalley cameras to transfer the images to the monitoring suite whilst the fibre connection was being transferred between providers.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Expansion of the existing system would involve new construction, or some alternative means of securing suitable premises. Construction works may be up to £200,000, whilst conversion costs of an existing building could be £30,000. Transfer of signals from existing site to new site up to £20,000. Additional revenue cost of monitoring up to £75,000 per annum.

Standalone systems would involve between £6,000 - £10,000 per installation but minimal revenue costs thereafter.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Options identified are technically possible. There might be some local concerns re siting of cameras (especially if pole mounted) and care will be needed to avoid collateral intrusion. There may be procurement issues around amendments to the monitoring contract.
- Political – Our existing system was largely driven by the Police, based on evidence of crimes committed/risk of crimes, particularly crimes against people rather than property. Demands from parishes tend to depart from that assessment and reflect concerns expressed within communities.

The Council prides itself on listening to/supporting parishes and it is appropriate for the Council to consider whether/how these demands can be met.

- Reputation – The Council has provided and maintained the CCTV system for its town centres for many years and demonstrated support for the Police in detection/prevention of crime. A decision either way on these proposals is unlikely to have a significant impact on the Council's reputation in this respect.
- Equality & Diversity – None.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Reaffirm Council support for funding bids made by parishes for standalone CCTV systems to funding partners.
- 5.2 Ask the Director of Community Services to arrange officer support wherever possible to assist parishes in the preparation of bids, managing tenders and preparing protocols for overseeing systems.
- 5.3 Ask Policy and Finance Committee to consider whether the Council's concurrent functions grant scheme might be amended to include installations for standalone CCTV systems as being eligible for support.

ADRIAN HARPER
HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

JOHN HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information please ask for Adrian Harper, extension 4523