



Cabinet Report

Meeting or Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	6th June 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Crime and Disorder CCTV
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Financial Summary:	The decision would result in an estimated £1.7m saving to the capital budget and would avoid the Council incurring revenue costs of approximately £1m per annum
Report Author:	Richard Cressey, Principal Policy Officer Tel: 7641 3403
Report of:	Stuart Love, Executive Director of City Management and Communities; Tel 7641 2111

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Since 2010 Westminster City Council has faced significant financial challenges due to reductions in funding from central government along with cost pressures within services. To the current financial year, our adjusted core Settlement Funding Assessment has fallen by £92m in cash terms and obviously more if the effects of inflation are taken into account.
- 1.2. Consequently the Council has examined every area of operation to identify opportunities to reduce costs and generate additional income. This process is on-going and will last until at least 2019/20.
- 1.3. The crime and disorder, fixed CCTV service provided by Westminster City Council is not considered to be the most effective use of the Council's limited resources and therefore it is proposed that the service should cease to exist in its current form from 1 September 2016.
- 1.4. The evidence that CCTV alone plays a significant role in preventing general crime and improving the safety of the city is limited. This is the case both in terms of independent research studies conducted to establish the efficacy of CCTV as well as the Council's own data which suggests that the service is primarily reactive in nature, supporting police prosecutions and other post-event activity, but not serving as a deterrent.

- 1.5. The Metropolitan Police benefit directly from the existence of CCTV, both in terms of securing prosecutions following arrests and the operational deployment of resources, but do not make a financial contribution to the revenue costs of the system.
- 1.6. The operational benefit to the Council is limited and, as such, continued investment in the service cannot be justified at a time of financial restraint.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That approval is given not to renew or re-procure the CCTV staffing contract currently operated by G4S following its expiration on 1 September 2016.
- 2.2. That approval is given for the decommissioning of the existing fixed CCTV camera system and estate from September 2016. That is unless a responsible partner¹ volunteers before 1 August 2016 to accept transfer of the assets and their continued operation.
- 2.3. That, should a responsible partner wish to assume responsibility for the assets, approval is given to transfer the assets from 1 September 2016.

3. Reasons for Decision

- 3.1. The current crime and disorder, fixed CCTV system is reaching the end of its operational life and contracts for control room staffing and maintenance of the system are due to expire over the next year.
- 3.2. The expected annual revenue cost for the continued provision of CCTV cannot be met within existing budget projections. It is therefore not possible to procure contracts and make financial commitments which we cannot meet.
- 3.3. The Council can no longer afford to directly subsidise partners which benefit from the existence of a CCTV service, most notably the Metropolitan Police.
- 3.4. The effectiveness of CCTV in preventing particular types of crime in public spaces is questionable as suggested by the Campbell Collaboration's 2008 report *Effects of Closed Circuit Television on Crime*.
- 3.5. The crime and disorder CCTV System is used to support management of the public realm with activity that ultimately assists in the detection and apprehension of offenders and undertaking civil or criminal prosecutions. As a result the crime and disorder CCTV system is primarily used to provide reactive support for the police in securing arrests and prosecutions relating to crimes committed in sight of cameras.
- 3.6. Extensive engagement with partners over recent years on the future viability of the CCTV system has not led to any meaningful financial support, leaving the Council with the full financial burden which it can no longer continue to bear.
- 3.7. Despite the declining health of the CCTV system, the Council would be prepared to transfer the cameras and feeds over to partners such as the Metropolitan Police and work in partnership to ensure the continued viability of the system where appropriate.

¹ We consider a responsible partner as an organisation prepared to manage the asset in line with guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and we would look to work with the ICO to ensure the transfer is undertaken in an appropriate manner.

Any partner would also have to provide accommodation for a control room as the Council's existing lease at the Trocadero is due to expire in 2017. Such an agreement would have to be under development by 1 August 2016 to enable the effective planning of decommissioning or transfer.

- 3.8. The Council's Crime and Disorder CCTV system plays a relatively marginal role in providing CCTV coverage of the city. There are a number of other systems currently operating in the city which provide extensive coverage and could be used in the event of a major incident or to capture criminal activity, subject to their location in relation to the incident.

4. Background information, including policy context

- 4.1 The long-term financial sustainability of Westminster's crime and disorder CCTV service has been uncertain for a number of years, most notably since the adoption of the 2012 CCTV Policy.
- 4.2 The Cabinet Member Report which saw this policy adopted stated that; "the reduction in third party contributions toward the upkeep of CCTV requires a review of the funding model for CCTV".
- 4.3 This financial uncertainty has been openly shared with partners for a number of years and it has been acknowledged, by the Metropolitan Police in particular, that there should be a 'collegiate approach to funding'.
- 4.4 Extensive efforts have been made in recent years to engage a range of prospective funding partners in the future provision of the Westminster CCTV service.
- 4.5 Engagement with the Mayor of London and MOPAC has largely been conducted through face-to-face meetings with occasional follow-up correspondence confirming discussion. The most notable of these is a letter from Boris Johnson in November 2014 which states that "I am afraid it will not be possible for MOPAC to fund the ongoing revenue costs".
- 4.6 The London Crime Reduction Board (LCRB) has also looked at the matter in recent years, resulting in the establishment of a Task Force chaired by Keith Prince on behalf of MOPAC. The Task Force has been attended by Councillor Aiken and Stuart Love on behalf of Westminster City Council, but is largely focused on a long-term strategic review of CCTV needs across London rather than the immediate funding pressures facing Councils.
- 4.7 Discussions have also taken place with BIDs and major business interests, most notably in the Oxford Street area. It is clear from such discussions that businesses will only fund the service if it is directly targeted at reducing the cost of crime to their business and possibly linked to additional or dedicated police resource. This is not currently the case as the service serves a wider crime and disorder related public space function. A service of this nature would not need to involve the Council. Businesses could finance and run this service in direct partnership with the police without Council involvement. If this were to occur, it could only happen in line with the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice as issued by the government.
- 4.8 In addition to the specific discussions with partners noted here, other conversations have taken place, which suggest that the operational value of the CCTV service to a range of partners is limited.

- 4.9 The Council has engaged with senior figures working in counter-terrorism from the Metropolitan Police and other authorities. Discussions with partners have indicated that CCTV is highly unlikely to prevent a major terrorist atrocity similar to that seen in the Paris attacks where perpetrators may actually seek the publicity afforded by camera coverage and are certainly not deterred by its presence.
- 4.10 The role played by CCTV in preventing crime in public spaces such as city centres is considered to be limited as highlighted by studies such as the 2008 Campbell Collaboration report *Effects of Closed Circuit Television Surveillance on Crime* and the 2007 Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention report *Closed-Circuit Television Surveillance and Crime Prevention A Systematic Review*. The 2013 College of Policing *What Works Briefing on CCTV* builds on these two reports, making clear that CCTV is only an effective preventative solution in enclosed spaces such as car parks and on public transport and not in city centres as a broad tool for public safety.
- 4.11 The CCTV system is predominantly used to reactively police the West End, securing arrests and prosecutions for crimes committed.
- 4.11.1 7,029 incidents were captured by CCTV last year, an average of 586 per month (with the summer months having higher numbers of incidents recorded). These incidents were predominantly captured reactively (91% of incidents) and contributed to 1,313 arrests (109 per month). 1,750 requests for footage were made (92.3% of requests were from the Metropolitan Police or other police forces) and 1,406 hours of footage were secured against these requests.
- 4.11.2 Broken down by Ward, 87.8% of incidents captured by CCTV occurred in West End or St James's wards, with those wards containing 61% of the camera stock (including WIFI cameras). For individual cameras, camera 108 (Villiers St/Strand) accounted for 408 incidents and camera 38 (Leicester Square/Cranbourn Street/Bear Street) accounted for 379 incidents. The top 15 cameras for numbers of incidents recorded were all within St James's or West End wards. See Appendix A for the detailed geographical breakdown.
- 4.11.3 When footage is broken down by incident type, 53% of incidents were defined as 'assistance or disturbance'. Analysis of incidents defined as 'assistance' relate to requests by the police for assistance from the CCTV team. A more comprehensive breakdown can be seen in Appendix B.
- 4.12 There are two minor caveats around the interpretation of this data.
- 4.12.1 Firstly, multiple cameras may be used to view an incident (for example if a vehicle is being tracked), however only the primary camera used will be recorded (the recording system only allows one camera to be entered).
- 4.12.2 Secondly, it is not necessarily the case that all cameras were in constant operation over the full 12 months.
- 4.13 City West Homes operate an extensive CCTV system across Westminster, including a mix of cameras across their stock.
- 4.13.1 Each of the four hubs (North, West, Central and South) has access to mobile wireless cameras which can be deployed to hot spots as they arise. There are 4 per hubs. Total – 16 cameras.

- 4.13.2 Churchill Gardens and Lisson Green estates have fixed mobile systems. 8 cameras on Lisson Green, 8 on Churchill. Total – 16 cameras.
- 4.13.3 Little Venice has wireless cameras. Total – 11 cameras.
- 4.13.4 In addition there are various fixed systems across CWH estates with hard disc download retrieval. Total – 93 systems on a 31 day loop.
- 4.13.5 The total number of cameras CWH operate across their estate is approximately 500.
- 4.13.6 There is no control room or staff to operate the cameras, however anti-social behaviour managers and identified staff have the ability to view cameras on portable devices.
- 4.13.7 Westminster City Council has the capability to take over the software as there is remote access available. These cameras are deployed across the 4 geographical hubs. Officers would need to approach the relevant ASB manager to seek approval to use the relevant cameras.
- 4.14 Currently, Parking Services use 2 lane watch cameras in Carlton Hill and St Georges Drive and 3 wifi cameras located at Great Windmill/Shafsbury Avenue, Piccadilly / Berkeley Street and Conduit Street / Mill Street.
- 4.14.1 The remaining 46 wifi cameras have or will be decommissioned, following a change in legislation that only allows parking cameras to be used for specific purposes, or are being used as crime and disorder cameras.
- 4.14.2 The NSL CCTV contract expires on 30 June 2016, at which point, Parking Services will cease to operate cameras and will move to an unattended, automated system. The current CCTV control room will close and the operation will be managed from Dingwall in Scotland.
- 4.14.3 Parking Services are currently proposing to introduce 11 automated cameras that will cover a number of sites across the city. These will replace the existing Wifi cameras and will be deployed at specific locations across the City and redeployed around these sites as required.
- 4.14.4 Due to the automated nature of the cameras, they will have no capacity for proactive crime and disorder monitoring, however they could provide reactive footage on request, subject to the camera providing coverage of the relevant incident.
- 4.15 Various cameras (number not disclosed) are managed by the police within the Government Security Zone from a control room located at West End Central Police Station.
- 4.16 TfL operate CCTV and ANPR cameras for five main purposes:
- Protecting the health and safety of employees, customers and members of the public;
 - Preventing and detecting crime and anti-social behaviour;
 - Real time traffic monitoring;
 - Enforcing traffic rules and regulations (e.g. relating to yellow box junctions, red routes and bus lanes); and our Road User Charging Schemes; and
 - Supporting the efficient management and operation of road and rail networks.

- 4.16.1 The cameras are located in and around London Underground stations, depots, car parks and trains, across London's road network for monitoring road traffic and for traffic enforcement, across London's road network for enforcement of Road User Charging Schemes, TfL bus stations and depots, piers operated by London River Services, Victoria Coach Station and TfL offices.
- 4.16.2 The cameras are used to capture and monitor images of events that take place in specific locations in real time. The images may also be recorded on a computer hard drive or magnetic tape depending on the type of camera. Cameras may be focussed on a fixed location, set to scan a particular area, or they can be operated remotely by specially trained CCTV operators.
- 4.16.3 The number of TfL cameras operating in Westminster is unknown.
- 4.17 Private businesses also operate extensive CCTV systems including a substantial number of cameras in the West End and beyond.
 - 4.17.1 Such systems largely operate inside premises, monitoring retail space or licensed premises such as bars, pubs or restaurants. There are also however, often cameras situated on the outside of premises which provide coverage of public space, including areas which are currently covered by the Council's system.
 - 4.17.2 Whilst it is unknown exactly how many privately operated cameras there are in Westminster, it is understood that retailers on Oxford Street are, for example, able to provide coverage of almost the entire length of the street from Oxford Circus to Marble Arch.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. £1.688m capital expenditure is currently budgeted to support delivery of a new CCTV estate. Should the decision be taken not to renew the contracts as outlined in this paper, this budget commitment could be released from the capital programme. This would provide the opportunity to invest elsewhere.
- 5.2. There is currently no General Fund budget for the provision of CCTV services and as such the decision would not result in an additional saving or change to the budget baseline. The service was temporarily resourced through one-off underspends from within City Management and Communities. This approach was never intended to be a long-term solution and is not sustainable. This decision avoids the need to divert funds away from other services in order to fund CCTV on an on-going basis.
- 5.3. Furthermore, based on existing contract costs and scoping the structure of a future service, it is estimated that the annual revenue budget required would be in the region of £1million, to fund maintenance, support, staffing and accommodation.
- 5.4. The costs of decommissioning the service have been estimated at £300,000. This is based on analysis used to inform an options appraisal of the service in 2015. The decommissioning exercise would cover removal and disposal of equipment and infrastructure for which there is no re-sale value on the assets as they are beyond their economic useful life.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. Whilst the Council and associated agents have a duty to have due regard to any CCTV code of practice (May 2015) for those cameras remaining in situ across the city, the Council has no statutory duty to provide CCTV services.
- 6.2. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council has a general responsibility to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder. Given that the impact of CCTV on crime prevention is considered to be limited as set out in this paper, it is reasonable to suggest that this decision does not involve a breach of the Council's statutory responsibilities in this regard.

Legal implications provided by Joyce L Golder, Principal Solicitor, 020 7361 2181.

7. Consultation

- 7.1. The Council has been extremely open with partners, including the Metropolitan Police, about the financial viability of the Crime and Disorder CCTV system in recent years. Partners have continually stressed the perceived importance of the CCTV system but have remained unwilling to enter detailed conversations about the future of the system.
- 7.2. Appendix D provides an overview the most notable, dedicated engagement that has taken place with partners since the beginning of 2014. In addition to those listed there have been regular discussions through existing forums such as the CCTV Governance Group, the BIDs roundtable, the Safer Westminster Partnership, the CCTV Observers Panel and other joint working arrangements.
- 7.3. On 25th May 2016 a briefing was held for partners on the proposed decision. This briefing was attended by a range of partners including the private sector, the Metropolitan Police and MOPAC. Key feedback included:
 - 7.3.1. General understanding of the situation the Council facing but retained concern regarding the possible impact on public perception. Agreement to collaborate, where possible, between partners to provide reassurance.
 - 7.3.2. Only approximately 2% of reported crime in Westminster is investigated using CCTV.
 - 7.3.3. Agreement that, on its own, CCTV tends not to deliver significant reductions in crime or prevent terrorist attacks.
 - 7.3.4. Recognition that there are significant numbers of other cameras which operate in Westminster and that therefore this decision is not fundamental to the coverage of the city.
 - 7.3.5. MOPAC and the Metropolitan Police are looking into the possibility of a pan-London solution to CCTV provision. Westminster will continue to be involved with these discussions but there is no direct impact on this decision.
 - 7.3.6. There will need to be specific conversations on the mechanics of decommissioning with organisations such as Paddington BID where partnership arrangements already exist.

APPENDIX A

Geographical Breakdown

Ward	Number of Incidents	Cameras	Incidents per camera
Abbey Road	2	1	2
Bayswater	8	2	4
Bryanston & Dorset Sq	39	6	7
Cavendish Sq & Oxford Mkt	8	1	8
Church St	108	5	22
Churchill	40	5	8
Harrow Road	228	4	57
Hyde Park	232	6	39
Knightsbridge & Belgravia	3	1	3
Lancaster Gate	56	3	19
Maida Vale	3	2	2
Marylebone High St	20	6	3
Queens Park	36	5	7
Regents Park	5	1	5
St James's	3002	37	81
Tachbrook	39	1	39
Vincent Sq	12	2	6
Warwick	6	1	6
West End	3159	46	69
Westbourne	10	1	10

APPENDIX B

Breakdown of Incident Type

Incident Type	Number of Incidents
DRUGS	181
VICE/INDECENCY	57
ALCOLHOL RELATED	305
ASB	343
ASSISTANCE	1833
HOMELESS/BEGGING	348
ENVIRONMENTAL	83
STREET CRIME	247
DISTURBANCE	1886
RTA/PERSONAL INJURY	317
SUSPECT PERSON/PACKAGE	265
ILLEGAL STREET TRADING	45
MISSINGPERSON	38
VEHICLE RELATED	561
DEMO/PROTEST	253
WEAPON	89
ROBBERY	144
TASKING	34

APPENDIX C

Outline timetable for implementation of decision

Date	What
6 th June 2016	Cabinet meeting
7 th June 2016	Notice given to G4S that the staffing contract will not be extended
7 th June 2016	Atec instructed to prepare for camera decommissioning from 1 st September 2016
1st August 2016	Deadline for partners to express interesting in taking over management of cameras, feeds and other assets
1 st September 2016	G4S staffing contract expires
31 st March 2017	Atec contract expires – decommissioning to be completed

APPENDIX D

Details of engagement undertaken since the start of 2014

What	When	Outcome
Leader met with Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC)	Spring 2014	MOPAC/MPS to consider £400k contribution – no direct feedback given Other actions not followed-up by MOPAC e.g. lobbying Home Office
Correspondence exchanged with James Brokenshire MP, Home Office minister (Leader)	Spring 2014	Refusal to fund
Correspondence exchanged with Boris Johnson (Leader)	Autumn 2014	Refusal to fund
Letters exchanged with Stephen Greenhalgh, DMPC (Leader)	Spring 2015	Keith Prince asked to set-up Task Force
Stuart Love and Richard Cressey met with Cllr Jonathan Glanz in capacity as chair of the Safer London Business Partnership (SLBP)	September 2015	Non-specific interest in making financial contribution for radio operation, follow-up required leading to next line of this document.
Richard Cressey met with Hannah Wadey of SLBP	October 2015	SLBP seeking enhancements in service offer. Prepared to pay for additional operator to be placed in control room to resource radios service but no financial ability to contribute to wider overheads or general running costs. Considered insufficient to maintain service without wider support.
Cllr Aiken, Stuart Love and Richard Cressey met with government security advisors and senior MPS counter-terrorism officers	Autumn 2015	Advice given to WCC that the CCTV system is not considered a vital tool in terrorism prevention. MPS to raise issue of funding risk at MPS Board. WCC provided detailed briefing note, no further feedback offered from MPS.

APPENDIX D

What	When	Outcome
Cllr Aiken and Stuart Love attended MOPAC Task Force	Late 2015	No meaningful outcome. Long-term focused, ignoring immediate issues facing councils
Stuart Love, Mick Smith and Richard Cressey met with NVEC, Safer London Business Partnership and Oxford Street retailers	Late 2015	Refusal to fund unless system focused on Oxford Street, reduction of business crime e.g. shoplifting and delivered alongside an increase in Police resources
Stuart Love and Charlie Parker met with Helen Bailey, MOPAC	Spring 2016	Understanding and acceptance of decision
Roundtable held with key local stakeholders	25 th May 2016	Partners informed of forthcoming decision