

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - CCTV Provision

Tuesday, 25 March 2014

Present: Councillor Robert Finnamore (Chair), Councillor Kim Snape (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Doreen Dickinson, Graham Dunn, Roy Lees, June Molyneaux and Rosie Russell

Also in attendance

External representatives: Neil Pentland (Baydale Control Systems Ltd) and Dave Cook (Baydale Control Systems)

Officers: Paul Lowe (Merged Crime and Disorder Reduction Manager) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

14.CTV.18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

14.CTV.19 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – CCTV Provision held on 18 February 2014 be held as a correct record.

14.CTV.20 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of any interests.

14.CTV.21 CHORLEY'S CCTV SYSTEM AND SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES

The Group welcomed representatives from Baydale Control Systems Ltd who are the Councils current CCTV provider.

Current System

The original CCTV system is approximately 18 years old and is an analogue based system. There are currently 50 public space cameras and a number of Council properties that have CCTV systems, including Astley Hall and Cotswold House. The cameras are a mixture of old shoebox style cameras, with separate cameras and lenses, and fully functional dome cameras. The cameras are displayed on any one of 24 sections of 4 large monitors through a unit called the matrix. This matrix also controls the cameras movement functions via operator keyboards.

This matrix has been obsolete for some 3-4 years and is now un-serviceable due to the extinction of some of the parts. The matrix also has limited telemetry protocols available (the language that tells the camera which way to move) and as a result, the Council are limited as to which cameras can be used as replacements. Repairs to any part of the system are lengthy and potentially, a breakdown of a major component could result in the system being down for a considerable length of time. The cameras are recorded on an early digital recording platform which captures an image 6 times every second. The recorders are approximately 6-7 years old and though still serviceable, due to time in service they are now prone to breakdown and have had a considerable amount of money spent on this financial year.

Upgrade options

Option 1:

As there are now no available options available to upgrade the current control system, Baydale Control Systems Ltd would recommend that a modern IP based control system be installed.

The digital recording system needs upgrading and a cost effective solution would be to replace the existing five units with an off the shelf digital recording unit which would allow 16 cameras to be recorded at a similar frame rate as current with storage for 31 days. This would reduce breakdowns and on-going maintenance costs.

With the matrix now being obsolete, replace camera types are now restrictive; The Company had replaced some recently but these have had to incorporate various converters to allow transmission to the control room over wireless links and also to convert the limited telemetry protocols available. Each camera needs to be replaced with a modern analogue dome camera, these cameras have fewer parts than the current cameras and the Council would expect to see a massive reduction in routine maintenance costs per year. However these cameras require the use of many converters and extensive control room cabling per camera.

Option 2:

With the continues development of IP based technology there are increasingly more cost effective means to transmit and handle the new camera images. The recording of these IP images can now be effectively and efficiently stored at 25 images a second, which is real time. This is something that the Police are keen to see.

The proposal would be to replace the existing obsolete analogue matrix with an IP base virtual matrix. This will allow for a combination of analogue and IP cameras to be displayed on the monitors in the control room. Existing analogue cameras could be retained or upgraded at any time to this new system to allow flexibility and budget. This new system would also allow for future expansion of the system and has an infinite number of potential camera inputs and minor outputs.

The new system would allow a number of IP bases transmission methods including Wireless, IP, Council LAN network and high speed ADSL2 broadband. This would reduce or eliminate in some cases, annual BT fibre optic charges.

This control and recording system is a more costly solution to the first but would future proof Chorley Councils CCTV operation for at least 10 years. There are many advantages to this system; it will allow both analogue and IP cameras to be installed, reduces the need for multiple converters, allows multiple site connectivity, and greatly improves the systems resilience. The new control system would be able to allow more cost effective camera replacements with the benefits of superior performance. The Council could also expect to see lower energy consumption within the control room at a reduction of 20-25%.

The installation of ruggedized dome cameras was advised and Members were provided with a specification sheet that highlighted the cameras key features. This type of camera is manufactured in one complete unit, making it very quick to install and replace should faults occur. They have a superior specification and performance rate in comparison to the current 'shoe-box' type cameras that the Council currently has and are very reliable due to having less serviceable parts and complex engineering.

A replacement camera program for the Council would provide a vastly reduced annual repair programme (with the first year covered under warranty), less risk of camera down time, more cost effective future camera replacements, better quality performance and much reduced maintenance costs.

Option 3

The final level of control upgrade would be to install facial recognition, Automatic Number Plate Recognition and video analytics. Virtually all public space local authority systems do not have this functionality installed due to the high installation costs and on-going third party support contracts that are required. The estimated installation cost for a system the size of Chorley's would be considerable.

The installation of high definition mega pixel cameras, whilst of fantastic quality, carry a price tag to match and one which Members thought was too high for this authority. All though its advantages were high definition pictures and advanced detection capabilities, the installation of a system like this would be too expensive and it was noted that option 2 would allow additions of this type if deemed needed in the future.

Baydale Control Systems Ltd recommended Option 2 as a minimum provision for Chorley. The control and recording system would be upgraded immediately followed by a rolled out replacement camera program.

The Neighbourhoods Manager explained that the replacement of the cameras would be done on a prioritisation basis after a full review had been carried out by the Council. The police would prefer a real time recording facility to help assist in the prevention and detection of crime. The equipment suggested in Option 2 would provide this along with a much greater recording and storage capacity.

The Group thanked Neil Pentland, Managing Director and Dave Cook, Area Manager of Baydale Control Systems Ltd for attending the meeting and requested that the Neighbourhoods Manager research the actual comparative costs that would be involved for the following options to be brought to a future meeting of the group:

- Maintaining the current system
- The implementation of Option 2, with a rolling programme of camera replacement over three years, and
- The implementation of Option 2, replacing all the cameras at the same time.

Chair