

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

02 June 2021

Joint Report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive; the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services and the Cabinet Member for Communities

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Council

1 REVIEW OF CCTV CAMERAS

1.1 Summary

1.1.1 Members are invited to give further consideration to the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting, held on the 26 January 2021, in respect of CCTV. Additional information has become available and high-profile serious crime has taken place, resulting in the need for the original recommendations to be reassessed.

1.1.2 The recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 3 December 2020 were presented at the Cabinet meeting on the 26 January 2021, and it was agreed, prior to any decision being made, further work be carried out and reported back to Cabinet.

1.1.3 This work included a review of the appropriate locations for passive only cameras, a detailed financial analysis and an evaluation as to whether any savings achieved could contribute to the ongoing funding of the Community Safety Partnership. A copy of the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on the 26 January 2021 are shown at **Annex 1**

1.2 Serious Crimes

1.2.1 Since Cabinet requested Officers to consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to move from “Live” to “Passive” for the CCTV coverage within the Borough, there have been some tragic events that have taken place which have been witnessed by CCTV.

- In March this year, we have all been shocked by the murder of Sarah Everard, whose body was found in a Kent woodland. A serving metropolitan police officer, has been charged with her kidnap and murder and is awaiting trial.

As a result of this murder the Government increased available funding for the new 'Safer Streets' (doubling to £45m), which will potentially provide funds for improvements to CCTV and lighting in high-risk areas.

[LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - Safer streets fund doubled after death of Sarah Everard](https://www.local.gov.uk/your-authority-on-uk-local-government-safer-streets-fund-doubled-after-death-of-sarah-everard)

- Also, in March this year in Tonbridge High Street, there was a stabbing, which the Police used CCTV as an invaluable tool. The operator was able to quickly back track the sequence of events, and to forward live footage to the Police Control Room whilst liaising with Kent Police on the Police radio systems. This action resulted in the identification of the chain of events leading to the incident which included the number of parties involved and where the weapons had been disposed of. Copies of the CCTV footage were requested immediately by Kent Police to ensure an effective charge and prosecution.
- During this unprecedented time there is recognition of the concerns from members of the public over the proposed changes to move from "live" to "passive" CCTV. This has resulted in a petition at Change.org.

1.3 Changing Landscape

1.3.1 During the more recent challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and as part of the changing business and social landscape, CCTV has been a safe, efficient and reassuring way of patrolling the High Streets, Car Parks and strategic assets. This monitoring has been able to be carried out from distance, without the additional concern of social distancing for Officers on the ground. It has also assisted in guiding and supporting Officers in delivering enforcement duties when required

1.3.2 The CCTV system has also proven useful in being able to facilitate real time links between businesses that have the Shopwatch radio systems and between radio users as part of the night-time economy. It is likely that this on-going support will be welcomed by those in the areas covered by CCTV as we seek to recover from the impact of the pandemic.

1.4 Community Safety

1.4.1 There is a clear well-established link between the delivery of community safety function and the provision of CCTV. CCTV cameras are recognised as one of a number of ways in which crime and anti-social behaviour is detected and addressed. The cameras aim to:

- Help reduce the fear of crime
- Help deter crime
- Help detect crime and provide evidential material for court proceedings

- Enforce community safety, develop economic wellbeing and encourage use of town centres/car parks/facilities
- Assist the Council in enforcement of regulatory functions
- CCTV primarily benefits the public, businesses and law enforcement agencies and are operated under strict legal controls and code of practice.

1.5 Legal Implications

1.5.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a statutory duty upon the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent: -

- a) Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment);
- b) The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- c) Re-offending in its area.

1.5.2 The above duty also applies to Fire & Rescue Authorities and local Policing bodies.

1.5.3 The 1998 Act also imposes a separate duty on the Council, together with other Responsible Authorities, to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce/ combat the matters set out at (a) to (c) above.

1.5.4 The Council is under no specific statutory duty to provide CCTV cameras. The current arrangements are provided in support of our wider crime and disorder duties set out above, and as landowner (in respect of Council owned buildings and car parks).

1.5.5 The live monitoring of the CCTV system is undertaken in partnership with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council under a formal Agreement. If either party wishes to withdraw from the Agreement, 2 years notice is required.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.6.1 As set out in the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2020. It was anticipated that a potential move to a passive system would make revenue savings to the Council and assist in meeting the Savings & Transformation Strategy. The recommendation in this report will mean that no savings will be forthcoming from the review of CCTV and other areas within the Council's budget will need to be identified.

1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 As set out in the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2020

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 It is not considered that the provision of CCTV is a function that impacts upon a specific group with protected characteristics in any different way to end users and any service changes recommended would have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. Policy Considerations

1.9 Policy Considerations

- [Communications
- Community
- Crime & Disorder Reduction
- Customer Contact

1.10 Recommendations

- 1.10.1 Following a reassessment of the review of the Council's existing CCTV provision it is **RECOMMENDED** that the current live monitored approach remain unchanged.

Background papers

contact: Anthony Garnett
Andy Edwards

- Cabinet papers from the 26 January 2021
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee papers from 3 December 2020
- Cabinet papers from the 14 October 2020
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee papers from 10 October 2019
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee papers from 29 August 2019

Adrian Stanfield – Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive
Robert Styles - Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services
Cllr Mark Rhodes – Cabinet Member for Communities