

Briefing Note

Proposal to consider the City of York CCTV System as a Scrutiny topic

Introduction

This note outlines the present state of the City of York CCTV system and discusses current and planned developments of the system. It also offers a view on the proposal to consider CCTV as a scrutiny topic within the coming year.

Current Position

The CCTV system has recently moved into a dedicated monitoring facility at West Offices. This facility, known as the York Travel and Control Centre (YTCC) brings together traditional public realm CCTV monitoring, traffic network monitoring and control, police liaison, public transport control and emerging developments in CCTV provision to other parts of the Council.

The YTCC is a fully digital control facility and dispenses with the analogue technology previously used. This has been made possible by the development of the Council's 'Dark Fibre' network, which provides digital fibre-optic connectivity around the City. The opportunity presented by the development of this network has allowed the BT analogue connections to each camera site to be replaced with digital Dark Fibre ones. This has involved forming new ducted connections to each camera, but the cost of doing this has been off set by the lower rental charges and greater flexibility offered.

The CCTV network currently comprises over a 100 cameras covering public realm, the highway network, CYC car parks, park and ride sites, libraries, CYC's West Offices and the Rowntree Park Reading Cafe. In the control room, the cameras are viewable on a modular digital flat-

screen video wall, allowing 24 cameras to be viewed simultaneously. Four operator desks are provided, each with screens to view up to four cameras, as well as running a map based control system. Two additional command and control desks are also provided to allow management of events and incidents to be accommodated in the control room. As with the previous system, all cameras are recorded on a digital 'DVR' that stores footage from all cameras for a rolling 31 day period. Facilities are provided to allow this footage to be burned onto DVDs for issue to the police for use as evidence etc. The CCTV control room also has police, 'shopwatch' and CYC parking radio systems, allowing the operators with the police, Civil Enforcement Officers and shop / bar security staff.

In addition to this, two further control desks are provided in the network control room part of the YTCC, for the active management of the road and public transport networks. These desks have the same CCTV control equipment and full access to the camera network as found in the CCTV control room, but also have access to the Urban Traffic Control, BLISS and UTMC systems to allow reactive control of the transport network.

At present, the CCTV control room is staffed by a mixture of CYC staff and staff from an external security company. This provides the flexibility to ensure we are able to staff the control room 24 / 7, generally with two members of staff on duty at all times.

Up-coming Developments

Developments are currently underway to fully utilise the facilities available in the YTCC by broadening the range of services offered by the YTCC. We are currently working with four schools to trial the management of CCTV at school sites from the YTCC, including us providing their equipment maintenance and support through our existing contracts. Assuming these trials are successful, we will start to work towards offering services to more schools and other CYC and public sector sites, both to bring additional revenue into the YTCC and to offer the sites a better service than is provided by the private sector.

We are also working to expand the transport network management we undertake. Using capital funding from schemes such as the Better Bus Area Fund, the Lendal Bridge Restriction Trial and Coppergate Bus Enforcement, we will start to provide active traffic management during the peak periods, Monday to Saturday.

Proposed Examination of CCTV as a Scrutiny Topic

Now the service has settled into its new accommodation within the YTCC at West Offices and is using the new digital technologies outlined above, there could be benefit in scrutiny of the direction the service is taking and the opportunities for it's further development and expansion.