

Cabinet Report

Report of Head of Housing and Environment

Author: Diane Foster

Telephone: 01235 422116

Textphone: 18001 01235 422116

E-mail: diane.foster@southandvale.gov.uk

Wards affected:

Cabinet member responsible: Jenny Hannaby

Tel: 07717271711

E-mail: jenny.hannaby@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

To: CABINET

Date: 4 October 2019

Budget for replacement CCTV equipment

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) To recommend Council approve the transfer of £22,000 from the capital contingency programme and recommend Council to create a new capital programme for the procurement of new CCTV recording and monitoring equipment for the CCTV control room.
- (b) To delegate the Head of Housing and Environment to award the contract in consultation with the cabinet member on completion of the procurement exercise subject to it being within budget.

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval for the transfer of £22,000 from the capital contingency budget and recommend Council to create a new capital programme for the procurement of new CCTV recording and monitoring equipment for the CCTV control room.
2. To seek agreement to delegate the Head of Housing and Environment to award the contract in consultation with the cabinet member on completion of the procurement exercise subject to it being within budget.

Corporate Objectives

3. This work contributes to the council's objectives of facilitating sustainable communities and running an efficient council.

Background

4. Vale of White Horse District Council manages the public space town centre CCTV schemes in Abingdon and Wantage. The schemes are relied upon by Thames Valley Police to help with the detection and prevention of crime as well as to protect and locate vulnerable and missing people. Teams within the council also make use of CCTV, for example when monitoring for emergency planning purposes in the event of flooding or other emergencies; and the car parks, environmental services and licensing teams when obtaining evidence during their investigations.
5. The CCTV control room is based within Abingdon Police Station. The equipment and staff are shared with South Oxfordshire District Council. The equipment within the CCTV control room is used to monitor all 29 CCTV cameras within the public space town centre CCTV scheme in Abingdon and Wantage as well as 57 cameras within South Oxfordshire District Council. All cameras operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
6. CCTV is regulated by the Information Commissioner's Office and must comply with data protection legislation. The councils have agreed a code of practice which sets out the standards and procedures for the management, operation and use of CCTV. CCTV is only used in public spaces and recorded images are stored for 31 days before being over-written. When we receive a request for footage, strict procedures are followed to ensure that there are legitimate reasons for providing it.
7. We receive funding from Thames Valley Police for CCTV; for 2019/20 this amount is £46,919 which is shared with South Oxfordshire District Council. Funding amounts for future years have yet to be confirmed.
8. The existing control room equipment was installed in 2011/12 and has now reached its end of life and is no longer supported by the manufacturer who released an obsolescence notice for the analogue matrix in 2017. This is making it increasingly difficult to source replacement parts when equipment failures occur. In addition, Microsoft are withdrawing support for Windows 7 in 2020 which is the operating system for control room equipment, and the software is now approximately six years out of date and is no longer supported by the provider.
9. The existing cameras are analogue cameras which is now considered to be old technology. Replacement cameras would be modern high definition digital cameras. These provide much greater image quality than the current analogue cameras.
10. Due to the age of the existing equipment in the CCTV control room and the developments in technology over recent years, the equipment does not support digital cameras. Therefore, the control room equipment will need to be replaced before any new cameras can be installed. New control room equipment will be able to support both digital and analogue cameras so the current cameras will continue to be supported. These cameras can then be replaced at a later date as required.

11. The total cost of the new control room equipment is £65,000. This will be shared with South Oxfordshire District Council based on the number of CCTV cameras per council.

Options

12. An alternative option would be to not replace the CCTV cameras and control room equipment and cease to provide a CCTV public space town centre scheme when the equipment fails. This may not aid long term discussions with Thames Valley Police.

Financial Implications

13. Failure to replace the CCTV equipment could lead to increased revenue costs incurred from necessary repairs to the existing equipment.
14. Any decision that has financial implications must be made with the knowledge of the council's overarching financial position. This is as reflected in the council's medium term financial plan (MTFP) as reported to Full Council each February as part of the budget setting report. The February 2019 MTFP and the budget report showed that the council was due to receive £474,000 less in revenue funding than it planned to spend in 2019/20 (with the balance coming from accumulated New Homes Bonus). This funding gap is predicted to increase to over £5.6 million per annum by 2023/24. Every decision should be made in cognisance of the need to eliminate this funding gap during the next five years.

Legal Implications

15. There are no legal implications with this report. However with regards to recommendation b, the award of any new contract and procurement exercise will need to be carried out pursuant to the council's contracts procedure rules.

Risks

16. If the budget is not made available to replace the CCTV control room there is a risk of increased revenue costs to pay for repairs as the equipment becomes increasingly older and less reliable.
17. In addition if the equipment fails and is not repairable the council will not be able to provide CCTV in our town centre public spaces. This will create an operational risk for all those who rely on CCTV. It is also a reputational risk for the council.

Conclusion

18. There is a short term need to replace the CCTV equipment in the control room. The transfer of funds from the capital contingency budget will enable the CCTV equipment in the control room to be replaced to allow modern digital cameras to be installed. The current equipment is reaching its end of life and there is a risk that if it is not replaced the CCTV service will not be provided.

Background Papers

- CCTV System Condition Report June 2019 – CDS Integrated Security Systems
- CCTV report for Q3-Q4