

OPEN

BRIEFING REPORT

Environment and Communities Committee

October 2025

Review of CCTV Service - Update

Report of: Philip Cresswell, Executive Director – Place

Report Reference No: EC/03/25-26

Ward(s) Affected: All

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide members with information on the outcome of stakeholder and partner engagement work that was scheduled to follow the presentation of a CCTV report at Environment & Communities Committee held in January 2025.

Executive Summary

- 2 In January 2025 Environment and Communities Committee received a report presenting potential options for changes to the existing CCTV service operating model. This was linked to a commitment within the MTFS 2025-2029 to undertake a review of the CCTV service to determine future provision. The MTFS has a £40,000 savings proposal aligned to this work.
- 3 Officers presented a detailed background to the CCTV service including the current operational model, financial information, recent equipment enhancements, service demands and trends as well as details of internal and external stakeholders who were reliant upon the current CCTV service.
- 4 The Committee resolved to amend the report and remove options 'do something' 2, 3 and 4 and instead progress with 'do something' option 1 as an operational matter. This report provides an update on that work and the outcome of the process to date.
- 5 During the meeting there were discussions in relation to the significant support role offered by the CCTV service to both internal and external

stakeholders. As part of the original review proposals there was a plan to consult with stakeholders to understand how each of the options would impact upon their current service delivery and identify any operational/financial pressures that this would create should alternative delivery arrangements need to be found. This would help produce a more holistic view of whether savings within the CCTV service would have unintended financial consequences for other services of the council.

- 6 Although a decision had been made to pursue 'do something option 1' the service determined that this would be a beneficial exercise to undertake – the value of CCTV support not having been previously monetised.
- 7 An engagement exercise was conducted with internal stakeholders. This aimed to clarify the extent of their reliance upon the CCTV service, the impact of any changes and the costs of finding alternative arrangements should the CCTV service be unable to continue to meet their specific needs. The exercise also attempted to capture any future needs of individual services that could be considered as part of ongoing CCTV service design and delivery.
- 8 Respondents provided a range of existing support needs outlining the consequences of a reduced CCTV service and potential financial impacts were alternative delivery arrangements required. The consultation identified additional financial pressure to services of at least £300k based upon known cost information in addition to highlighting the non-monetary benefits of the service as it currently operates.
- 9 The CCTV service is a 24/7/365 operation that provides a single established point of contact and camera surveillance network. However, this goes far beyond the specific needs of individual services operated by the Council, underpinning public safety and confidence for residents across the whole of Cheshire East.
- 10 Funding via the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire continues to be explored although the focus is on specific projects based on local need and circumstances rather than a revenue budget contribution.

Background

- 11 In January 2025 Environment and Communities Committee received a report outlining potential operational changes to the delivery of the CCTV service. This approach was in support of the MTFS 2025-2029 where it had been agreed to undertake a review of the CCTV Service to determine the approach to future provision.
- 12 The report outlined four potential options for changes to service delivery including information around the potential and known impacts of each

option and any relevant supporting financial information. The aim of the report was to seek approval by Committee to engage in a public consultation and engagement exercise to establish stakeholder views on the proposed future operating model options.

- 13 To aid committee in its decision making, background information within the report included:
- The national picture on local authority CCTV provision and the role of CCTV in community protection through the deterrence and detection of crime.
 - The current operating model of the Cheshire East CCTV service including staffing arrangements, the recently enhanced camera estate and performance against third party accreditation.
 - Service costs and income generation.
 - Service demand including volume, daily/weekly incident patterns, incident type and prevalence and location of incidents.
 - Examples of other Council services who had a direct reliance upon the current operating model of the CCTV service and links to external stakeholders including Cheshire Police.
- 14 At committee, Members unanimously resolved to remove options do something 2, 3 and 4, leaving do something option 1 to be carried out as an operational matter therefore not requiring committee approval or public consultation.
- 15 It was agreed however that further engagement with stakeholders and potential partners would take place and that the outcome of that work would be shared with Committee members.
- 16 The committee also endorsed further discussions with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Cheshire Constabulary around the potential for revenue funding towards CCTV service costs given the level of current support to day-to-day policing activities.

Consultation and Engagement

- 17 Following the decision by committee to support option 1 as a way forward, a staff consultation exercise was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Organisational Change Policy and Procedure.
- 18 This process concluded in June 2025 leading to a reduction in the number of Grade 6 supervisory roles from two to one, releasing a staffing saving of £40,000 (full year savings).

- 19 An engagement process commenced in March 2025 with internal stakeholders to understand the scope of the support offered by the existing CCTV operational model. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached as Appendix 1. Stakeholders who responded to the questionnaire included:
- Customer Services
 - Regulatory Services
 - Highways
 - Building Control
 - Housing/Homeless
 - Public Rights of Way/Rural Cultural Economy
 - Parking Services
 - Planning Enforcement
 - Trading Standards
 - Estates/Facilities Management
 - ASB and Community Enforcement
 - Safety Advisory Group
- 20 Responses identified that the CCTV service supported both statutory and discretionary functions operated by services. Much of this related to out of hours provision throughout the year but also specific support for services to shut down over the Christmas period e.g. customer services.
- 21 Services cited the benefits of the service as an immediate point of contact/triage service for out of hours enquiries, lone worker support for officers both within and outside office hours, and support with evidence gathering as part of enforcement action.
- 22 The service also actively monitors controlled access to our hostel and temporary accommodation, provides an initial response to alarm activations and monitors barrier access to our MSCP/Bus Station in Crewe.
- 23 24-hour camera surveillance also provides additional security for council buildings and assets including vacant buildings, car parks, the Cledford Hub and the Gypsy and Traveller Transit site in Middlewich. The

presence of this surveillance has a positive impact upon our insurance premiums.

- 24 Respondents were asked to quantify replacement costs were the CCTV service unable to support their ongoing service needs. Although some services were unable to answer this question others were able to reasonably quantify these additional costs based upon the alternative arrangements that would need to be made.
- 25 These arrangements included alternative call handling and triage services, the employment of specific additional security personnel, a contract for external lone work support service and third-party external CCTV monitoring contracts for buildings and assets. Estimated costs to fund these requirements were in the region of £300K per year excluding officer costs and time for procurement and contract monitoring processes.
- 26 In some service areas there was the potential that basic out of hours service provision would need to be provided through existing staff resource with associated payroll costs in line with the Standby Pay provisions within the Council's Pay and Allowances Policy.
- 27 In terms of the impacts of a reduced CCTV service, respondents reported a negative impact on public safety (including vulnerable individuals), staff safety and the protection and prevention of crime/damage to Council assets and the loss of evidence to support wider enforcement work. The loss of any call handling and triage system was felt to create a reputational risk for the Council as it would lose its ability to respond appropriately and in a timely manner. Additionally, a single point of contact in emergency situations allowed for a complete oversight of a situation where multiple services might be involved.
- 28 Respondents were also asked to identify whether there were any areas where CCTV could be developed to further support their service area. Where suggestions were made these will be subject to further consideration.
- 29 The service remains committed to income generation working closely with internal services and the Town and Parish Council. There are several new paid for projects in train providing additional CCTV coverage to Council assets in addition to ensuring the achievement of full cost recovery under any existing arrangements.
- 30 Existing external contracts remain under scrutiny with cost savings identified at points of review/renewal. To date this has included a reduction in maintenance costs following contract renewal, changes to reporting software at reduced cost and the digitisation of the radio link

system with the potential for financial savings in 2026-2027. Cheshire Constabulary have also recently agreed to contribute to the Airwave radio annual cost as this provides a direct two-way link between the two services.

- 31 Prior to the January 2025 report, an approach was made to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cheshire to discuss the potential for revenue funding available to support the CCTV service. This funding model was not considered appropriate by the PCC.
- 32 However, the PCC advised that there would continue to be the potential for specific project funding based upon local need and circumstances. A recent example includes the ongoing Crewe Safer Streets project which has been funded by the PCC and provides, amongst other things, wider surveillance capacity of the town.
- 33 It is expected that our established relationship with Cheshire Constabulary/PCC and our collaborative approach will allow us to benefit through future opportunities.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 34 In response to a report to the Committee in January 2025 Members determined to maintain the operating model of CCTV service (subject to a small staffing restructure). However, it was agreed that plans for partner and stakeholder consultation would continue to take place and that the outcome of such discussions would be shared with Committee members.
- 35 This report fulfils that commitment and supports the following priorities within the Corporate Plan 2021-2025.
 - a) To support a sustainable financial future for the Council through service development, improvement and transformation (Open and enabling)
 - b) Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods (Thriving and sustainable)

Other Options Considered

- 36 No other options have been considered. It was considered a positive opportunity to engage with stakeholders and partners to understand their current and potential future use of the CCTV service and to fully appreciate the benefits, financial and otherwise that the service brings to the Council as a whole.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 37 CCTV services are considered a discretionary function, however, there remains a duty within Section 17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and an obligation on Local Authorities to work in partnership to develop and implement a strategy for tackling crime and disorder. Section 163 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 creates the power for local authorities to provide closed circuit television coverage of any land within their area for the purposes of crime prevention or victim welfare.
- 38 As part of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, there exists a requirement highlighted by the Surveillance Camera Commissioner (SCC) to local authority Chief Executives, that they must ensure that all CCTV systems that are operated by, or on behalf of, the local authority are compliant with the requirements of DPA, GDPR and Codes of Practice for CCTV. This would include stand-alone systems such as those used in libraries, leisure centres, body worn cameras, vehicles and all Council buildings.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 39 Proposals to review the CCTV service were identified in the MTFS 2025-2029 with an associated savings budget of £40,000, a value that was removed from the 2025-2026 base budget during the budget setting process.
- 40 The service continues to closely monitor its budget, with a view to addressing any in-year pressures with appropriate mitigation if required, to ensure there is no deviance from MTFS saving requirement.
- 41 The annual cost of the CCTV service is £677k, over a third of which, £242k, is returned as income from charges to external parties. The remainder does not get charged out internally within Cheshire East.
- 42 Stakeholder engagement has identified that support offered by the CCTV service to other council services reduces the need for additional external third-party spend and where possible respondents have provided a minimum estimated monetary value of this support.

Human Resources

- 43 There are no significant human resource implications. A restructure of the service has taken place following established policy and procedure and the resultant change to reduce supervisory resource has been determined.

- 44 This change has recently been implemented. It will now be for service management to monitor effectiveness and ensure that it provides the necessary supervisory support to the CCTV operating team.

Risk Management

- 45 Significant risks were outlined in the original report of January 2025. These related to specific proposals that had the potential to fundamentally change the established CCTV operating model with resultant impacts to employees, contractual and Service Level Agreement liabilities (internal and external) and the ability of the Council to provide a comprehensive surveillance network across the whole of Cheshire East.
- 46 Following the decision by Committee to approve the implementation of 'Option 1 – do something' resulting in a supervisory change, the risks that were identified were substantially mitigated whilst still achieving the MTFS saving commitment of £40,000.

Impact on other Committees

- 47 There are no identified impacts on other Committees.

Policy

- 48 The Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of residents. Crime, and the fear of crime, has the potential to have detrimental impacts on the way that residents use their local environment, limiting levels of social engagement and activity.
- 49 Studies indicate that CCTV cameras act as a deterrent as well as a means of detection, preventing crime from occurring in the first instance and that actively monitored cameras are more effective as they increase the perception of the risk of getting caught.
- 50 A Cheshire East CCTV Opinion Survey 2021/Safety of Women in Public Places Survey 2021 found that 94.9% of respondents were in favour of the use of CCTV and that it makes both residents and visitors feel safer.
- 51 The presence of cameras within a community will also help to encourage community pride and confidence in the use of public open space.

Commitment 1: Unlocking prosperity for all	Commitment 2: Improving health and wellbeing	Commitment 3: An effective and enabling council
	'Everyone feels safe and secure, difference is celebrated and abuse	

	and exploitation not tolerated. ‘Lasting solutions are delivered through strong and committed partnerships’	
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

52 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Other Implications

53 There are no implications to rural communities, children and young people, public health or climate change. Any potential implications previously identified have been mitigated by the decision of Committee in January 2025 to retain the existing front facing operational model.

Consultation

Name of Consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy) :</i>			
Ashley Hughes	S151 Officer	19/08/25	26/08/25
Julie Gregory	Acting Monitoring Officer	19/08/25	28/08/25
<i>Legal and Finance</i>			
Wendy Broadhurst	Lead Finance Partner (Place)	04/08/25	05/08/25
Charles Coghlan	Lawyer (Place)	04/08/25	06/08/25
<i>Other Consultees:</i>			
<i>Executive Directors/Directors</i>			
Chris Allman	Director of Planning and Environment	07/08/25	11/08/25
Phil Cresswell	Executive Director – Place	19/08/25	14/08/25

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Tracey Bettaney, Rick Hughes, Angela Mann tracey.bettaney@cheshireeast.gov.uk, rick.hughes@cheshireeast.gov.uk, angela.mann@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Stakeholder Questionnaire
Background Papers:	CCTV Review Report 30 January 2025 Report Template Pay and Allowances Policy February 2022 Pay and Allowances Policy.doc

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CCTV Service Review 2025 - Council Services Survey

Background to this survey



As part of the MTFS an ongoing review of the Cheshire East Council CCTV Service [a report](#) was presented to [Environment & Communities Committee on 30 January 2025](#) which outlined 5 initial options for service redesign/delivery.

At Committee a decision was made to progress with 'Do Something – Option 1', which is a restructure around supervisory posts.

There was however also a request to undertake a strategic review of the role of CCTV, to understand its wider support role to various council services. This review will form part of a further report to Committee in June 2025.

Purpose of this survey



Your service area has been identified as one which is currently supported by the CCTV Service i.e. camera monitoring, out of hours protocols, lone worker alarm monitoring, door and barrier monitoring etc.

It would therefore be useful if you could complete this short survey to help us understand your relationship with the CCTV Service as part of the strategic review. This will also help us identify any future requirements that you might have from the service.



Giving your feedback

This survey should only take a few minutes to complete. Please complete it by **Friday 14 March 2025**.



Contact us



If you have any questions about this survey, or if you want this

questionnaire in a different format or to submit your response in a different way [email the Research and Consultation Team](#).

Keeping your data safe



Any personal information you give us will remain private, be stored securely, and be used in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. To read more about how we use your data [read our Privacy Notice](#).

Current support offered by the CCTV Service

Please describe the support currently offered to your service area by the Cheshire East CCTV Service:

Write in below

Is this support provided by the CCTV service for a statutory function or for a discretionary function? A statutory function is one which you have a legal duty to provide.

Tick one option only

- ☐ For a statutory function
- ☐ For a discretionary function
- ☐ For a combination of both statutory and discretionary functions

☐ Not sure / Don't know

☐ Other (write in below):

The future of the CCTV Service

If this current support could no longer be provided by the CCTV Service and had to be resourced through alternative means, what would be the approximate annual cost that would be incurred by your service area?

Tick one option only

☐ Under £5,000

☐ £5,000 to £9,999

☐ £10,000 to £19,999

☐ £20,000 to £49,999

☐ £50,000 to £99,999

☐ £100,000 plus

☐ Not sure / Don't know

☐ Other (write in below):

Is there any other support you think the CCTV Service might be able to provide to your service in future?

If so, please give suggestions below - we are happy to explore any suggestions you might have so please "think big":

It would help us if you could answer the questions below - the information will be used so we can understand which service area you are answering on behalf of, and who to contact if we have any follow up to your submission. Your contact details will not be used for any other purpose.

Write *in* **below**

You have now reached the end of the survey, thank you.

Please click "Finish survey" below to submit your consultation response.