

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND COMMUNITIES

Report prepared by John Littlemore

Date Issued: 10 December 2010

1. Future Provision of CCTV
- 1.1 Key Issue for Decision
- 1.1.1 To approve a partnership arrangement with Medway Council for the council's CCTV service including staffing, maintenance and management to be operated as part of Medway Council's shared CCTV control centre.
- 1.2 Recommendation of Director of Regeneration and Communities
- 1.2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Community Services agrees to pursue a partnership arrangement with Medway Council to provide CCTV services through a service level agreement.
- 1.2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Community Services gives delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and Communities that following the consideration of stakeholders' views and subject to the satisfactory resolution of the issues listed in paragraph 1.5.6 to enter into an agreement with Medway Council; and to authorise the Head of Legal Services to enter into an agreement for the future provision of the council's CCTV service, on the terms and conditions agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Communities.
- 1.2.3 In the event that Medway Council is unable to provide satisfactory assurances to the issues in paragraph 1.5.6 the Cabinet Member gives delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and Communities to obtain the provision of a CCTV Service through the council's procurement process.
- 1.3 Background
- 1.3.1 The council has operated a CCTV service since 1997 for the primary purpose of reducing crime and anti social behaviour, as well as increasing public safety and public confidence throughout the borough.

- 1.3.2 In achieving that aim the service maintains 116 fixed cameras and 23 mobile cameras. In addition the service operates as a vital part of the Maida safe town centre radio scheme, has links with the Police "Airwaves" radio and responds to calls from the emergency help points within council operated car parks.
- 1.3.3 This service is operated 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year, with daily briefings currently held at the CCTV control centre for representatives from the Police and Town Centre Retailers to share intelligence.
- 1.3.4 The staffing of the service was contracted to Profile Security from April 2009, with staff transferred under a Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment Regulations (TUPE) arrangement. The contract is due to expire in April 2011, although an option exists for the Council to extend the contract for a further two years.
- 1.3.5 The service has seen little investment in terms of the technical infrastructure, other than the replacement of the Matrix in 2009 at a cost of £41,000. This is a core technical requirement which will be retained as part of any upgrade or arrangement to transfer the service to Medway Council.
- 1.3.6 The council has over a number of years considered various schemes to maintain the provision of the CCTV service. Whilst the service has continued to perform well, it has been acknowledged that the physical environment within the basement of the Town Hall and the technical infrastructure upon which the service relies requires significant investment to make them fit for purpose.
- 1.3.7 A capital scheme to upgrade both the physical environment and technology was approved and these improvements will cost £247,000 with ongoing capital investment of £50,000 per annum required for the next two years at least to address the ageing camera stock. The scheme provides no opportunity to either develop the service or reduce the ongoing revenue costs without considering a reduction in the levels of service.
- 1.4 CCTV Proposal from Medway Council
- 1.4.1 A shared-service proposal has been made by Medway Council and this has been assessed to determine whether this initiative offers good value for money and complies with the regulatory framework for delivering services in partnership with other local authorities.
- 1.4.2 The partnership arrangement proposed by Medway Council would include physically transferring the operation of the service,

including staffing, maintenance, management and service liaison to their central control centre based in Medway. The operation of the service from Medway is practically feasible as the technology is in place for the cameras to be monitored from another location. In doing so the service would also transfer much of the risk, with an undertaking by Medway to repair or replace equipment as necessary within the annual charge.

- 1.4.3 In undertaking the service Medway would be making a commitment to maintain the existing Maidsafe Radio Scheme, police Airwaves radio and response to car park help points. In addition they have undertaken to share if requested, their expertise and experience in delivering telecare and telehealth services to help Maidstone develop a new service offering, including help to promote independence for older people and provide a new income stream in the future.
- 1.4.4 Medway has a stated ambition to develop a county wide control centre. In joining such a shared service arrangement at an early stage, the council would have a greater opportunity to influence the future direction of that service. Swale Borough Council, a member of the Mid Kent Investment Partnership, has already become a partner to Medway CCTV hub and, together with SwaleSafe and Swale's Community Safety Partnership, have given references supporting the quality of the service provided.
- 1.5 Reasons for Recommendation
- 1.5.1 As part of the medium term service and financial planning process, the current CCTV service and the cost of provision were reviewed and a range of options identified. The review confirmed that in its current location, the cost of the service could only be significantly reduced by reducing the level of service provision i.e. reducing the number of days the CCTV cameras are observed. However, one of the options was to consider a proposal from Medway Council which already provides the CCTV service for Swale Borough Council. This option would require Maidstone to join a shared CCTV control centre based in Medway, through the transfer of the operation, maintenance and management of the service to Medway Council.
- 1.5.2 In agreeing to the shared service, Medway Council would look to operate the service as part of their wider operation, providing for economies of scale and more flexible staffing options. Medway would accept the risk of the ageing camera stock in providing a fully serviced proposal which includes the repair and replacement of all cameras and other equipment within the fixed price offered.

- 1.5.3 In accepting such a proposal the council would benefit from an immediate capital and revenue saving, improve resilience in terms of staffing, technology and disaster recovery arrangements and place the service in a more sustainable position for the longer term. It would also offer the opportunity to develop income streams for the CCTV service and other services provided by Medway's control centre.
- 1.5.4 The proposal would also result in the release of the space occupied by the current service within the Town Hall, widening the options available regarding the future use of the building.
- 1.5.5 A "soft-market test" has been undertaken to provide confidence that the Medway Council proposal offers good value for money. The information received from a third party confirms that the Medway Council figures for providing a shared service are comparable.
- 1.5.6 Advice from the procurement section and legal services is that the partnership offer from Medway Council can be entered into without tendering the service so long as further clarification is obtained from Medway Council to ensure:
- the service level agreement properly reflects the shared nature of the partnership arrangement;
 - Medway Council's procurement process complies with European Procurement Directives and our own contract procedure rules;
 - Maidstone Council officers fully participate in future contract negotiations and appointments;
 - Maidstone Council is able to fulfil its partnership role within the governance arrangements of the CCTV Service

In the scenario that Medway Council is unable to give the assurances being sought under 1.5.6 the recommendation at paragraph 1.2.3 enables the council to move the process forward by way of tendering the service in accordance with European Procurement Directives and Maidstone Council's contract procedure rules.

1.5.7 Stakeholder Engagement

In advance of any change to the delivery of the CCTV service a consultation process will be undertaken to ensure that the needs and views of service stakeholders are taken into account.

The consultation process will include but not be limited to:

- Kent Police;
- Safer Maidstone Partnership partners;
- Maidstone Town Centre Management;
- Profile Security;
- Staff involved in the delivery of the CCTV service;
- Internal service users (parking/environmental services).

1.6 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.6.1 The council could continue with the current capital scheme to provide a basic upgrade to the basement area within the Town Hall and elements of the equipment at a cost of £247,000. It is not recommended that the council takes this action as it will incur significant cost and does not offer the opportunity to improve resilience or deliver savings.
- 1.6.2 Whilst the council does not have a “do nothing” option due to the health and safety implications for part of the work, the council could look to address only those essential health and safety issues and not upgrade any of the equipment. This would leave the service vulnerable in terms of failure, with increased revenue costs attached to repair. Capital investment would also be required in the short term as equipment becomes beyond reasonable repair or the frequency and cost of repairs becomes unmanageable.
- 1.6.3 If the council decided to keep the service at the Town Hall and either complete the current scheme or simply address the immediate health and safety issues, it could reduce its ongoing revenue costs by reducing the hours over which the service operates. It is not recommended that the council takes this action due to the negative impact it will have on the contribution the service makes to reduce crime, increase public safety and maintain public confidence.

1.7 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.7.1 The transfer of the service to Medway Council would support the objective of creating a safe environment, through a sustainable CCTV service, without a reduction in the level of service and at a significantly reduced cost.

1.8 Risk Management

- 1.8.1 The main potential risks associated with the decision can be summarised as:-

- Loss of local knowledge if the existing staff decide not to transfer to Medway or leave the service shortly after the transfer;
- Service disruption during the transfer;
- Perception and response of service stakeholders;
- Damage to the Council's reputation;
- Legal Challenge regarding decision not to tender the service;
- Exit arrangements should the service be returned to MBC at a later date.

1.8.2 The potential risks highlighted in 1.8.1 will be incorporated into the risk log of the formal project plan and actions to mitigate the risks will be identified and monitored as part of the project management arrangements.

1.9 Other Implications

1.9.1 The financial and staffing implications of the decision are contained in the exempt report due to commercial confidentiality and conducting future commercial negotiations and/or tendering processes and employee relations.

1.9.2 Legal

Advice will be sought from the Legal Services team to ensure that the council fully complies with all legislative requirements and receives sufficient protection through the partnership arrangement with Medway Council.

1.9.3 Community Safety

The provision of CCTV makes an important contribution to the council's aims of reducing crime and anti social behaviour. In reducing the cost and improving the resilience of the CCTV service, the service will be more sustainable in the longer term.

1.9.4 Procurement

Advice will be sought from the procurement team to ensure that services being procured by Medway City Council comply with the appropriate regulations.

1.9.5 Asset Management

With the transfer of the service to Medway, the council will be releasing the basement area currently occupied by CCTV, widening options in terms of the future use of the building.

1.10 Relevant Documents

None

1.11 Background Documents

None

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

October 2010

This is a Key Decision because: The nature and significance of the proposed change, as well as impact of staffing, stakeholders and approach to delivering community safety.

Wards/Parishes affected: All

How to Comment

Should you have any comments on the issue that is being considered please contact either the relevant Officer or the Member of the Executive who will be taking the decision.

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