

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Decision Made: 20 December 2010

#### **PROVISION OF CCTV**

##### **Issue for Decision**

To consider 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.

##### **Decision Made**

1. That a partnership arrangement with Medway Council to provide CCTV services through a service level agreement be investigated.
2. That the Director of Regeneration and Community Services reports back to the Cabinet Member for a decision as to the way forward in the procurement of CCTV services, following consideration of stakeholders' views, such report to include an analysis as to whether the issues listed in paragraph 1.5.6 of the Report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities have been satisfactorily resolved.

##### **Reasons for Decision**

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 satisfy the assurances being sought listed above, paragraph 2 of the Decision Made 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.

The Decision Made in this document differs from the recommendations made in the Report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities, with the Cabinet Member for Community Services retaining responsibility for the decision, to ensure complete transparency in the decision making process relating to the future of the CCTV service.

### **Alternatives considered and why rejected**

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 thought appropriate that the council takes this action as it will incur significant cost and does not offer the opportunity to improve resilience or deliver savings.

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.

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 thought appropriate 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.

### **Background Papers**

None

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| Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Head of Change and Scrutiny by: <b>30 December 2010</b> |
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