

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 18 December 2012

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Gary Waller

LOUGHTON CCTV

Recommending:

That a supplementary capital estimate of £10,000 in 2012/13 be approved to part fund the renewal and restructure of the current network of CCTV cameras covering High Road, Loughton and to extend the system northwards to cover the shopping parades both sides of the High Road between Brooklyn Avenue and Traps Hill.

1. The Loughton High Road CCTV system was completed in 2006 as part of the Town Centre Enhancement Scheme. The system currently comprises six cameras fitted to six dedicated columns between Old Station Road to the junction with Brooklyn Avenue. This also includes an Automatic Number Plate Reader (ANPR) system part funded by Essex Police. Part of this joint funding agreement with the Police included the positioning of a digital recording system within the Police station in Loughton where the system still remains today.
2. We have been informed that the original six cameras are now approaching the end of their life span and are repeatedly being repaired. Currently five cameras are operational and two re-deployable cameras loaned from Essex Police have been installed in the High Road to cover the area usually monitored by the sixth camera.
3. In the past, Essex Police provided a broadband telephone connection which allowed remote access to the CCTV system from the Civic Offices. However, this has since been withdrawn which has resulted in increased officer time attending Loughton Police Station to maintain the system and carry out downloads. Following the successful upgrade of CCTV at Loughton Broadway, we are proposing to link both systems wirelessly to allow officers to also control and maintain the Loughton system from the Civic Offices.
4. Loughton High Road is the second busiest CCTV system in the District in relation to requests for downloads. In 2011 Safer Communities were asked to carry out 30 download requests on behalf of Essex Police and in the period January to October 2012 we have already provided 20 downloads. There is a vibrant night time economy in the High Road and there is an identified need for improved cameras which have a stronger day and night time capability to enhance image quality.
5. It had originally been intended to extend the High Road CCTV System within the third phase of the town centre enhancement scheme. However, this was not undertaken and there are therefore no cameras northwards from Brooklyn Avenue to the York Hill Junction. We have, therefore, investigated the possibility of extending the existing system in the High Road at the same time as undertaking the required refurbishment.

6. The refurbishment and extension of the High Road Scheme which we wish to pursue includes an increase in cameras from the current six to twenty three, including a mixture of static, moving and mega-pixel cameras. The installation will also include four new CCTV columns, subject to planning permission, extending the system to cover the shopping parades on both sides of the High Road between Brooklyn Avenue and Traps Hill. The repositioning of existing and new cameras will be based upon Crime Pattern Analysis and other intelligence sources collated over the last two years, and all work would be carried out utilising existing infrastructure where possible. Our proposals are supported by Essex Police.

7. We have been advised that the estimated cost of upgrading and extending the CCTV systems is £45,000. We are proposing that this capital expenditure can be met by:

- (a) a virement of £15,000 from the remaining Loughton Broadway CCTV capital budget;
- (b) the use of £14,000 of Loughton related section 106 monies already received;
- (c) re-designating £6,000 of the existing revenue budget as capital; and
- (d) seeking a supplementary capital estimate of £10,000 to fund the balance.

8. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.