

This report is public	
CCTV Thames Valley Project	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	9 September 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, Councillor Rob Parkinson
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	30 July 2024
Report of	Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety, Tim Hughes

Purpose of report

To seek approval to join the Thames Valley CCTV partnership, with an associated transfer of CCTV assets and operational responsibility to Thames Valley Police under a 'single owner' model; and moving monitoring arrangements to a shared Oxfordshire hub.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To agree to join the Thames Valley CCTV partnership, with an associated transfer of CCTV assets and operational responsibility to Thames Valley Police under a 'single owner' model; and moving monitoring arrangements to a shared Oxfordshire hub.
- 1.2 To recommend approving the capital funding of up to £250,000 in order to upgrade the public open space CCTV network and cameras to meet the necessary threshold to be included in the OPCC Thames Valley CCTV project.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Assistant Director - Law, Governance and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to execute the formal agreements needed to join the Thames Valley Police CCTV Partnership.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report recommends the Council joins the Thames Valley CCTV partnership, with an associated transfer of CCTV assets and operational responsibility to Thames Valley Police under a 'single owner' model; and moving monitoring arrangements to a shared Oxfordshire hub. It further recommends upgrading the public open space CCTV network and cameras to meet the necessary threshold to be included in the OPCC Thames Valley CCTV project. This reflects the recognition that to be considered to be in a position to be included in the partnership that respective LA partners must ensure the network and cameras in their infrastructure is of a minimum standard so as to not adversely affect the viability of the project.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	<p>The proposals in this report will require capital to bring up to specification the existing network infrastructure that exists in Cherwell.</p> <p>Accepting that joining the Thames Valley Police CCTV Partnership is subject to formal approval and signed agreements, the revenue expenditure for the single owner model, combined with a new local funding formula which is fair and transparent, suggests an annual revenue saving in the region of £10,000 could be achieved. This will be offset by the costs of borrowing for the scheme and Minimum Revenue Provision over the life of the assets which is estimated at c£47k. Therefore, actual revenue savings are not expected for some years.</p> <p>Joining the Thames Valley Police CCTV Partnership and achieving this revenue saving is contingent on transferring digital control room equipment and new HD digital cameras. In addition to this TVP have committed that future capital expenditure will be met by them under the new arrangements. So, whilst a significant capital expenditure is required initially it will reduce the Council's future liabilities for future capital expenditure when the network and cameras need upgrading and /or replacement.</p> <p>Rachel Ainsworth, Finance Business Partner, 30 July 2024</p>			
Legal	<p>Joining the Thames Valley Police CCTV Partnership, with the associated transfer of assets and future liabilities from this Council to Thames Valley Police will be executed through a formal agreement, subject to approval by Executive.</p> <p>Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services. 30 July 2024</p>			
Risk Management	<p>Failure to take steps to being part of the wider Thames Valley CCTV project would mean that there would be additional challenges to operating and maintaining the existing CCTV network. The system is in need of investment and failure to make the necessary investment may result in the CCTV network becoming defunct. Having no public open space CCTV means our duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 may not be met and could also lead to an increase in crime or fear of it. This proposal mitigates these risks, their monitoring and management is done through the service operational risk register and will be escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when deemed necessary.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 30 July 2024</p>			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact				There is no impact from an equalities impact perspective as it the proposals relate to the operational management of the existing CCTV

				network and how it will be managed, monitored and maintained in future.
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		There are no specific implications arising from the report that will impact on equality.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		The report raises no specific implications for any particular group or individual.
Climate & Environmental Impact				N/A
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	All			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	Engagement with Thames Valley Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the other Oxfordshire districts.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Cherwell District Council (CDC) owns and operates a public open space Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system in the district, consisting of 63 cameras.
- 3.2 The system is monitored by civilian staff employed by Thames Valley Police (TVP) to whom CDC make a financial contribution towards meeting this cost. Within Oxfordshire, monitoring control rooms are located in Banbury, Oxford City, Witney and Abingdon.

- 3.3 Under the current operating model, the Council retains direct responsibility for the public open space CCTV system and its ongoing maintenance. In April 2022, the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner tabled a report to the Police and Crime Panel outlining a new vision for CCTV. This vision recognised that CCTV exists primarily for the benefit of policing and the wider interests of community safety. Therefore, it is right that policing shoulders the lion share of the responsibility for providing the capability, under a ‘single owner’ model. This single owner model will help to consolidate technology, drive savings through economies of scale, improve integration with police systems and provide increased resilience.
- 3.4 There has been recognition for some time of the value for a shared Oxfordshire hub control room. Sharing will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the monitoring – with more ‘real time’ monitoring, no lone working, capital investment from TVP and resilience from fail over to another hub with the same monitoring equipment elsewhere within the Thames Valley Police geographic area.
- 3.5 Progress towards a shared hub has been hampered by numerous reasons, but since an Oxfordshire CCTV partnership board was established in 2022 and TVP Operations Manager to gain greater traction, the point has now been reached whereby an Oxfordshire monitoring control room, located in Abingdon, is proposed.
- 3.6 This would form part of a Thames Valley Police CCTV partnership, the first phase of which saw the transfer of ownership of CCTV from Milton Keynes City Council and Slough Borough Council to Thames Valley Police. The Abingdon CCTV command suite will be the second phase of the partnership and will bring all current cameras from the Banbury, Witney, and St Aldates control rooms into Abingdon. The suite would be open 7 days a week, with extended opening hours where appropriate e.g. Thursday to Sunday.
- 3.7 In terms of governance, a Board will be put in place to govern the Thames Valley CCTV Partnership, chaired by the Police Crime Commissioner and with attendance from both Thames Valley Police and all partner local authorities.

4. Details

- 4.1 Joining this partnership arrangement will require ongoing contributions from all partners and based on a partnership funding formula, with 50% of the total partnership costs being met by TVP and the other 50% met by the local authorities (LAs). Of the 50% met by LAs, relative contributions will be arrived at by considering the percentage of the total cameras between each LA and the Community Safety Partnership Funding Formula between each LA.

Formula Percentages		
Location	% of Cameras	CSP %
Slough	29%	16%
Milton Keynes	13%	27%
Oxford City	12%	15%
South Oxfordshire	12%	10%

Vale of The White Horse	6%	11%
Cherwell	16%	13%
West Oxfordshire	12%	8%
Total	100%	100%

- 4.2. Under this ‘single owner’ model, all our CCTV assets will be transferred to Thames Valley Police, and they will assume full operational responsibility for maintaining the assets and associated costs, such as:
- Staffing the shared monitoring hub
 - Maintenance contract for cameras and control room equipment
 - Hardware repairs and replacement – cameras, network infrastructure, control room equipment
 - Software licensing and updates to the video management system
- 4.3. Joining the Thames Valley Police CCTV partnership is contingent on transferring in high quality assets; hence the Council’s inclusion in the proposed project is contingent upon the necessary upgrade to the network and existing camera being upgraded to HD digital.
- 4.4. By its nature, public space CCTV cameras are used to solve public space issues, which provide safety and reassurance to the public. Therefore, any partner can request an increase in public space CCTV cameras. This would require agreement at the Thames Valley CCTV Partnership Board in which local feedback and crime statistics would be considered. The requestor of the CCTV camera will bear the capital cost of camera and installation and then be included within the LA’s overall total number of cameras, with an associated uplift in LA contribution as per the funding formula described at 4.1.
- 4.5. This Council would retain responsibility for columns and assets on which the cameras are mounted, electricity to the cameras and any existing rented fibre costs – noting that the upgrade to HD digital will reduce these costs by using wireless transmission, where possible.
- 4.6. Based on figures supplied by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley the new future contribution arrangements for this Council are projected as:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
TVP CCTV partnership contribution	74,798	76,904	78,946

- 4.7. This revenue expenditure is broadly in line with what is currently committed in CCTV budget £76,558 for 2024/25. It is expected that an annual revenue budget saving of approx. £10k would be realised as a result of the current repair and maintenance budget no longer being required as these costs will be met via the contribution shown above.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Executive could choose to cease provision of this discretionary service, however the case for continued provision of public space CCTV is clear. It assists the Council in meeting its duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and clearly has a role in the detection and prevention of crime.

Option 2: To retain the system as it currently is. The Thames Valley CCTV Partnership will go ahead without CDC - meaning there is real risk of the CCTV system in Cherwell becoming obsolete. If the existing CCTV system were to be retained, then there would still be a significant need for investment to bring the infrastructure up to a minimum standard to allow for its continued operation. The costs would be comparable to the £250,000 capital investment highlighted in the preferred option, although could be profiled over a long roll out period. The responsibility for long term resilience of CCTV monitoring would fall to CDC.

This has been rejected as it is likely to lead to an obsolete CCTV system and means the Council would be excluded from obtaining the benefits from being part of the Partnership.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The benefits to formally joining the Thames Valley CCTV partnership are clear. The proposed changes of the project bring increased resilience, reduce the operational burden on CDC and ensure that the CCTV network is upgraded ensuring a sustainable system able to exploit technological advances.

Decision Information

Key Decision	Yes
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	None
Background Papers	None

Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Tim Hughes, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Report Author contact details	Tim.hughes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk Tel: 01295 221686