

**COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY  
18 APRIL 2024**

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**CCTV CAMERA REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with an update on the camera replacement programme.

**Summary**

2. A review of CCTV was completed in May 2021 to determine whether the public space CCTV system in Darlington was fit-for-purpose and met operational requirements.
3. The review established that the Internet Protocol (IP) cameras installed in the town centre produced high quality images and met operational requirements, however, the images from the legacy analogue cameras were soft and compared poorly to the IP cameras. The review concluded that the analogue cameras should be replaced with new technology and a delivery programme was agreed.
4. The assessment also concluded that there was a lack of frequency diversification and misalignment of existing CCTV equipment transmission so the project would also ensure appropriate alignment and configuration of the wireless network.
5. The project commenced on 1 May 2023, with a six-month envelope for completion by 31 November 2023.
6. All camera replacement and wireless transmissions were completed in the timescale, however, works to the Control Centre were delayed due to contractual issues with British Telecom. Control Centre works were finally completed in January 2024.

**Recommendation**

7. It is recommended that Scrutiny Members note the contents of this report.

**Dave Winstanley  
Group Director of Services**

**Background Papers**

Cabinet report of 22 June 2022 outlining the replacement programme and associated release of funding.

S17 Crime and Disorder	CCTV cameras help prevent and detect crime and anti-social behaviour, supporting the work of both the Council and Police.
Health and Wellbeing	Cameras around the town and in parks and open spaces contributes to these locations being safe places to enjoy and exercise therefore having a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There is no impact on climate change.
Diversity	There is a positive impact on diversity as cameras contribute to the safety of areas.
Wards Affected	Wards that have CCTV cameras
Groups Affected	No group is affected differently.
Budget and Policy Framework	There is no impact on the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	CCTV cameras contribute to the Council's vision by preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, helping make Darlington a safe place to live, visit and invest.
Efficiency	There is no impact on the Council's efficiency agenda.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

8. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) is part of everyday life within our towns and cities in the UK. Councils and law enforcement agencies rely heavily on surveillance as a tool to prevent and detect crime. It is now estimated that there are around 5.2 million CCTV cameras in the UK.
9. Darlington Borough Council operates a Public Space CCTV system throughout the Borough which primarily supports the Council Plan objectives of keeping the Borough safe. The benefits include:-
  - (a) They act as crime deterrent
  - (b) They provide peace of mind
  - (c) They enable evidence detection
  - (d) Help create conditions for success
10. The network is linked to a Control Centre where the range of services provided have developed over the years, from control of traffic system to the development of effective strategic partnership working with the Police and other statutory agencies.

11. Since the introduction of the system in the 1990s the system has developed and now supports 122 cameras located throughout the Borough of which a significant number are past the expected useful operating life. The quality of the pictures is well below what is expected from a modern camera.
12. Within the Council Plan, one of the key actions was to “review our approach to the use of CCTV in supporting community safety and work with partners to enhance the service further.”
13. Work commenced on updating our approach with one of the first actions being the investment in 10 re-deployable cameras to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. These cameras can be moved to different locations as and when required.
14. In addition, through the Home Office Safer Streets 2 Fund, the Council were awarded £230,400 to introduce 17 additional cameras in and around Darlington town centre (including subways). Included in this amount was £54,510 match funding provided by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner. These cameras have only recently been installed.
15. The next phase was to review our fixed CCTV system and Eclipse Research were commissioned by the Council to assess the existing public space CCTV cameras and the transmission network, including the productivity and condition of individual cameras.
16. Of the 122 cameras, a significant number have been replaced over the years, however there were still 74 older style analogue cameras in operation. The images from the analogue cameras were soft and of poorer quality than the newer Internet Protocol (IP) cameras.
17. The second part of the replacement programme required the design of a wireless network to replace the leased fibre circuits that connect most of the cameras to the Control Centre, other than cameras connected wirelessly already. Moving away from leased circuits has provided an annual saving that will be reinvested to support the replacement camera programme.
18. The transmission network was upgraded to wireless links using the 5GHz, 60GHz and 70-80GHz frequencies, and should have sufficient diversification to avoid the problems that were experienced when just 5GHz was used. Where lines of site are not achievable, the system uses 4G/5G mobile telephone network.

## **Progress**

19. A tender process for the contract to supply and install cameras, transmission equipment, design an edge to core Wi-Fi transmission network and supply and install additional recording servers was completed in April 2023, and contract awarded. Works for the project commenced 1 May 2023, and the contract completed January 2024.

20. The scheme has now been commissioned and is fully operational. The benefits of a digital CCTV system include:
  - (a) The cameras and transmission have in-built encryption, ensuring unauthorised access to the video recordings is prevented.
  - (b) Digital cameras can provide up to three times more coverage than analogue cameras.
  - (c) Cameras can zoom in without becoming too grainy and have better zoom-in clarity.
  - (d) IP cameras offer more expandability and scalability.
  - (e) IP cameras offer network intelligence and remote manageability. They can stream images, and different parts of images, to different recipients simultaneously.
21. As part of the project two additional servers were added to the Control Centre to increase the systems recording capacity as required for extra image quality of digital cameras.
22. Other upgrades in the Control Centre as part of the project included the extension of the monitor wall by installing eight new monitors to increase the potential overall viewing platform to 108 cameras at any one time.
23. The overall improvement resulting from the replacement and upgrade to Darlington's Public Space system is reflected in the quality of the images and recordings, leading to improved detection, monitoring and recorded evidence footage.