
Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi

Report by Director of Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships

Scottish Borders Council

28 September 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out potential options, benefits and future opportunities available to Scottish Borders for investment in Council Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi; and seeks Council agreement to proceed with a 3rd party provider with a scheme for seven towns.**
- 1.2 This report provides details of proposals presented to SBC by CGI for both Public Space CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi, as well as facilitating a discussion on other options for consideration.
- 1.3 As well as providing information around the benefits and financial implications for the proposals, this report describes the wider opportunities presented by modern CCTV systems coupled with Town Centre WIFI provision.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that the Committee:**
 - (a) Consider this report as an Outline Business Case with a range of background issues, benefits and future considerations relating to CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi for the Scottish Borders;**
 - (b) Consider options submitted by CGI, including outline financial implications;**
 - (c) Consider the current SBC policy around CCTV systems, and agree to move to a principle of investment and modernisation to reflect community priorities;**
 - (d) Agrees in principle to proceed, with a seven town CCTV and town centre Wi-Fi solution; subject to receiving a fully defined proposal, costed business case and funding arrangements**

- coming back to a subsequent Council meeting for final approval; and**
- (e) Agree that consultation is undertaken with other towns and communities to determine views, practicalities and priorities for potential future CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi investment opportunities.**

3 BACKGROUND

CCTV

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Council currently operates seventy Public Space CCTV cameras located in Duns, Hawick, Galashiels, Kelso, Peebles, Eyemouth and Melrose. Further to this, 2 mobile camera systems are also utilised by Police Scotland. Selkirk has established a different model, which Scottish Borders Council does not operate.
- 3.2 The Council currently meets all ongoing revenue costs, including energy consumption, telecoms charges, consumable items and annual charges from the contractors who provide maintenance support for each system. It is possible that modern CCTV solutions could remove some of these costs.
- 3.3 The Council's position to date with regard to CCTV provision is not to install new CCTV equipment or replace life-expired systems but to continue to maintain the current asset within the existing revenue budget until they are beyond economic repair. Many of the systems are approaching this point of disrepair, and are also operating on outdated analogue technology which will not be available for use at the digital switchover in 2025. It is suggested that this existing policy approach be re-considered, and shifted towards upgrades to reflect such public concerns as parking, traffic management and public safety.
- 3.4 Previous work undertaken by Officers in 2018 indicated that the likely total capital cost of replacement, on a like for like basis, while utilising more modern digital technologies, could be in the region of circa £600,000. There would have been potentially additional costs associated with related civils works and infrastructure in the region of £250,000. These figures would need to be further explored with up-to-date costs and compared against modern digital options available to SBC for different providers.
- 3.5 There is various well documented evidence available suggesting that CCTV contributes to the perception of public security and the prevention and detection of crime, which reassures the public in areas that it is installed and adds to the overall community presence in that area.
- 3.6 The current CCTV provision doesn't allow for the collection of any meaningful data in relation to the usefulness of the CCTV or whether it provides value for money. New systems could provide a platform for the Local Authority and key partners including Police Scotland to capture relevant data relating to the use of CCTV in the Borders region and the part it plays in the management of incidents and community safety.
- 3.7 Wider benefits available through effective use of CCTV, include:
 - Acting as a deterrent to crime and anti-social behaviour.
 - Increasing public safety by reducing the perceived fear of crime.
 - Assisting emergency services when attending an incident.
 - Evidence gathering for detection and prosecution of persons who may have been involved in a crime.
 - Supporting key community, statutory and private sector partners.

- Supporting the management of public and commercial areas which are essential to commercial wellbeing of the community.
- 3.8 The National Strategy for CCTV in Scotland recognises that the benefits of CCTV are not confined to a single partner and that along with helping local authorities to do all they can to reduce crime and disorder and promote community safety, it also provides the Police with information in relation to crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- 3.9 In order to gain a wider perception of where public space CCTV sits within local priorities, SBC carried out a consultation in 2019 of both members of the public and potential key partners and stakeholders in the form of surveys. Almost 80% of respondents believed that crime & disorder in public areas would increase if CCTV was removed. Around 80% also believed that a combination of fixed and moveable cameras is the most suitable solution. Furthermore, over half of participants:
- strongly agreed that public space CCTV is an effective tool in reducing crime;
 - strongly agreed that public space CCTV is an effective tool for increasing public safety; and
 - strongly agreed that public space CCTV makes you feel safe.
- 3.10 Some towns within the region have explored options to invest in CCTV systems themselves to supplement SBC-resourced arrangements, most notably Selkirk. Any future developments should complement the plans of individual communities and explore possible joint resourcing arrangements. SBC should also consider how value for money and comparable costs can be achieved with community-led schemes such as those in Selkirk, including possible economies of scale opportunities.
- 3.11 The majority of crime and anti-social behaviour in the 8 towns with CCTV is being committed out-with the traditional town centre areas that are currently covered by their CCTV provision. SBC should also consider potential wider coverage, including specific areas of concern on both SBC premises including depots and wider areas in communities.
- 3.12 Command and control systems for CCTV offer several benefits to the Council in terms of public safety, security, and efficient resource management. These systems allow local authorities to monitor and manage their surveillance infrastructure effectively. Some key benefits are:
- Quick Response: ability to react faster to incidents.
 - Smart Resource Use: effective allocation of resources in real-time.
 - Traffic Management: Monitor and manage traffic efficiently.
 - Track Crime Patterns: Analyse CCTV data to identify crime trends.
 - Emergency Planning: Plan for emergencies based on historical data.
 - Surveillance capacity: Increased surveillance scope with fewer staff.
 - Lower Maintenance: Easier maintenance with centralised systems.
 - Public Trust: Increased transparency in law enforcement.
 - Solve Crimes: Increased ability to solve crimes and identify suspects.
 - Accident investigations: Intelligence for accident investigations.
 - Manage Major Incidents: Monitor and respond effectively.

- Quick Dispatch: Dispatch help faster for emergencies.
- Community Policing: Engagement for safer neighbourhoods.
- Raise Awareness: Encourage responsible behaviour.

3.13 Modern cloud-based CCTV solutions offer numerous benefits, especially when it comes to scalability. Some of the advantages of using cloud-based CCTV solutions include:

- Traditional on-premises systems often require significant upfront investments in hardware and infrastructure. In contrast, cloud solutions can be scaled up or down based on the Council's needs.
- Cost-Efficiency: You pay for what you use, avoiding the high upfront costs associated with traditional CCTV systems.
- Accessibility: Cloud-based CCTV allows authorised users to access camera feeds and footage from virtually anywhere with an internet connection. This remote access is crucial for Councils with multiple locations or for those that require off-site monitoring, making it easier to manage security.
- Data Redundancy and Backup: Cloud solutions often include robust data redundancy and backup options. The video footage is securely stored in multiple data centres, reducing the risk of data loss due to hardware failures or disasters. This ensures that surveillance data remains intact and adherent to SBC Data Security policies.
- Automatic Updates and Maintenance: Cloud-based solutions will be maintained and updated by the service provider, including software updates, security patches and hardware maintenance.

3.14 There are currently two mobile CCTV units in use within the Scottish Borders by Police Scotland. SBC has made financial provision (£50k) to explore another two or more units, and it's important that SBC works closely with key partners to ensure CCTV investment is joined-up and offers for the optimum CCTV solutions for the region. This should include targeting areas of identified need/concern, and the opportunities for income generation and future-proofing.

Town Centre Wi-Fi

3.15 In today's digital age, the importance of internet connectivity cannot be overstated. Local authorities play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life for residents and promoting economic growth within their regions, which is recognised in SBC's Digital Strategy. One strategic initiative that can yield substantial benefits is town centre Wi-Fi, which has been invested in by numerous other local authority areas to achieve the following benefits:

- **Economic Growth and Vitality** - Town centre Wi-Fi stimulates economic growth by attracting businesses, tourists, and shoppers. Access to high-speed internet encourages businesses to set up shop in the area, boosting job opportunities and increasing foot traffic. Furthermore, it supports e-commerce, allowing local businesses to expand their customer base beyond the physical boundaries of the town centre, and may help with regenerating town centres.
- **Enhanced Tourism** - Tourists rely heavily on internet connectivity to access maps, reviews, and information about local attractions. Providing Wi-Fi in town centres enhances the overall tourist experience, encouraging

longer stays and repeat visits. Additionally, it allows local authorities and businesses to promote cultural and historical landmarks through digital platforms.

- **Improved Public Services** - Town centre Wi-Fi facilitates communication between local authorities and residents. It enables access to essential services, such as online payment options, community announcements, and emergency alerts. This connectivity can also support smart city initiatives, making it easier to manage traffic, energy, and public safety.
- **Community Engagement** - A well-connected town centre fosters community engagement. Wi-Fi can be used to provide information about local events, workshops, and cultural activities. It encourages residents to spend more time in the town centre, building a sense of community and increasing civic participation.
- **Accessibility and Inclusivity** - Investing in town centre Wi-Fi promotes inclusivity by ensuring that all residents, regardless of income or mobile data plans, have access to the internet. It helps bridge the digital divide and ensures that no one is left behind in the digital era.
- **Sustainability** - Promoting Wi-Fi access can reduce the need for printed materials, such as brochures and maps, which are not only costly but also environmentally unsustainable. This aligns with sustainability goals and reduces the environmental footprint of the town centre.
- **Income Generation** - Whilst there would be clear principles around free access and availability of Wi-Fi for various circumstances, there are further options to explore around premium options. This could provide opportunities for generating income potentially from businesses, visitors and private users.

3.16 There is no current town centre Wi-Fi provision available in any Scottish Borders towns. There were previous schemes operated in both Hawick and Jedburgh, which are no longer available. Any new development would seek to have an enhanced offering than was previously available.

3.17 The Council and partners can use public Wi-Fi statistics to manage the towns in several ways to enhance services, improve urban planning, and make data-driven decisions through improved data collection and use of analytics. Wi-Fi networks offer local authorities the opportunity to gather valuable data on foot traffic, visitor demographics, and usage patterns. This data can inform decision-making processes, helping SBC allocate resources more effectively and plan infrastructure improvements. These analytics include:

- **Digital Inclusion and Accessibility:** Ensure that public Wi-Fi services are accessible in underserved areas, bridging the digital divide.
- **Community Services:** Promote local services.
- **Visitor Insights for tourism promotion:** Ability for data analysis on the number of visitors, their origin, and the duration of their stay to tailor tourism promotions and events. Also to identify peak tourist seasons and allocate resources accordingly.
- **Public Safety:** Use data on the density of users in specific areas to share key messages, or manage crowds during events or emergencies.
- **Security:** Monitor for any unusual network activity that could indicate security threats or incidents.
- **Traffic Flow:** Gather information on the movement of people to optimise traffic signals, public transportation routes, and parking areas.

- **Infrastructure Planning:** Identify areas with high connectivity demand to plan for additional public Wi-Fi access points or improved network infrastructure.
- **Retail Analytics:** Understand foot traffic patterns to assist local businesses in optimising opening hours and marketing strategies.
- **Business Incubation:** Identify areas with high user concentrations to support the establishment of new businesses.

4 OPTIONS FOR SBC CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 SBC has an ambitious programme of digital transformation, with ongoing efforts to explore new opportunities for digital solutions and cost-effective means of implementing positive digital change. There are several options to be considered around the future of both CCTV and town centre Wi-Fi, ranging from modest to extensive. There are also several options available in terms of provider, SBC's role and the involvement of community and public sector partners.
- 4.2 In the quest to build modern, thriving communities, local authorities must address both safety and connectivity. Simultaneous investment in CCTV and Wi-Fi infrastructure can reduce costs associated with installation, maintenance, and management. Shared infrastructure can optimise resources, leading to cost savings for the local authority.
- 4.3 The broad option that members are being asked to consider is a comprehensive Borders-wide digital CCTV and town centre Wi-Fi programme in the seven towns in which SBC currently operate CCTV systems. There are smaller-scale variations that can be explored by SBC, some of which may result in loss of economies of scale and less widespread benefits. There is also an increasingly urgent need to address the pressing upgrade requirements on the seven systems currently operated by SBC.
- 4.4 Further options could include consideration of SBC/partner sites, expanding mobile camera options and a focus on other areas of concern. It may also specifically include such sites as the Transport Interchange in Galashiels, which has been highlighted previously by elected members. Consideration will also need to be given to how Selkirk can interface with any new systems, as well as possible roll out to other towns and locations across the area. Eshiels depot has been used as an illustrative option for roll out to an individual SBC site.
- 4.5 SBC's strategic IT Partner, CGI, have offered initial Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) costs based on some outline options.

Option	One-off Costs	Annual Costs
To implement CCTV only across 7 towns	£810,000; or £1.7 Million	£90,000; or £600
To implement CCTV and Public Wi-Fi across 7 towns	£1.3 Million; or £3 Million	£167,000; or £1,400
Eshiels Depot	£39,000	£12,500
Cost of further additional CCTV Cameras per Unit	£6,500 per device	£1,650 per device

At this stage, these costs are only for information, are subject to significant further negotiation. Members are asked to use this information only as an indicator of potential costs at a high level, and therefore not detailed.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

A comprehensive business case is required which will encompass a robust financial business case including initial capital outlay and ongoing revenue costs as well as identifying other non-financial benefits. The costs indicated within the ROM from CGI are a starting point for further negotiation, and exploration of alternative suppliers. This investment would form part of the Council's delivery of the Digital Strategy and as such the business case requires to be prioritised against other potential digital investments to ensure value for money can be demonstrated.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The risks for Scottish Borders Council of not evolving the CCTV systems currently available are significant. Communities consistently raise the need to feel safer, and that CCTV is a key priority for them. Some of the CCTV systems in place are already at the end of their usefulness, and the current analogue system for the seven existing towns will be obsolete when the switch from to digital takes place in 2025.

5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

A full IIA will be undertaken prior to proceeding with any of the CCT & town centre Wi-Fi options.

5.4 Sustainable Development Goals

CCTV and town centre Wi-Fi should complement the Digital Strategy for SBC, which in turn seeks to promote and enhance the Council's commitment to Sustainable Development goals.

5.5 Climate Change

The options being proposed within this report should allow an overall positive impact on climate change. In many cases, the availability of effective and widespread CCTV should reduce the need for a physical presence to undertake some surveillance, monitoring and inspection work. It may make targeted response more possible, reducing the need for travel. Cloud-based storage solutions reduce the need for physical storage space. Town centre Wi-Fi may enhance the ability of communities to access remote services and information.

5.6 Rural Proofing

The initial proposal is targeted at town centre locations across the Scottish Borders. However, further phases may include exploration of wider CCTV and Wi-Fi coverage to benefit more rural areas. Indeed, a major opportunity of these digital solutions, is that further scaling up could offer rural communities possibilities that have never been available or feasible previously.

5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

The enhancement of CCTV and Town Centre Wi-Fi will need to be accompanied with a robust and thorough approach to data protection. It's likely that enhanced/updated protocols will be required given the increased availability and volume of data, and also to ensure that any new Cloud-based solutions are consistent with the arrangements of SBC and any partners. Ultimately, there should be an overall improvement in the ability to securely manage CCTV-generated data. SBC will need to work closely with data protection professionals within associated partner agencies and with communities to ensure that the benefits from these proposals are delivered without any compromise to data protection standards. A full Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be undertaken, which will identify all additional measures that are required.

5.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

It is not anticipated that there will be any changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation arising from this report.

6 **CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The following consultees have all been consulted: Director of Finance, the Director of Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director People Performance & Change, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications

Approved by

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Background Papers:

CCTV Provision in the Scottish Borders – Executive 16th April 2019

Closed Circuit Television Provision in the Scottish Borders, Consultation Report – Council 26th June 2019

Closed Circuit Television Provision in the Scottish Borders – Council 30 September 2020

Previous Minute Reference: None

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jason McDonald can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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