

REPORT OF: THE CLERK
TO: PARISH COUNCIL
DATE: 17 JULY 2017
SUBJECT: CCTV AT COMMUNITY HALL

1 INTRODUCTION

The Parish Council has allocated £5,000 in its budget for 2017-2018 for the installation of CCTV around the community hall.

Advice from Cheshire East Council was sought and provided. In addition, the Vice-Chairman of Handforth Parish Council, attended the meeting held on 19 June 2017 and outlined the arrangements introduced in Handforth. Members have already received a copy of the Handforth policy document on CCTV.

2 INFORMATION FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (CEC)

The CEC CCTV Manager provided information, in response to specific queries, as follows:

There are two options for dealing with this; (1) to link the cameras into the CEC CCTV system; or (2) the Parish Council operates its own stand-alone system.

(1) Linked into CEC

This option is costly. Installation, including BT's installation for transmission fibre optic cables is likely to be £20-30,000 all-in. The system would have 24 hours a day, 365 days a year monitoring by highly-skilled CCTV operators, direct Police radio links to Cheshire Police, state-of-the-art monitoring system, ability to transfer images live-time to the Police Control Room, and compliance with all legislation and audit requirements.

(2) Parish Council Stand-Alone System

The second way has a much lower initial outlay. A stand-alone system, which would be record-only could be installed. This would not be monitored. The footage would be downloaded when incidents occurred. This would require an outside company to install and is a post-event evidence retrieval system. This is the system which Handforth Parish Council uses. It would cost in the region of £7,000-10,000.

Members will recall that Councillor Smith made reference to the Handforth Financial Regulations which allowed the Council to seek one quotation only, provided that this was under £5,000 (which was the financial limit set by Handforth PC). This Parish Council's own limit is £1,000, but even if it were higher, there is no justification for seeking fewer than three quotations. The Parish Council has a duty to seek best value for public money at all times; however, there is no necessity to accept the lowest quotation provided that the reasons for accepting other than the lowest, are included in the minutes.

The following are the responses from the CEC CCTV Manager to specific questions raised by Councillor Peter Groves. The blue text is where the Parish Council links into the CEC system. The red text is for a stand-alone system.

1. Who could monitor the screen?

The CEC system could provide 24/7/365 coverage of the cameras from our dedicated emergency control room in Macclesfield. We have a wonderful team of operators, highly skilled in all types of crime.

The system would be a stand-alone system with no live monitoring but representatives of the Parish Council (normally the Clerk) would download evidence for Police once notified that an incident had occurred, in the hope that offenders could be identified.

2. Who would install such a system and does CEC have a preferred provider?
CEC could install the system as it has a dedicated team of engineers able to provide full installation and maintenance of the system.
An outside CCTV installation company chosen via due process by the Parish Council.
3. The cost of having the system monitored if this was through the CEC system?
The cost is £1,850 per camera per year which includes fibre optic line rental (high cost from BT), all maintenance (other than parts) and full CCTV monitoring.
4. Approximate costs of maintenance?
Included in the above costs other than parts but often an engineer can repair on site.
A separate maintenance contract would be required with the installation company for the upkeep of the CCTV cameras.
5. How resistant to vandal attacks are systems?
CEC uses anti-vandal CCTV cameras in all new systems which are highly effective. In the CEC system 13 towns/villages are monitored. Of these, no cameras have been vandalised. This could also be owing to the fact that CEC CCTV has been very effective in the apprehension and detection of criminals, possibly deterring them from trying.
A private company for the stand-alone system would no doubt provide the same cameras if this was requested.
5. If the Parish Council wanted to put a camera on a pole to monitor the area surrounding the hall, would this require planning permission?
Planning permission would be required for most installations. If the Council were to opt for stand-alone, there would also be a requirement for compliant signage to be installed, an operational statement to justify the installation and a privacy impact assessment. (CEC can assist with these.)
7. What arrangements does CEC have with the Police over CCTV systems at similar locations ?
The Police make huge use of the CEC CCTV system in all 13 towns and villages covered. When an incident is seen, it is reported to the Police which will then request download of the footage. If the incident is live, CEC can report direct to the Police using the radios in the Control Room and are able to guide the responding Officers to the location and/or offenders. CEC also has a live video feed with the Police Control Room thereby enabling live images to be sent from the cameras, in real time.

3 DECISION REQUIRED

The Parish Council is asked to consider how to proceed to try to ensure that CCTV is installed during the current financial year.

If Option 1 (link to CEC) is the preferred option, progress can be made, but the implementation of the scheme will need to be deferred to 2017-2018 as the current budget provision is inadequate.

If Option 2 (stand-alone) is the preferred option, a specification will need to be drawn up and quotations sought from three appropriately qualified contractors. In these circumstances, Members are invited to consider how a specification will be prepared.

Carol Jones
Clerk

10 July 2017