

**City of York Council**

West Offices
YORK

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Briefing Note

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The Development of CCTV in York

Introduction

1. This note provides a brief overview of CCTV operation in York, the scope of the current system and proposals for future development.

Background

2. The City of York Council CCTV service is operated by the Network Management Team in the City and Environment Services Directorate and is currently focused around these areas of operation;
 - Crime and disorder and police support;
 - Active management of the transport network;
 - Car park security;
 - CYC building monitoring (libraries and schools);
 - Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) enforcement of bus lanes.
3. The service consists of around 90 cameras (120 when the libraries and P+R sites are included), and is monitored from a new, staffed control room facility at West Offices. This control room, which was provided jointly by the 'West Offices' Accommodation Project and transport capital funding uses state of the art digital equipment and has been designed to offer space for future expansion of the service. The CCTV Control Room and the neighbouring Network Management control facility are jointly referred to as the York Travel and Control Centre (YTCC).
4. Opened in April 2013, the new YTCC includes six map based digital operator work-stations, (plus two more dedicated to transport network monitoring), a large multi-purpose video wall and an up to date digital video switching system. The service also has a hard-disk recording system capable of recording a rolling 31 days footage for all connected cameras.
5. The CCTV service is now fully integrated into the Council's 'Dark Fibre' private fibre-optic network. This future proof and enabling network, that connects the majority of CYC premises providing high speed, high band-width

data and voice networks, includes a specific segregated network for the CCTV system and is also being utilised by a number of partners within the City.

6. Between November 2012 and March 2013, work was undertaken to convert every CCTV camera in the City to digital operation and connect them to the Dark Fibre network. This allowed the old and more expensive and inflexible previous analogue connections, to be ceased. The benefits of this development include lower operational costs for the camera estate, increased flexibility and ease of deployment and using the Dark Fibre 'backbone', better links to Council premises, partner organisations and other authorities.
7. The CCTV service employs 8 staff, (4 night time staff working 33hrs/wk; 3 day time staff working 25 hrs/wk and a supervisor working 37 hrs/wk), all of whom work to a shift pattern that provides staff cover 24 hrs / day, 7 days a week. The staff employed by the service are all licensed CCTV operators and have enhanced CRB clearance and are police 'NPPV L2' vetted; this is required as the control room is provided with a police 'Air Wave' radio allowing direct communication between the operators, police controllers and officers on the ground. The service also has radios for the CYC operated parking / Civil Enforcement Officer radio system and the Store-Net network.
8. In addition to the CYC employed staff, external staff from the Security Company providing building security services for West Offices are utilised, working 4 day on – 4 day off, 12 hour shifts; currently there are three such external staff working in the team. This combination of CYC and external staffing has increased the flexibility of the team to react to changing circumstances, enhanced the ability of the team to provide full 24 hour cover and provided a mechanism for quickly expanding the size of the team, should this prove necessary. These benefits will prove to be prerequisite for expansion of the service and offering CCTV support to other parts of the Council and external users.

Current Developments

9. CYC is committed to the development of the CCTV system and is keen to see it grow into a service that can provide CCTV, alarm and service monitoring, and 'out of hours' call support both internally and to other public sector bodies. The development that has gone into building the YTCC and Dark Fibre network has resulted in a resource that is well placed to offer reliable, cost effective services across North Yorkshire and beyond. There could be benefits for both York as the provider and other organisations as service users in this approach – Service provision (especially to the smaller rural authorities) from the YTCC would allow more cost effective and comprehensive service to be offered than is possible locally.
10. To illustrate this, the three current strands of development currently being investigated with regard to possible expansion of the YTCC are outlined below;

Developments with in CYC

11. Work is currently underway with a number of service areas within CYC to develop proposals for the YTCC taking on CCTV monitoring and control and 'out of hours' coverage. These proposals generally follow the model of identifying opportunities where service areas need CCTV coverage of premises or need to provide out of hours telephone services but need to find budgetary savings. In such cases, amalgamation of their service requirements into the YTCC can offer reduce costs and bring additional funding into the YTCC to support growth of the service.
12. Generally, services such as this require cover for set times such as 24/7 or overnight; but do not generate sufficient work to justify specifically employing staff, or they do employ staff but see poor utilisation of them. By combining a number of such services in one place (the YTCC), a smaller pool of staff can be shared across a number of services. This allows each service area to reduce its overall revenue expenditure and by directing that expenditure to the YTCC allows the YTCC to fund additional staffing and coverage, to the benefit of all.
13. This type of development is currently being explored in terms of the provision of CCTV to schools, 'out of hours' telephone support for the Customer Centre and 'night-watchman' support for Neighbourhoods and Communities functions.

Provision of services to other public bodies

14. An opportunity that is developing at the moment is the hosting of CCTV services for other local bodies. As pressure on public bodies to reduce costs increases, many are looking for savings in the fixed costs of providing CCTV. Whilst the obvious option of closing the CCTV service or reducing coverage is often not politically palatable, service sharing with other public bodies is, and has the potential to significantly reduce fixed costs. CYC, with our new CCTV infrastructure and highly flexible staffing arrangement is well placed to offer other bodies this service at a rate that both offers reductions to end-user bodies and provides sufficient income into the YTCC to expand cover and reduce CYC revenue costs.
15. The use of the Dark Fibre network, and its linkages outside the boundary of York mean that where previously the costs of linking remote CCTV systems together would often prove prohibitive, this is now an option that can be provided at a sustainable rate.

Closer working with the Police

16. We have a long history of working with North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and they rely heavily on the CCTV system to support policing in York. Recently, they have connected the Force Control Room, (FCR) at Fulford Road police station to the Council's Dark Fibre network, allowing the provision of CCTV images into the FCR from the YTCC.

17. It is likely that with this improvement in connectivity between CYC and NYP, the range of services we are able to offer to the police, and the degree to which the police are able to directly utilise CCTV for their own purposes will increase. Additionally the opportunities for joint working and closer linkages in delivering front-line services and joint investigatory and intelligence roles will grow. On this basis there may be new models for cost and resource sharing that can be investigated.

Conclusion

18. As outlined above, there are a number of strands emerging regarding the future development and expansion of the CCTV system that could allow CYC to begin to offer CCTV and control / monitoring service across North Yorkshire and beyond. Such initiatives could reduce the costs associated in service provision and increase service level for participating bodies and could bring revenue into CYC to support the current service and allow it future expansion.

19. The major investment CYC has made recently both in the new CCTV system and the wider Dark Fibre network, mean that the system we have is well suited to expansion and taking on services for others in CYC and outside. The system, being 'state of the art' is also well placed to allow us to provide services at a rate that offers cost reductions for end-users, provides income into the YTCC to fund core service provision and allows for expansion.