



Penwith District Council

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Jim McKenna BA CPFA **Chief Executive**

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My Ref :

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Date : 14 November 2006



Dear Ms Giggal

Report regarding West Cornwall CCTV

Thank you for inviting us to attend your recent informal council meeting to discuss CCTV. Further to that meeting, please find attached a report detailing the background to, and current position of, the West Cornwall CCTV system.

This report has been written, as requested, for you to take to your next full council meeting to discuss the issues with all of your members present.

The report contains recommendations regarding the upgrade of the system and several options regarding how this might be financed. I would like to propose that I meet with yourself and the other Town Clerks within the next fortnight for an informal conversation to look at the options in more detail and how this may be progressed. I will be calling you this week to arrange that meeting.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

AP

Allan Hampshire
Head of Housing Health & Community Safety

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

1. **CCTV REPORT**

2. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

2.1 Penwith and Kerrier District Councils jointly operate the West Cornwall CCTV System (hereafter WCCCTVS) which consists of 47 cameras covering the six principal towns in West Cornwall. The cost of the WCCCTVS is shared jointly between the two councils.

2.2 The WCCCTVS went live in March 1999. The design life of the system is 15 years, although it was always recognised that items such as cameras, monitors and video recorders would require replacement earlier than that, every 5 years is the recommendation.

2.3 As technology advances, so the existing equipment will become obsolete. It is already extremely difficult, and therefore expensive, to get replacement parts for some of the system. Currently there is no provision for the ultimate replacement of part, or all of the system.

This report aims to identify the need for, and worth of, continuing to operate the CCTV system. It provides options for consideration which range from removing the whole system to upgrading it. It seeks to secure support from the town councils for the upgrade of the system, and looks at how to meet the cost of such an upgrade should this be the preferred option.

3 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 The WCCCTVS went live on 5 March 1999 with 47 cameras providing coverage 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year across the 6 principal towns in West Cornwall, the 3 within Penwith being Penzance with 13 cameras, St Ives with 8 cameras and Hayle with 4 cameras.

3.2

Funding Breakdown

Funding Source	£000's
External Grants	465.5
District Councils x 2	207.5
Town Councils x 6	43.0
Chambers of Commerce x 6	32.7
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	2.8
Total	751.5

The current costs are variable but approximate £396,000 per annum (£198,000 each from Penwith and Kerrier) to include contract costs, overheads, and £20,000 towards remedial maintenance.

3.3 Performance and Impact

3.4 The WCCCTVS has been an asset to West Cornwall since it began operation. Some examples are shown below:

- In the 2005/2006 financial year 736 major incidents of note (where the police are requested to attend the scene) were monitored by the WCCCTVS with 349 detentions observed on screen – an average of 1 per day.
- In 2005/2006, 113 requests were made by the police resulting in evidence being captured. This led to 99 arrests, 25% of which were related to assaults and 21% were related to criminal damage.
- Two of the operators won a 'Highly Commended' award from the CCTV User Group in a national competition searching for 'Operator of the Year' whittled down from over 5,000 applicants in 2003.
- The WCCCTVS is also used in 'non-crime' incidences such as locating missing children and seeking medical assistance.
- In early 2005 the WCCCTVS played a vital role in resolving a national search for a murder suspect after the suspect was identified by one of the operators monitoring the cameras leading to an arrest.
- Violent crime is a major issue at national level – on average 25% of all major incidents recorded by the WCCCTVS are linked predominantly to alcohol-related violent crime. The use of proactive monitoring means that such incidents end earlier due to rapid police deployment and perpetrators are brought to justice through the use of recorded evidence.

3.5

- Taped evidence was used in a case in Redruth where young men undertook an unprovoked attack on a stranger using a weapon – the evidence was used in court where the attackers were too sickened by their actions to watch – this assisted the court in issuing a custodial sentence.
- The WCCCTVS is also utilised for special operations which have a positive impact on the community for example by reducing the supply of drugs in the community, or assisting with crowd control at public events such as Golowan and New Years Eve celebrations in St Ives.

3.6 Consultation

3.7 In the Crime and Disorder Audit 2004 the views of residents and business people were canvassed regarding what they felt could be done locally to reduce crime and/or improve community safety. The four crime types they were asked to apply this question to were car crime, burglary, violence and disorder. In all four questions "More CCTV" ranked in the top five of the 24 given options and, for three of the questions, ranked in the top three in the results from the business community.

3.8 **Current Situation**

3.9 The WCCCTVS costs are currently split 50/50 between Kerrier District Council and Penwith District Council (approximate £198,000 per annum each which includes £20,000 towards remedial maintenance). Kerrier's contribution is raised through a Special Levy on the council tax on residents living in parts of Camborne, Redruth and Helston. Penwith's comes from an even spread across the council tax base.

3.10 At the beginning of the scheme it was estimated that the life span of the system was between 10-15 years, though it was appreciated that cameras, monitors, video recorders and other such equipment would require replacement earlier than that.

3.11 During the last 7 years costs have increased in relation to remedial maintenance as the equipment becomes older. Sourcing spare parts for existing cameras is becoming increasingly difficult and the video system is now regarded as reaching obsolescence with a move to digital recording of pictures (Restormel Borough Council have used digital recording for the last 3 years). Certain manufacturers such as Panasonic and JVC have advised suppliers in writing that not only do they no longer manufacture certain products but also they cannot support them.

3.12 As the system ages there is the increased risk that incidents captured on CCTV will not be of evidential quality and will therefore be useless.

3.13 **The Way Forward/Options**

3.14 **Option 1 – Remove System**

3.15 One option would be to remove the system in order that the ongoing financial costs to the Council were removed. However this option would be likely to lead to a decrease in detected crimes and a further increase in fear of crime which detrimentally affects quality of life. Such a decision, if it were taken solely for financial reasons, could also bring into question both Penwith and the town council's consideration of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

3.16 There is a cost for removal of the system. An approximate cost was worked out and is shown in the table below – the cost to remove cameras and make good has since been amended and this figure is also included in the table below:

3.17 **Removal of System**

3.18

Action	Cost (£'s)
To remove the cameras and make good	65,565
3 months costs to Monitoring Contractor	39,145
3 months costs to NTL	33,897
3 months costs to Maintenance Contractor	5,036
Total	143,643
Cost per Council	71,821

3.19 **Option 2 – Remedial Maintenance**

3.20 The second option is to fund remedial maintenance only, which would aim to keep the equipment operational for as long as parts were available, and assuming that current contractors would continue to support a degrading system. Currently only one manufacturer can supply the lens used in the existing cameras, and leads for cameras are bespoke, having to be made specifically for use in the system.

3.21 This option would not provide any upgrade to the system and would lead to a less effective system using equipment that cannot always be replaced nor supported, eventually leading to removal of the system with associated costs as shown above. As the system ages, so more repairs are needed leading to a rapid increase in the cost to support this option as detailed in the table below.

3.22 **Remedial Maintenance**

	£'s Year 1 2007/08	£'s Year 2 2008/09	£'s Year 3 2009/10	£'s Year 4 2010/11	£'s Year 5 2011/12	Total Years 1-5
Total Cost Per Annum	65,478	108,175	94,901	111,580	100,519	480,653
Cost per Council Per Annum	32,739	54,087.5	47,450.5	55,790	50,259.5	240,326.5

These figures exclude contracted maintenance and repair costs, transmission costs and monitoring costs, and are therefore in addition to the approximate figure of £198,000 per annum already being paid by Penwith.

These figures exclude removal costs of up to £143,643 (£71,821 per district)

3.23 **Option 4 – Upgrade Programme**

- 3.24 The costs shown below give the estimated cost for the continuous upgrade of the cameras and associated monitoring and recording equipment required. The Councils would retain ownership of the system in this option. The costs are based on borrowing the capital needed to upgrade the whole system in one year. Upgrading the entire system in one year rather than staggering the process is preferable and most cost effective. Any cameras which are not upgraded will be more likely to need ongoing remedial maintenance with the increased costs and other problems associated with this option as previously discussed.
- 3.25 The cost to upgrade the whole system in Penwith is £256,042. Spread over five years the cost would be £51,208 per annum.
- 3.26 **Funding Sustainability**
- 3.27 It is inevitable that costs will increase over the coming years to cater for either remedial maintenance and/or an upgrade programme. Steps can be taken to reduce the cost through seeking income generating schemes and opportunities such as those listed below:
- 3.28
- **The monitoring for third parties in return for a fee** The Councils have a power to charge under certain circumstances as defined within the Local Government Act 2003.
- 3.29
- **Section 106 Agreements** Penwith District Council is looking closely at the use of 106 agreements in relation to the funding of the CCTV system.
- 3.30
- **Licensing** Penwith District Council is looking closely at whether a requirement to pay towards the cost of the CCTV system could be included within the licensing of premises.
- 3.31
- **Contributions from traders.** At the beginning of the WCCCTVS it was the intention that traders would make an annual contribution. However, an exercise undertaken by the Monitoring contractor on the Councils' behalf to invoice traders in 1999 cost them £13,000 and led to only 4.1% of accounts raised being paid (£4991). This was not seen as a cost effective way of generating income and the Councils then took responsibility for generating revenue via council tax. The Business Improvement District (BID) scheme is being further investigated as a possible means for getting local businesses to put funding into the system but this is not a short-term option as it would take time and money to set up.
- 3.32
- **Grant funding** in principle – whilst currently no specific grant funding exists, funding sources are being investigated.
- 3.33
- **The sale of second hand cameras** and other equipment which could be sold to schools or similar.
- There is currently limited officer time available to investigate further the potential alternative sources of funding. We must ensure that these sources are cost effective to pursue.
- 3.34 **Conclusion**

3.35

The West Cornwall CCTV system is seen, by the police, public and businesses alike, as being a valuable tool in the fight against crime and disorder and the fear of crime in town centres.

When the system was originally installed the costs were met from a variety of sources which included the two district councils, the six town councils and the six Chambers of Commerce. As time has gone on all of the other partners have dropped out leaving Penwith and Kerrier District Councils to pick up the entire cost of running and repairing the system. With the system aging, repairs being necessary on a more frequent basis, and costs increasing, the need to upgrade the system is becoming increasingly urgent.

Whilst it recognises the role which the CCTV system plays in the reduction of crime and the fear of crime in the 3 town centres, in light of current and future years budget constraints Penwith Council would find it difficult to continue to fund the contractual and (increasing) repair costs, as well as the upgrade on its own. There is, therefore, a need for the Town Councils to contribute to the cost of the upgrade and this can be achieved in several different ways:-

1. Through a 3 way equal split
2. Pro rata per number of cameras
3. Spread over the taxbase
4. Pro rata per number of properties

The cost per town council of an equal 3 way split is £17,300 per annum. The costs of the other options are detailed in the spreadsheet below and are the costs per annum. Payments would need to start at the beginning of the 2007/2008 financial year

Option 1 – Equal 3 way split between Hayle, St Ives and Penzance

Option 2 – Pro rata per number of cameras

	No. Cameras	% System	Contribution £
Hayle	4	16	8,193
St Ives	8	32	16,387
Penzance	13	52	26,628
Total	25	100	51,208

Option 3 – Spread over the tax base

	Taxbase	% Taxbase	Contribution £
Hayle	2,954	19	9,518
St Ives	5,092	32	16,407
Penzance	7,847	49	25,283
Total	15,893	100	51,208

*£ 3.22p
per year
BAND D.*

Option 4 – Pro rata per number of properties

	Properties	% Properties	Contribution £
Hayle	3982	19	9,684
St Ives	6283	30	15,279
Penzance	10792	51	26,245
Total	21,057	100	51,208

*** It is therefore **RECOMMENDED** - that

1. That the value of continuing to operate the CCTV system is both acknowledged and supported.
2. That it is agreed that the system, if continued, must be upgraded.
3. That the Town Councils agree to fund the upgrade, using one of the detailed options commencing 2007/2008 financial year

Background papers:

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