

PFCC Decision Report

Report reference number: 024-23

Classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: CCTV Upgrade Works in Basildon Town Centre

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Basildon town centre

Report by: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)

Chief Officer: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)

Date of report: 27 January 2023

Enquiries to: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)

1. Executive Summary

This report sets out a proposal for the PFCC to invest, alongside Essex Police, Basildon Borough Council and First Bus, in an upgraded CCTV system for Basildon town centre.

2. Recommendations

That the PFCC contributes up to £12,500 from their Community Safety Development Fund towards the costs of an upgraded CCTV system within Basildon town centre.

3. Background to the Proposal

Following a spate of 15 knife crimes and robbery offences in Basildon town centre within two weeks during the autumn of 2022, Basildon Council approached representatives of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Essex Police for discussions regarding how the CCTV network in the area could be upgraded. The bus station in Basildon is due to be refurbished as part of the Council's regeneration plans,

however Basildon Town Centre Management (BTCM) is not planning to renew the redundant CCTV system as part of the scheme.

There are currently four cameras located between the former Marks and Spencer building and Brook House, but these are of very poor quality. Basildon Council is planning to replace them like-for-like before the new cinema opens later this year but approached the PFCC's office and Essex Police for discussions regarding the potential to work in partnership to extend and upgrade this.

Following further discussions with First Bus, it is proposed to split the costs of the proposed scheme between Basildon Council, First Bus, Essex Police and the PFCC.

4. Proposal and Associated Benefits

With the addition of a new camera on East Walk, there is an opportunity to extend CCTV coverage to cover the area stretching from here, through the town centre and up to the bus station. This would act as a deterrent to crime being committed in the first instance, as well as supporting prosecutions where crime does occur.

During the 2022 calendar year, compared with 2021:

- The total number of crimes (excluding fraud) recorded in the borough increased by 4.8%, compared with a 3.8% increase seen across the whole force area.
- 12.1% of all crime recorded within the whole force area was recorded in Basildon.

Within this:

- Violence with injury increased by 9.8%, compared with 8.6% across the whole force area. 11.7% of all violence with injury recorded within the county was recorded in Basildon.
- Violence without injury rose by 7.5%, compared with 5.1% across the whole force area. 12.7% of all violence without injury recorded within the county was recorded in Basildon.
- Robbery grew by 8.7%, compared with 11.7% across the whole force area. 16.2% of all robbery recorded within the county was recorded in Basildon.
- Theft increased by 26.2%, compared with 16.8% across the whole force area. 6.6% of all theft recorded within the county was recorded in Basildon.

With the above – as well as the outcomes of community consultation set out in section 6 below - in mind, investing in an enhanced CCTV system for the town centre could both reduce crime levels and increase public confidence.

5. Options Analysis

The PFCC could chose not to support the request, however this would result in Basildon bus station and town centre lacking a good quality CCTV system. The absence of such could be a further deterrent to bus travel – thereby impacting negatively on the county's net zero carbon ambitions - and would likely also have a detrimental impact on crime levels.

6. Consultation and Engagement

A residents' perception tracker survey carried out by Basildon Borough Council in 2021 found that residents in the St. Martin's ward (covering the town centre) felt significantly less safe during the day than anywhere else in the borough (at 82%, compared with a borough-wide figure of 91% and an LGA benchmark of 93%). Residents of St. Martin's were also significantly less likely to say that they felt safe outside at night, at 60% compared with a borough-wide figure of 67% and an LGA benchmark of 78%. The only ward in the borough where less than 90% of residents said they felt safe in their own homes was St. Martin's, at 81%.

Within the force, consultation has been undertaken with the Strategic Lead for Partnerships and Prevention, who has confirmed that the proposed location is a priority area for target-hardening measures such as CCTV. Consultation has also been undertaken with Basildon Council's Head of Economic Development and CCTV Manager, as well as the Commercial Director of First Bus Essex.

7. Strategic Links

The proposal aligns with the PFCC's Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 as follows:

Further investment in crime prevention	Work with Safer Essex and in line with the Crime Prevention Strategy to invest more in preventing crime in Essex
	Build on the success of the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) by encouraging increased targeting of hotspots, including in the night-time economy, and known offenders to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB)
Reducing violence against women and girls	Work with police and partners to look for ways to reduce the fear women feel in their communities
	Encourage measures to make public space free from abuse and harassment
	Apply to the Government's Safer Streets fund to improve lighting, CCTV and safety in town centres and key hotspots

The proposal supports delivery of the Crime Prevention Strategy as follows:

Knife crime	Enable prevention work through effective analysis, targeting high harm areas and individuals through local and force tasking and working with Community Safety Partnerships
	Ensure relentless enforcement and pursuit against knife crime offenders operating in Essex
Dwelling burglary and street robbery	Collect, analyse and disseminate intelligence to identify and respond to emerging threats, hotspots and trends
Places	Ensure a co-ordinated partnership approach to community safety issues, encouraging local ownership and leadership of

	community led solutions that provide public reassurance, reduce harm and protect the vulnerable
Night-time economy	Identify crime trends, patterns or hotspots and respond accordingly
	Reduce anti-social behaviour, supporting a healthy, happy and productive night-time economy

The Safer Basildon Partnership Community Safety Strategy 2022 – 2025 includes priorities to improve the perception of community safety and to prevent serious violence. Key indicators of success within the strategy include:

- Reduction in knife crime
- Reduction in violence with injury
- Reduction in the proportion of people reporting they feel unsafe at night, in particular young people

The methods to be employed to achieve these outcomes include robust enforcement of perpetrators of crime by using all available tools and powers.

8. Police operational implications

There are no operational implications arising for Essex Police from this decision report.

9. Financial implications

The enhanced scheme is estimated to cost up to £50,000, to which the PFCC is requested to contribute up to £12,500. This can be funded from the PFCC’s Community Safety Development Fund. The remainder of the costs will be met by Essex Police, Basildon Borough Council and First Bus.

Basildon Council has already accessed separate funding via the Violence and Vulnerability Unit to fund the element of the scheme covering the bus station and college. This funding needs to be spent by the end of March.

10. Legal implications

Award of this funding would be subject to the terms and conditions of the Council’s standard grant agreement. Within this, there is a requirement for any communications associated with the project to acknowledge the funding contributed by the PFCC.

11. Staffing implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this decision report.

12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

There are no equality, diversity and inclusion implications arising from this decision report.

13. Risks and Mitigations

No risks have been identified with approving the recommendation set out in this decision report.

14. Governance Boards

The proposal set out in this decision report was discussed by the PFCC's Corporate Management Team on 24 October 2022 and agreed in principle pending the submission of this report.

15. Links to Future Plans


This proposal does not link with any future plans beyond the broader strategic priorities set out in section 7 above.


16. Background Papers and Appendices

None

Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the PFCC’s Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Chief Executive / M.O. Sign: 
Print: P. Brent-Isherwood
Date: 27 January 2023

Chief Finance Officer Sign: 
Print: Janet Perry
Date: 30 January 2023

Publication

Is the report for publication? YES X
NO

If ‘NO’, please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State ‘None’ if applicable)

None

If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet? YES NO X
2. Of Appendix? YES NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

N/A

Date redaction carried out:

Chief Finance Officer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign:

Print:

Chief Executive / Chief Finance Officer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:



Sign:

Print:

ROGER HIRST

PFCC

Date signed: 3 February 2023

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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Sign:

Print: