Bedford Borough Council

CCTV Annual Report – April 2020 to March 2021

Introduction

This report looks at all CCTV records held by Bedford Borough Council (BBC), from incidents and requests, involving the CCTV control room, which were recorded in the year 1st April 2020-31st March 2021. It provides us with a 12-month analysis period in which to evaluate the performance of the CCTV systems. The BBC CCTV Control Room achieved its certification of compliance from the Surveillance Camera Commissioner in December 2019. This is the 2nd annual report to be produced for us. Completing this document annually will allow us to identify key performance indicators, both as a result of the Control Room activities and also the demand on them from partner agencies. In addition it is an indicator of the requirement The Bedford Community Safety Partnership (CSP), under section 115 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, of the need to work with and share information, to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safer. Community safety partnerships (CSPs) are made up of representatives from the 'responsible authorities', which are the:

- Police
- local authorities
- fire and rescue authorities
- probation service
- health

The responsible authorities must work together to work out how to deal with local issues like antisocial behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and reoffending. They annually assess local crime priorities and consult partners and the local community about how to deal with them. This will likely involve the use of static or deployable CCTV cameras as a problem solving tool.

This report will detail the first year information analysis for the BBC CCTV control room. The information is broken down into reports generated both by the CCTV control room and partner agencies. The highest concentration of incidents is within the Bedford Town Centre area which is also where the majority of partners work together covering Local Authority, Police, Night Time Economy (Bedsafe), Retail Radio Link (Town Centre Commerce) and a number of volunteer organisations. It is anticipated that the reporting mechanism will develop and change over the next three years.

Incidents

The total number of reports into the control room for the period 01/04/20 – 31/03/21 was 1,503

The primary sources of calls (incidents) into the CCTV control rooms are from the Police. These are made up of calls from their Control Room, Police Officers and PCSO's and accounts for 489, 32.53% of all calls. This is up considerable against the last financial year (26.12%) a good indicator of the effectiveness of the CCTV service in assisting the Police.

The CCTV Control Room accounted for 548 reports requiring a response from any partner covering the town centre in particular, 36.46% of all calls. A lot of this work is down to a robust pro-active ethos within the CCTV control room. This is also as a result of information sharing between the local authority and the police around for instance wanted persons, missing persons, vulnerable individuals, specific targeted operations involving partner agencies and retail crime initiatives.

Calls from other partners accounted for 191 reports - 12.71%%

Other calls from council departments accounted for 32 - 2.1% of all calls.

The number of arrests viewed on camera was 360.

The activities in particular in the town centre areas had been affected by the National Lockdowns put in place due to Covid-19, whereby the footfall has seen a drastic reduction in public places.

Reviews and media seized during investigation

The BBC CCTV staff are responsible for analysing and viewing images at the request of either Bedfordshire Police or any other authorised officer of the Local Authority. They will also provide information and images whereby requests for footage have come from a third party such as an insurance business. This is all completed in accordance with GDPR and Data Protection legislation.

In 2020-2021, the BBC CCTV control room received a total number of 372 requests for footage to be copied for use as evidence. Again a reduction is due to the National Lockdowns put in place due to Covid-19

Deployable cameras

BBC CCTV have a total of 31 deployable cameras which have been purchased not only by BBC CCTV, but also partner agencies including, Bedford Prison, Ward Cllrs, Housing Associations and Parish Councils. Requests for these camera's to be utilised must be submitted in writing and verified with evidence and data to support their placement. All placements are discussed and agreed at a monthly partnership meeting to ensure that there is a justified requirement for a camera to be located in an area. Of the 29 cameras, 13 have been provided by the BBC Community Safety Team

During the period April 20 to March 21 there was a total of 25 requests for the use of deployable cameras. These covered a range of issues including fly tipping, antisocial behaviour, threatening behaviour, drug use & dealing and exploitation in varying manners.

Projects

BBC have been successful in a bid to the Home Office, Safer Streets Fund to carry out a series of improvements to our CCTV Control including the installation of a Video Management System. The works have been completed and the Control Room now boasts an analytic capable camera control system with 4K monitors, 7 x 65" 4K monitors, upgraded servers, offering higher storage capacity. In addition a new view suite has been installed improving operator response and viewing capabilities. 12 Town centre camera have been replaced with 4MG Avigilon Cameras and 2 Predator Cameras.

We are now in the process of agreeing additional funding from the Home Office Safer Streets fund to Install more cameras in the high footfall areas in 4 separate areas on the outskirts of the town centre area. This will fall in line with the objective of the Safer Streets III project, which is to improve the safety of females travelling though these areas into the town centre itself.

The CCTV system is over 20 years old and has grown organically from the original 9 cameras covering the town centre to over 700 covering our car parks, museum and some of the urban areas outside of the town centre. The system itself is comprised of a combination of cameras based upon fibre networks, wireless networks and mobile data linked cameras. It is of vital importance that we can secure funding where possible to continue to upgrade our the CCTV cameras through out the Borough of Bedford.

The BBC CCTV maintenance contract will be going out to tender at the end of December 2021.

The BBC CCTV staffing provision contract has been tendered with an implementation date of 1st April 22 for the successful candidate.

Protection of Freedoms Act

Section 33 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (PoFA) requires all local authorities to pay due regard to the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice (SCC Code) where they operate surveillance cameras overtly in a public space. The BBC CCTV system achieved its certification of compliance from the Surveillance Camera Commissioner in December 2019 and is subject to an annual review until a full inspection in 2021. We are pleased to share that our audit commended us on a number of good practice processes being in place to manage every aspect of our CCTV processes and policies. We are also very pleased to have passed on the first audit we had requested with the SCC.

Training and staff

The BBC CCTV team play an integral part in the prevention and detection of crime, safeguarding of vulnerable young & elderly, provide a key link between partners working and utilising the Bedford Town Centre, whilst ensuring that both residents and visitors to Bedford Borough Council feel safe whilst going about their daily life. The control Room is a 24/7 365 day operation, the team is made up of 1 full time supervisor and 7 staff comprising 4 full time and 3 part time. The team played a huge part in us acquiring our certification from the SCC. The level of commitment, enthusiasm and hard work shown by all of them is admirable and they are a great asset to BBC.

Bedford Borough Council – CCTV Control Room

Key Performance Indicators - 1st April 20 – 31st March 21

Indicator Details	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	July 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Total
Police requests	42	39	48	24	45	51	50	59	34	25	42	30	**489**
Beds Safe – Night Time Economy	0	0	0	04	11	07	05	0	04	0	0	0	**31**
Blue Caps – Retail Customer Service	0	0	0	02	0	01	0	0	0	01	0	0	**04**
Retail Radio – Town Centre Commerce	09	06	06	07	17	20	13	22	14	14	09	19	**156**
Bedford Borough Council	01	01	0	0	0	01	02	02	01	0	01	0	**09**
Fire Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
CCTV Control Room	71	32	35	31	51	54	47	41	49	45	52	40	**548**
Parking Services	0	0	03	05	02	01	06	01	02	02	01	0	**23**
Arrests – All above sources	31	25	28	23	31	39	40	35	17	29	37	25	**360**
Footage Requested													**372**
Footage Destroyed – (Requested but not collected)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**57**
Footage Awaiting Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**18**