

## Agenda item 8

### For decision - Approval of CCTV Service Level Agreement with Somerset Council

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#### Summary (incl. recommendations)

In 2024 responsibility for funding the public CCTV cameras in Somerset Towns was devolved to Town Councils (TC). Under a 3 year Service Level Agreement (SLA) between TCs and Somerset Council (SC) it was agreed that an annual fee per camera would be paid by each town to cover the service for monitoring these cameras. Monitoring takes place in an SC control room in Bridgwater. Images are used by the police for evidence gathering and live developments are relayed to the police as needed. In 2025 the CCTV images from Frome cameras were forwarded to police 30 times.

SC are updating the SLA for the 2027-2030 period. It is planned that the annual fee paid will rise with inflation. The main change, to recognise the new role of TCs as the fee paying client, is to set up a new post within SC's CCTV team to take on the liaison with TCs in order to be able to answer local questions and concerns. To continue the CCTV service this updated SLA now needs FTC approval.

The recommendation is to approve the SC CCTV Service Level Agreement (CCTV, Management and Maintenance Obligations) for Frome's 10 public town centre CCTVs to run from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030 at an initial annual cost of £27,980 (£2,798 per camera x10), plus additional cost for repairs, funded from 600-7987. Costs rising thereafter in line with inflation.

#### Background

In Frome there are 10 Public CCTV cameras located in the town centre. These have been managed and monitored by Somerset Council (SC) for use by the Police.

Legally, SC have a responsibility to ensure the safety of their citizens and while CCTV provision is not itself a named legal requirement it is nonetheless viewed as a key means by which the policy of ensuring public safety is delivered.

SC has retained the role of managing and monitoring these cameras, but following the devolution process in 2024, responsibility for funding all of the publicly managed cameras across the Somerset towns was transferred from SC to Town Councils.

At the time FTC reviewed with SC, the PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) and the Police (Somerset Commander) whether an alternative possible option could be for the Police to take on the direct management of the local town cameras. However both SC and the Police took the view that for consistency Frome's CCTV provision should be managed in the same way as the other Somerset towns.

(The exception to this being the three CCTV cameras in Victoria Park managed locally by the police, which is covered below).

Discussions were formally agreed on 15 March 2024 when FTC agreed an SLA with SC to run Frome's 10 CCTV's in the town centre, installed at 8 locations, at a cost of £25k in year 1 (with RPI increases planned for years 2 and 3). A 6 month notice period was agreed allowing FTC to withdraw from the agreement if needed. This SLA was on the same per-camera fee terms agreed between SC and other Somerset towns.

Under this agreement FTC has taken on the ownership of all the cameras and have the power to turn off or re-site a camera. In practice the cost of a re-siting makes this all but prohibitive. FTC also have the liability for any camera repairs or upgrades as needed. At the time of transfer the Frome cameras were reported as being digital, in good condition and with an expected work life in excess of 10 years.

To date they have needed no extra funding to maintain/repair other than the fee paid to SC for their monitoring.

FTC do not see or store the images from these cameras; the images are fed live to an SC control room in Bridgwater which is currently monitored 24/7. Images are made accessible to the police for evidence gathering and the SC control room can alert operational police on duty to any developing live situation that may need a response.

Frome's usage of CCTV's is significantly lower than the two main Somerset towns

- Bridgwater: 79 cameras
- Taunton: 60 cameras.
- Yeovil: 29 cameras.
- Wells: 17 cameras.
- **Frome: 10 cameras.**
- Street: 9 cameras.
- Shepton Mallet: 8 cameras.
- Glastonbury: 7 cameras.
- Wellington: 6 cameras.
- Burnham-on-Sea: 6 cameras.
- Highbridge: 2 cameras.

The 10 town centre cameras that FTC have taken on are:

Number	Location	Fixing	Type	Model
501	The Library	Column Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
502	Cattle Market Car Park	Column Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
503	Cattle Market Toilets	Column Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
504	Scott Rd	Wall Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
505	Bath St	Wall Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
506	Stoney St	Wall Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
507	Catherine Hill	Wall Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
508	Palmer St	Column Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
509	Church St	Wall Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision
510	Kingsway	Wall Mounted	Digital	Hik Vision

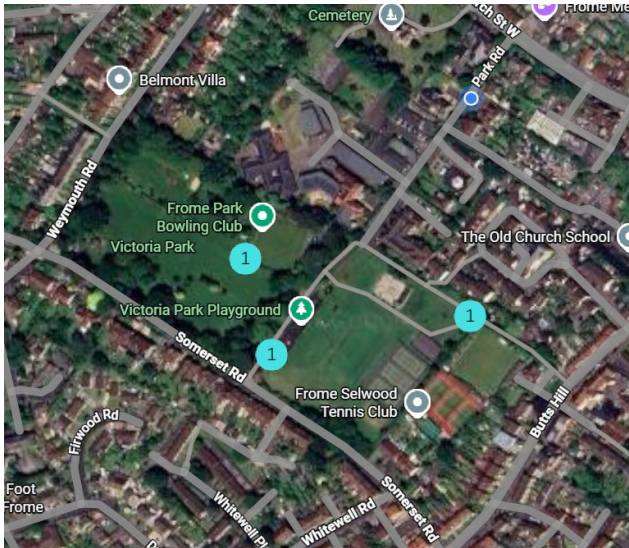
Their locations are shown in the map below



### The Victoria Park and Mary Baily Cameras

Separate to the town centre’s 10 CCTV cameras managed by SC, there are a further 3 cameras based around Victoria Park and Mary Baily. All three cameras are owned, run and monitored directly by the Frome Neighbourhood Police team from their Frome station.

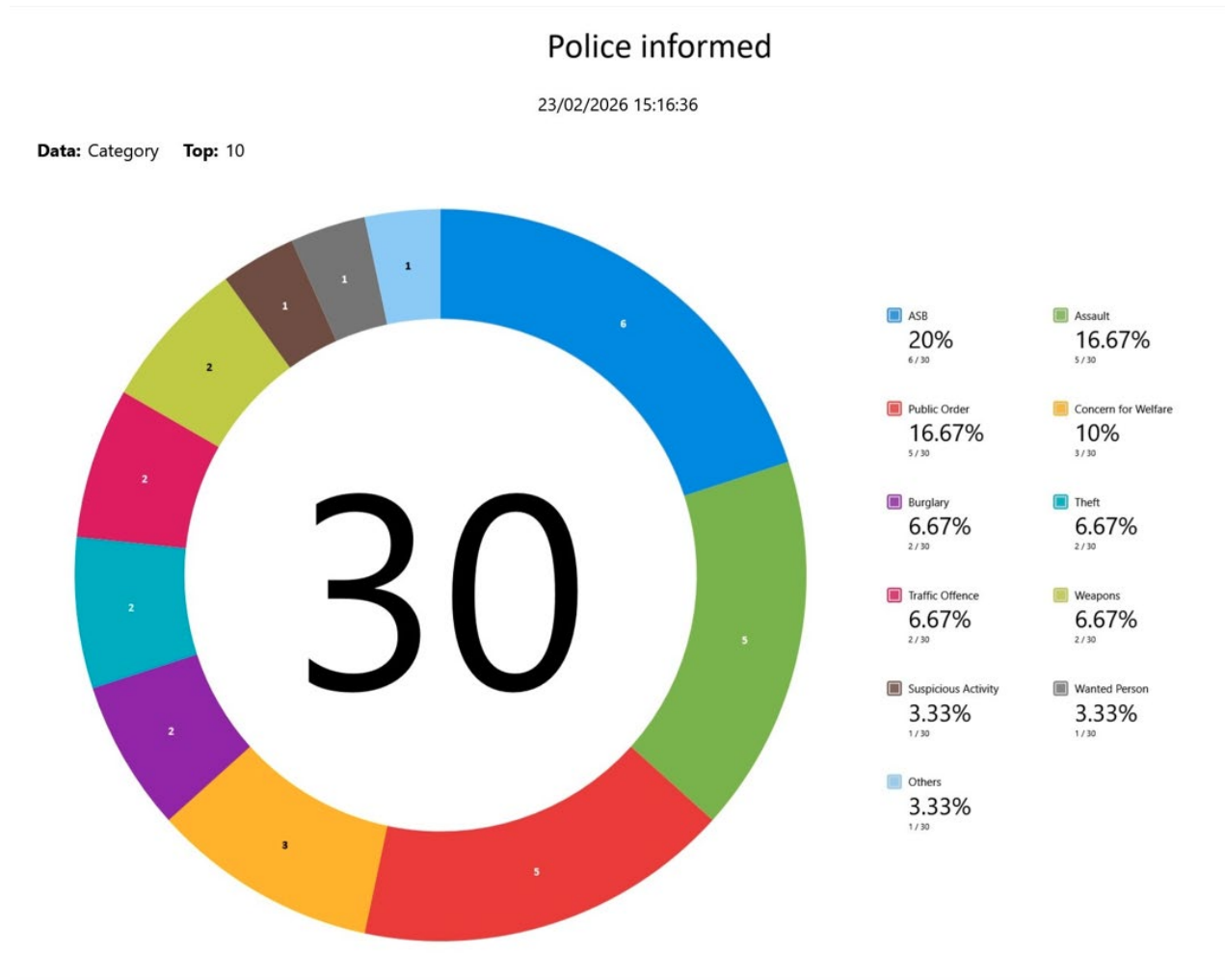
The SC control room does not receive images from these cameras. While each of the 3 cameras had an original bespoke funding source (the most recent one by the Bowls club, installed in 2023, for instance had support from both the Bowls club and FTC), the Police were the provider and have at all times been the legal owner of these cameras. These 3 cameras are separate to the SC CCTV update covered in this paper.



### Feedback on CCTV usage

SC provide some feedback on CCTV usage. The chart below covers the last quarter of 2025 when the police asked for CCTV footage from the cameras on 5 occasions.

Figure 1 - Number of times CCTV monitoring led to police being informed in 2025. Split by incident category



## Updated SC CCTV policy

Since the beginning of 2026 SC has been undertaking a review of the CCTV devolution agreement currently in place with that all Somerset Towns. The aim of the review is to update the agreement in line with feedback from the first year. [SC has now finished this review and updated the SLA for the period 2027-2030, which can be read on the website here at Appendix 8.1.](#) It is this agreement that FTC is being asked to approve in order to maintain the CCTV service.

The main points of the new SLA are:

- The agreement runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2027 and shall remain for 3 years, ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2030, with a one-year break clause and an annual review
- SC will provide administrative and technical support and repair/replace cameras as needed (payable by the Town Council)
- No increase in the 2026/27 fee per camera of £2,798. RPI increases only for following years of the SLA
- A greater prominence given to the Town Council's role as client: being informed of outages, working together on Town Centre priorities and Town Centres being able to request access to images for legitimate use reasons (serious damage to council property, major public safety concerns, insurance, legal) and subject to resources allowing
- Control room resources targeted to times of greatest activity
- Changes to control room rota would allow the recruitment of a new Town Centre liaison post, at no additional service cost, to address the client role of the Town Centre outlined above
- An annual assessment of camera condition and service performance

Other options considered	Local Police managing CCTVs directly
Key considerations for the Council	Implications for public safety without CCTV provision
Consultation and feedback	None
Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan	Having effective town centre CCTV provision strengthens public safety and supports aim two of the council plan: Support a thriving town (foster a vibrant local economy with opportunities for young people, a thriving town centre, and investment in growth projects).
Financial and Risk Implications	Annual cost is £27,980 +RPI annual, plus any additional costs for repairs/upgrades
Legal / HR Implications	None (cameras are not monitored and images are not stored by FTC).
Equalities Implications	None
Community Safety Implications	An effective CCTV service is seen as a key means of supporting the police to manage public safety.
Climate Change and Sustainability Implications	None
Health and Safety Implications	None

Background Papers	See SLA Appendix
Report sign off	Peter Wheelhouse, 20/05/26

**Recommendation**

Approve the SC CCTV Service Level Agreement (CCTV, Management and Maintenance Obligations) for Frome's 10 public town centre CCTVs to run from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030 at an initial annual cost of £27,980 (£2,798 per camera x10), plus additional cost for repairs, funded from 600-7987. Costs rising thereafter in line with inflation.