

Code of Practice for the management and operation of The South Kesteven District Council CCTV Monitoring System

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this code of practice

This Code of Practice is based upon the model code of practice and principles set out by the Local Government Information Unit in its publication "A Watching Brief" and the Information Commissioners Code of Practice for CCTV. The code governs the operation of the Closed Circuit Television Scheme within South Kesteven, all partner areas and the associated control room.

It sets out the rules that are to be observed by the councils staff, its members, partner organisations, contractors, the Police and any other party or organisation involved in the administration or operation of the scheme.

1.2 Revision

The responsible officer and the CCTV Manager will review this code annually.

1.3 Supplementary Documentation

This code will be supplemented by the following documents; they contain instructions and guidance to ensure that the objectives and principles set out in this code of practice are achieved.

The CCTV operations Manual (Restricted Access)
CCTV operator aide memoir (Restricted access)

1.4 Ownership of the Scheme

South Kesteven District Council owns the scheme and the responsible officer is the Chief Executive, this responsibility is delegated to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Legal Services

2. SYSTEM AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The CCTV system in the town centres, Council housing areas and car parks of Grantham, Stamford, Bourne, Market Deeping, Deeping St James and other participating partner areas have been established to: -

Protect areas and premises used by the general public;

Detect and deter crime;

Assist in the identification of offenders leading to their arrest and successful prosecution;

Reduce anti-social behaviour;

Reduce the fear of crime;

Assist with the management of the town centres, car parks, housing estates and leisure facilities;

Maintain and enhance the commercial viability of the district and to encourage continued investment;

Detect unauthorised access to restricted areas and report any transgression to the Police immediately.

Provide assistance to the emergency services

ANY UNAUTHORISED USE OF THE CCTV SYSTEM FOR ANY PURPOSE WHATSOEVER WILL RESULT IN THE INSTANT DISMISSAL OF THE CCTV OPERATOR.

2.1 Mobile CCTV

A mobile unit will be used within the South Kesteven area and will routinely be deployed to monitor areas without a current CCTV system and also to bolster the camera coverage at existing locations

2.2 Covert Cameras

Covert cameras will not be accepted into South Kesteven District Council's CCTV system. Furthermore the South Kesteven District Council will ensure that:-

- (i) Signs advertising the presence and operation of CCTV will be predominantly displayed at key points both within and at the periphery of each scheme.
- (ii) Information on the signs shall be sufficient to ensure that members of the public will be in no doubt that CCTV cameras are in operation and will give some indication of the extent of CCTV coverage.

The South Kesteven District council will clearly identify that it is the owner of the scheme and will provide a contact telephone number

2.3 Private Areas

The purpose of the scheme is to provide surveillance of public areas only. Wherever possible the cameras will be sited and configured to view just public areas and not overlook private dwellings or other areas where privacy is expected. However, it will not always be possible to achieve this and certain cameras may have the capability of viewing private locations i.e. through the zoom facility. All control room staff are made aware of these facts and are trained not to use the cameras to look in to the interior of any premises or other area where an infringement of privacy may occur. Any such breach of this condition will be dealt with as a breach of contract.

3. CONTROL ROOM OPERATION

- (a) The control room will operate 24hrs a day 365 days a year, the control room will be staffed by at least one operator at all times.
- (b) Supervisory visits take place on at least four occasions per month without pre-warning the operator of the visit.

3.1 Operational Management

An appointed CCTV Manager manages the scheme on a day-to-day basis

The CCTV Manager will: -

- (a) Manage and supervise the CCTV system on behalf of South Kesteven District Council and other members of the CCTV partnership which include any local authorities and organisations who join the CCTV system in accordance with item 9 of this Code of Practice.
- (b) Liase with the Police and other agencies and partners.
- (c) Arrange for the viewing of recordings of incidents, which, in his judgement, may be so, viewed.
- (d) Ensure the adequacy of procedures for the transfer of images, which are to be used in evidence to other parties, and in particular to ensure those procedures preserve the continuity of evidence.
- (e) Advise on the operational use of the system.
- (f) Receive and decide upon all requests from statutory enforcement agencies wishing to utilise the system to carry out surveillance.
- (g) Ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation of the system takes place in accordance with the guidelines contained in this Code of Practice.
- (h) Ensure that effective repair and maintenance of all parts of the system (including system updates) is undertaken.
- (I) Ensure that CCTV operators are properly trained and supervised.
- (j) Regularly audit the operation of the scheme and this Code of Practice and will in particular examine: -
 - (i) Control room records
 - (ii) The contents of recording medium (on a spot check basis)
 - (iii) Equipment performance
- (k) Ensure the destruction of old data is effected in a controlled and secure manner and environment.

3.2 Documentation

(i) Visitors Book

All visitors to the control room will be required to sign in the visitors' book, together with the times of arrival and departure and the reason for the visit

(ii) Video stills register

A video stills register will be kept at the review suite and an entry must be made upon the production of each still.

(iii) VTAS

A video tracking and administration system (VTAS) is in use at the control room and is used to:

- Track the movements of all recording media in use
- Enter the details of incidents that have been monitored by control room staff
- Enter requests made by the police
- Enter general admin records on the daily log
- Log system faults and failures
- Log evidence movements

4. PERSONNEL ISSUES

4.1 Screening

All control room staff are employed by South Kesteven District Council and are employed subject to approved vetting procedures, to ensure suitability for the sensitive nature of the work involved.

4.2 Health

Control room staff must confirm to health employment procedures and may be required to undergo medical checks to confirm that all requirements are met.

4.3 Confidentiality

The standard SKDC contract contains a confidentiality clause and disciplinary action will be taken against any individual found to be in breach of this. The installation of a Police communications system has also meant that all control room staff have been made aware of their responsibilities under the official secrets act.

4.4 Requirement to Give Evidence

All staff are made fully aware that they may be called upon to give evidence in a court of law relating to evidential material that they have exhibited, or incidents they have witnessed whilst carrying out their duties.

5. CONTROL ROOM ACCESS

5.1 Authority for Access

The Corporate Manager Democratic and Legal Services or his/her nominee is authorised to decide on behalf of the authority who has access to the control room. This will include:-

- (i) All control room staff
- (ii) Police officers during the course of their investigations and all follow up action i.e. image reviewing, evidence seizure, taking written statements.
- (iii) Authorised representation of statutory enforcement agencies
- (iv) Approved maintenance contractors
- (v) Accompanied visitors by prior arrangement with the Corporate Manager Democratic and Legal services.

Duty control room staff will check the identity of all visitors

5.2 Control Room Security

A CCTV camera monitors the primary point of entry to the CCTV unit, with a live video feed to the control room, a door access control system restricts unauthorised entry.

6. OPERATOR TRAINING

The authority will ensure that all operators are trained to a proficient level before they are allowed to take up a solo position within the control room: -

Training will include:

- District Council induction
- Use of all control room equipment
- Basic CCTV terminology
- Basic control room duties
- System aims and objectives
- Familiarisation with the areas monitored by CCTV cameras
- Camera patrolling
- Evidence and statement preparation
- The Video Tracking Administration System
- Overview of all control room logs
- Management of recording medium
- Radio/Telephone procedures
- Airwave System- Operating procedure and data protection issues
- Incident reporting procedures
- Relevant governing legislation
- The South Kesteven District Council's CCTV Code of Practice
- Actions in the event of an emergency

An experienced operator will provide all CCTV specific training; the authority will also ensure that technological, procedural and legislative update training is carried out as required. The CCTV Manager will ensure that training records are maintained for each member of staff employed at the control room.

6.1 Operational Procedures

A manual containing operational procedures will be available in the control room and will contain detailed advice on the following topics: -

- Alternative telephone/communications.
- Emergency procedures.
- Emergency contacts.
- Telephone bomb warnings or suspect packages.
- Fire precautions.
- Equipment - maintenance logs.
- Camera locations.
- Incident report procedures.
- Recorded image review procedures
- Health and safety hazards
- First aid equipment
- Accident/personal injury
- Operator's duties
- Access control
- Special instructions
- Temporary instructions
- Confidentiality of information

7. IMAGE AND RECORDING MEDIUM ADMINISTRATION

7.1 Ownership of Copyright

The images captured by the recording system and transferred to videotape, still image or CD-R remain the property of South Kesteven District Council.

7.2 Image Retention

Recorded images will be retained for no longer than Thirty-One days, unless seized by an authorised person.

7.3 Digital Storage

Digital recording devices will be checked on a weekly basis to ensure that the correct amount of archive images is being stored.

7.4 CD-R Storage

CD-R's will be stored in the facilities provided for that purpose, and will be booked out of the control room by the duty operator at the time of seizure.

A designated member of the control room staff will carry out an audit of the CD-R stock on a Monthly basis

7.5 Tape Storage

Tapes will be stored in the facilities provided for the purpose and will be filed in a logical order to facilitate identification of tapes. Tape reference numbers will be unique and should assist in identifying the following information from the tape label:-

The recorder in which it was used
Whether multiplexed or incident tape
The date on which it was used
The time at which it was used
The number of times it has been used

The labels displayed on the videotape will be sufficient to ensure swift retrieval of appropriate information as and when required.

Duty control room staff will electronically clear each videotape prior to each use and before it is disposed of.

A designated member of the control room staff will carry out a videotape audit on a Monthly basis

7.6 Reviews Of Recorded Images

Requests from the Police for a videotape review may be carried out by the police officer concerned without reference to the CCTV Manager. Requests for a videotape review from any other source must be referred to the CCTV Manager and should only be carried out on that officer's specific authority.

The investigating officer upon completion of each viewing must complete a viewing proforma.

CCTV control room staff will not carry out reviews of recorded images on behalf of police officer

7.7 Video Tapes

The only occasions on which recordings of images can be removed from the control room without reference to the CCTV Manager is when a police officer wishes to seize the images to be used as evidence. Operators must strictly adhere to the following procedure:-

- (i) A seizure request must be received from the Police, signed by the requesting officer and authorised by an officer of the rank of sergeant or above prior to any recording medium being prepared for seizure. It must detail the cameras required, date, time, and brief description of the incident.
- (ii) When an incident has been recorded and the Police request seizure of the recorded images for evidential purposes, the duty operator shall follow the relevant procedure as detailed in the operational manual.

- (iii) A copy of the statement and the seizure request is copied and is filed at the control room.

7.8 Photographs

Control room staff will maintain the photograph log.

Photographs will not be taken without sufficient reason for doing so and the operator taking the photograph should bear in mind that the existence of such photographs must be capable of justification.

Photographs may be taken of live incidents but the taking of such photographs must be recorded in the photograph log. Similarly, photographs may be taken from video recordings but the taking of such photographs must also be recorded in the photograph log.

All photographs obtained from the CCTV system will remain the property of South Kesteven District Council. A written record will be maintained in the photograph log of the destination of all photographs and any which are permitted to leave the control room may only do so under signature of the recipient.

Photographs taken from the system and retained in the control room will be filed by date and only retained for as long as is operationally necessary. The photographs will then be destroyed by the CCTV Manager who will record the destruction in the photograph log.

A designated member of the control room staff will carry out a still photograph audit on a monthly basis

8. DIRECTED SURVEILLANCE

Requests from either the police, statutory enforcement agencies or departments within the council, to use the system to carry out directed surveillance upon specific individuals or locations, will require authorisation under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). Requests must be made in writing and submitted to the CCTV manager, the following guidelines apply.

Police- Requests must be authorised by an officer of at least the rank of Superintendent or equivalent and will remain valid for up to 3 Months. In the event of an urgent need, an officer not below the rank of superintendent or equivalent may give oral authority. This authority is valid for 72 hrs and must be supplemented by a written authority within 4 hours of the oral authority being made.

Local Authority- Requests for directed surveillance submitted by department heads must be authorised by a senior officer of the council, as outlined in paragraph 6 of the Policy Practice and Compliance Procedures For south Kesteven District Council in relation to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

9. DISCLOSURE OF DATA

Ownership of all recorded video images remains with the South Kesteven District Council's CCTV Unit. Any recordings that are removed from the control room in accordance with this Code of Practice must be returned to the South Kesteven District Council's CCTV Unit as soon as reasonably practical after court proceedings are concluded or their use is not required.

Any recorded material shall only be used for the purposes set out at item 2 of this Code of Practice.

Representatives of the Police and statutory enforcement agencies may view images recorded from the CCTV system without prior authorisation from the CCTV Manager

9.1 Subject Access Disclosure

Where a named subject requests to view data obtained by the CCTV system, then subject access disclosure will be provided subject to the payment of an initial fee of £10 for any search of data, and that the named subject provides sufficient and accurate information about the date, time and place to the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, South Kesteven District Council. A subject access request form can be obtained by either writing to the address on the front of this document or alternatively a copy can be downloaded from the councils website – www.southkesteven.gov.uk

Legal representation of individuals may also apply for access to information on behalf of their clients by following the procedure in item 8.1 of this code

The Corporate Manager of Democratic and Legal Services will verify that a valid request has been received from a named subject or the legal representation of that subject. If the request is found to be valid, either (a) a copy of the requested material may be made available to the named subject or (b) a viewing of the specified images will be arranged between the data subject or legal representation and the CCTV Manager

10. PARTNERSHIPS

Local partnership agreements will be concluded where third party CCTV systems wish to join South Kesteven District Council's scheme. Such agreements will incorporate the following subjects:-

- (i) Acceptance of this Code of Practice.
- (ii) The primary objectives of the CCTV system at a particular site.
- (iii) Operational methods to be utilised on that particular site.
- (iv) Methods of receiving regular reports within the partnership on matters relating to the Code of Practice and management of the scheme.
- (v) Safeguards for and relating to police operations.

10.1 Police

South Kesteven District Council will conclude an agreement with the Police, which will incorporate: -

- (i) Acceptance of the Code of Practice.
- (ii) The primary objectives of the CCTV system at a particular site.
- (iii) Operational methods to be utilised on the particular site.
- (iv) Methods of receiving regular reports between the South Kesteven District Council and the Police on matters relating to the Code of Practice and management of the scheme.
- (v) Safeguards for and relating to police operations.
- (vi) Police intentions regarding the monitoring and audit of their involvement in the scheme.
- (vii) A named police officer as the point of contact.

11. ACCOUNTABILITY

Lines of accountability are as follows: -

11.1 Elected Members

Responsibility for the CCTV system lies with the South Kesteven District Council Cabinet's Community Affairs portfolio holder.

11.2 Internal System Evaluation

The cabinet member responsible for community affairs will receive annual reports on the activities of the CCTV system from the Corporate Manager Democratic and Legal Services. Copies of such reports will be made available to the South Kesteven District Council's partners.

11.3 Annual Review

The Corporate Manager Democratic and Legal Services will report an annual review of the activities of the CCTV system to the South Kesteven District Council.

11.4 Day to Day Management

Management responsibility has been devolved to the CCTV Manager. The Corporate Director Democratic and Legal Services may delegate this responsibility to other officers of the South Kesteven District Council or may allocate specific tasks.

11.5 Publication of the Code of Practice

A copy of the Code of Practice will be made available for public perusal at the locations below:

Council offices at Grantham, Stamford and Bourne
Police stations at Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and Market Deeping
Public Libraries in the South Kesteven area
South Kesteven District Council's website-www.southkesteven.gov.uk

12. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

South Kesteven District Council will ensure that its complaints procedure is applicable to the CCTV system and will publish information about the manner in which an individual may make a complaint about the administration of the scheme.

12.1 Legal Requirements

At all times and without exception, all staff employed at the CCTV Unit will comply with the relevant sections of the following legislation: -

Human Rights act 1998
Freedom of information act 2000
Data Protection Act 1998
Regulation of Investigator Powers Act

13. SYSTEM EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

In addition to the ongoing internal evaluation of the CCTV system, South Kesteven District Council will carry out independent evaluations on the following basis: -

13.1 The South Kesteven District Council accepts responsibility for ensuring that effective independent evaluation of the scheme will be undertaken. It is accepted that without such evaluation no assessment can be made of the overall operation of the scheme or of its impact on the problems that it is intended to address.

13.2 Evaluation of the scheme will include the following topics as a minimum requirement: -

- (i) Assessment of the scheme's impact upon crime.
- (ii) Public views.
- (iii) The performance of the CCTV operators and observance of the Code of Practice.
- (iv) The South Kesteven District Council's observance of the Code of Practice.
- (v) Whether the scheme's aims are still valid.

13.3 Any item, in addition to the above, within the guidelines being established by the Association of Chief Police Officers, and the Local Government Information Unit, will also be included.

A comprehensive report will be submitted by the independent evaluators to the Corporate Manager Democratic and Legal Services who will make the report available in its entirety to elected members and the South Kesteven District Council's partners.