



Okehampton Town Council

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Body Worn CCTV Privacy Impact Statement

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is primarily to minimise the risk of informational privacy – the risk of harm through use or misuse of information gathered through the use of the Council's Body Worn CCTV system.

Introduction

Using CCTV can be privacy intrusive because it is capable of putting law-abiding members of the public under surveillance and recording their movements as they go about their day-to-day lawful activities. Careful consideration should be used whether to use it or not. The authority should take into account what benefits can be gained, whether better solutions exist and what effect it may have on individuals.

Okehampton Town Council considers these matters objectively as part of an assessment of the schemes impact on people's privacy.

Impact Assessment

Okehampton Town Council owns and operates a Body Worn CCTV system utilised by employees working in Simmons Park and open spaces owned or the responsibility of the Council.

Assessment Date: March 2020, March 2023
Last Reviewed Date: May 2025
Undertaken by: Emma James, Town Clerk
Next Review Date: May 2027

What organisations will be using the CCTV images? Who will take responsibility under the Data Protection Act?	Okehampton Town Council, Devon & Cornwall Police and will be the exclusive users of the system. Okehampton Town Council will be the Data Controller at the point of images being recorded. However, if these images are seized/passed to Devon & Cornwall Police or any other statutory body, then the legal responsibility will be transferred to that body as the data controller for those images.
What is the organisations purpose for using CCTV? What are the issues that the system aims to address?	The Council's employees who work in outdoor spaces that are owned by or the responsibility of the Council have recently been subjected to verbal abuse and threats as part of an increase in anti-social behaviour in the town, and particularly in Simmons Park. The purpose for the use of body-worn CCTV is to reduce the likelihood of confrontational situations and to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, address public safety concerns and the capture of evidence of any crime in

	progress that employees may come across; for example vandalism or assault on others.
What are the benefits to be gained from using CCTV?	<p>Using CCTV can significantly reduce crime and is reported by other local Councils to have had a positive effect by reducing abuse aimed at employees.</p> <p>Previous use of body-worn CCTV by employees has resulted in significant reduction in incidents of abuse directed at them.</p>
Can CCTV realistically deliver these benefits?	Yes, as reported by other local Councils
Can less privacy-intrusive solutions, such as improved lighting, achieve the same objectives?	The body worn CCTV system has been implemented specifically for the reasons stated and to provide a vital tool in the prevention of the occurrence of incidents. No other tool can be utilised in such a way for this purpose.
Do you need identifiable images of individuals, or could the scheme use other images not capable of identifying the individual?	It is of paramount importance that the system is capable of identifying individuals. Footage from the system may be used by the police and if the persons were not identifiable then the system would not be fit for purpose.
Will the particular equipment/system of work being considered deliver the desired benefits now and remain suitable in the future?	The Council's method of work is unlikely to change and will continue to use this method to aid in the reduction of the likelihood of confrontational situations and to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, and public safety.
What future demands may arise for wider use of images and how will you address these?	<p>Legislation changes overtime and the Council will comply with future regulations as they arise.</p> <p>A fixed CCTV system covering the town centre and Simmons Park has been procured by the Council. This system is monitored by Torbay Council and is accessible to Devon and Cornwall Police to view.</p>
What are the views of those under surveillance?	<p>The Council has not undertaken a full public consultation process, but those persons that are aware that the Council is implementing this system are happy to be in an area that is monitored. These persons include members of the public who have raised concerns about anti-social behaviour, Okehampton College and local police.</p> <p>By abiding with legislation and Council policy the system will only be used in confrontational circumstances.</p>
What could we do to minimise intrusion for those that may be monitored, particularly if specific concerns have	As the system is body worn it is only set to record when employees are in, or in fear of, a confrontational situation. The system has been established on a proper and legal basis as set out in policy.

been expressed? Is the system established on a proper legal basis and operated in accordance with the law?	
Is it necessary to address a pressing need, such as public safety, crime prevention or national security?	<p>Incidents of anti-social behaviour increased significantly during 2019 and continued, although on a less intense scale. Use of this system will help to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and address public safety concerns of those using the Council facilities as well as the capture of evidence of any crime in progress that employees may come across; for example vandalism or assault on others.</p> <p>Since implementation of the use of the body worn cameras incidents of anti-social behaviour towards Council employees has significantly decreased and the cameras are now rarely worn or used.</p> <p>An increase in anti-social behaviour towards employees in early 2025, which is ongoing, has resulted in the need consideration of reinstatement in use of the cameras which have not been required for some time.</p>
Is it justified in the circumstances?	Yes
Is it proportionate to the problem that it is designed to deal with?	Yes. It is to be used to ensure safety of employees and members of the public and complies with current legislation.