



SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL CCTV SCHEME

Evaluation by Dartford Borough Council

27th January 2011

DARTFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Index

Introduction	Page 3
Methodology	Page 4
1. Maintenance	Page 5
2. Documentation	Page 5
3. Access	Page 5
4. System Management	Page 6
5. Communications	Page 6
6. Partnership Working	Page 6
7. Lay Visitors	Page 7
8. Performance Indicators	Page 7
9. Complaints	Page 7
10. Complements	Page 7
11. Training	Page 7
12. Signage	Page 7
Conclusion and Recommendations	Page 8

Introduction

Sevenoaks District Council is committed to ensuring that the support of the public, for CCTV in public places, continues by conducting regular checks and evaluations of the system and publishing the results in an annual report.

There is a natural inclination to assume that CCTV surveillance systems will make a significant impact in reducing the level and fear of crime within town centre environments. However, establishing whether CCTV is an appropriate counter measure, determining the system requirements and measuring the ongoing success following implementation can only be achieved through an appropriate evaluation process.

The Sevenoaks CCTV System comprises of 96 CCTV cameras covering Sevenoaks, Swanley, Westerham, Edenbridge and New Ash Green. The majority (some 91 cameras) have pan, tilt and zoom (PTZ) control with the remaining 5 being static models. A three year development to the existing scheme was completed in March 2009, this included a fully digital data storage/handling solution and further developments made to the existing external CCTV equipment.

All cameras display pictures through the display monitor wall in a secure CCTV Control room located in Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks.

The Control Room consists of a display monitor wall with the capability of viewing cameras in quad formation on each monitor. All recordings are stored on digital hard drives. Operator positions have their own incident monitors located on the main control desk where there will soon also be the facility for incident recording in 25 frames per second real time mode. There is also the ability to produce both digital still images and hard copy still prints.

Any operator can select any camera image on any of the active monitors, which permits the selection of specific areas that need to be monitored.

A review console, sited adjacent to the main control desk allows the digital images to be reviewed without interfering with the recording operation of the main system.

Methodology

Paul Woodfield, CCTV Management Team Administrator at Dartford Borough Council undertook a site visit to the CCTV Control Room at Sevenoaks District Council on Thursday 27th January 2011. The system was tested against the pending Code of Practice, which will be available to the public on the Council's website, and in Sevenoaks District Council public areas.

Sample recordings were checked for recording quality, compliance against the Code of Practice and for Human Rights issues.

It is anticipated that this report will be incorporated into the Sevenoaks District Council Annual report on CCTV, which will be made available to the public in accordance with the Code of Practice.

As no CCTV operators were on duty during the evaluation an Interview was undertaken with Sharon Wright, CCTV Manager.

1. Maintenance

The picture quality of the CCTV system was found to be of a very good standard, with 94 of the 96 cameras fully functioning. The two cameras that were out of service on the day of inspection were both as a direct result of independent contractor's actions whilst carrying out unrelated civil works. A regular cleaning programme is in place, and the system is maintained to a good standard by the Council's appointed maintenance contractor. The CCTV Operation receives a prompt and satisfactory response to maintenance and repair issues. The recorded images are checked regularly to ensure that it meets an acceptable standard.

2. Documentation

The CCTV Code of Practice and CCTV Operators Manual are kept within the CCTV control room. The following documentation is completed within the control room: -

- Visitors Log
- Daily Occurrence Log
- Incident Log
- Review Log
- Maintenance Log / Fault Reports
- Stills Movement and Seizure Report
- Emergency Numbers and Procedures
- Targeted Operations Log
- Data Movement/Seizure Report
- Daily CCTV System Check Log

Documentation was inspected and found to be fully completed and held in accordance with the Code of Practice.

3. Access

The control procedures for access to the CCTV Control Room were reviewed and the Code of Practice is strictly adhered to. Access was electronically controlled and included an internal intercom system and spyglass porthole

4. System Management

A random sample of recordings were reviewed, and all cameras were found to be recorded using the Bosch DiBos Digital Video Recording system at a time lapse rate of 12.5 frames per second. A further Bosch DiBos DVR has recently been purchased to implement Real Time recording (25 frames per second) of the 6 spot monitors located on the main control desk. The CCTV Unit was found to operate in accordance with the Human Rights Act (specifically Article 1-gather information lawfully, and Article 8 - an individuals Right to privacy) on these random reviews. The images recorded were found to be of a very good quality.

A full audit trail is available for all Images, which are kept securely within the Control room.

The CCTV Control Room is fitted with an atomic Rugby Clock that is used to perform regular time checks by all operators and the Bosch DiBos DVR's have their own built in software to update the system time on an hourly basis.

Preset changes and settings are only carried out by the Senior CCTV Operator.

Due to the current financial constraints levied on Local Authorities from Central Government it has been necessary to reduce staffing levels.

5. Communications

CCTV Operators communicate with Kent Police by way of two Airwaves Radio base stations that are located within the control room. The Airwave License conditions and procedures are strictly adhered to and a usage/responsibility log is also in place. The Control Room Operators also have access to three Shop Safe / Pubwatch radios for the areas of Edenbridge, Swanley and Sevenoaks and are able to co ordinate responses and act on information received via this medium.

6. Partnership Working

The CCTV Operation in Sevenoaks has a good working relationship with Kent Police, Customs & Excise, Immigration Service and Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Youth & Community and Social Housing Groups. As well as Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators, Kent County Council Wardens and local Police Community Support Officers.

7. Lay Visitors

Regular Lay Visits have been undertaken throughout year. No adverse comments or observations have been made by the Lay Visitors.

8. Performance Indicators

There are no specific performance indicators included in the CCTV Code of Practice. However, Key Performance Indicators agreed and implemented by the Kent CCTV User Group are recorded and monitored by the Control Room Supervisor on a monthly basis and are collated for presentation to the CCTV Manager.

The current CCTV Manager was a key contributor in the introduction of the Key Performance Indicators now being increasingly used as a means of benchmarking and comparison of system performance by similar sized Local Authority CCTV Operations throughout the County.

9. Complaints

There were no complaints disclosed regarding the CCTV system in 2010.

10. Compliments

The CCTV control room has received complimentary correspondence from Kent Police and the Crown Prosecution Service for its contributions toward detecting crime, the apprehension of offenders and the quality of evidence leading to a number of successful prosecutions.

11. Training

All operators have valid BTEC Level 2 Awards in CCTV Operations for Public Space Surveillance and are licensed by the Security Industry Authority. Accreditation certificates are displayed in the CCTV Supervisors area in sight of all Control Room visitors.

12. Signage

CCTV Signage within the District was found to be good, and complied with current recommendations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation of Sevenoaks District Council CCTV Scheme found the scheme is running efficiently and the cameras and equipment are working to a very good standard.

- 1 The Code of Practice is updated to include extracts from or reference to the Home Office Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference as updated in April 2010 and to include the Kent Police Mobile Data Technology.
- 2 The System would benefit from the resumption of 24/7 monitoring in order to offer the same level of service to residents and businesses throughout the district during the weekdays as was previously afforded before the enforced staffing reductions. It is a considered opinion that any reduction in staffing levels, regardless of justification can only lead to a reduction in service.
- 3 It was mentioned that there is currently a PCSO in training in order to provide a level of emergency CCTV Operator cover during the periods that the Control Room is unstaffed. I would recommend that this avenue is actively perused in the short term but not as a long term solution to the current financial restrictions that have been imposed on the department.

The overall evaluation of Sevenoaks District Council's CCTV System found the Control Room to be running efficiently; the cameras and equipment were working to a very good standard. There were no areas for concern observed, however the proposed recommendations are for consideration.

Signed 

Dated.. *11-2-11*

Paul Woodfield (CCTV Management Team)
Dartford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Home Gardens
Dartford
Kent DA1 1DR