

CCTV CONTROL ROOM VISIT BY MEMBERS OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE. 10 October 2011.

The CCTV Control Room at Sevenoaks is manned 24 hours a day on Saturday, Sunday and Monday [and other Bank Holidays]. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays it is unmanned from 9am until 1pm, although the cameras are still recording and footage can be retrieved later. Due to staffing cuts from 8 to 6 FTEs, it is no longer possible to operate the Control Room 24/7. Closed at the quietest times.

Staffing

6 staff work 10 and 12 hour shifts. The Manager is shared between Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells B.C on a 50:50 basis. The control room at T.Wells also receives images from CCTV cameras for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.

Ongoing talks with Tonbridge and Malling, and Tunbridge Wells for further sharing of resources as all three districts are in the West Kent Police area.

Cameras

96 cameras cover Sevenoaks Town Centre, Westerham, New Ash Green, Swanley, Edenbridge, Dunbrik Depot, Sencio Leisure sports centres and Lullingstone Park visitors centre. There is one spare camera connection available into the control room.

In Sevenoaks town there are 17 cameras. St Johns shopping area and the Vine cricket ground is not covered, although Hollybush Recreation Ground is.

Recordings are kept 31 days before being erased in accord with the Data Protection Act. If Police request a recording for evidence, this will be copied and saved for the Police.

The CCTV operator can go from camera to camera to track an incident. The images from the camera tracking an incident can be fed direct to a screen in a Police car, enabling them to follow up the incident. At night, the camera will still pick up an image if sufficient street lighting or may be an infra red light on the camera.

There is a direct link with the West Kent Police Control Room in Maidstone.

CCTV Control Room assistance to Police in making arrests

During the year 2010 to 2011, CCTV Control Room has assisted Police with a total of 107 arrests.

Social Affairs Select Committee – 1 November 2011

In the first 6 months of this year, April – Sept 2011, CCTV Control Room has assisted Police with a total of 51 arrests, totalling from the 3 categories below.

1. Instigated arrests by SDC CCTV Controller who notified the Police of an incident or potential incident. 7 arrests made in the first 6 months of this year.
2. Monitored arrests. Police called CCTV Control Room and Control Room monitors potential incident. 17 arrests made in the first 6 months of this year.
3. Assisted arrests. Suspect identified by Police. SDC gather evidence for Police. 27 arrests made in the first 6 months of this year.

Police contribution to running of the CCTV Control Room. Nil.

If the Police refuse to contribute financially to the running of the Control Room, maybe they could be persuaded to contribute 16 man hours a week (number of hours cut last year) so that the CCTV Control Room could return to being open 24/7

Out of Hours service

Sevenoaks CCTV Control Room operates the Out of Hours service for both Sevenoaks and Tonbridge and Malling. Customer phones the normal Sevenoaks or Tonbridge and Malling Council number and the Sevenoaks CCTV operator activates the relevant out of hours procedure or, if not an emergency, reports for action/information for the next working day.

Approximately 90 Out of Hours calls a month received at Sevenoaks for each authority.

Elizabeth Purves. 10.10.2011