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CCTV POLICY

2026

This policy was approved by the council at its meeting held on 26th March 2026, minute number 26-142.

Adopted: 2017 **Last Review:** May 2022 **This Review:** 26th March 2026 **Next Review:** March 2027

Introduction

This Policy is to control the management, operation, use and confidentiality of the CCTV system at the Community Office. It was prepared in 2017, and reviewed taking due account of the Code of Practice published by the Data Protection Commissioner (July 2000). This policy will be subject to periodic review by the Parish Council to ensure that it continues to reflect the public interest and that it and the system meet all legislative requirements.

Whitwick Parish Council accepts the principles of the 1998 Act based on the Data Protection Principles as follows:

- data must be fairly and lawfully processed
- processed for limited purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- not kept for longer than is necessary
- processed in accordance with individuals' rights
- secure
- not transferred to countries with inadequate protection
- subject to guidance on good practice
- examples of how to implement the standards and good practice

Background

After discussion at several Council meetings (agendas and minutes of which are available to the public) a new scheme was installed in 2016 for prevention of crime and protection of staff. After consultation with the police and specialists, this was designed to monitor visitors via the front entrance to the Community Office and to give external monitoring of the front/side and internal areas of the building, plus digital recording via a standalone hard drive system. Due to public use of council facilities, recording is carried out 24 hours per day, 365 days of the year. Surveillance of colour monitors is undertaken by staff who, whilst not specifically employed for CCTV monitoring, are undertaking other duties but who already have an overall remit for safety of public visitors and protection of council property and premises.

Statement of Purpose

To provide a safe and secure environment for the benefit of those who might visit, work or live in the area. The system will not be used to invade the privacy of any individual, except when carried out in accordance with the law.

The scheme will be used for the following purposes:

- to reduce the fear of crime by persons using Council facilities so they can enter and leave the building without fear of intimidation by individuals or groups.
- to reduce the vandalism of property and to prevent, deter and detect crime and disorder.
- to assist the police, the Parish Council and other Law Enforcement Agencies with identification, detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders by examining and using retrievable evidence relating to crime, public order or contravention of byelaws.

- to deter potential offenders by publicly displaying the existence of CCTV, having cameras clearly sited that are not hidden and signs on display, both inside and outside the Community Office.
- to assist all “emergency services” to carry out their lawful duties.

Changes to the Purpose or Policy

A major change that would have a significant impact on either the purpose or this policy of operation of the CCTV scheme will take place only after discussion at Council Committee meeting(s) and resolution at full Council meeting. All agendas are posted on the Parish Council notice board at least 3 clear days before Council meetings.

Responsibilities of the Owners of the Scheme

The elected Parish Council retains overall responsibility for the scheme.

Management of the System

Day-to-day operational responsibility rests with the Parish Clerk, who can be consulted by staff out of hours, if and when necessary.

Breaches of this policy by operators will be investigated by the Parish Clerk and reported to the Property Management and General Purposes Committee.

A CCTV system prevents crime largely by increasing the risk of detection and prosecution of an offender. Any relevant images or digital evidence must be in an acceptable format for use at Court hearings. This policy must be read and understood by all persons involved in this scheme and individual copies of this policy will therefore be issued for retention. A copy will also be available for reference in the secure recording area(s).

Control and Operation of the Cameras, Monitors and Systems.

The following points must be understood and strictly observed by operators:

1. Trained operators must act with due probity and not abuse the equipment or change the pre-set criteria to compromise the privacy of an individual.
2. The position of cameras and monitors have been agreed following consultation with the police and security consultants in order to comply with the needs of the public.
3. No public access will be allowed to the monitors except for lawful, proper and sufficient reason, with prior approval of the Parish Clerk or by application to the Council/Committee. The Police are permitted access to images and data if they have reason to believe that such access is necessary to investigate, detect or prevent crime. The Police are able to visit the Community Office to review and confirm the Parish Council's operation of CCTV arrangements. Any visit by the Police to view images will be logged by the operator.
4. Operators should regularly check the accuracy of the date/time displayed.
5. Digital records should be securely stored to comply with data protection and should only be handled by the essentially minimum number of persons. Digital images are retained for a maximum of 30 days and erased automatically according to the system settings.
6. Images will not normally be supplied to the media, except on the advice of the police if it is deemed to be in the public interest. The Parish Clerk would inform the Chairman of the Council and/or Property Management and General Purposes Committee of any such emergency.
7. As records may be required as evidence at Court, each person handling a digital record may be required to make a statement to a police officer and sign an exhibit label. Any images that are handed to a police officer should be signed for by the police officer and information logged to identify the recording, and showing the officer's name and police station. The log should also show when such information is/returned to the Parish Council by the police and the outcome of its use.

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8. Any event that requires checking of recorded data should be clearly detailed in the log book of incidents, including Crime Nos. if appropriate, and the Council notified at the next available opportunity.
9. Any damage to equipment or malfunction discovered by an operator should be reported immediately to their line manager or contact made with the company responsible for maintenance, and the call logged showing the outcome. When a repair has been made this should also be logged showing the date and time of completion.
10. Any request by an individual member of the public for access to their own recorded image must be made on an 'Access Request Form' and is subject to a standard fee. Forms are available from the Community Office and will be submitted to the next meeting of the appropriate Council/Committee for consideration and reply, normally within 40 days.

Accountability

Copies of the CCTV Policy are available in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, as will any reports that are submitted to the Parish Council *providing it does not breach security needs*.

The Police will be informed of the installation and provided with a copy of this CCTV Policy.

Any written concerns, complaints or compliments regarding the use of the system will be considered by the Parish Council, in line with the existing complaints policy.