

SCRUTINISING PERFORMANCE

INDEPENDENT CCTV MONITORING SCHEME

Background

The Authority identified in 2009 that the Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) were undertaking the oversight of public place CCTV, without clearly identified roles, responsibilities or legislative precedence. Members were concerned that there was no effective independent oversight of the public place CCTV that is managed by Sussex Police in the county. Reflecting the concern expressed at community engagement events and through general comment from the public, the Authority felt that it was in the public interest to address, via visibly independent assessment.

The Authority adding value

The Authority approached the Independent Custody Visiting Association and the Home Office to seek advice on the way forward. The advice given was ambiguous regarding what was to be done but it was clear that public place CCTV monitoring was not a role for ICV volunteers.

The Professional Standards Committee asked the Chief Executive to draft an Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme proposal for consideration before final approval by the Authority.

The Scheme was approved in December 2009. Volunteers have been recruited from the current panel of over 75 ICV volunteers who have experience of working with Sussex Police and are security vetted. Twelve CCTV Monitoring Visitors have been appointed, including representation from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community. This recruitment process will help ensure that the scheme restores public confidence as quickly as possible.

Central co-ordination of the scheme will be carried out by the Police Authority Chief Executive's office.

The Authority has appointed a Lead Member for Independent CCTV Monitoring, who is also a member on the Professional Standards Committee, the Committee that will have governance and oversight of the scheme.

Outcome

The Chief Constable supports the introduction of the Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme in Sussex, as the Authority and Force work together to raise awareness of the independent nature of this work, as well as promoting public confidence in policing.

Independent CCTV Monitoring Visitors will be encouraged to express unfettered opinions or concerns on behalf of the public, and these views will

be free from political or internal pressures. This will also promote continuous improvement and bring innovative ideas to the use of CCTV in Sussex.

The issue of public confidence in the oversight of CCTV, particularly those under the control of the police, goes to the heart of public accountability of policing. The Authority has led the way in the development of an independent means to raise public confidence in the use of public place CCTV in Sussex, with an initiative that we believe is unique in England and Wales.

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Reference:

[Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme Policy](#)