

WELSHPOOL TOWN COUNCIL

Policy

Welshpool Town Council Body Worn Camera's

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Policy is to facilitate and monitor the deployment of Body Worn Camera's (BWC's) across Welshpool.

All data acquired by BWC's will be processed and controlled by Welshpool Town Council in line with our internal policies.

2. Use and Principles

Welshpool Town Council strives to improve the environment and safety of the public they serve. BWC's are being introduced in Welshpool Town Councils Area to assist in recording and combating a variety of offending activity.

BWC's will provide officers with real time evidence, assisting in crime prevention, prosecution evidence and public/Internal complaints.

The use of BWC's should also act as a deterrent to offending behaviour in the community and towards staff.

The equipment records visual and audio footage through a single lens. The device is highly visible due to its markings. It is small and lightweight so will not cause a physical burden to the officer wearing it.

3. Operational Deployment

All staff will be trained on BWC's and given instructions as to its use.

The BWC will be fitted to the upper chest area and be high visibility so it can be easily recognised as overt surveillance.

Each BWC will be asset marked and assigned to a member of staff for their work shift.

This should be documented in the office note book as a central booking database.

Each device should be tested on a daily basis using a standard format of Date and time. This can then be played back in real time to ensure the BWC is functioning.

The BWC can then be deployed with the staff for that shift.

Should an incident arise the BWC should be activated immediately. Recording should be ceased at the end of the incident. At no point should it be turned off during an incident as vital evidence could be lost. Upon returning from an incident or at the end of a shift the footage should be downloaded to the main computer network by the Town Clerks Office who are the system administrator. The memory can then be wiped so the BWC has full storage capacity again.

4. Storage of Devices

BWC's will be stored inside a locked local authority building when not in use. Designated storage facilities will be made available along with a charging point.

At no point should they be left in vehicles as continuous exposure to extreme temperatures could affect the functions and longevity of the devices.

5. Storage and copying of Data

Data collected by BWC's will be stored electronically on the central Office database in line with the office.

The requirements of Data storage, copying and destruction are set out in the policy for data and for CCTV equipment.

Under the requirements of the code of practice issued under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996, material which is obtained in the course of a criminal investigation and which may be relevant to the investigation must be recorded and retained, and may be used as evidence in criminal proceedings. The admissibility of evidence is governed by the common law, section 76 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act

6. Governance and Audits

Governance remains with the Town Clerk. Audits can be conducted by the Town Clerk.

7. Limitations of use

BWC's will only be used during working hours and are not for personal use away from working deployments. Any Misuse of the devices would render you liable under current disciplinary procedures set out in council policies.

8. Legislation and Human Rights

Any actions taken with regards to the use of body cams shall take into account the legislation on Human Rights.

9. Evidence Policy

Evidence will be retained in line with the data and CCTV Policy.

10.Data - Access by authorised Personnel and Freedom of Information Act requests

All Data requests will be dealt with and managed by the Town Clerk. Requests should be submitted to him at the below address but such material shall only be available to the Town Council, Powys County Council, Solicitors, Police and Insurance Loss Adjusters.

11.Evaluation / Feedback

Evaluation, Feedback and Faults can be passed to the office in the form of a report. These will be dealt with in a timely manner and a response given including a time scale for resolution/completion.

12. Freedom of Information Requests

The use of BWC's is NOT covered by the FOI act unless they are operated by a Public Authority or publically owned company.

Therefor any requests for personal information collected by the units may still be made using the Subject Access Request procedures under section 7 of the DPA but may be refused under certain circumstances

13. Review of Procedure

This document should be reviewed annually commencing one year from the date of implementation. Any review will take into account, changes in legislation and working practices.

The review will be carried out by the Town Clerk.

R A Robinson Town Clerk
24.3.2017