

Cheshire East's CCTV Control Room in Macclesfield

Introduction

Following Local Government Reorganisation, Cheshire East Council inherited three independent CCTV systems. There was one CCTV system in each of Crewe, Macclesfield and Sandbach. The aim of Cheshire East Council was to harmonise the three systems into one control room in Macclesfield, as part of the ICT/CCTV Capital programme.

The Crewe control room was located in the Victoria shopping centre; those premises were leased and vacated in January 2011. The Crewe facilities were moved to Macclesfield's existing control centre. The Sandbach control room was moved to Macclesfield on 30 June 2011.

Work of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee

A report detailing the movement of CCTV control rooms was presented to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee on 7 July 2011. During this meeting the Committee's Members were invited to visit the CCTV control room at Macclesfield. At the next meeting of the Committee on 1 September 2011 the Members that attended site visits were asked to present feedback to the Committee.

Feedback from Member site visits

The feedback from Members that visited the control room in Macclesfield was generally very positive. The main point many of them wished to make was that they were impressed with the performance and effort of the CCTV room staff.

Members were pleased with the standard of equipment being used in the control room, particularly the HD screens that allow staff to view CCTV coverage clearly. Members also commented that the staff's ownership of rotas and operations allowed them to work effectively as a team.

CCTV staff are able to provide evidence to the Police within hours of incidents. This ability to work quickly allows the Police to get convictions for offences recorded by CCTV quickly and effectively. Members feel that this work should be applauded.

Possible Improvements

Members believe that a review to establish which cameras were in the most effective positions should be carried out. For those cameras that weren't the Committee would look into whether they could be moved to other locations to increase the effectiveness of the CCTV network.

Members also suggested that any relocation or placing of new cameras should be Police led and evidence based to ensure effective placement. Also, collaboration between Safer & Stronger Communities and Environment Services should be carried out to ensure that any trees or other street furniture will not obstruct CCTV camera sightlines or grow to do so in future.