

Surveillance Camera Policy

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Introduction

Surveillance Cameras in taxis can deter crime, protecting drivers and passengers. However, the Council recognises that improperly controlled surveillance cameras have the potential to invade people's privacy.

Purpose

The Surveillance Camera Policy's purpose is to facilitate the use of surveillance cameras in City of Wolverhampton Council's licensed taxis to protect drivers and passengers without unnecessarily invading individuals' privacy.

This protection is intended to come from:

- Visible surveillance cameras deterring individuals from committing a crime through the knowledge that evidence of it will be recorded.
- Occupants of the vehicle feeling reassured that crimes, as well as malicious complaints against drivers, are less likely to occur in an environment protected by surveillance cameras.
- Helping complaints investigations by the Council and police come to the correct conclusion.

Surveillance cameras can also provide information to assist the Council and police when investigating complaints involving taxis.

Scope

Taxis constitute private hire vehicles and hackney carriage vehicles. The main difference between the two is that hackney carriages can be used to pick passengers up from the street without a booking, whereas private hire vehicles can only be used to collect passengers who have already made a booking.

Surveillance cameras are the formal name for Closed Circuit Television (CCTV).

Taxis licensed by City of Wolverhampton Council are expected to have the Council's approved surveillance camera system installed within 14 months of installation becoming available i.e. installation is mandatory.

Vehicle licences are issued for a maximum of 12 months and after 2 months of installation being available, any application for a vehicle licence will require the installation of the system prior to the licence being granted.

Vehicle licence holders are required to comply with this policy throughout the duration of their licence.

Installation and Maintenance

The system must be installed by an installer approved by City of Wolverhampton Council.

Only an approved installer can conduct repairs or maintenance on the system.

External Video Recording

To assist drivers by providing 'dash-cam' functionality, the external facing cameras will always be recording when the vehicle's engine is on. Audio footage will not be recorded.

This will protect drivers from malicious insurance claims and to reduce their insurance premiums.

Internal Video Recording

Internal video footage will only be recorded when the vehicle is being used for a licensable activity (i.e. private hire or hackney carriage use), triggered by the driver using his driver licence to activate the system.

Audio Recording

For privacy, audio recording is disabled unless it is triggered by one of the following:

- Passengers' panic button
- Driver's panic button
- G-force sensor indicating a crash
- Shouting detected by a microphone
- Door opening when vehicle is in motion

An audible warning and visual light shall indicate when audio recording is occurring. The recording will last five minutes.

Data access

The system is encrypted and data is stored on a secure hard drive. Data older than 31 days will be overwritten.

Only authorised officers of the Council are granted access to the data, which will only be done in the following circumstances:

- A complaint has been made to the licensing authority involving that vehicle or driver of that vehicle.
- A police force has requested the footage to investigate a crime.
- A legitimate and lawful data request to assist with an investigation has been made.
- A Subject Access Request, compliant with the GDPR, has been made.

If the data is to be transferred, it must be done securely via:

- Secure email
- Encrypted email
- Encrypted data drive
- Disc, transferred directly between officers from the organisations
- Secure online storage

Advising customers of the system

Signage (Appendix A) provided by City of Wolverhampton Council informing of the surveillance camera must be displayed prominently in the vehicle. If signage is lost or removed, new signage must be obtained from the council at the earliest opportunity and prior to any further licensable activities being undertaken.

An audio message will play after a vehicle's door closes when the vehicle is in use as a private hire or hackney carriage vehicle.

Privacy Notice

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the official regulatory body responsible for enforcing compliance with privacy and data protection legislation.

The law defines a 'data controller' as the individual or organisation which has ultimate responsibility for how personal data is collected and processed. This policy states that the data controller will be City of Wolverhampton Council. The data controller is ultimately responsible for how the images are stored and used and determines in what circumstances the images should be disclosed.

Where a service provider is authorised for the remote storage and/or management of CCTV data, they will act as a 'data processor'. A data processor, in relation to personal data, means any person (other than an employee of the data controller) who processes data on behalf of the data controller, in response to specific instructions.

There must be a formal written contract between the data controller and data processor (service provider). The contract must contain provisions covering security arrangements, retention/deletion instructions, access requests and termination arrangements.

The system will operate in compliance with City of Wolverhampton Council's Privacy Notice: <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/your-council/our-website/privacy-and-cookies-notice>

Appendix A – Sample Surveillance Camera Signage



CCTV in operation

This vehicle is protected by CCTV in the interests of public safety, crime detection and crime prevention.

Audio recording may also be made in the event of an incident.

The CCTV has been installed in accordance with the Surveillance Camera policy of City of Wolverhampton Council.

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For more information:
01902 55 TAXI
www.wolverhampton.gov.uk