

Koitiata CCTV / Spycam

This is an open letter to the Koitiata Residents Committee members, written and distributed on behalf of concerned residents. It has been posted on www.koitiata.nz, the facebook page, links emailed, and a printed copy distributed to all residences in Koitiata. Links to referenced documents are included on the web page at www.koitiata.nz/news

Hello Koitiata Residents Committee Members.

15th January 2018

Let's talk about the CCTV/Spycam issue. I suspect that you don't really want to. But, on behalf of those community members who don't feel very included on this issue, and those who are very concerned about their personal privacy, I am going to insist. I know that you may think it's done and dusted, but it's that sort of thinking that got us to where we are now. You own this, so can we have a bit of your time please?

There is no question that this CCTV/Spycam proposal is probably heading towards being the most contentious and divisive issue this community has experienced. If there was ever an issue that the Koitiata Residents Committee (KRC) ever needed to be fully consultative on, this is it. You are the members of KRC, nominated by the community to represent all our interests, not the interests of a few.

CCTV cameras and personal privacy are contentious issues, full stop. The way this project has been foisted onto our community, suggests that the level of awareness within KRC, about that contention, is minimal. Or is it just being ignored? Or maybe other over-riding interests? Rightly or wrongly, ~~many~~ members of our community are suggesting that they are being treated as fools. Whatever possessed the KRC to believe that a wave of the 'crime-prevention-wand' would see this crossed off the list?

Purpose / Need

There are legitimate purposes for the installation of CCTV cameras and recording systems. Just ask the people who sell them. They are claimed to "prevent crime". Whether they actually "prevent crime" is another contentious issue, but it is assumed that having crime would be the first requirement if it is going to be prevented.

- If there is a case for the Koitiata Spycam installation and use to be made, why has that not been made available to all the community?
- Where is the supporting information and the crime statistics used to support the case and justify this expenditure?
- If "preventing crime" is not the basis for this installation, then what is it?

Community Consultation

- If, as it was claimed recently that "the community has been fully consulted", then why are people expressing surprise when the subject is raised?
- What form did the consultation take?
- When was the survey conducted?
- When were the community meetings on the subject held?
- Which issue of the Koitiata Matters Newsletter was the proposal outlined in?

Funding

- When was the community asked for their approval to spend the 'surplus' from the Centennial fund and other community funds on a Spycam?
- If you concluded that this is a justified use of community funds, how many quotes did the KRC get to ensure the community's funds were wisely spent?

Operation

- Who is the Koitiata community member that is responsible for the storage and access control?
- When are the signs being installed?
- Will there be regular reviews of the system's operation and effectiveness?
- Will the community be included in the review process?

Personal Privacy

During the KRC's community consultation you will have become aware of the reservations many are expressing relative to personal privacy. You're not aware? No surprises there. Well you had better get up to speed on that subject; you are now taking KRC into new territory.

Each recording of people passing the camera becomes a *Personal Information Record*. There is genuine concern from residents about that personal information existing. And there is concern about that personal information being in the hands of unauthorized people.

- Who do members of the community contact to request a copy of, or deletion of their personal information?
- When were you planning to tell the community about their rights under the Privacy Act 1993?
- Can the community be assured that committee members are even aware of the Privacy Act and the Privacy Commission's guidelines?
- Is the committee and its members aware of their responsibilities, the implications and liabilities of the Privacy Act?
- Who is the (legal) Authority?

We cannot DeJodge The Private Company as this might Breach our Privacy Act.

You are probably thinking that I'm against CCTV/Spycams. I am not. I believe that in certain circumstances there are cases to be made for their use; provided that (a) the purpose is justified (b) controlled by an authority, (c) community they are installed in is consulted and are supportive, (d) reviewed and removed when the problem is solved, and (e) most importantly, they comply with the Privacy Act.

After my reading of the information in the Privacy Act, and information on the subject from NZ Police, Privacy Commission, Neighbourhood Support and other sources, here's my view on The Koitiata installation;

Principle 4 of the Privacy Act 1993 in particular states (paraphrased) that: 'Personal information must not be collected by means that are unlawful, unfair, or intrude to an unreasonable extent upon the personal affairs of the individual concerned.' (from Neighbourhood Support 'Guidelines for operating crime prevention cameras...')

BULLSHIT

"Because there were only a handful of 'questionably qualifying' offences in Koitiata during 2014-17, (9 in 3.5 years) the use of 'Crime Prevention' as a 'Purpose' for the installation does not stand up as justification. Therefore, unless there is another supporting need that we have not been privy to, the collection of resident's movements into and out of the village (personal information) is unfair, intrusive and unreasonable. My conclusion is that it is therefore possibly unlawful. I have no doubt that if the operation of this installation goes ahead we will be having a legal determination from the Privacy Commission in the future."

If it remains your view that it is a done deal, then I suggest that you have a bit of a think about the ownership and responsibilities of this CCTV/Spycam installation, and sort out who is going to put their hand up when counted. Read all of the 'Guidelines for CCTV' documents that are linked to here. Then if you are genuine in your representation of the Koitiata residents, you will make your case and let the community decide.

In case you have any doubts, I am not yet convinced that this project is justified and do not support it.

Eddy Mason
3 Rapaki Street,
Koitiata,
(06) 327 3676; email: eddymbeach@gmail.com



SMILE

you're ON CAMERA