

59260 Unauthorised Erection or Placement of Items, Symbols, or Materials in Public Spaces

The request alludes in particular to unauthorised items erected on lampposts along Leith Street and London Road, which remained in place for much of November 2025.

The Council's policies, procedures, or standard operating guidance governing:

when Council-operated CCTV should be considered or reviewed in response to unauthorised activity, vandalism, or other non-permitted actions in public spaces

Any incidents requiring police/emergency service attendance should immediately be reported to Police Scotland on the radio network. Supervisors should be made aware of serious incidents.

how decisions to review or not review CCTV footage are made, approved, and recorded.

Viewing requests received from Police Scotland, other legitimate enforcement bodies or from within the Council, must comply with the purpose of the scheme as defined in the Code of Practice (CoP). Data will also be issued when the Information Governance Unit forward 'Subject Access Requests' (SARs), from individuals or insurance companies acting on their behalf, which will then be processed by supervisors.

The Unique Reference Number (URN) will be assigned immediately upon receipt of a viewing request, and a hard copy of the request will be retained for 3 years as per the retention schedule.

Purpose of Public Space CCTV Scheme (as per the CoP):

- Maintaining public order and reducing anti-social behaviour
- Deterring and preventing crime, particularly violent crime
- Reducing the fear of crime
- Protecting property
- Assisting with crowd control for demonstrations, protests and major public events
- Monitoring and managing transport networks
- Supporting legal proceedings
- Helping safeguard public safety and health
- Locating vulnerable/missing individuals

Confirmation of whether Council-operated CCTV footage was reviewed, requested, retained, or otherwise considered in relation to the November 2025 incidents involving unauthorised items in public spaces.

The Council's public space CCTV was reviewed on the morning of 17/11/25 to establish when the flags were put in place and the nature of any data captured. Police Scotland liaison staff were made aware of the incident, but no viewing request was submitted and consequently, no data retained beyond the standard 31-day period.

Where CCTV footage was NOT reviewed or considered, please provide reason for that decision and the policy, guidance, or criteria relied upon.

As above.

The Council's policies or guidance on cost recovery, including: * when costs arising from unauthorised activity, vandalism, or non-permitted use of public space are pursued from those responsible * when such costs are absorbed by service budgets or the general fund.

Cost recovery from events is covered by [Finance and Resources Committee](#) report of 25/01/2024.

Vandalism recovery depends on whether the perpetrator is identified or caught. If we can recover any costs, we will liaise with Police Scotland and the court system to seek recovery. However, often a perpetrator is unknown. If damage is caused by persons unknown for example by graffiti, then any clean up or repair will come from Council budgets. The Council may also be able to make its own insurance claim (e.g., fire damage to a building).

For vehicle damage to Council property, for example a car hitting park railings, the Council will arrange the repair and attempt to recover costs through the driver/car owner's motor liability insurance and liaise with Police Scotland and court system as appropriate.

Other forms of recovery can arise from areas such as planning enforcement or other enforcement. Where the owner fails to comply, and where the Council has the legal powers to intervene, then the Council can generally carry out the work and reclaim reasonable costs.

If someone carries out unauthorised activity in a park, open space, or green space and causes damage, and we can identify those involved, we will endeavour to work with them to reinstate the area and take reasonable steps to recover costs, if it is deemed appropriate. This would be on a case-by-case basis.

Like any business, consideration is given to the cost/benefits and the likely ability to obtain cost recovery or restitution; for example, if the entity is known, able to pay, or debt recovery cost is prohibitive. For example, debt recovery is covered by the Council's [Corporate Debt Policy](#). Following legal and finance advice, cost recovery may not be considered appropriate, and all repair and restitution costs are left to be absorbed by the respective department or service area.

The total costs incurred by the Council in responding to and remedying the November 2025 incidents, including : * staff time and overtime, * equipment or contractor costs, * and any costs associated with coordination with external agencies, like police.

The total cost of the removal of the flags overnight between 27-28/11/25 was £3,350,25.

Any internal records, correspondence, decision logs, or risk assessments relating to: * evidence handling, * decisions not to pursue identification of responsible individuals, * and decisions regarding cost recovery in these incidents. I request that the information be provided in electronic format. If any part of this request is refused, please specify the statutory exemption(s) relied upon and explain why they apply. Where information is held but not disclosed, please confirm that fact.

Information not held.