

Public Document Pack

Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS



Belfast
City Council

19th April, 2017

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
- **REPORT TO FOLLOW**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Friday, 21st April, 2017 at 9.30 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. **Restricted Items**

- (b) Proposed Reorganisation of the Security Unit (Pages 1 - 8)

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Proposed reorganization of the Security Unit
Date:	21 st April 2017
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	George Wright, Head of Facilities Management (Ext.5206)

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues To seek the Committee's endorsement of the proposals in respect of the reorganization of the Security Unit.
2.0	Recommendations It is recommended that the Committee notes and endorses the operational changes set out herein and agrees the recommended option for managing the city centre venues and keeping spend to within budget.
3.0	Background
3.1	Members will recall that a report was tabled at the Committee's meeting in March 2017 in respect of the operation of the new Exhibition Area (opening May 2017). Part of that report dealt with proposed changes to the operations of the Security Unit, in the light of the new demands being made on the service by the Exhibition and the occupation of the new building at 9 Adelaide. It was considered that it would make operations more straightforward

and robust if our in-house security staff could cover all of the city centre buildings. In addition the council has set a very rigid efficiency target for the next number of years.

3.2 After discussion, the Committee agreed to defer any decision on the matters raised in relation to the Security Unit, in order to allow parties to receive a fuller briefing on what was being proposed. The following information is a summary of a number of issues raised at the briefings:-

3.3 **In-house v. contracted services (Duncrue site)**

The Security Unit has an annual operating budget of **£1.427m** per annum, of which a total of **£940,457** relates to in-house staffing costs (excl. supervision but incl. on-costs & O/T). A further **£538,317** is spent on externally-contracted security provision at a range of sites, divided into 'core' (covered every day for 52 weeks per year) and 'optional' (covered as needed) sites. The 'core' sites are as shown opposite.

Site
Wilmont House
Digital Services
Malone House
Belfast Castle
St. George's Market
Smithfield Market
Waste Transfer Station
Dunbar Link
Belfast Zoo
Gasworks

3.4 Overall, therefore, a total of **£1.478m** is currently spent on the physical security of council assets each year, split between the in-house Security personnel (64%) and externally-contracted cover (36%) provided by the current provider, Sword Security Ltd, and this has been the situation for many years.

3.5 The use of private-sector resources has been a routine aspect of the overall security processes and arrangements for many years and so is not something new or unique, and in fact the number of properties covered by contracted services is much larger than those covered by the in-house team. What is being proposed currently is simply that the Duncrue site be added to the list of 'core' locations above, and the BCC staff instead redeployed to the city-centre, to provide the necessary cover in the new Exhibition Area and also the 9 Adelaide building.

3.6 Whilst the additional demands would require additional budget, this can be minimised and offset if Sword Security is engaged at Duncrue and if 3 potential vacant posts (created by post-holders leaving / VR or redeployment) are not filled at the present time (this includes one post at Raphael Street car park which is being fitted with an automatic barrier). There will be no compulsory redundancies. In addition if demand is greater than expected then a budget for these posts can be developed as part of the rate setting process for next year. There would be no changes to the existing terms and conditions or pay & grading

3.7 arrangements for Security Operative staff; all pay and existing entitlements would remain

exactly as at present. In addition, the proposed changes would mean that each member of staff would work 27 fewer night shifts per annum and only one additional week-end day (either a Saturday or Sunday), thus creating a significantly enhanced work/life balance situation for staff.

3.8 In terms of alternative approaches to the need for cover at the Exhibition and 9 Adelaide (which must, of course, be covered) it has been suggested that 4 additional Security Operative posts should be created. This would be an additional approx. **£134,000** per annum, accost which has not been accounted for in the 2017/2018 revenue estimates. Alternatively, the Sword staff could be deployed to the Exhibition and 9 Adelaide rather than Duncrue, leaving the existing staffing arrangements untouched and requiring additional expenditure of approx. **£76,440** per annum (not currently budgeted for).

3.9 During the consultative process the trade union representatives also suggested another possible approach. This would involve splitting the 8 staff assigned to Duncrue (the site is covered by 2 staff at all times) and thus to continue to cover the site on a 24/7 basis with 4 staff, while releasing the other 4 to cover the Exhibition and 9 Adelaide on a revised rota.

3.10 However, in assessing this and all other options the role of 'pool' staff must be properly considered. For a number of years the Security Unit rotas have required 'pool' working, meaning that on certain shifts staff are not allocated a specific location/shift but are deployed as needed to cover sickness, leave and other absence. This is necessary in order to manage overtime costs effectively, but for operational reasons there is currently only one unallocated pool shift available, meaning that overtime costs are substantially over budget.

3.11 In terms of the management proposal set out herein, the rota has been adjusted to provide two additional unallocated 'pool' posts, in addition to the other benefits set out. This is the level necessary to manage overtime effectively, and if the trade union proposal were to be accepted it would be necessary, at a minimum, to add these 2 additional posts to the existing establishment of 27, making a total of 29 staff and additional rate-borne costs of **£67,000** per annum (not budgeted for – but also note the pool issue below.)

3.12 In addition, the ratio of 'pool' to allocated posts in the proposed 25-person model is considered to be optimum, so if this level is to be maintained the current proportion of 'pool' to allocated staff (13.64%) in a new structure this would in fact require an additional 'pool' post to be created, taking the overall staffing requirement to 30 Security Operatives (i.e. 3 new posts). This would involve additional rate-borne costs of approx. **£100,500** in total per annum

3.13

Quite apart from the additional costs associated with the trade union option, the implementation of permanent lone-working in Duncrue would be a considerable health and safety concern as we do not have the resources to provide regular night-time mobile patrolling support in the way that Sword and other companies routinely do. Staff based at Duncrue on night shift would therefore be entirely alone each night, with no colleagues or supervisors on hand and no immediate means of support in the event of an incident etc.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE

3.14

In summary, 4 distinct options exist for the Committee’s consideration. These options and the associated costs are as set out below. Option 1 is recommended as the management side position.

- 1) adopt the management proposals which would see the BCC Security staff from the Duncrue site redeployed to the city-centre, ;
- 2) keep all existing structures and rotas exactly as at present and cover the new Exhibition and 9 Adelaide building using the contracted supplier at an additional cost as set out below;
- 3) create a minimum of 4 additional posts to provide the cover at the new locations while continuing to cover all existing locations as at present at an additional cost as set out below; or
- 4) split the 8 staff currently allocated to the Duncrue site, and continue to cover the site with 4 BCC staff on a lone-working basis and use the 4 staff freed up to cover the Exhibition & 9 Adelaide (although not recommended for health and safety reasons).

3.15

In summary the financial implications of each option in terms of additional rate-borne expenditure requirements are as follows:-

Management option	Sword option (at City Hall and 9 Adelaide)	Additional staff option	Duncrue lone-working option
£0	£76,400	£134,000	£67,000

NB: all options above assume that the potential savings of £30,750 at Raphael St and that the 2 vacant security posts are not filled at this point. Note the above costs do not include reducing the over expenditure or overtime.

As can be seen, the management proposal (including the Raphael St savings) would allow all city-centre locations to be covered by BCC security staff with the Duncrue site covered by Sword, at no additional cost to the rate-payer.

3.16

3.17	<p>The option to use Sword at the Exhibition and 9 Adelaide would cost up to £76,440 in additional rate-borne expenditure while the additional staffing model would cost £134,000 (and it is likely that this cost would be even greater, as an enhanced 'pool' would inevitably be needed to cover a growth in the base work-force numbers) The option suggested by the trade union representatives would involve at least £67,000 of additional expenditure (and potentially up to £100K if the proportion of 'pool' to allocated staff were to be maintained).</p>
3.18	<p>The management proposal offers the following benefits;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full cover at all required locations including Duncrue, Exhibition & 9 Adelaide at no additional cost to the rate-payer; • better site management and much-improved access to the Raphael St car-park in the evenings and week-ends for staff based in 9 Adelaide/CWB; • significant reductions in overtime costs, which are currently substantially over-spent; • improved work-life balance for staff based on having to work 27 fewer night-shifts per person per annum (and no transport difficulties getting to/from the site); • improved 'pool' cover to reduce overtime, and Exhibition cover provided on normal as opposed to enhanced time (i.e. O/T); and • Exhibition and 9 Adelaide covered by BCC staff and not external contractors.
3.19	<p>Although not part of the above overall package in relation to numbers and rotas etc, it is also proposed to externalise the alarm-monitoring work currently carried out in the Control Room. The existing Bold/Gemini monitoring system in use is now obsolete and the supplier will no longer support it. A new system would cost approx. £26,000 to procure, plus an annual licensing fee estimated to be £8,600. Over a typical 5-year period this would involve additional rate-borne costs of approx. £70,000.</p>
3.20	<p>The alarm-monitoring function is labour-intensive, often creates false alarms which have to be dealt with by Control Room staff and also involves significant alarm-testing work at various sites.</p>
3.21	<p>With the introduction of new CCTV systems terminating in the Control Room from the Exhibition & 9 Adelaide, and the increased involvement for staff in access-control (e.g. Raphael St and later City Hall) it is felt that the staff time in the Control Room should be diverted to more value-adding activities, while at the same time securing a reduction in expenditure. Consequently, the Unit sought competitive prices from the private sector for the provision of alarm-monitoring services, and can obtain these services for an annual fee in the order of £5,500 for all 155 sites. The respondent companies all offer Gold level response</p>

and are fully compliant with BS 5979:2007. This would secure a nett saving of approx. **£42,500** over a 5-year period, and would involve no changes to staff numbers or staff terms & conditions in the Control Room.

Other issues arising from the briefings

(a) Training & development, and career-path progression

3.22 All Security staff have recently been provided with the training necessary to obtain accreditation by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) and all have successfully acquired this. Both the initial training and the annual licensing costs have been paid by the department. Although not a mandatory requirement for public-sector staff the Unit regards this as a useful baseline for the development of a professional security team and has chosen to provide it. Other specialist training around threat & risk assessment is currently being developed for staff, in addition to the standard council training carried out for all staff (e.g. Equality/Diversity, Health & safety etc).

3.23 With regard to career progression, there are relatively few opportunities within the Unit as it consists of a fairly small team with few layers or tiers. Where opportunities arise in which in-house staff can gain supervisory experience through 'acting-up' this is pursued wherever feasible (one such opportunity exists at present), and of course all Security staff have the opportunity to engage in a personal development planning process with their line manager, which can allow them to acquire new qualifications etc which may assist them in seeking a change of career direction and/or promotion within the council.

(b) Allocation of Overtime

3.24 It is the Unit's practice to offer all overtime first to BCC in-house Security staff, and this has been the standard approach for a number of years. However, it is unfortunately the case that, in certain very rare circumstances (e.g. on foot of very high sickness levels at a particular time) there is just no alternative but to use one of the council's contracted suppliers to provide short-term cover. This is however exceptionally rare, and is only ever done in the most difficult of circumstances.

3.25 The Unit has no plans to change the current approach to the allocation of overtime, and has recently introduced an 'overtime ladder' to try to ensure that all overtime is allocated fairly and equitably among the in-house team.

3.26 More broadly, it must be noted that overtime does carry significant costs for the organization and the rate-payer, and does clearly therefore need to be effectively managed. At present, the Unit's overtime budget for the full year is almost **£131,000** but a significant over-spend of

	<p>£73,300 exists in the last financial year due in very large part to the mandated requirement to cover Saturdays and Sundays in the City Hall. Under the proposals set out at 3.3 above these costs will cease, as all necessary week-end cover will be built in to the revised rotas on normal time following the substitution of the Exhibition and 9 Adelaide sites for Duncrue etc.</p>
4.0	Main report
4.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The key issues are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the approach which the Committee wishes to take in relation to providing the necessary Security cover at the Exhibition, 9 Adelaide and Duncrue sites as set out in 3.3 above (i.e. to adopt the management proposal, to use Sword at the Exhibition & 9 Adelaide, to adopt the trade union proposal splitting the Duncrue staff complement or to create additional permanent posts within the Security Unit); • the Committee is asked to note the implementation of electronic access-control at the Raphael St car-park site and also the use of a private-sector partner to provide alarm monitoring services.
4.2	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The financial implications of the four principal options are as set out at 3.15 above. It should be noted that the council has set out an efficiency target of £2.5m per year for the next two years.</p>
4.3	<p>In addition, the use of a private-sector partner to provide alarm monitoring services would generate savings of approx. £43,000 over a 5-year period.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no direct equality or good relations issues arising from this report.</p>
5.0	Appendices – None.

This page is intentionally left blank