

# Design & Cost Report – Security Upgrades in Community Hubs & Libraries

Date: 25 May 2023

Report of: Deputy Head of Customer Contact

Report to: Director of Communities, Housing & Environment

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

A request was made to Strategic Investment Board in February 2023 requesting funds to upgrade the Security Systems within Community Hubs & Libraries. This was following a review of existing equipment, which was found to be either absent or in need of upgrade, which poses a health and safety risk to staff and customers. £400k was approved, with £200k to be released in Year 1, 2023/24, and a further £200k in Year 2, 2024/25. The work to upgrade sites is to be phased over the two years, with the sites that are most in need to be prioritised in Year 1, thus improving the health and safety of customers and staff at lone working sites and at centres that have seen the highest levels of increased antisocial behaviour. These priority sites have now been identified and estimated and reflect the latest known costs and authority spend £400k is sought to commence rollout of the upgrades. Funds are to be injected into the Community Hub Programme to allow the Community Hub Development Team to facilitate the upgrade work in conjunction with Leeds Building Services.

## Recommendations

- a) Authorise the expenditure of £400k to provide enhancements to the current security systems in place within Community Hubs & Libraries. £200k in Year 1 2023/24 and £200k in Year 2 2024/25.
- b) Note that since the original cost estimate from Leeds Building Services, the authority has procured a new supplier of CCTV cameras and due to inflationary pressures, it is anticipated a further £80k may be required to complete all of the works. This was reported to Strategic Investment Board in May 2023.

## What is this report about?

- 1 It was flagged by the Compliance Team that due to new Data Protection legislation various protocols needed to be revisited. They needed to ensure that responses from LeedsWatch were clear, agreed, and current in terms of what happens when panic alarms are activated and

who to contact regarding an activation at a particular site. This involved the review of each Community Hub & Library, detailing what was present in terms of Security equipment and reporting what happened when the panic alarms were activated. The outcome of the sites within scope of the review were varied, and it became apparent that there was a huge disparity in the technical equipment and technical set up across the sites, as well as the response from Leedswatch, thus posing a Health & Safety risk to staff and customers.

- 2 The outcome of the review illustrated that the majority of sites are covered by one or more of the following: CCTV, a physical guard, panic alarms, a link to Leedswatch and processes in place for staff on site in the event of a disturbance. It was evident that no two sites work the same. Given the changes in the Council workforce and how staff work across the four clusters of the city, where staff are more mobile and work on occasion in different centres, further work was commissioned to ascertain the cost to bring all sites up to the same specification and function. This was further necessitated by recent reductions in staffing levels across the service, where some sites at times can be staffed by lone workers. Many Community Hubs and Libraries are used by local Councillors and some MPs and following the attack and subsequent tragic death of an MP the year before last, this potentially increases the likelihood of harmful behaviour and potentially threat to life in Community Hubs & Libraries, particularly in the current financial climate.
- 3 Quotations returned from Leeds Building Services (LBS) for 32 Community Hubs & Libraries (excluding Central Library, which will be addressed as part of wider future planned works) was estimated at £400k. See appendix 1.
- 4 The 2023 Capital programme approved at Executive Board in February 2023 included £400k for these works phased over two years, £200k 2023/24 and £200k 2024/25 respectively.
- 5 Since the original cost estimate from Leeds Building Services, the authority has procured a new supplier of CCTV cameras and due to inflationary pressures, it is anticipated a further £80k may be required to complete all of the works. This was reported to Strategic Investment Board in May 2023.
- 6 The priority sites for Year 1, 2023/24, have been identified based on either limited or no security provisions, lone worker sites and/or sites with higher levels of antisocial behaviour incidents. These include Garforth, Horsforth, Holt Park, Rothwell and Moor Allerton Community Hubs & Libraries and Chapel Allerton and Gildersome Libraries. The cost for these sites have been estimated at £136k (see appendix 2) and is based on a high level estimate from Leeds Building Services therefore additional sites will be upgraded within this financial year, from the list shown in appendix 1, up to the Year 1 budget of £200k.
- 7 Authority to spend £400k is sought to enable essential upgrade work to commence at the above sites to reduce the health and safety risk to staff and customers at sites that are deemed at most risk.
- 8 Work on the remaining sites in scope will be carried to Year 2 and will commence from April 2024.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 9 Improvements to the Health & Safety of all staff and customers through the consistency of equipment and processes across the whole service.

- 10 This will also ensure parity of processes so that all sites follow the same protocol in the event of an incident, reducing margin for error caused by currently having different processes at different sites.
- 11 Given this risk to staff and customer Health & Safety and margin for error created by having different processes from site to site, a full overhaul of all site security measures will be undertaken.
- 12 The support, advice and learning opportunities provided in Community Hubs & Libraries contribute to the Best Council Ambition by tackling poverty, inequality and improving the quality of life of citizens living in Leeds, with particular focus upon the pillar of Health & Wellbeing. The upgrade of security provisions within Community Hubs & Libraries will ensure that staff feel safe to carry out their role in supporting the Best Council Ambition and customers will be safer in accessing services that improve and enrich the lives of citizens.
- 13 Whilst the costs to upgrade all the sites within scope are substantial, potentially the cost could be greater in the event of a situation that could have been prevented by a more uniform response to an activation and could represent pre-emptive savings by reducing the potential for injury compensation or worse still loss of life. Some sites have reduced staffing numbers, which will result in more lone working and an increase in risk to staff safety. Incidents can happen anywhere and not just in areas where there is marked antisocial behaviour, therefore a consistent approach should be applied across all public buildings to ensure equality in terms of safety when accessing services that includes all citizens inclusive of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 14 In 2030 Leeds aims to be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, people are living healthy lives for longer, and are supported to thrive from early years to later life.
- 15 By addressing these security issues within the public environments across the Community Hub & Library network, staff will feel safe to carry out their work to support the ethos of the Health and Wellbeing pillar through the continued provision of services that tackle poverty, inequality and improve the life of the citizens of Leeds.
- 16 Likewise, customers will be able to continue to reap the benefits of continued access to support and services delivered within Community Hubs & Libraries in safer environments, contributing to the Council's ambition in ensuring that by 2030 that Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone.
- 17 Specifically, the implementation of good security coverage in public buildings also contributes to the Best City Ambition in safeguarding children and at-risk adults. The experiences of the pandemic and lockdowns highlighted how not only those working in public services, but anyone who has an established relationship with potentially vulnerable people can play an important role in being vigilant about their health, wellbeing, and safety. Relevant professionals cannot be everywhere, all the time, seeing behind every closed door and potentially breaches of safeguarding within Community Hubs & Libraries could be observed and recorded evidence could be used to help a child or vulnerable adult out of a dangerous situation.
- 18 In addition, enhanced security measures could also play a positive role in Community Safety, again potentially providing recorded evidence where anti-social behaviour is observed within Community Hubs & Libraries.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

19 Executive Member for Citizens & Communities, has been briefed regarding the contents of this report and is supportive of its submission and the work to improve safety in Community Hubs & Libraries.

## What are the resource implications?

20 The capital programme provides £400k of funding for these works.

21 The revenue effects are expected to be minimal and can be contained within existing budgets

22 The implementation of these enhanced security measures will be carried out by our internal service provider, Leeds Building Services (LBS), using the approved security system in place Council wide. This system is specified and set up to enable monitoring and response by LeedsWatch therefore Leeds Building Services have been approached to provide costs and a timetable for work to commence on the Year 1 priorities.

23 There are 33 buildings within scope (Gildersome Library has since been added following completion of a refurbishment at the end of 2022). Sites vary in size, layout and technical requirement and due to these variables will require resource planning by Leeds Buildings Services around their other scheme commitments. LBS are to provide a work plan for Year 1 following receipt of an official order and will be asked in advance of 2024/25 to earmark resources for Year 2.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

24 The risk of not proceeding with the recommended security upgrades, poses a threat to both staff and customers should an incident occur within a Community Hub & Library where current provision is below standard.

25 Delays in the works and implementing these improvements elongate the risk to staff and customers therefore a timely decision would be welcome.

26 Risk Assessments and safety measures are in place to circumvent current inadequacies in the existing set up but are far from ideal, hence this request to proceed with the upgrade is critical.

27 Since the original cost estimate from Leeds Building Services, the authority has procured a new supplier of CCTV cameras and due to inflationary pressures, it is anticipated a further £80k may be required to complete all of the works. This was reported to Strategic Investment Board in May 2023.

28 This review of the security provision within Community Hubs & Libraries instigated work for site Managers to assess their Data Protection compliance at each of their sites. Work to date is supportive of the risks highlighted within this report, in that there are clear disparities in technology, workarounds and response to panic alarm activations across the city.

29 Furthermore, this review has identified that having different processes, can create risk and this has instigated process improvements between the service and LeedsWatch, which will enhance safety further.

30 The new security system and LeedsWatch response has been tested and is now operational at Beeston Community Hub where the security system was implemented as part of the Community Hub & Library refurbishment of the building. Feedback from the onsite team and LeedsWatch is hugely positive and provides surety that the upgrades and associated processes will be beneficial.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 31 Potentially there could be legal implications of proceeding with this upgrade. In some cases, there are sites with little or no security measures in place therefore some citizens could directly challenge the authority on the grounds of privacy invasion. This legal implication is minimised through the instigation of a manager review of Data Protection Impact Assessments for every site to ensure that the provision of CCTV is justified. These assessments will be reviewed again upon installation of any new system and/or changes.
- 32 Conversely by not proceeding with the upgrade could also result in personal legal action against the Council if an incident occurs and existing systems in place failed and resulted in injury or even worse.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **What other options were considered?**

33 An options appraisal was carried out in October 2021 to look at the advantages and disadvantages of doing nothing, upgrade partially or upgrade all sites within scope. The recommendation was to upgrade all sites based on the Health & Safety aspects highlighted within this report

#### **How will success be measured?**

- 34 Staff will feel more secure knowing there is one process which is replicated at any site across the Community Hub & Library network.
- 35 Staff within LeedsWatch will be confident on one single approach at all Community Hub & Library sites in the event of an activation.
- 36 Customers will be more secure in accessing services across the Community Hub & Library network

#### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

- 37 The implementation will commence as soon as possible following the injection of capital for Year 1 2023/24.
- 38 The Community Hub Development Team will oversee the implementation via liaison with the Security Team within Leeds Building Services and Community Hub & Library Managers and LeedsWatch.