

Ulster Hall – Provision of Security Services

Background Information

As part of the Ulster Hall's structural and operational review there is a requirement to look at security arrangements at the venue

In the past the Ulster Hall has not had a dedicated security function, but had the following security arrangements operating prior to the venue's closure:

Key holding was the responsibility of the venue's Facilities Manager and Facilities Supervisor.

For commercial concerts Promoters brought in their own security team to cover load-ins/outs, event security and stewarding.

Monitoring of the venue's Fire Panel was the responsibility of the Duty Management Team as part of the Evacuation strategy.

There are no staff within the present structure who have dedicated security functions as part of their JD's.

Current Situation

The following environmental and operational changes have been proposed when the building opens in March 2009 and these will need to be taken into consideration to establish a way forward both in terms of the provision of, and budget estimates for, security services.

- Upgraded CCTV system and Fire Management system
- The Ulster Orchestra will have office spaces at the rear of the building. Access to the building during the day for both UO staff and visitors will be via this Back Stage entrance. The Ulster Orchestra will also require out of hours access.
- The Ulster Orchestra will have the option to program concerts & rehearsals on Wed/Thurs & Fridays, along with the existing client base and the introduction of a sales & marketing strategy it is envisaged that occupancy levels will be increased.
- It is the intention that the building will be open to the public from 0800 – 1800hrs Monday – Saturday, plus event nights.
- Introduction of Interactive Exhibition areas.
- A destination Café will be in operation within the foyer area.
- A bar service will be in operation for all events within the Group space.

- A city centre Box Office will operate from the Foyer offering tickets for sale for the Ulster Hall, Ulster Orchestra and Waterfront Hall events.

The security specification can be split into the following areas:-

- Monitoring of CCTV and Fire Management system
- Basic Artiste Liaison function
- Daytime security presence for Backstage Door, Café, Box Office, Exhibition Spaces, Event Load-in's.
- Event Security
- Key Holding

Options Investigated

Option One – Status Quo

As the venue will now be opened during core hours, with the introduction of the City Centre Box Office, Café, Exhibition Areas and the Ulster Orchestra Office space it is felt that there will be a requirement for a security presence. It is not felt that this option meets the requirements of the newly refurbished Ulster Hall.

Option Two – Contracted out security services

- 2 personnel covering core operational hours 0700 – 1800
- 2 personnel covering events on a Rota basis
- Cover outside main operational hours would be by remote monitoring by City Hall
- Key holding provided by BCC Key holding supplier.

This option would be to extend the current BCC security contract to provide 2 additional guards for core operational hours Monday – Saturday and operate a 3 man pool to cover all event hours. The requirement for the security provision for events would be the responsibility of the venue manager and would be planned 6 weeks in advance.

Estimated Costs:-

Maximum week 132 hours core plus 134 non-core = 266 hours @ £9.73 per hour (£134,585)

Reasonable estimate 132 core hours plus 64 non core = 196 @ £9.73 per hour (£99,168).

Option Three – Minimum security presence covering core operational hours with the option to bring in event security when required.

- Extend the current BCC security contract provider to allow for one guard to cover core operational hours 0700 – 1800 Monday – Saturday.
Duties would include:-
Monitoring of CCTV and Fire Management system
Co-ordination of core hours evacuation strategy.
Basic Artiste Liaison function
Daytime security presence for Backstage Door, Café, Box Office, Exhibition Spaces, Event Load-in's.

- Standard event security will be carried out by the Duty Manager and Front of House Supervisor.
- When required, the venue manager would schedule in additional event security from the existing BCC provider. It is envisaged that the cost for this additional security be passed onto the Client.
- Out of hours access to the building would be controlled by remote access from the City Hall control room.
- Key Holding – outside of core and event hours the responsibility for incident investigation could be carried out by the current BCC key holding contractor.

Estimated costs:-

Core Hours 66 hours per week @ £9.73 per hour – Total cost £33,393.

Recommendation

It is recommended that **Option Three** should be adopted. This option provides a level of security to support the day to day operation of the venue as a public building, and covers the Council's responsibilities as Landlord. It is felt that the FOH staff and Duty Managers brought in to operate events will adequately cover the security and evacuation function, whilst also utilizing services already available through the security function at the City Hall.

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