

GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDIT SECTION

COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Item 5(b)

13th January 2021

Title of the Audit: Neighbourhoods & Sustainability – Alarm Receiving Centre

1. Introduction

1.1 As part of the agreed Internal Audit Plan we have carried out a review of the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) operated by Neighbourhoods and Sustainability (NS).

1.2 The ARC is responsible for monitoring fire and intruder alarms at over 1,000 sites and deals with over 12,000 alarm activations each year. The ARC is operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and, to date, operations have been maintained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The ARC is accredited by the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) as a GOLD standard ARC. To maintain this accreditation, the ARC must meet the requirements of British Standards (BS) 5979:2007, 7858:2012, 8484:2016 and BS EN ISO9001:2015.

1.3 The scope of the audit was to provide an assessment of the ARC's compliance with the Standards noted above and to gain assurance that, for a sample of the BS requirements, the ARC senior managers are able to provide evidence of compliance. Internal Audit currently review the ARC's compliance with the requirements of the BS' twice per annum, and this report covers the two reviews undertaken during 2020.

2. Audit Opinion

2.1 Based on the audit work carried out, both reviews concluded that a reasonable level of assurance could be placed upon

the control environment. The reviews have identified some scope for improvement in the existing arrangements and a total of two recommendations which management should address.

3. Main Findings

3.1 We are pleased to report that ARC management were able to provide satisfactory evidence of compliance with the sample of requirements for BS5979:

- Section 6: Operation of an ARC – compliant
- Section 7: Records – compliant in all but one area (evidence of routine maintenance and testing is not always held within the ARC and available for inspection)
- Section 8: Contingency Plans – compliant

3.2 Compliance was also confirmed in all but one area within BS EN ISO9001:2015; Section 9.1.2 Customer Satisfaction. The Quality Management System states that annual customer feedback surveys will be undertaken and reviewed by ARC management. However we found that customer satisfaction surveys have not been undertaken since 2018.

3.3 The last NSI review was completed in July 2020 and no recommendations or improvement observations were made.

3.4 An action plan is provided at section four outlining our observations, risks and recommendations. We have made a total of two recommendations for improvement. The priority of

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each recommendation is:

Priority	Definition	Total
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	0
Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	2
Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	0
Service Improvement	Opportunities for business improvement and/or efficiencies have been identified.	0

- 3.5 The audit has been undertaken in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
- 3.6 We would like to thank officers involved in this audit for their cooperation and assistance.
- 3.7 It is recommended that the Head of Audit and Inspection submits a further report to Committee on the implementation of the actions contained in the attached Action Plan.

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No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
Key Control: The ARC is compliant with the requirements of BS5979: Records				
1	<p>In order to comply with BS5979: Section 7: Records, the ARC should maintain a record of all routine maintenance and testing. Property and Land Services (PALS) provide the facilities function for the ARC which includes scheduling all routine maintenance and testing activity along with receiving the subsequent reports/certification and progressing any remedial action required.</p> <p>Evidence of routine maintenance and testing could not be provided by ARC management in 2 out of 14 cases, although ARC management advised that the maintenance had taken place and were able to provide evidence that the relevant contractors had recently been on site.</p> <p>In a further two cases we found remedial action was required following the maintenance visit. In one of the cases four remedial actions were identified, however, only two were approved for completion by PALS.</p> <p>In seven cases routine maintenance and testing was delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, we confirmed that, at the time of our audit, all routine maintenance and testing has now taken place.</p>	<p>ARC management should improve current record keeping arrangements in relation to routine maintenance and testing at the ARC.</p> <p>As a minimum ARC management should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine maintenance and testing is undertaken in a timely manner; • Copies of all reports and certification are obtained and retained within the ARC. This should include robust evidence that remedial work was completed satisfactorily or, where it was not completed, documented confirmation of the justification for this, which can then be supplied to the contractor at the next inspection (if required); • Where remedial action is not progressed it will not impact on the ARC's BS5979 accreditation; and • Any cases where failure to progress remedial action will impact the ARC's BS accreditation are escalated to NS senior management as a matter of urgency. 	Medium	<p>Response: Accepted</p> <p>ARC Management will work closely with PALS facilities maintenance team to ensure processes are robust for 2021.</p> <p>Officer Responsible for Implementation: ARC Operations Manager</p> <p>Timescale for Implementation: 31 December 2021</p>

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	<p>Current arrangements increase the risk that equipment is not maintained when due and/or that ARC management are unable to evidence completion of maintenance (and any remedial work), thus jeopardising the ARC's operational safety, performance and/or its BS accreditation.</p>			
<p>Key Control: The ARC is compliant with the requirements of BS EN ISO9001:2015 Section 9.1.2 Customer Satisfaction</p>				
<p>2</p>	<p>The Quality Management System states that annual customer feedback surveys will be undertaken and reviewed by ARC management. However, we found that customer satisfaction surveys have not been undertaken since 2018. At this time they were put on hold due to the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the resulting reluctance to use the survey platform utilised by the ARC.</p> <p>ARC management have advised that all customers continue to be offered regular meetings to discuss the service provided by the ARC.</p> <p>However, there is an increased risk that customers' needs and expectations are not being met and that ARC management do not take the required remedial action due to lack of awareness.</p> <p>Furthermore, the ARC cannot currently be considered fully compliant with the requirements of the BS in relation to customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>ARC management should review the current options available to enable the re-introduction of annual surveys to obtain customer feedback. This information should be collated, analysed and, where appropriate, action taken to improve customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Response: Accepted</p> <p>Officer Responsible for Implementation: ARC Operations Manager</p> <p>Timescale for Implementation: 31 December 2020</p>