



**South
Cambridgeshire
District Council**

Report to:	Cabinet	12 March 2024
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Bill Handley, Lead Cabinet Member for Communities	
Lead Officer:	Jeff Membery, Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services	

Increasing protections for High Street ATM's (Automated Teller Machine)

Executive Summary

1. This report requests a Cabinet decision on the project to increase protection for high street ATMs. This is due to progress into the implementation phase on 1 April 2024.
2. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) of £100,000 has been allocated to, and approved for, this project with criteria for the funding stipulating that the project must 'improve the High Street'. This is one-off funding and is available for delivery between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.
3. Viable sites will see the installation of one or more heavy duty planters to prevent or slow down the theft of the ATM. The planters will be filled and maintained by the local community beyond installation by way of a community project – this must be agreed in advance.
4. Prior to the release of funds, research has been done into 14 sites deemed by Police to be at high risk of ram-raiding and ATM theft. This research has involved an officer assessment of the suitability of each location (space available, land ownership, support from the associated business etc), followed by ascertaining the level of elected Ward Councillor and Parish/Town Council support, bearing in mind there is a need for ongoing community engagement beyond installation.
5. Given the low number of viable sites identified from the original list, research has recently begun to locate further possible sites that the Police did not initially identify as their highest priority. A definitive list of ATMs in the District is not available but, at the time of writing, of those located in South Cambs nine additional sites look to warrant further investigation for the project that will increase protection. The same assessment and engagement will be undertaken for all ATM's in this second tranche as for those on the first list.

Key Decision

No.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that:
 - a) Cabinet agrees to progress work, from 1 April 2024, to protect the ATM identified at the Co-op in School Lane, Cambourne.
 - b) Cabinet agrees to delegate to the Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Communities, decisions to proceed with increasing protection to ATM following assessment of additional sites within the approved £100,000 budget, ensuring local district councillors and parish/town councils have been engaged.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. The research, site assessments and consultation with elected members, businesses and parish/town councils about this project has already been extensive. Many of the original 14 sites are not suitable for the installation of heavy-duty planters for a range of reasons (including available space, land ownership, business preference) but it is hoped that delivery at the Cambourne location may help others in the second tranche of sites assess whether the installation of planters would be a good option for their ATM.
8. The list of potential sites would be kept under review to ensure as many locations as possible are assessed and progressed during the 2024-25 period. If necessary, any unallocated funds will be returned to the District Council's SPF programme coordinator for use on other projects in South Cambridgeshire.
9. The second tranche of sites will be assessed using the same criteria as the original 14 sites identified as higher priority by the police before a decision by the Head of Service in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member.

Details

Background

10. The Police are keen to reduce the vulnerability of ATMs in rural areas and to prevent, or at least hinder, attempts by thieves to cause criminal damage and inconvenience to the affected communities.
11. Attacks on ATM machines happen every year. After a quieter 18 months, there has been a marked increase in attacks across the county. Two attacks have occurred in South Cambridgeshire since summer 2023 and a further three have occurred in neighbouring districts within the last four months. Offences across Cambridgeshire tend to happen in smaller market towns and villages near an 'A' road.
12. Solutions to this problem include the installation of either anti-ram bollards (these can be removed but will slow down the offenders which may result in them being caught) or heavy-duty planters which make a feature of the obstacle.
13. Many of the ways in which ATMs are attacked would not be prevented by planters. These include drilling the ATM out, 'gas' attacks (whereby flammable gas is piped into the ATM and then set light to create a small explosion) or using an oxy acetylene torch to cut open the ATM. However, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has said 45% of them are being lifted out by telehandler, which is a heavy-duty reach forklift, widely used in agriculture and industry, following the ramming of the premises with a vehicle. A heavy-duty planter would delay, if not

prevent, the damage and theft, and therefore would be a positive addition where viable.

14. Regardless of the solution, partners need to work together to try to reduce the number of ATM attacks by making it a less attractive way for offenders to access money. No single agency can do this alone, so discussions took place between Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Council officers as part of the South Cambs Community Safety Partnership. The Partnership fully supported this project progressing.
15. The SPF funding criteria require an improvement to the High Street. This project would deliver an obstacle to ATM theft, but also improvements to the visual appearance of the High Street and a community project for the ongoing maintenance of the planter/s.
16. Communities must be involved in this project – potentially in the design of the planters and in decisions about their contents, and certainly in their ongoing maintenance. For example, instead of plants a group may decide to instal some form of artwork created with input from schools or community groups. This would require less ongoing maintenance. This element of the project must be signed up to by the community (either a local group or the Parish/Town Council) prior to the commencement of works. It has been part of the feasibility assessment of sites.

Phase 1 - site assessments

17. The following is a summary of each site that was identified as higher priority by Police.

-	Location business name	Town/village	Priority	District Councillor briefed on project	Parish / Town Council support	Proceed with Project?	Reason / Details
1	Imperial War Museum	Duxford	High	N/A	N/A	No	ATM removed
2	Co-op	Gamlingay	High	N/A	N/A	No	ATM removed
3	Cambridge Building Society	Sawston	High	N/A	N/A	No	ATM removed
4	BP	Whittlesford	High	Yes	N/A	No	Location is not on a High Street or near a high street, therefore this site would not meet the criteria for the funding.
5	Co-op	Sawston	High	Yes	No	No	Limited access on High Street and narrow footpath.
6	Co-op	Fulbourn	High	Yes	No	No	Limited access on High Street due to narrow footpath. Spoke with Parish Council who confirmed agreement with the narrow footpath. District councillors briefed

7	Co-op	Linton	High	Yes	No	No	Limited access on High Street due to narrow footpath. District councillors briefed.
8	Co-op	Longstanton	High	Yes	No	No	Limited access on High Street due to narrow footpath. District councillors briefed.
9	Co-op	Brace Dein, Cambourne	High	Yes	Yes	No	ATM removed after ram-raid in May 2023. NCR (National Cash Register Corp) the owner and installer of cash machine, advised not viable to reinstate ATM due cost post ram-raid. They also said there had also been a drop in usage prior to attack, also making it unviable. Town Council and District councillors briefed.
10	Co-op	Papworth	High	Yes	No	No	Not required as site very well fortified with existing planters. Discussed with Parish Council and District councillor who agreed. Police also amended their original recommendation.
11	Co-op	Cottenham	High	Yes	No	No	Limited access on High Street due to arrow footpath. Would likely require changes to path and road beyond the scope of the funding. District councillors briefed.
12	Co-op	Great Shelford	High	Yes	No	No	Parish Clerk advised newly built Co-op has requested anti-ram bollards in their planning app so planters will be surplus to requirements. District councillors briefed.
13	Co-op	School Lane, Cambourne	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	Location lends itself to the fortification of the ATM. Project to be progressed. See point 18.
14	Spar	High St, Bassingbourn	High	Yes	N/A	No	Limited access on High Street due to narrow footpath. District councillor briefed who understood. However, traffic solution programme underway through Parish Council and there may be scope in future. Cannot progress at this point but to be reviewed.

18. The Cambourne Co-op that welcomes the project to use planters to protect the ATM has adequate space and written approval has been provided by the private landowner, Abbey Group, as well as the Co-op Central England and Cambourne Town Council.
19. Beyond installation, SCDC will have no further responsibility for the planter/s. Ownership will be by one of either the business, the landowner or Town Council, to be agreed and stipulated in a formal agreement prior to any work starting. Options might include the Town Council having ownership *and* responsibility for maintenance (including insurance) or the host business for the ATM or landowner taking ownership, and responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the contents resting with the Town Council.
20. With regard to the Cambourne planter/s, Cambourne Town Council (together potentially with identifiable community groups) have confirmed in writing that they are willing to take on maintenance of the planters, with formal ownership to be confirmed by agreement.
21. Some initial work has already been done to begin to assess the second tranche of ATMs. Waterbeach Parish Council have verbally given support for a machine in that area progressing and them being involved in ongoing maintenance of a planter if the site is feasible. Written approval will be sought after the Parish Council meeting in February.

Phase 2 - delivery

22. Invitations to tender for the installation work will be invited via the Council's procurement portal and it is proposed this will be done on a 'Lots' basis (each site forming a separate Lot). Each Lot will include a requirement to investigate the technicalities of installation of the planter/s and the confirmation and actioning of any Planning requirements, or their absence.
23. In initial informal conversations with Greater Cambridge Shared Planning's officers, they have advised that while no definitive guidance has been found for the installation of planters for this purpose, it is likely that if they or bollard(s) are situated entirely within private property for security purposes (not a public footpath) then planning permission would not be required. However, planning permission would likely be needed if the bollard or planter was installed on the property boundary or on public land. If the site was a listed building or within a conservation area it may be more complex.
24. Officers have already engaged the County Council Highways Team. Local Highways Officers have confirmed that unless the District Council proposes to install a planter on the adopted highway, then Cambridgeshire Highways would not need to be involved further in this proposal and has no objections to the installation of planter/s on private land.
25. The Cambourne site is privately owned land set back from the highway. If any future site was on adopted highway it would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
26. The other potential sites to be investigated are located in the following locations:

-	Name	Address		Name	Address
1	Wallis & Son	Cambridge Road, Barton	15	Shell- Four Went Ways	Newmarket Rd, Little Abington
2	MFG - Harston (BP)	123 High Street, Harston	16	Tesco Milton	Cambridge Rd Ind Estate, Milton
3	Trumpington Food & Wine	150 Shelford Road, Sth Trumpington	17	One Stop	14 Greenside, Waterbeach

4	One Stop Willingham	56-58 Church Street, Willingham	18	One Stop	4 High Street, Milton
5	Tesco Cambridge Extra	15-18 Viking Way, Bar Hill	19	BP- MFG - Waterbeach	A10 Ely Road, Waterbeach
6	BP Londis-Highway Stops	Huntingdon Road, Girton	20	Post Office	High street, Sawston
7	Barclays Bank	5-17 High Street, Histon	21	Post Office	Cambridge Road, Hardwick
8	Holiday Inn - Impington	Lakeview, Bridge Road, Impington	22	Costcutter	Little Venice, St Neots Rd (A428) Caxton
9	Tesco Express (small)	30 High Street, Histon	23	Babraham Bioscience Technologies	Babraham Hall, Babraham
10	One Stop	43-47 Ditton Ln, Fen Ditton	24	BP	Opposite War Museum, A505, Duxford
11	MFG – Arrington	15 Ermine Way, Arrington	25	Sanger Institute	Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton
12	Morrisons	High Street, Cambourne	26	Spar Stapleford	67-69 London Road, Stapleford
13	SPA-Stores & Post Office	81 High St, Gt Abington	27	Spar	High St, Bassingbourn
14	Sweet Talk News	77 High St, Linton	28	Coop	Capper Rd, Waterbeach

27. The same investigations will take place to ascertain in more detail the suitability of the sites, the permissions required for each, and the appetite within the community to take on the post-installation maintenance. It is hoped that this research can take place in the next 4-6 weeks and that the procurement process can include as many of the viable sites as possible, but with a minimum of the Cambourne site, as outlined in this paper. Further rounds of procurement (or an extension to any existing contracts) will be undertaken later in the year if necessary.

28. Initial conversations with potential contractors have indicated that the already allocated £100,000 would be sufficient to instal planters at approximately 10 locations. Where there is a need to remove existing street furniture or make other alterations prior to installation, costs may increase. Procurement on a Lot-by-Lot basis after the initial Cambourne location is progressed (subject to member approval) is therefore deemed the best course of action.

Options

Cabinet could:

- a) agree to progress the recommended Co-op site in Cambourne identified in the first tranche of 14 vulnerable ATMs.
- b) Delay a decision on the recommended Co-op site in Cambourne and ask officers for more information before making a decision.
- c) Agree to delegate to the Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Communities, decisions to proceed with ATM target hardening work following assessment of additional sites within the approved £100,000 budget.
- d) Decide to end the project at the investigation phase and return the entire £100,000 to the South Cambridgeshire District Council's SPF funding co-ordinator for use on other programme projects.

Implications

29. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial and Fraud Risk

30. £100,000 of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority funding is available to progress this project. It is anticipated that this SPF funding could cover the installation of planters at approximately 10 sites. Procurement on a 'Lots' basis (with costs confirmed at tender stage for each site) is considered the best course of action to support project delivery. Any unspent funds would be returned to the District Council SPF programme co-ordinator and used for other SPF projects.

Legal

31. SCDC Legal Team has given advice, including the following:

The Legal Team have advised that the Highways Act 1980 states that we, the Council (District & County) have the powers to place an object, as structures to enhance the amenity of the highway. This can be on the pavement, as long as we have consent from the frontages and as long as it is not for income. But there cannot be an obstruction to footfall and at all times there must be agreement with Highways for installation. The Legal Team suggested if we get an objection from Highways, they must advise where in the legislation they feel we are not meeting the criteria. [Highways Act 1980 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/426)

Staffing

32. There are no staffing / resource implications – the project will be delivered within current resources.

Risk/Opportunities

33. The project will be delivered in line with Project Management Principles and a risk log developed (possibly per site) prior to commencement. It is anticipated that the biggest risks relate to delays as a result of Planning and Highways considerations, though these have been explored (see above), and changes to costs arising from the unforeseen requirement for additional preparatory works. However, the project will be developed to ensure it remains within the allocated budget.

34. It is anticipated that completion of one site could lead to further interest from others, resulting potentially in the fortification of more ATMs. It is not anticipated that the interest would be higher than current budget allocation and, if this issue presented, the project would be managed according to the budget currently available.

Equality and Diversity

35. The protection of ATMs supports the longevity of residents being able to access cash locally, especially where this supports independent living.

Health & wellbeing

36. This project is in line SPF funding aims to improve the visual appearance of the High Street. It will protect valued ATMs and will provide an opportunity for a local community-based project

for the maintenance of the planter/s, which has the potential to impact positively on the health and wellbeing of those involved.

Consultation responses

37. The Council's Legal Team advises we should ensure the Parish Councils have been engaged, together with the Local Ward Councillor/s for the area and businesses, as well as the landowner. This has been done in each case and will be for the second tranche of sites.

38. See table at point 17 for details of engagement with Parish Councils, Ward Councillors and businesses. The same will be done for the sites in the table at point 26.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas`

Growing local businesses and economies

39. The availability of cash to residents can help support businesses, especially smaller local high street enterprise, due to the additional costs of processing digital transactions.

Report Author:

Linda Gallagher – Community Safety Partnership Development Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713340