REPORT TO: CITY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 17 FEBRUARY 2025

REPORT ON: WIRELESS NETWORK PURCHASE

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT NO: 48-2025

1.0   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   The purpose of this report is to summarise the sourcing strategy for the purchase of wireless network equipment for installation across the Council estate.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   It is recommended that the Committee:

(a) approves the commencement of a procurement exercise in respect of the purchase described, based on the sourcing strategy detailed in Appendix 1, and delegates authority to the Head of Digital & Customer Service to make the purchase.

3.0   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1   The total projected cost of the purchase is £60,000 for equipment and installation and this cost will be met from IT capital budget for 2024/25. The £3,770 revenue cost for maintaining the network will be met from within Corporate Services IT budget.

4.0   BACKGROUND

4.1   This report supports the Council's IT Strategy which was approved at the City Governance Committee on 4 March 2024 (Article VIII of the meeting of the Committee refers). The Councils IT strategy sets out to deliver secure, robust, and affordable IT platforms. Helping to enable digital services, mobile and flexibly accessible services with best value technology products and a cloud first approach.

4.2   Wireless technology is used extensively to connect Council buildings to the Council network. This provides a connection to the internet, telephony and access to Council business applications and data. Wireless is a very reliable, flexible and low-cost alternative to fibre and other leased line network services.

4.3   The Council wireless network provides IT services to Council offices, libraries, sports centres and public space CCTV. Some of the existing wireless equipment has reached end of life and needs to be replaced. Replacing the equipment will minimise the risk of service outages, provide increased bandwidth and improve security.

4.4   Current hardware is between 8 and 10 years old and is more likely to become faulty, is more difficult to repair and no longer provides enough capacity. Current equipment does not have the modern security and management features available in new hardware. The cost of new equipment is very competitive compared to alternative technologies such as fibre or leased lines. Inflationary increases have impacted the overall value of all IT hardware. Wireless hardware costs have not increased significantly in recent years but have improved in reliability, bandwidth and security.

4.5   Wireless technology provides greater flexibility than fibre or other wired alternatives. The wireless equipment can be easily moved from one location to another. This means equipment can be re-used easily and its use can be maximised over the lifetime of the hardware. The software that runs the equipment can be upgraded at minimal cost to increase bandwidth in the future and provide new security features.

4.6   New wireless technologies have been developed since the existing hardware was installed that will provide a more reliable and secure service, as well as much greater bandwidth capacity. It is expected the new equipment will provide 2 to 3 times more bandwidth than currently available.

4.7   A much higher investment of capital and revenue would be required for a fibre network alternative. Installation and rental costs for fibre are significantly higher than a wireless solution. The current annual maintenance cost for the hardware being replaced is £3,120. This will increase to £3,770 once the new hardware is installed.

4.8   The purchase will be awarded through the existing Tayside Procurement Consortium Framework Contract (contract for supply, installation, and maintenance of wireless infrastructure Ref: TPC/Wireless/21/09). This single supplier Framework offers best value (supplier is Rapier Systems Ltd).

5.0   POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1   This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

6.0   RISK ANALYSIS

6.1   There are four standard risks in any procurement and for public sector regulated procurements, a fifth is added, that of the procurement exercise itself breaching the public contract regulations and leaving the Council open to a legal challenge:

Key Risks			
Description of Risk	Probability (L/M/H)	Impact on DCC (L/M/H)	Actions required to manage Risk
Commercial Risk – That either the price objectives are not achieved up front or there are other costs that arise during the contract and diminish the overall benefits.	Low	Low	Costs and requirements are known as utilising an existing framework route.
Technical Risk – This concerns the difficulty in being able to specify the desired outcome and on the market being unable to deliver to the specification	Low	Low	The supplier has experience of installing and configuring the hardware.
Performance Risk – This concerns the ability of suppliers to perform consistently over the life of the contract to deliver the planned benefits	Low	Low	Framework contract in place with service levels and contract management.
Contractual Risk – Being able to remedy the 's shortcomings in the contractor's performance without severely damaging the contract and about avoiding reliance on the contracted supplier as the contract develops.	Low	Low	Contract already in place for supply of the hardware and installation.
Procurement Risk – where a procurement is found unsound in law, through the public procurement rules	Low	Low	The purchase will be awarded through the existing Tayside Procurement Consortium Framework Contract (contract for supply, installation, and maintenance of wireless infrastructure Ref: TPC/Wireless/21/09). This single supplier Framework

			offers best value (supplier is Rapier Systems Ltd).

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

ROBERT EMMOTT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES　　　　　**28 JANUARY 2025**

SOURCING STRATEGY	The purchase and installation of wireless network equipment
PROJECT NUMBER	
PROJECT INFORMATION	The purchase will be awarded through the existing Tayside Procurement Consortium Framework Contract (contract for supply, installation, and maintenance of wireless infrastructure Ref: TPC/Wireless/21/09). This single supplier Framework offers best value (supplier is Rapier Systems Ltd).
PROPOSED CONTRACT DURATION	2024/2025 one off purchase
RECOMMENDATION	It is recommended that the Committee: (a) approves the commencement of a procurement exercise in respect of the purchase described, and delegates authority to the Head of Digital & Customer Service to make the purchase.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	The total projected cost of the purchase is £60,000 for equipment and installation and this cost will be met from IT capital budget for 2024/25. The £3,770 revenue cost for maintaining the network will be met from within Corporate Services IT budget.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	There are no issues
BACKGROUND PAPERS	NA