

<b>Decision maker:</b>	<b>Assistant director environment and place</b>
<b>Decision date:</b>	<b>23 September 2016</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Wifi at Museum Resource and Learning Centre</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Assistant director communities</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key decision**

This is not a key decision.

## **Wards affected**

Countywide

## **Purpose**

To approve provision of wifi in the Museum Resource and Learning Centre (MRLC).

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

- (a) Wifi be provided in the Museum Resource and Learning Centre at an installation cost of £15,325;**
- (b) Hoople Ltd are commissioned to conduct the work based on the specific provided.**

## **Alternative options**

- 1 That wifi is not installed at the MRLC due to cost. This would not be consistent with the approach in other corporate buildings and would reduce the services capacity to generate income through room hire / use relating to the savings plan in the cabinet report on 10 March 2016.
- 2 That wifi is enabled throughout the MRLC. This is not recommended given the additional costs and building usage in those areas.

## Reasons for recommendations

- 3 To enable the wifi of key areas within the MRLC.

## Key considerations

- 4 Appendix 1 outlines the costing of wifi within the MRLC. Costings for an alternative option covering all the areas in the building are also shown. To provide the most cost effective solution it is recommended that wifi be prioritised in the areas to be used by staff and the public.
- 5 The investment at this corporate building is being recommended to support flexible working, maximising the use of space, the facility being available for use by other services within the council, and enable a “paperless” approach to operating services. In addition the wifi investment will aid the generation of income by this service by providing a “better offer” for hire of the meeting space in the building.

## Community impact

- 6 The wifi availability will improve the efficient use of council owned corporate property supporting the corporate plan priority to secure better services, quality of life and value for money. The recommendation also supports the wider digital strategy aim of enabling services to operate digital by default and promote digital inclusion.
- 7 The wifi would enabled greater range of interaction with the collections and link to programme with schools and groups.

## Equality duty

- 8 The equality duty is in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to employees. The duty requires that when exercising public functions, public service providers must have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 9 The duty relates to different groups who share any of the “protected characteristics” of age, sex, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sexual orientation. A needs and impact assessment is one tool that may assist decision makers to comply with the public sector equality duty.
- 10 There would be no negative effects on the protected characteristics. A positive impact relates to age and gender, in that women aged 65+ are less likely to use the internet and can therefore suffer from digital exclusion. The use of the internet at the MRLC can be a friendly and familiar environment for the introduction and use of the internet on subjects of interest (e.g. view collections on line; history research; web reference material; family history).

## Financial implications

- 11 The installation of the wifi is a one off cost of £15,325 from the ICT revenue reserve.

## **Legal implications**

- 12 The wifi installation will be part of the contracted work with Hoople. There are no legal implications.
- 13 The council has no statutory duty to provide wifi. However, it may choose, as permitted by the general power of competence set out in s.1 Localism Act 2011, to do so and may do so also if the activity assists and supports the council in meeting other statutory duties or in delivering its corporate aims and objectives.
- 14 In letting a contract to install wifi at MRLC at an overall cost of £15,325, the council would be required to comply with paragraph 4.6.13.2c of its contract procedure rules and obtain at least three formal quotations by following the procedure set out in paragraphs 4.6.13.7 to 4.6.13.11.
- 15 The council has in place a contract with Hoople Ltd. Hoople Ltd is a separate legal company over which the council exercises control similar to that which it exercises over its own departments. Therefore, the council may request work of this nature to be carried out without, in this instance, the need to conduct any procurement. However, if Hoople wishes to subcontract the work, or any of it, it will be required to have regard to the council's contract procedure rules when letting any such contract opportunities.

## **Risk management**

- 16 That the wifi does not do as required as it does not reach all parts of the premises.  
Mitigation: that priority areas have been selected based on use and investment.
- 17 That the income generation is not achieved for the hire of MRLC.  
Mitigation: that the offer of wifi will add appeal.

## **Consultees**

- 18 The services have confirmed the installation of wifi will be of benefit to their working practices and support the income generation targets.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Herefordshire Council Museum Store – Public and Corp Wireless

## **Background papers**

- None identified.