

## ITEM No ...13.....

**REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**REPORT ON: WI-FI IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS ESTABLISHMENTS**

**REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

**REPORT NO: 311-2022**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To consider the upgrade of Wi-Fi facilities in Primary School and Early years establishments and purchase of new Cisco Wi-Fi hardware and licenses for schools. Summer 2024 is targeted for completion of this wide-ranging project.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee -

- Agree to the upgrade of Wi-Fi facilities in Primary School and Early years establishments within Dundee City Council. This will see 700 wireless access points installed into 46 establishments to provide comprehensive wireless internet coverage to mobile devices within these establishments.
- Remit the Head of Customer Services & IT to purchase Wi-Fi hardware, licenses and installation services through compliant procurement routes.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Precise costs will be returned from marketplace exercises.

3.2 Wireless Access point device costs including purchase, support and licensing are expected to be up to £500 each with installation of each device estimated at an average of up to a further £500 per device.

3.3 The total cost of up to £700,000 will be met from the IT Education capital budget across the financial years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25.

3.4 Staffing costs to support the deployment of the products to be met from existing Customer Services and IT staffing budgets.

### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 This report supports the Council's IT Strategy which was approved at Policy and Resources Committee on 18 February 2019 (Report 81-2019). The Council's IT strategy sets out to deliver mobile and flexibly accessible services through low cost corporately deployed solutions.

4.2 Children and Family Services are drafting a new strategy for IT in schools. This strategy will underpin the infrastructure and technology for their digital learning strategy. One of the key aims of the new strategy is to deliver one to one personal devices to all pupils and staff. To achieve this aim, it is essential that schools have widespread and reliable Wi-Fi.

4.3 In recent years there has been a significant increase in the use of mobile devices in schools, such as laptops and tablets. Wi-Fi has become a necessity to facilitate the use of mobile devices and enable digital learning.

- 4.4 Work has begun to upgrade and extend the Wi-Fi service to provide increased capacity and coverage in all schools. This work has now been completed in secondary schools. A pilot project for one to one pupil and staff devices has been setup at Morgan Academy. This project would not be possible without the upgraded Wi-Fi service that has been put in place.
- 4.5 In primary schools and early years establishments the current Wi-Fi service does not provide full coverage. Most of the hardware that provides the Wi-Fi service is also approaching end of life and needs to be replaced.
- 4.6 New hardware is required to provide the expanded and upgraded Wi-Fi. An estimated 700 Wi-Fi Access Points are required for this project. In addition, a specialist contractor is required to install the devices on ceilings and walls in every building. This includes installing IT data cables to connect the devices to the Council network. The purchase of these devices, licenses and installation costs will be spread over the financial years 22/23, 23/24 and 24/25. A range of dependencies will impact on the implementation of the project including availability from the marketplace of equipment and of contractor services to assist in the projects implementation. Completion of the project is targeted for summer 2024 with schools being upgraded throughout the lifetime of the project in line with a project plan agreed with the Children and Families service.
- 4.7 The wifi service will be available to staff and pupils using Council managed devices and a guest wifi service will also be included.
- 4.8 A procurement exercise will be carried out to acquire the Wi-Fi access points and licenses. A separate procurement exercise will be carried out to appoint a specialist contractor for the installation of the Wi-Fi Access points. The estimated cost for installing one Wi-Fi Access point is £500. This varies dependant on length of cabling, complexity and height of the installation location.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

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 CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**ROBERT EMMOTT**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

**Date: 2 NOVEMBER 2022**