



ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

WBC Executive Member for Digital &
Environmental Services &
ADC Executive Member for Resources
12 July 2021

Decision to be taken on or after
20 July 2021

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s) Affected: N/A

Award of Contract - Network Refresh Project

Report by the Director for Digital Sustainability & Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

The Councils data network underpins all of the technology utilised by the Councils and forms the basis of all connectivity across the data centre, the Cloud, building management, CCTV systems and wireless systems.

1.2 The data network has grown organically over time and goes through a constant cycle of 'spot' upgrades to individual devices and continual growth due to specific demands from staff and customers.

1.3 Wi-Fi was rolled out across Council premises over an extended period at a time when mobile devices (tablets, smartphones, and laptops) were not as common as they are now. The fabric of the buildings has impacted on the installation of Wi-Fi leaving many non-serviced areas across site and areas that have never been purposely covered.

1.4 Wi-Fi availability is a common issue with customers and staff not having adequate access to the network in all locations.

1.5 Over the past 3 months a review of the data network has been carried out, this work has identified a number of challenges that need remediation to support the Councils' ambitions.

Examples include:

- Wireless coverage is generally poor and needs improvement.
- Significant portions of the network are 'End of Life' and are no longer supported by the manufacturer.

- Insufficient resilience and robustness with single points of failure prominent in many areas.
- Network components do not fully support modern features.
- Legacy configurations in place present security vulnerabilities.
- Network cabinets (where IT connections for buildings are enabled) are insufficient in terms of power, cooling and / or space, prevents full service of the areas they serve and presents risk to the equipment.
- Connectivity between some buildings is inadequate meaning reduced capacity to those buildings and reduced availability.

1.6 The review comes at a time when the Councils are embarking on a WorkspacesAW project on the back of lessons learnt and opportunities identified because of the Covid-19 lockdown. The project will embrace a much higher degree of remote and flexible working. To support this the Councils need a modern, secure, high speed wireless network to help achieve its digital strategic objectives and WorkspacesAW initiative.

1.7 A project is underway to replace, upgrade and improve the data network over a 2-year period commencing in 2021.

1.8 The project is expected to address the following:

- Wi-Fi
 - Replace and extend the wireless network infrastructure
 - Ease of access
- Network resilience and robustness
 - Secured access to data
 - High availability
 - Reliable
 - Reduce dependency on Town Hall data centre.
- Remote working capability
 - Promotes flexible working
 - Ease of access - home, work, and other council owned premises.
 - Improved utilisation of council premises
- Across the following sites:

- Worthing Town Hall
- Portland House
- Museum
- Assembly Rooms
- Connaught Theatre
- Pavilion Theatre
- Police Station
- Commerce Way
- Shoreham Centre
- Crematorium

- Highdown Gardens
- High St. Car Park
- Adur Sheltered Housing
- Colonnade House
- Beach Office

Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Members are recommended to approve the award of the contract to Southern Communications for a total contract value of £823K on the terms set out in this report.

3. Context

- 3.1 All of the existing network equipment will need to be refreshed over the next two years, however around 75% of it needs replacement as a matter of priority due to age and capacity.

While the Councils could replace equipment piecemeal and over time, this is both more expensive (purchasing at or near list price) and provides no opportunity to re-imagine how the network can support the IT strategy.

This project provides an opportunity to support the WorkspacesAW, providing customers and staff with access to an excellent Wi-Fi and network service and considering higher demand for remote working post Covid lockdown.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The framework selected to procure service is the **Crown Commercial Services (CCS) framework RM3808 Network Services 2, via Lot 1: Data access services**, as this lot covers the end-to-end requirements identified within the scope of the business case. (See section background papers for a link to this artifact)
This route has allowed Adur and Worthing Councils to procure the full Network services it has identified within its Scope of Business Case, as well as access to the widest selection of Network suppliers and innovators compared with the frameworks identified as part of an independent review.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The capital budget for the network refresh within AW workspaces is £600,000. In addition, the digital service has a budget of £30,000 for the annual maintenance of the network.

5.2 The value of the contract is £823,000 which comprises of an initial payment of £764,600 and further two years annual maintenance charges from 2026/27 which is split as follows:

- Capital spend £615,020
- Revenue maintenance £149,580 (years 1-5)
- Additional annual maintenance charge of £26,270 for 2026/27 and 2027/28.

5.3 There are also associated specialist staff costs £125,000 required to support the implementation of the new network. Consequently, the full capital spend will be £740,020.

5.4 The capital project will be funded as follows:

- Existing AW workspaces budget £600,000
- Contribution from the Digital Services revenue budget £75,000 (£50,000 in 2021/22 and £25,000 in 2022/23)
- Contribution from general underspend within the capital budget £65,020.

The funding package for the whole capital project will need approval from the Joint Strategic Committee in September 2021, however sufficient budgets are already in place to enable the letting of the main contract.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

6.2 s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation

6.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

6.4 s1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the local authority to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority

Background Papers

- [NRP Options Appraisal Summary](#)
- [NRP Scope and Business Case v1.0](#)

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

- Having a robust and secure IT network is essential to the running of Council services as it underpins the Councils IT infrastructure.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

- Having a robust and secure IT network infrastructure is critical in providing IT services to staff and citizens.

2.2 Equality Issues

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

- Greater use of IT platforms reduces reliance on paper-based processes.

4. Governance

- The project will improve resilience and reduce cyber security risks.
- The project will provide new access channels for transactional processes and improve accessibility for service users.
- A new IT network will be more resilient and improve remote access, supporting the move to more home-based working and flexible office working.