

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 August 2014

MEMBER'S ITEM – WI-FI ACCESS ACROSS MEDWAY

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

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Summary

This report sets out a response to questions raised by Councillor Osborne, regarding the public facing component of the free wi-fi access across Medway and the nature of the data protection guarantees.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 Under Medway Constitution Overview and Scrutiny rules (Chapter 4, Part 5, Paragraph 9.1) Councillor Osborne has requested that an item on this matter is included on the agenda for this meeting.

2. Issues

2.1 Councillor Osborne has requested that an item be placed on the agenda and the reasons are set out as follows:

'Given the announced move on the 18 March 2014 towards free wi-fi access across Medway there needs to be scrutiny by Councillors on the public facing component of this service and the nature of data protection guarantees

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/information/newspages/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=5715>

I require the following from officers:

- i) **Further details on the negotiated position on wi-fi access for the Medway scheme and provisional timeframes for delivery on this project including any/all revenue implications. This could be provided in restricted session if commercially sensitive.**

Typical coverage for the service will focus on high footfall locations, such as retail zones and key transport locations. Medway are working with the provider to accelerate deployment in key areas.

The service will be provided by utilising networking equipment, which will be attached to specific assets, primarily street furniture, capable of enabling a core wireless network within its borders. Typical dimensions of the equipment will be 23.9cm (L) x 19.5cm (W) x 14.1cm (H).

Below shows examples of the equipment:



The service will enable the digital and social inclusion of those who would typically not be able to access the Internet. The proposed model will allow equal accessibility irrespective of mobile network or service provider the individual is using.

There will be no advertising on the street as there will be indication on the users' mobile phones that they are in a wifi-enabled area. The service provider will ensure the Medway site is at the top of the list of services that users can connect to and will also ensure they know the service is free.

The service includes providing a 30-minute free usage to every resident and visitor per handset every 24 hours. Should the user require further access then the service would be available at a fee.

The users will need to register on the site only once to access the service, without entering credit card details, and will get access to the Internet for 30 minutes every day, per device, free of charge. Once the user has gone through the registration process they will be able to seamlessly connect every time they want to use the Internet.

Medway Council can propose 3 websites which will be available to users free of charge 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for example www.medway.gov.uk

All sites except the 3 free sites will be secured so the user cannot access without registering or purchasing time. These will be available to anyone with a Wi-Fi enabled device. This will maximise usage and access to these sites and enable complete social and digital inclusion.

The preferred provider already has commercial relationships with all of the mobile network operators, so end-users will expect to connect seamlessly to Wi Fi in areas where their provider has a wholesale relationship.

The programme for setting up the service, including the installation of the equipment and design and approval of the Medway pages should be complete by the end of March 2015.

Please refer to the exempt appendix for the revenue implications

ii) State of consideration on which websites will be considered accessible both pre and post the 30 minute window; including comment about whether the Council will seek to garner external advertising revenue

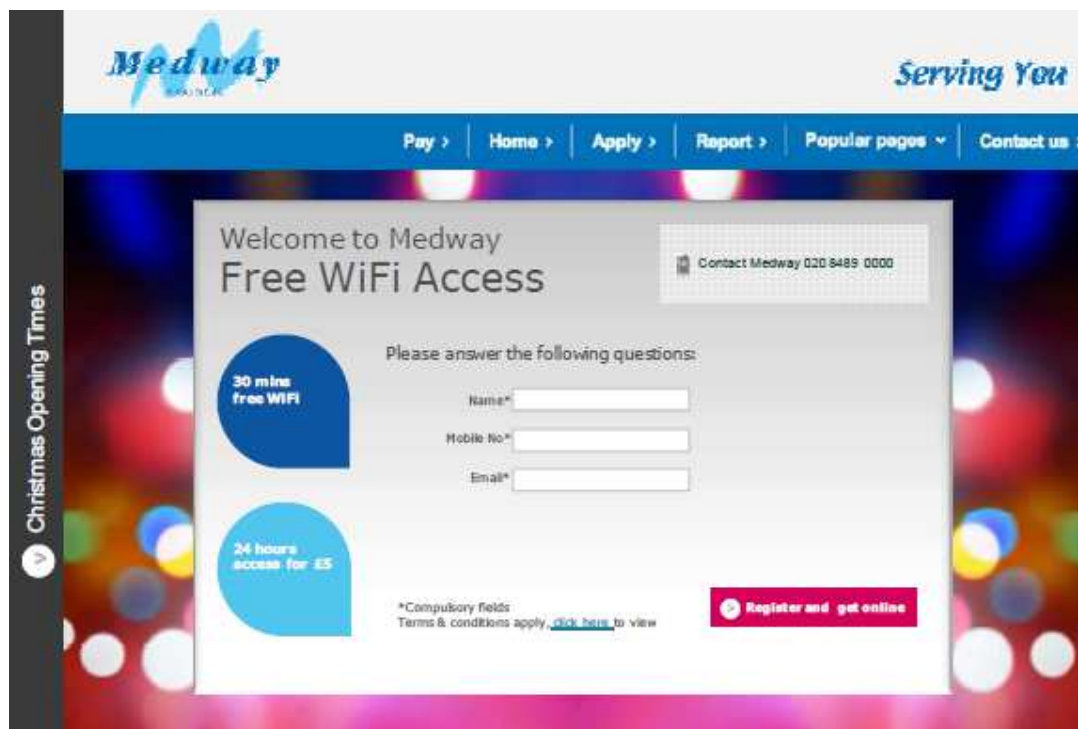
The contract allows for Medway to propose 3 trustworthy whitelisted websites which will be available free of charge 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The final decision on the whitelisted sites is yet to be made, although it is recommended that www.medway.gov.uk – the Council's website is proposed as one of the 3.

iii) Consideration given by the Council on the homepage for the wi-fi access to Medway services given recent up-grading of the Medway Matters onto an online format.

Medway's communications team will consult with Medway Council's Legal Services in relation to the format and design of the homepage, and any other branding before going live.

It will be a Medway branded service with Medway focussed functionality. Medway will be able to include a disclaimer on the front page to advise the user that they are registering with the service provider and not with Medway Council

Below shows an example of what the Medway landing page could be:



iv) Consideration around data-protection and security feature guarantees on free access for Medway residents to Council services'

Any sites that Medway wish to block access to will be configured to Medway's requirements.

The contractor is required to comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. The data protection considerations apply to the Medway Council website, regardless of access point, e.g. home, internet café, street, etc. However, in regard to personal data which may be gathered by the contractor with regard to registration and charging, in those circumstances, the contractor is the data controller and so the obligation is with the contractor, not Medway Council, with regard to adhering to the principles of the Data Protection Act for this set of data.

The WiFi network deployed by the provider will support all common standards and security options

3 Director's comments

3.1 This programme is in addition to the upgrades to the broadband infrastructure planned in Medway through the government's Broadband Development UK (BDUK) investment. The BDUK programme will deliver improvements in broadband services in parts of Medway currently experiencing poor

connectivity speeds, and that lie outside those areas where commercial providers are planning service upgrades. The rollout of the BDUK programme in Medway is anticipated to take place by the end of 2015.

4. Risk management

- 4.1 Please refer to the exempt appendix for details of risks associated with this project.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Before commencement of the procurement process in order to direct the specification, the Category Management Team worked with ICT, Asset & Property Services and Highways Maintenance. Consultation also took place with Medway Planning.
- 5.2 During the procurement process in order to aid the evaluation process, Category Management worked with the previously mentioned service departments during the period of competitive dialogue whilst evaluating the submissions.
- 5.3 Post procurement/tender award Category Management, ICT and the Communications and Marketing Teams are working with the preferred contractor, previously mentioned services and the Communications and Marketing Team in order to aid the contract management process and the development of the service.
- 5.4 The contractor's Community Relations and town planning teams will manage and participate in any prior consultation required with Medway's planning department and other stakeholders.

6 Financial and legal implications

6.1 Financial Implications

This contract award has the following financial implications:

- There is no financial risk to the Council as this procurement is revenue generating throughout the contract period
- Any costs for planning or business rates and taxes will be picked up by the preferred bidder, should these arise
- The contract award is based on a tender exercise to obtain the best value quotation

6.2 Legal Implications

The procurement process was undertaken in line with EU Regulations and Contract Rules. Following on the contract was completed by Medway Council's Legal Services.

There are no direct legal implications arising. Members will note the reference to data protection in the body of the report.

7. Recommendations

7.1 The Committee note the responses to questions.

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Background papers

None