

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

2 July 2008

CORPORATE WIDE AREA DATA / VOICE NETWORK - MILL STREET FIBRE

Report by Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise Members of risk management issues in respect of elements of the Council's Wide Area Data / Voice Network (WAN), and to seek approval to mitigate these risks by adopting a "spend to save" solution by re-routing elements of the existing cable network.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Council has, since April 2002, owned a 7km long high bandwidth private fibre communications network which is used to transmit data and voice traffic between the main Council premises within central Kilmarnock.
- 2.2** The fibre cable which connects these locations is laid below street level within concrete ducting, part of which runs down the full length of Mill Street, between West Netherton Street and West Shaw Street, Kilmarnock. A map illustrating the location is attached as Appendix A of this Report.
- 2.3** This element of the fibre network currently services the Council's Greenholm Street, Burnside Street and Holmquarry House offices with data and voice connectivity to the Civic Centre (South) building, and as such facilitates staff access within these premises to key corporate and departmental IT systems such as Payroll, Council Tax, Roads Management and Building & Works etc.
- 2.4** However as Mill Street lies within the boundary of a planned development by TESCO, the Head of IT has, given the importance this fibre cable link has to the delivery of data and voice services to the aforementioned Council locations, recognised a serious risk to continuity of service delivery during construction of the planned TESCO development, should activity on site damage the concrete ducting and the fibre cable.
- 2.5** As construction is scheduled to commence on the TESCO site during June 2008, the Head of IT recommends that additional action is taken by the Council as soon as possible to mitigate the risk associated with damage to the concrete ducting and the fibre cable along the Mill Street route.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 3.1** This data / voice communications link is essential in maintaining the Council's Financial Systems including Payroll, Creditor Payments and Financial Management.
- 3.2** The Head of IT has already taken the following steps to mitigate the risk to the Council associated with loss of data and voice connectivity arising from potential construction damage to the fibre cable below Mill Street :
 - 3.2.1** A private data / voice circuit, providing the same bandwidth as the current Mill Street fibre cable has been ordered from BT who advise that delivery and installation is scheduled for August 2008. When installed, this new circuit will provide essential contingency in the event of the loss of the fibre connection, and supplement the existing limited bandwidth back-up radio connection to the Greenholm Street office.
 - 3.2.2** Agreement has been reached with the developers of the planned TESCO facility to encase the existing ducting in a concrete jacket in order to protect the Mill Street fibre cable from damage during the construction phase of the planned development.
- 3.3** The Head of IT does not regard the TESCO offer of encasing the existing ducting in a concrete jacket to be an appropriate permanent solution which would provide an acceptable level of risk management into the future.
 - 3.3.1** Furthermore, it is anticipated that should the Council require future access to the Mill Street ducting for the purpose of maintaining / replacing the existing fibre cable, then authorisation would be required from TESCO, in addition to a road closure permit for West Shaw Street, both of which would result in a lengthy period of loss of staff access to key Council IT systems.

4. PROPOSED SOLUTION

- 4.1** In recognising that the TESCO offer of encasing the existing Mill Street fibre cable does not reduce the risk to the Council to an acceptable level, the Head of IT proposes to install a new fibre cable from the junction of West Netherton Street and Armour Street, to the junction of Glencairn Street and West Shaw Street, taking account of all proposed works in the vicinity of the planned TESCO development.
- 4.2** Following on from initial discussions with the Council's preferred contractor, it is estimated that the proposed installation of the new fibre cable will take approximately one month to complete, with works commencing as soon as possible in order to minimise risk to the Council.
- 4.3** Once the new fibre cable is installed, the Head of IT proposes to terminate the BT contract for a private data / voice circuit outlined within Section 3.2.1 of this Report, as it is deemed that the existing limited bandwidth back-up radio connection to the Greenholm Street office will provide an acceptable level of emergency contingency in the event of loss or damage to the re-routed fibre cable.

4.4 The total cost associated with re-routing the existing Mill Street fibre cable, including the laying of new ducting under the pavement surface of Glencairn Street, is estimated to be **£ 150,000**, with zero recurring cost.

4.5 Given the cost associated with the provision of the only alternative to a new fibre cable, which is a private BT circuit at approximately **£ 25,000pa**, this proposal represents a significant opportunity to the Council to “spend to save”, as a break-even point will be achieved after a period of 6 years.

5. POLICY / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no Policy / Legal implications associated with this project.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The outcomes associated with this project will enable the Council to deliver services in a more efficient and effective manner, thus contributing to Community Planning Action Plans and the Council’s Single Outcome Agreement.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The proposals contained within this Report are intended to minimise the risk to the Council associated with loss of staff access to key corporate and departmental IS systems.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The cost, subject to detailed survey, of providing the BT contingency circuit, as outlined within Section 3.2.1 of this Report, is estimated to be **£ 25,000** Capital in addition to **£ 25,000pa** Revenue, to be met from existing provision contained within the IT Services 2008/09 Capital Programme, and 2008/09 IT Services Revenue Budget.

8.2 The cost, subject to detailed survey, of re-routing the existing Mill Street fibre cable is estimated to be **£ 150,000**, with zero recurring Revenue based cost. It is proposed that this cost is met from existing provision contained within the Corporate Office Accommodation Budget.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 It is recommended that Members ;

- a) Endorse the proposal, as outlined within Section 4 of this Report, to install a new fibre cable bypassing the planned TESCO development site.
- b) Otherwise note the contents of this Report.

Elizabeth Morton

Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

For further information on this Report, please contact Malcolm Roulston,
Head of Information Technology (Tel : 01563 576809).

AMR / 25th June 2008

APPENDIX A

