

## PE1524/D

Highland Council Letter of 1 October 2014

### Response to Public Petitions Committee

#### Q1 - How many buildings would we need to enable with public Wi-Fi inc. all schools

The Highland Council has 305 buildings which would be classed as public buildings, including all schools. The list below includes properties which are leased to Highlife Highland, which is an arms-length organisation established to deliver sports, culture and leisure services on behalf of The Highland Council.

<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Number</b>
Information Centres	1
Libraries	20
Museums and Galleries	6
Offices, Administrative Buildings (Accommodation Account only)	19
Schools	210
Service Points	21
Sports Centres and Pools	49
<b>Totals</b>	<b>305</b>

#### Q2 - What would be an indicative cost for installing a separate public access Wi-Fi in these buildings?

The indicative cost for installing separate public access Wi-Fi in the buildings listed above, based on an average of 10 access points per building would be:

- Initial cost (including setup and install): £495,015
- Annual Support Charge (including Line Rental): £110,105 per annum

It should be noted that a wireless site survey would be required to obtain the accurate number of access points required to provide full coverage to each building and this may also have an associated cost.

This price above also excludes any additional costs for works such as:

- Building enablement work
- Additional equipment such as repeater units
- Structural surveys (such as asbestos survey)

#### Q3 - Cost Implications – is this a one off capital cost or would there be on-going revenue/maintenance costs as well

The costs above include both capital (one-off) and annual revenue charges.

**Q 4- What is the current status in our estate i.e. how many of our buildings offer public access Wi-Fi & what plans are already in place to increase the number of sites offering this service**

There are currently three managed sites with public access Wi-Fi: the Council Chambers in Wick, Dingwall and Inverness HQ.

We are currently initiating a project to roll out “Guest access” Wi-Fi to certain Highlife Highland sites (libraries and Inverness museum). The intention is to extend this guest access to other Highlife Highland sites (leisure facilities and community facilities). Forecasted timescale for rollout to the initial 42 sites across Highland is the end of December 2014.

**Q5 - Will the new SWAN network offer any opportunities in the future to provide such a service across the public sector?**

The service will be available, but there would still be additional costs to be met by the Council to provide public Wi-Fi. There is the potential, from a technical perspective to provide this service via the SWAN Network although security and capacity requirements would need to be further assessed. Current legal advice suggests that State Aid could also apply and this would need to be understood fully before any development was authorised.

**Q6 - Any other implications that I need to cover in my response?**

There are a number of issues regarding security which would need to be considered and managed in providing a new service. For example, having open access Wi-Fi with no login requirements makes it impossible for the service to be totally secure. Not requiring login to use the service could put the council at risk due to the Council being unable to ascertain who was using the service in the event of any access to illegal content.

Carrying out monitoring of content would be a requirement of any service to fulfil the council’s obligations to protect the public from accessing inappropriate content through our systems. It would be reasonable to have a more relaxed filtering policy for public access, but there will always be a need to do some filtering to protect users and the council.