

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Housing & Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Replacement of Handheld Devices (Trades Operatives)
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/018

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval for the procurement of 200 handheld devices (smartphones) under an appropriate framework agreement, which devices are to be used by the trades operatives within Building Services. These devices are to replace existing ones which are more than 4 years old and which are now progressively less economic and efficient.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Committee approve the procurement of 200 handheld devices (smartphones) under an appropriate framework agreement or other appropriate tendering process, which devices are to be used by trades operatives within the Council's Building Services in replacement of existing devices and will entail a total estimated expenditure of up to **£148,000**.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Building Services intend to recover the cost of the replacement devices through the charging of the Housing Repairs Response contract and any shortfall will be met through the Service's contribution to the Housing & Environment General Fund Budget by way of its Trading Accounts surpluses.

The Trading Accounts generate surpluses annually, however since the introduction of the use of IT devices to improve productivity nearly 5 years ago, there has never been an expenditure line for depreciation of IT equipment. This has resulted in the requirement for this one off expenditure to update equipment and in the future additional improvement in IT will be accounted for through the budgeting process.

#### **4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There will be resource implications for the Corporate Information Technology Services (ICT) the Central Procurement Unit (CPU) and Legal Services of the Council in order to procure and configure the devices.

ICT will be requested to provide the staffing resources that will be required to ensure that the devices are appropriately configured to Council's systems and provide the necessary backup needed to support their ongoing workings.

The input of the CPU and Legal Services will be required in order to ensure the procurement of the devices complies with legislation and the Council's standing orders.

#### **5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

The current handheld devices were purchased over four years ago to automate the manual timesheets completed by the trades operatives within response repairs and to allow the scheduling of jobs. The devices also enable details of works to be sent to the trades operatives without the need for them to attend Kittybrewster depot. The data captured by the devices also assists in satisfying the data capture required by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Therefore the devices reduced downtime and allowed additional work to be undertaken.

However they are now starting to fail and are requiring increasing on going care and maintenance. In addition the operating system that the devices run on is no longer supported and in order to continue to operate the total mobile system through the mobile devices they will need to be replaced with devices which are supported by an operating system.

Therefore the recommendation is that we renew the devices at a cost of no more than £148,000.

Building Services will work in conjunction with CPU, ICT and Legal Services in order to procure the devices in the most appropriate manner.

#### **6. IMPACT**

The community plan sets out our vision for the future of the City – an even better place to live and work, where people can expect high quality services to meet their needs.

The purchase of the handhelds for Building Services meets the following objective:

- Homes challenge – improve the quality of housing and environment for individuals and the community.

It also meets the objective in the policy document “Aberdeen the Smarter City”:

Smarter living - we will provide quality services to our council tenants to enable them to have a dry, warm home in a safe and enjoyable environment.

## **7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

If the devices were not replaced responsive repairs would be unable to schedule jobs, be required to complete manual timesheets and have to return to Kittybrewster depot on a regular basis for information on future work. The response contract currently under takes on average 15,000 jobs a month therefore additional resources would be required for time sheet input & allocating work resulting in reduced efficiency. Previously this role was carried out by 15 people.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

## **9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

**Kiemon Stewart – Operations Manager**