

# Delegated Decision Report

Decision below £250k

<b>Subject:</b>	Network Connectivity and TV for Oldham Family Hubs Sites
<b>Decision maker: Senior Officer</b>	Julie Daniels, Executive Director Children & Young People Rebecca Fletcher, Director of Public Health
<b>Councillor sign off</b>	Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member Adults, Health & Wellbeing
<b>Decision date:</b>	1 August 2025
<b>Report author:</b>	Bruce Penhale
<b>Ward (s):</b>	All

## Reason for decision

This report seeks approval to provide Oldham Council network connectivity and TV media solution for the 6 FH sites in order to:

- Provide secure Wi-Fi for council staff to enable them to access council systems across the Family Hubs sites.
- Provide public Wi-Fi for visitors across the Family Hub sites to enable them to use their devices to register for Family Hubs whilst on site, and to access the information recommended to them by Family Hubs staff, on site.
- Ensure that the solution accommodates flexible and reliable internet access to support media broadcasting and general site usage.
- Enable TVs and monitors at the sites to display media content (e.g., videos, timetables) with flexible remote updating capabilities.

Therefore, this report seeks approval to fund ICT works to 6 Family Hubs sites to establish the secure Wi-Fi connections and systems broadcasting the information into the hubs. The estimated cost for this service is £175,152 (£29,192 per hub) but could be less dependent on the actual costs incurred by the Council's ICT team.

## Recommendation(s)

That authority is given for the Council's IT Team to implement the project to provide Oldham Council network connectivity TV media solutions in the 6 Family Hub sites at a maximum cost of £175,152.

## Background

The six Family Hub sites currently deliver a wide range of family services through a range of organisations. Despite being run by Local Authority employees, there is no Local Authority internet access available, since staff use the Northern Care Alliance wi-fi system.

Council staff within the Integrated Children and Family Service manage the Family Hubs and work from the sites, using the hot desking facilities. It was agreed a number of years ago that as the service is a joint service between the local authority and Northern Care Alliance under a Section 75 agreement, that NCA networks and equipment would be used by the service and installed within the hubs.

But this solution no longer meets service needs as Council staff operating from the Family Hubs who do not have NCA system access (e.g. the Parenting Team, Early Years or Early Help) cannot work successfully from the Family Hubs. Council wi-fi is also needed to support the Synergy case management system which is being implemented in the Family Hubs to record interventions delivered to children and families.

The potential for Family Hub TVs to share information on activities within the hub, key public health messages, and signposting information to families using the sites are also not able to be used with the NCA wi-fi as this does not have capacity for mirror cast technology.

The Family Hubs Board has therefore agreed that in order to meet the existing needs for the Family Hubs and to improve the service offer, Oldham Council networks and Wi-Fi needs to be installed.

**Alternative option(s) to be considered** *(please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s))*

Option 1: improve the connectivity by installation of Oldham Council network and Wi-Fi to enable the staff to have effective access to Council IT systems and to implement the Synergy case management system.

It will also enable the staff to broadcast and promote the offers and service delivered in hubs to the families and children on the TV installed in the hubs to keep the community informed.

Option 2: To continue with the existing NCA (Northern Care Alliance) networks without the additional LA networks. This will prevent the implementation of the identified improvements to the operation of the Family Hubs, and prevent Council staff without NCA system access from working within the Family Hubs.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

**Consultation** *(include any conflict of interest declared by relevant Cabinet Member consulted)*

The proposal has been discussed at the Family Hubs Board, and agreed at both the Children’s Services and Public Health Management Teams.

**Risks:**

Unless the proposal is implemented Council staff without NCA system access will not be able to operate effectively out of the Family Hubs, it will not be possible to implement the Synergy Case Management system.

Children and families would not benefit from the information about Family Hubs activities, offer and services and public health messages which can be delivered through the TV screens in the Hubs.

**Implications**

<p>Financial</p>	<p>Permission is sought for the Council’s IT Team to provide Oldham Council network connectivity TV media solutions in the 6 Family Hub sites at a maximum cost of £175,152.</p> <p>Early indications are that there will be a service underspend in 2025/26, with the NCA confirming a circa £250k actual underspend in the year to date, whilst not guaranteed, this will be the first call to fund the works</p> <p>In the event that the is not sufficient to fund the proposed expenditure; the one-off, non-recurring cost will be funded by a drawdown from the Public Health 0-19 Rightstart reserve which is one of two reserves with a combined value of £1,625k, specifically designated to fund the redesign, rationalisation and development of the service, including the impact of TUPE transfer of staff from the NCA to the Council (now complete). The costs form part of the planned spend for the reserves.</p> <p>Andy Cooper, Senior Finance Manager</p>
<p>Legal</p>	<p>The proposal will enable Council staff to efficiently work from any one of the 6 Family Hubs in order to deliver their statutory duties and responsibilities under the relevant legislation including the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014, through immediate access to systems and engage with the families and counterparts with whom they work.</p> <p>The nature of the work undertaken by the Council’s staff at the 6 Family Hubs can involve the handling and processing of confidential and sensitive data. The use of a Council Wifi to support the service delivery will see the implementation of appropriate technical and logistical measures and safeguards to ensure adherence and compliance with data protection</p>

	<p>legislation and regulations in order to protect information sent and received via the network installed.</p> <p>In the absence of a Council Wifi, Council staff will be unable to efficiently discharge their duties and responsibilities leaving the Council open to risk of financial and reputational harm.</p> <p>Rifat Iqbal, Group Solicitor (locum)- Civil Litigation</p>
Equality impact including implications for Children and Young People	The proposal will increase the ability to deliver services to children and families through the family hubs. There are no adverse implications for individuals with any protected characteristics.
Other	N/A

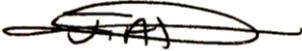
Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution?	Yes
Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget?	Yes
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	No

Background Papers under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

None

Report author sign-off	Bruce Penhale
Role	Assistant Director Early Help
Date of sign-off	29/7/2025

<b>Approval</b>	
Cabinet member sign-off	Cllr Barbara Brownridge 
Role	Cabinet member Adults, Health & Wellbeing
Date of sign-off	6/8/2025

<b>Approval</b>	
Officer approval sign-off	Julie Daniels 
Role	Executive Director Children & Young People
Date of sign-off	29/7/2025

<b>Approval</b>	
Officer approval sign-off	Rebecca Fletcher 
Role	Director of Public Health
Date of sign-off	31/7/2025