

REPORT TO:	Housing and Community Services Committee	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	25 November 2010	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Mark Alflat – Director of Community Services	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Lee Carter, (01283) 595957, lee.carter@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Installation of Digital TV Infrastructure Equipment in Properties Currently Serviced from a Communal TV Aerial.	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Church Gresley, Etwall, Hilton, Linton, Newhall, Swadlincote, Woodville	TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS01

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve the appointment of Commercial Television Systems (UK) Limited, to undertake the installation of digital television infrastructure equipment and cabling to specific properties, which are serviced by a communal TV aerial in preparation for the digital switch over during September 2011.
- 1.2 Utilise the budget allocated for the cost of upgrading to digital TV, as agreed at the Housing and Community Services Committee 4 February 2010, and place a charge on our tenants for the cost of the Sky Digital Plus upgrade element of the service, (if they request the service). The Sky Digital Plus charge can either be a one off charge or spread over a specified time period.
- 1.3 Recharge the whole cost of one connection per leasehold property, either the basic digital upgrade element or together with the additional Sky Digital Plus upgrade (if requested by resident) in accordance with their leasehold agreement.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To advise members of the requirement that Housing Services have to upgrade specific properties that are currently serviced from a communal TV aerial, to receive digital TV signals. To provide details of the works required, in preparation for the September 2011 switch over.
- 2.2 Members should also be aware that dependant on the digital service required both tenants and leaseholders are proposed to be charged reasonable costs, for an enhanced Sky Digital Plus upgrade service. However, leaseholders will be charged the whole cost of the basic digital upgrade, unlike Housing Services tenants, which are proposed to be funded by the Council.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Digital TV switchover is a Government policy. When complete it will mean that almost everyone will be able to receive digital TV through an aerial (Freeview).
- 3.2 The reasoning behind the switchover means the national TV network uses less broadcast space and when complete will ensure more room for new services such as wireless broadband, local TV networks and high definition TV.
- 3.3 There are a number of options available for the upgrade, and so a procurement exercise has been undertaken, in accordance with Committee resolution 4 February 2010.
- 3.4 The chosen installer was marginally more than the lowest tendered however; the references for Commercial Television Systems (UK), Limited (CTS) were exceptional, when compared to the lowest. CTS also have experience of working within this region.
- 3.4 To ensure our tenants who receive their TV signal through our communal systems, have the widest digital choice available to them, we are proposing to adopt a Integrated Reception System (IRS). This system allows our tenants and leaseholders access to a full digital reception service including Freeview, satellite channels (Sky Digital Plus – see financial implications for service charges) and to receive FM and Digital Audio Band radio (DAB).
- 3.5 The options have been discussed with the tenants' representative group, the Repairs and Improvement Working group (now the Home Standards Group), who endorsed the Council's officers recommendation to go with the IRS system, as they thought it allowed a greater choice for tenants and leaseholders rather than just accessing Freeview alone.
- 3.6 The works will be supervised by our own Project Officers in conjunction with the installer, similar to the way all other contracts are supervised. The works are proposed to commence January and be complete by the end of February, well in time for the digital switch on, during September 2011. Tenants and leaseholders will be kept informed throughout the works. TV reception may be intermittent during the works, but this interruption will be kept to a minimum.
- 3.7 It should be noted that this upgrade for digital TV only applies to those properties which are currently serviced via a communal aerial, which is generally only flats and some bungalows, detailed property list is attached (Annexe A). Tenants and leaseholders that are on independent aerials will have responsibility for their own upgrades.
- 3.8 An article is being published in the tenants' newsletter which is due to be published mid December giving an update on this project together with general advice for the digital upgrade, for those tenants and leaseholders that remain responsible for their own TV upgrade. This complements the national and regional updates that are frequently aired on both analogue television and radio.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 A budget of £95,000 was allocated at the Housing and Community Services Committee 4 February 2010. Following the successful procurement exercise using Fusion 21 (a highly recommended procurement specialist) Commercial Television Systems (UK) Limited is recommended to undertake the digital TV upgrade.

- 4.2 The cost of the tender is £46,650 excluding scaffolding which we anticipate to be in the region of £5,000 to £8,000, which is well within budget. The balance of the budget will be utilised to ensure compliance with other works relevant to achieving the decent homes standard.
- 4.3 The cost of the installation will be met by the allocated budget; however, recharges will be issued as detailed in section 4.4 and 4.5. As with all other upgrades such as kitchen, heating and bathrooms, we currently do not charge for upgrades in service. However, the IRS system allows access to an upgraded Sky digital Plus television service, which, based on the cost submitted by the preferred installer is £40.00 per connection. Individuals will then need to arrange direct with Sky, their own monthly package details and costs i.e. the Council only supplies the connection facility at £40, not the Sky monthly packages - these are to be arranged separately.
- 4.4 It is proposed to offer the upgraded access to Sky Digital Plus TV to all tenants; with a charge of £40 should they want this enhanced service. Any receipts from this would be credited back to the HRA reserves. The charge can either be made as (i) one lump sum or (ii) spread over a specific period of time.
- 4.5 Leaseholders would be charged for the full connection - the basic digital upgrade of £110.00 per connection, with the option of a further charge of £40.00 should they choose to have upgraded access to Sky Digital Plus TV. Any receipts from this would be credited back to the HRA reserves.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 As part of the wider Council objectives lifestyles choices and value for money are two of the key themes, affected by these works. Clearly the digital TV upgrade enables our tenants of all ages to have access to the latest digital media, giving a greater lifestyle choice.
- 5.2 As with all procurement within Housing Services value for money is key, and using Fusion 21 has enabled the Council to utilise a well regarded and nationally recognised and robust procurement partner.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 Upgrading to digital TV ensure that our tenants and leaseholders have access to the latest digital media.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 That the digital TV upgrade project be awarded to Commercial Television Systems (UK) Limited, and that the relevant service charges are applied to both tenants and leaseholders, as detailed in section 4.

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 Housing and Community Service Committee; 4 February 2010: Proposed Five Year Maintenance and Improvement Programmes for Council Housing 2010 – 2015