Report to: **Salcombe Harbour Board**

Date: **28 September 2015**

Title: **Wi-Fi options**

Portfolio Area: *Salcombe Harbour*

Wards Affected: **All**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Urgent Decision: **N**   Approval and   **N**
                                  clearance obtained:

Date next steps can be taken: **N/A**
(e.g. referral on of recommendation or
implementation of substantive decision)

Author: **A Parnell**   Role: **Harbour Master**

Contact: **01548 843791**
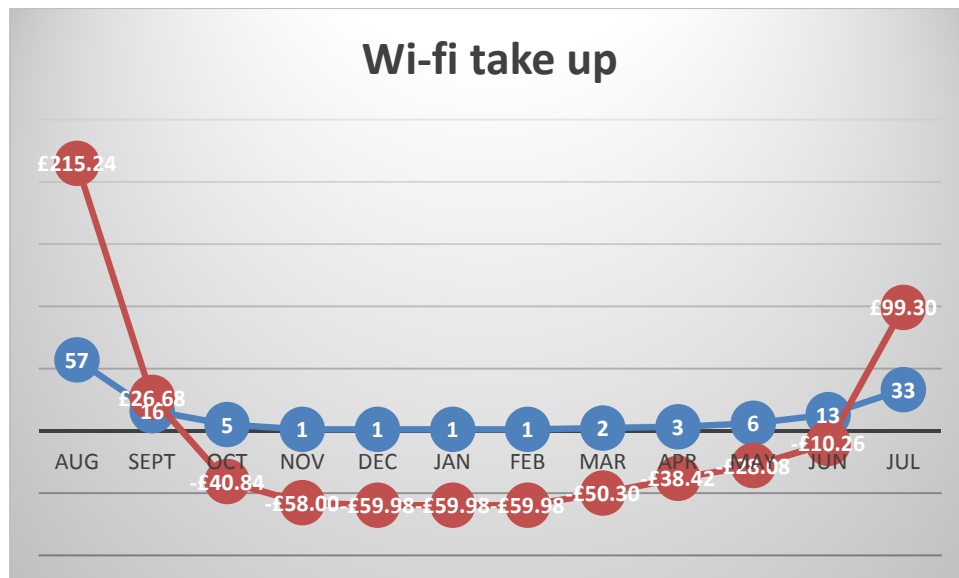

> **Recommendations:**
> 1. That the Harbour Board NOTES the report

1. Executive summary. This report provides an update on the provision of Wi-Fi by the Harbour Authority and outlines potential alternatives.

2. Background. The Harbour provides commercially-contracted public Wi-Fi access on a 'pay as you go' basis which is available to visitors and residents alike. At the last meeting (13 Jul) the Harbour Master reported poor take-up of this service by the public due possibly to poor coverage and the ready provision of free wi-fi ashore. The Harbour Board directed the Harbour Master to provide an update on the success or otherwise of this venture, along with possible improvements for consideration at the September meeting.

3. **Coverage**. The original equipment was sited on the Egremont and also on Whitestrand with the intent of providing wi-fi to visitors. Investigations with Wi-Fi Spark (our provider) have revealed that the present equipment has a maximum reliable range of 30m. Although it can be detected some way beyond this, neither the swinging moorings or Visitors' Pontoon have a strong signal, making it unusable below decks.

4.   **Uptake**. Over the past year (Aug 14-Jul 15) take up has been as illustrated:

Wi-fi take up

£215.24

£99.30

57

£26.68
16

5   1   1   1   1   2   3   6   13   33

AUG   SEPT   OCT   NOV   DEC   JAN   FEB   MAR   APR   MAY   JUN   JUL

-£40.84   -£58.00 -£59.98 -£59.98 -£59.98   -£50.30   -£38.42   -£26.08   -£10.26

It can be seen that for most months there are insufficient user transactions to generate a profit and the net result for last year was 139 total transactions generating a loss of £64.62. (Although our equipment was bought outright, the ongoing service charges cause the negative revenues outside of the summer months).

5. **Review**. The small net annual loss is insignificant, however there are challenges to increasing take-up (and hence revenue) from wi-fi:

- **Obsolete equipment with insufficient range**. Increasing range and speed would require renewed equipment. Replacing the wireless access points on Whitestrand and Egremont would cost approximately £16,000 + VAT with a maximum range of 150m. Although the stated range is likely to be exceeded in practice, the Visitors' moorings behind the fuel barge are over twice this range from Whitestrand, and the southern end of the VP is further than 150m from Egremont.
- **Geography (and power)**. The geography of Salcombe harbour – and the dearth of power and telephone points – make siting more equipment around the estuary problematic. An possible option would be to site another access point in the vicinity of Cliff House (cost approx. £4,500) but this would only serve the moorings off Cliff House Gardens.
- **Commercial constraints.**
    - The ready availability of free wi-fi in the town.
    - The imminent (next few years) of 4G.

6. **Outcomes/outputs**. Continuing the current service is effectively cost neutral (but should be closely monitored to ensure that it remains so). Replacing, upgrading or expanding the service could cost over £20,000

with no guarantee of increased take up or likelihood of recouping the cost (approximately 5,000 additional transactions would be required to pay off the equipment costs).

4. Proposed Way Forward. Retain the existing equipment and run until obsolete (not expected to be within 2 years), and phase out when 4G arrives.

5. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	N	The Pier and Harbour (Salcombe) Confirmation Order 1954
Financial	Y	Continuing the current service will cost the Harbour c£70 pa. Replacement could cost up to £20,000
Risk	Y	There is a small risk that 4G is never delivered to the estuary, at which point the need for continued wi-fi would have to be reviewed.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	None
Safeguarding	N	None
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	No adverse impacts
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	No adverse impacts
Other implications	N	

Supporting Information

Appendix: None

Background Papers: None

Approval and clearance of report

Process checklist	Completed
Portfolio Holder briefed	**Yes/No**
SLT Rep briefed	**Yes/No**
Relevant Exec Director sign off (draft)	**Yes/No**
Data protection issues considered	**Yes/No**
If exempt information, public (part 1) report also drafted. (Committee/Scrutiny)	**Yes/No**