

FREE RESOURCE — DECISION TEMPLATE

Leased Line vs Broadband Decision

A structured decision framework for choosing between leased line and broadband connectivity — document your current setup, define your requirements, run a 3-year total cost of ownership comparison, score performance, assess risk, and record a justified recommendation.

6

DECISION
SECTIONS

3-Yr

TCO COST
COMPARISON

Risk

PERFORMANCE
MATRIX

Fillable

TICK & TYPE
IN ANY VIEWER

TCO COMPARISON

PERFORMANCE

RISK ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDATION

PREPARED FOR

Cloudswitched Knowledge
Library

PREPARED BY

Cloudswitched Ltd.

VERSION

2026 Edition

FORMAT

Interactive PDF

00

How to use this template

Work through each of the six sections with your team. Document your existing connection, define what your business actually needs, then use the comparison tables to evaluate broadband against a leased line on a true 3-year cost basis. Capture the risks, score each option, and record a justified decision at the end.

This is an **interactive PDF** — tick the boxes and type into the fields directly in any modern PDF viewer, or print it and complete it by hand. Fill every field with evidence: speed tests, quotes, SLA documents and contract terms. A decision backed by numbers survives scrutiny; a decision backed by opinion does not.

WHAT THIS TEMPLATE IS

A vendor-neutral framework to help UK SMEs choose the right internet connectivity. It compares the two realistic options — contended business broadband (typically FTTP) and a dedicated, uncontended leased line — across cost, performance and risk. It is not a quote and does not commit you to any provider.

HOW TO COMPLETE IT

Gather your last three internet bills, a recent speed test, your current contract, and quotes for both options before you start. Headline monthly prices hide the real cost — the 3-year TCO table on page 4 is where the true comparison happens. Carry your figures forward to the recommendation on page 7.

The six sections

- **01 Current Setup Documentation** — baseline your existing circuit, speed, cost and SLA.
- **02 Requirements Assessment** — define the speed, latency, uptime and capacity you need.
- **03 3-Year Total Cost of Ownership** — compare the true cost including hidden charges.
- **04 Performance Requirements Matrix** — score each option against weighted criteria.
- **05 Risk Assessment** — evaluate downtime, capacity, provider and lock-in risk.
- **06 Decision Framework & Recommendation** — record and justify the final decision.

01

Current Setup Documentation

Document your existing internet infrastructure to establish a baseline for comparison. Pull the figures from your contract and a live speed test — do not rely on what you were sold.

Primary connection type

☐ FTTC ☐ FTTP ☐ Leased Line ☐ Other

Current ISP & circuit reference

Contracted download / upload speed

Actual measured download / upload speed *from a wired speed test*

Monthly cost *inc. VAT*

Contract end date & notice period

Current SLA *uptime / repair time*

Number of users dependent on connection

Known issues with current connection *(downtime, speed drops, congestion)*

Secondary / backup connection *if any*

02

Requirements Assessment

Define what your business actually needs from its internet connectivity to make an informed decision. Base projections on realistic growth, not best-case sales forecasts.

Concurrent users (current)

Minimum acceptable download speed

Latency requirement (ms) for key applications

Critical cloud services *Microsoft 365, VoIP, CRM, ERP, etc.*

Bandwidth-intensive activities *(video conferencing, large file transfers, cloud backup)*

Maximum acceptable downtime per month

Concurrent users (projected 3 yrs)

Minimum acceptable upload speed

Required fault repair time (hours)

Symmetrical upload required?

☐ Yes ☐ No

WHY SYMMETRY MATTERS

Broadband upload is a fraction of download; a leased line is symmetrical. If you run VoIP, video calls, cloud backup or host any service, upload speed — not the headline download number — is usually the real constraint.

03

3-Year Total Cost of Ownership

Compare the true cost over 3 years, including the hidden costs that headline prices do not reveal. Enter every figure for each option, then total each year and the 3-year position.

COST ELEMENT	BROADBAND (FTTP)	LEASED LINE
Monthly circuit cost		
Installation / setup fee		
Router / CPE equipment cost		
Static IP address charges		
Enhanced SLA upgrade (if available)		
Annual price increases (estimated, 3 yrs)		
Estimated downtime cost (based on SLA)		
Secondary connection cost (if needed)		
TOTAL Year 1		
TOTAL Year 2		
TOTAL Year 3		
3-YEAR TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP		

HIDDEN COSTS TO CAPTURE

Install fees, static IP charges, mid-contract price rises (often CPI + 3.9%), and the business cost of downtime are where the two options really diverge. A cheap broadband headline can lose to a leased line once a single day of lost trading is priced in.

04

Performance Requirements Matrix

Score each connection option from 0–10 against your specific performance requirements. Weight reflects how critical each factor is to your business, then carry both columns to a weighted total.

REQUIREMENT	WEIGHT	BROADBAND (/10)	LEASED LINE (/10)
Guaranteed bandwidth (symmetrical)	HIGH	_____	_____
Low latency for VoIP / video	HIGH	_____	_____
Uptime SLA (99.9%+)	HIGH	_____	_____
Fast fault repair (sub-5 hours)	MEDIUM	_____	_____
Scalability (increase speed easily)	MEDIUM	_____	_____
Uncontended (no shared bandwidth)	MEDIUM	_____	_____
Proactive monitoring by ISP	LOW	_____	_____
IPv6 support	LOW	_____	_____
WEIGHTED TOTAL	—	_____	_____

HOW TO WEIGHT

Multiply each score by its weight (High = 3, Medium = 2, Low = 1) before totalling. The option with the higher weighted total is the better technical fit — read it alongside the 3-year TCO, not instead of it.

05

Risk Assessment

Evaluate the risks associated with each option and their potential business impact. Document the mitigation for each — an unmitigated risk is an accepted one.

Risk 1: Connection downtime — *impact on revenue / operations*

Risk 2: Insufficient bandwidth — *impact on productivity / cloud services*

Risk 3: Provider failure — *mitigation strategy*

Risk 4: Growth exceeding capacity — *upgrade path available?*

☐ Yes — upgrade path available ☐ No

Risk 5: Contract lock-in — *flexibility to change?*

Overall risk summary & rating

06

Decision Framework & Recommendation

Bring together all the analysis to make and document your decision. The numbers from the previous sections should point clearly to one option — record it here with its justification.

Recommended connection type

☐ Broadband (FTTP) ☐ Leased Line

Recommended contract term

☐ 12 months ☐ 24 months ☐ 36 months ☐ Other

Recommended ISP

Estimated monthly cost

Estimated 3-year TCO

Justification for recommendation

Risks accepted with this decision

☐ Decision approved by senior leadership

DECISION MADE BY

DATE OF DECISION

TARGET INSTALL DATE

Need help choosing the right connectivity?

Cloudswitched designs, procures and manages business internet for UK SMEs — broadband, leased lines, failover and SD-WAN, with vendor-neutral advice and fixed-price installs.

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