

**To receive a report on Breakthrough Communications  
service and consider any actions and associated  
expenditure**

**Report to:** Policy and Finance

**Date of Report:** 06.07.26

**Officer Writing the Report:** Town Clerk / RFO

**Purpose of the report:** To inform the Council of a subscription offer from Breakthrough Communications.

**Officer's Recommendations**

Members are requested to note the contents of this report and consider approving the three-year price lock-in arrangement at a total cost of £4,990, with the contract renewal date extended to January 2030.

The Council has already paid £1,995 for the initial 12-month subscription period. Therefore, the remaining cost to secure the extended three-year agreement is £2,995 plus VAT.

The expenditure can be met from Budget Code 6208 – Subscriptions, for which provision has been allocated.

**Report Summary**

The Council have appointed Breakthrough Communications for a number of years as an external body to provide expert advice around data protection, FOI, GDPR, social media, communications etc etc.

Breakthrough Communications is designed for parish and town councils, and only for parish and town councils which is why they built what we know as Council Hive.

It brings together expert advice, on-demand training, ready-made resources and live events into a single, supportive home for the Council.

Staff save hours by reaching for ready-made templates and checklists instead of building them from scratch. Officers can pick up bite-sized training whenever it suits them, on real-life topics like FOI, GDPR, social media, communications and councillor roles. Councillors can keep their training current and feel confident in their responsibilities. And whenever a tricky question lands on your desk, Breakthrough is available by phone.

Most importantly, Council Hive is shaped around how Councils actually works. The events, the training, the resources and the advice are all developed in partnership with the parish and town council sector. Whatever stage the Council is at, they meet you there.

Breakthrough have been approached by several clerks as to whether their Council could saved money by renewing Council Hive for more than one year at a time. Breakthrough have reflected on this question and are happy to offer this to established Council Hive customers.

At the same time, they had already planned to increase Council Hive pricing from July, as their subscription price has not risen for almost three years.

So, before the new pricing takes effect, they wanted to give Saltash Town Council as established Council customers the option to lock in the current £1,995 annual rate by renewing now, before the price rises in July, and to also have the option to make a further saving by renewing for two or three years if they wish.

Their standard 12-month renewal is £1,995 plus VAT, which is due to rise to £2,495 in July. The discounted renewal options now available are:

**1 year price lock-in:** £1,995 plus VAT *(current annual price is locked in, immediately saving your council £500. We will invoice your council now before the price rises in July and we will renew your subscription until October 2027, so you also benefit from three months free of charge)*

Due to the Council already budgeted to cover the Breakthrough subscription it made sense to take advantage of the 1 year reduced subscription saving £500 plus Saltash were also getting an extra three months for free – this has now been actioned.

Additionally, they are also offering:

**2 years price lock-in:** £3,295 plus VAT (*current annual price locked in, plus a further saving of £695 against the current annual rate over the two years, with renewal extended until October 2028*)

**3 years price lock-in:** £4,990 plus VAT (*current annual price locked in, plus a further saving of £995 against the current annual rate over three years, with renewal extended until October 2029*)

This means that Saltash Town Council can secure its renewal at the current annual rate before the forthcoming price increase, while also having the option to reduce the overall cost by committing for a longer period.

It is also worth flagging two additions now included within Council Hive.

- Saltash Town Council can now access both an annual Communications and Engagement Health Check and an annual Data Protection Health Check, giving you structured feedback and practical recommendations each year.
- In addition, Breakthrough Communications training that staff or councillors may previously have paid for separately through your county association is now included for Council Hive customers at no extra cost.

Lock-in for 2 and 3 years is also very good value but this is something that needs to be considered by the Council due to the length of commitment and cost but not forgetting a total saving of almost £1,500.

## **Budgets**

**Budget Code:** 6208 Subscription

**Budget Availability:** £21,186

**Committed Spend:**

**Signature of Officer:**

Town Clerk / RFO