

To receive a report on Audio Visual, Democratic Services, Telephony and Internet Provisions and consider any actions and associated expenditure

Report to:

Policy and Finance

Date of Report:

16 June 2026

Officer Writing the Report:

Mayor's Secretary / Receptionist and Office Manager/ Assistant to the Town Clerk

Pursuant to:

[P&F held on 10.3.26 minute nr. 325/25/26](#)

Purpose of the report:

To present Members with the findings of a full review of the Town Council's current audio-visual equipment, democratic services software, telephone systems, and internet provision, and to seek approval for the recommended upgrades, associated expenditure, and proposed phased implementation.

Officers Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

1. To approve the phased implementation of technology improvements identified within this report.
2. To approve the appointment of:
 - Company C for Long Room audio-visual Solution;
 - Company B for the portable PA system;
 - Company C for the telephone system;
 - Company C for internet provision;
 - Company B for Democratic Services Software, with implementation to commence in January 2027 to allow for a managed transition;
3. Approve the associated expenditure and budget allocations as detailed in the report;
4. Approve any necessary virement from Budget Code 6208 PF Subscriptions to meet any minor shortfall in approved capital budgets;
5. To delegate authority to the Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk, working with Councillors Nowlan and Bickford, to:
 - develop the Long Room acoustic specification;
 - procure quotations or undertake a formal tender process where required by Financial Regulations;
 - evaluate submissions;
 - report outcomes with recommended appointment to the Town Council.

Executive Summary

This report presents the outcome of a review of the Town Council's audio-visual equipment, democratic services software, telephone system and internet provision.

Quotations have been obtained and assessed against functionality, value for money, operational resilience and future requirements. Recommended suppliers have been identified in each area.

The proposals can be delivered within existing approved budgets and provide improved meeting facilities, modern cloud-based systems, enhanced public accessibility and greater operational flexibility. Members are asked to approve the recommendations and delegated authority arrangements set out in this report.

Report Summary

Following P&F held in March the Town Council approved the Administration Department undertake a full investigation for a number of alternative software packages that were identified which appeared to offer improved functionality and better value for money.

This has provided an opportunity for the Council to consider potential updates and improvements to a range of technology systems and software.

These include the audio-visual equipment in the Chamber and Long Room, democratic services software, the telephone system, and internet provision.

Given the complexity of the proposals and the number of quotations received, Councillors Bickford and Nowlan provided assistance and knowledge and have worked closely with officers across several meetings to assess and refine the available options.

Each section of this report includes a summary of requirements, the rationale for proposed improvements, and the associated quotes for Members' consideration, along with detailed comparisons and recommendations.

Audio Visual

The Town Council has outgrown its current audio-visual arrangements for both virtual and hybrid meetings.

The existing setup comprising a television over 10 years old, a laptop more than five years old and due for replacement and inadequate audio equipment built into the TV and laptop, means the current system no longer meets operational needs.

Government has indicated its intention to reintroduce remote and hybrid meetings, although the required legislation has yet to be enacted and is not anticipated within the current year. In anticipation of this, the Council is taking a proactive approach to modernising its meeting infrastructure, enabling future streaming capabilities that support increased openness, strengthen accountability, and align with the Council's commitment to transparency.

A range of options including projectors, Meeting Owl devices, and other audiovisual equipment were explored.

The quotations received reflect solutions recommended by suppliers following site visits, identified as the most suitable for the Town Council's use of the Chamber and Long Room.

[Click on this link to view the specifications for each item advertised for quotes to be received.](#)

St Ives and Truro City Councils were contacted to review their meeting broadcast arrangements; St Ives has not yet responded. Truro uses an HP Poly Studio system, although this has been deemed unsuitable for the Chamber and is now dated. Truro is also considering upgrading to a more advanced, AI-enabled solution.

The Guildhall Chamber

The Chamber currently presents several challenges for both virtual and in-person attendees, including poor audio, limited visibility, and inflexible layout. The existing setup a laptop connected to a TV via HDMI is over five years old and no longer fit for purpose, with the laptop due for replacement.

Following a review of the Council's accommodation requirements and future use of available space, upgrading the audio-visual system within the Chamber is no longer required at this stage. Accordingly, the quotations obtained for these works have been withdrawn from further consideration.

Long Room

The Long Room has historically presented challenges in relation to sound quality due to its high ceilings, acoustics and listed building constraints. In addition, the previous projector-based setup had become outdated, required significant manual intervention to operate, and was not well suited to modern meeting requirements, including live streaming and virtual participation. As a result, this equipment has now been retired.

While any future solution will need to take account of the room's size and heritage restrictions, there remains an opportunity to create a high-quality and flexible meeting environment that meets the Town Council's current and future requirements.

Following a review of the Council's accommodation and operational needs, Members have indicated a preference for the Long Room to become the Council's principal meeting and conferencing space. The vision is to retain a traditional chamber-style layout, relocate the Mayoral and Freeman boards, and create a dedicated environment that is suitable for formal Council meetings, committee meetings and training sessions while retaining an area for staff welfare facilities.

The recommended audio-visual equipment is capable of operating independently of any future acoustic improvements; however, acoustic treatment would further enhance speech clarity and overall meeting quality. It is therefore proposed that quotations for the acoustic requirements are obtained separately as part of a wider project specification.

Consideration will also need to be given to the room's network infrastructure and internet connectivity to ensure reliable operation of any new audio-visual and meeting technologies. The internet provider recommended elsewhere in this report has indicated that it is able to provide a proposal for these works and, having an established understanding of the Town Council's existing infrastructure and operational requirements, is well placed to advise on the most appropriate solution.

Quotes for Audio Visual - The Long Room

[Click on this link to view Audio Visual quotes for the Long Room.](#)

Company	System Information	Total Cost of Products	Installation Costs	Annual Maintenance	Total Cost
A	75" TV with portable trolley Logitech roommate, TAP IP and rally camera with mount Barco clickshare and pucks QSC audio DSP and licence Shure wireless microphone system Network switch Loop system Bose active speak system (Equipment housing is not included) Cabling and hardware	£34,482.46	£3,775	£700	£38,957.46
B	75" TV with portable trolley Biamp sub, amp and speaker Stuudio master audio mixer Microphone - lapel x 1 Microphone – handheld x 1 Feedback suppressor Connectors and cabling	£12,051.17	£3,133.33	£0	£15,184.50
C	75" TV with trolley Logitech rally bar with mounting solution Logitech mic pod, hub and cables Logitech Tap IP	£7,396.79 (no requirement for table mounts)	£1,550	£0 Package includes six months virtual support	£8,946.79

Comparison of quotes

Company A provides a comprehensive, high-spec solution with integrated conferencing (Logitech Roommate, Tap IP, Rally camera) and a professional-grade audio setup, including QSC DSP, Shure wireless microphones, hearing loop system, and Bose active speaker. This option offers strong performance but is more complex and higher in cost.

Company B focuses on a traditional audio setup with separate amplifier, speakers, and mixer, along with handheld and lapel microphones. While functional, it is less integrated and may require more manual operation during meetings.

Company C offers a streamlined, all-in-one Logitech solution with Rally Bar, mic pod system, and Tap IP controller. This provides a simple, user-friendly setup with good integration and fewer components to manage.

Recommendation:

Option C remains the most suitable audio-visual solution, offering a balanced and fully integrated system that is simple to use and supports both virtual and in-person meetings.

Budget

Budget Availability: £10,100

Budget Codes: 6414 GH Equipment - Guildhall

Committed Spend: £0

Please refer to the total budget section of the report for a detailed breakdown and recommended allocation.

Members approved a budget for audio-visual improvements, including a new display screen, conferencing system and sound equipment for the Council's meeting facilities. As the Chamber is no longer being progressed as a meeting venue, the budget previously identified for Chamber improvements is available, providing sufficient funding within this budget code.

Members are referred to the total budget section of the report for a detailed breakdown and recommended allocation

PA System – Multiuse for both outside Town Council events and at external Town Council Property's

A portable PA system remains necessary for Town Council civic and community events, including the Christmas Lights Switch-On, St Piran's Day celebrations and Library events. Quotations have therefore been obtained for an improved portable solution.

The system would also provide enhanced sound for larger meetings and functions, with the flexibility to be used at the Library, Isambard House and other outdoor and community events.

Quotes for PA System

[Click on this link to view PA System Quotes](#)

Company	System information	Cost of products	Delivery and training	Total Cost
A	Bose L1 Pro 16 Cover and roller bag Bose T4S tonematch mixer and PSU Sennheiser microphone – lapel x 1 Sennheiser microphone – handheld x 1 Cabling	£5,058.07	£87.50	£5,145.57
B	2 x Electroverse Everse 8 Active PA speakers Wireless microphone x 1 Stands and carry case Connector and cables	£1,949.88	£208.33	£2,158.21

Comparison of quotes

Quotes received for a portable PA system show a clear difference in cost and capability.

The Bose L1 Pro 16 package offers a premium, all-in-one solution with a professional mixer, both lapel and handheld microphones, and enhanced sound coverage and control, making it suitable for larger or more complex events.

The Electro-Voice Everse 8 package provides a more affordable and portable alternative with a single speaker which is rechargeable battery powered, one wireless microphone, and essential accessories, but with fewer features and reduced coverage.

Recommendation:

Company B's proposed PA solution (Electro-Voice Everse 8) is recommended as practical and more affordable, meeting core requirements without the higher cost and complexity of the premium option.

Budgets

Budget Availability: £10,100

Budget Codes: 6414 GH Equipment - Guildhall

Committed Spend: £0

Please refer to the total budget section of the report for a detailed breakdown and recommended allocation.

Democratic Services Software

The Policy and Finance Committee chose not to progress resolution 247/25/26, relating to the five-year Civica Modern.Gov contract, until further findings have been obtained.

The Town Council has continued with Civica Modern.Gov for a further 12-months.

The Administration Department has undertaken a full investigation of alternative options ensuring the Town Council secures a solution that delivers improved efficiencies and best value for money.

Following attendance at an online demonstration and discussions with the supplier officers consider the proposed solution to be modern and intuitive, making effective use of existing Microsoft platforms, and representing a potentially more cost-effective option.

The Town Council's existing system is hosted on the Council's server that is approaching end of life and is intended to be decommissioned. As the Council is already considering a move away from locally hosted servers, transitioning to a new system at this stage may be appropriate.

However, it should be noted that a change of this nature would have a significant impact on administrative services and internal operations. Careful planning and preparation will therefore be essential to ensure a smooth and seamless transition.

Company Bs software offers a digital platform used for managing meetings and democratic processes, including agendas, reports, minutes, and decision tracking. It can use AI to automate tasks such as document drafting, summarising reports, extracting key decisions, improving search, and helping officers prepare and manage meetings more efficiently.

Quotes for Democratic Services Software

[Click on this link to view Democratic Services quotes](#)

System	Initial set up costs	Annual Support and Maintenance, Hosting and Authentication per annum	Annual Cost for Government Specific AI Software	Total cost over five-year contract
Company A	£10,208	£16,209 (Per annum for five-year term)	Not available	£91,253
Company B	£2,995	£2,915 (three-year contract is available at same annual cost, training costs are dependent on how many Councillors are needed to train)	£480 (2 licences unlimited credits – Town Clerk / Admin Department)	£19,250

Comparison of quotes

Company A's proposal includes full migration of existing data to a hosted server.

Company B's system is cloud-based but does not include data migration; templates would need to be developed in-house following training. It does, however, provide training for both officers and members, including support at the first committee meeting. Members would access and annotate reports via an app on their Town Council laptops.

The IT Consultant has confirmed compatibility with Company B's system and will support implementation at no additional cost. Company B also offers a local government-specific AI tool, which has been trialled positively by officers and is included in the overall cost.

Following extensive demonstrations and research, Company B presents a more modern, flexible, and future-focused solution, whereas Company A offers a stable but more traditional system with less scope for innovation.

Successful implementation will require thorough pre-planning and dedicated staff time for training and system rollout.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Company B be appointed, with the contract commencing in January 2027, ahead of the current contract's end in April 2027, to ensure a controlled and seamless transition.

Beginning implementation in January will significantly reduce the risk of data loss and provide a three-month transition period to support the full migration of all meeting data, templates, and processes.

This approach will also enable the Town Council to decommission its current single point of failure—the on-site server—moving to a more resilient and modern cloud-based solution.

Budget

Budget Availability: £21,186

Budget Codes: 6208 PF Subscriptions

Committed Spend: £6,414 (Future annual software costs)

Following the decision by Policy & Finance Committee to pause the move to the existing provider's hosted solution, the project has not progressed despite previously agreed installation and integration costs.

A budget of £26,417 was precepted for Year 1 of Civica, based on a transition to Civica's hosted server.

As the project has not commenced, the 2026/27 actual costs now reflect the renewal fee only (£10,878), leaving a remaining balance of £14,772 within the Democratic Services software subscription budget.

Telephone Systems

[Click on this link to view Telephone Systems quotes](#)

P&F agreed to pause Resolution 248/25/26, relating to the phone system, pending a full review of all systems.

Members will be aware that the current phone system is outdated, with frequent line dropouts, and does not support modern working practices such as hot desking or remote access due to its reliance on fixed landlines.

A range of potential solutions has since been revisited.

Quotes for telephone systems

[Click here to view telephone system quotes](#)

Company	System information	One off equipment and installation costs	Ongoing monthly cost	Contract length
A	Teams system Wireless Bluetooth headsets Support desk Initial virtual training Unlimited minutes	£3,261.78	£211.54	36 months
B	Yealink system Wireless Bluetooth headsets Support platform Virtual training Unlimited minutes	£2,599.86	£210	24 months
C	Wildix system Wireless Bluetooth headsets In person training Unlimited minutes	£3,230	£173.44	12 Months

D	3CX system. Headsets are not included. Package includes 35k landline minutes and 14k mobile minutes per month Guidance provided on how to operate system Unlimited minutes	£1,440	£209.51	36 Months
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Comparison of quotes

Although Microsoft Teams would align with the Council's existing internal software, it has been advised that it does not currently provide the level of telephony functionality required, particularly in relation to trunking.

After extensive research it is confirmed the original decision to move to the Wildix system proposed by Company C offers greater flexibility moving to a Bluetooth-based solution on a 12-month contract. This would enable staff to make and receive calls from any working location, supporting remote and flexible working. A single fixed handset has been recommended for both the Library and the Guildhall reception to ensure communication is maintained during a power failure or emergency situation.

The system includes call transcription, with recordings automatically emailed to the relevant officer. In the future, it also offers an AI-based feature that identifies the purpose of a call through keywords and routes it to the appropriate line, removing the need for the current menu-based system.

Recommendation

Approve appointing Company C to transition the Town Council to the Wildix Communications system to improve and future proof the Town Council's telephony infrastructure delegating to the Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk to recycle existing equipment.

Budget

Budget Availability: £8,389

Budget Codes: 6300 PF Telephone, Internet & Mobile

Committed Spend: £3,700 (Ongoing monthly invoices for phone calls/line rental, internet & mobile)

Due to P&F paused resolution 248/25/26 the Town Council already precepted £3,769 for new handsets and implementation.

The additional cost of call recording and AI transcription is to be confirmed and will be costed by storage capacity.

Internet

[Click on this link to view Internet quotes](#)

As part of this project, the Administration team reviewed internet provision to ensure best practice.

Quotes for internet

Company	System information	Installation costs	Monthly cost	Contract length
A	Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) – Library and Guildhall Business Fibre - Depot	£1,609.15	£134.96	36 months
B	FTTP at all three sites	£750	£154.85 (Quote received does not tally correctly)	12 months
C	FTTP – Library Ultra Gateway – Guildhall Starlink - Depot	£125	£275	12 months
D	FTTP and back up Vodafone SIM	£2,010	£284.85	36 months

Comparison of quotes

Following research, although several providers indicated that FTTP was available at the Longstone premises, this has been confirmed as incorrect. Our current provider has clarified this position and continues to offer advice based on its understanding of the Town Council's infrastructure.

Company C proposes an upgrade to the existing internet service at the Guildhall, while maintaining current provision at the Library and Depot. It has been confirmed that FTTP is not available at the Depot. The proposed 12-month contract provides flexibility to upgrade should FTTP become available in the future.

Recommendation

To appoint Company C for the provision of internet services for all Town Council premises for a 12-month period.

Budget

Budget Availability: £8,389

Budget Codes: 6300 PF Telephone, Internet & Mobile

Committed Spend: £3,700 (Ongoing monthly invoices for phone calls/line rental, internet & mobile)

Risks and Implications –

Benefits of Proceeding

- Improved meeting experience for Members and the public.
- Future readiness for hybrid and streamed meetings.
- Reduced reliance on ageing equipment.
- Increased operational resilience through cloud-based systems.
- Enhanced flexibility for staff and Councillors.

Of proceeding with all items in 2026/27

- Significant officer time required to deliver implementation and system transition
- Need to ensure full system integration between AV infrastructure and democratic services platforms
- Outstanding technical assurance required regarding hearing loop integration with proposed AV systems

Of Not Proceeding

- Continued poor meeting quality and accessibility
- Reputational risk (public broadcasting expectations)
- Increasing maintenance issues with ageing equipment
- Missed income opportunities from room hire

Budget Overview

Due to the nature of multiple quotes being received and in line with Financial Regulations, more than three companies were invited to quote based on the various project specifications.

Adverts were also published in the local press and on the Town Council's social media channels, inviting any interested suppliers to contact the Town Council for further information and to submit quotes for one or more elements of the project.

In relation to the Long Room acoustics, initial investigations indicate that the required improvements may exceed the Council's procurement threshold.

It is therefore requested, through the officer recommendations, that the Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk, working in consultation with Cllrs Nowlan and Bickford, be authorised to further develop the project requirements following procurement of the audio-visual equipment. Should the estimated value of the acoustic works require a formal tender process under the Council's Financial Regulations, delegated authority is sought to undertake the necessary procurement exercise and report back to Council with recommendations for consideration.

It should also be noted that further work is required to assess and improve the network infrastructure needed to support the proposed audio-visual systems. It is recommended that the Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk, in consultation with Cllrs Nowlan and Bickford, be authorised to progress this work within approved budgets and report back to Members at the earliest opportunity.

Area	Capital Cost	Annual Cost
Long Room AV	£8,946.79	£0
PA System	£2,158.21	£0
Democratic Software	£2,995.00	£3,395.00
Telephone	£3,230.00	£2,081.28
Internet	£125.00	£3,300.00
TOTAL	£17,455.00	£8,763.28

Overall Budget Position

The total capital cost of the proposed works is £17,455.00, with an ongoing annual cost of £8,763.28.

Approved budgets exist across relevant cost centres for elements of this project, particularly for audio-visual equipment, democratic services software, and telephony improvements.

At present and excluding any future acoustic improvements and network infrastructure requirements, the project can be delivered within existing approved budgets and planned expenditure.

Implementation / Phasing Options

To manage costs, resource demands, and implementation risk, a phased approach is proposed:

Phase 1 (Priority): Implementation of telephone system, and internet improvements

Phase 2: Procurement of portable PA system

Phase 3: Audio and Visual procurement for Long Room including improvements to network infrastructure, internet

Phase 4: Action identified improvements to acoustics for the Long Room, subject to budget requirements and approval

Phase 5: Implementation of Democratic Services software, including preparation for transition commencing January 2027

Signature of Officer:

Mayor's Secretary / Receptionist and Office Manager/ Assistant to the Town Clerk