<u>**IT Consultant Report**</u>

Information:

The Town Council's contract with its current IT provider is due for review by April 2022.

This review is practiced every three years to ensure the Town Council is receiving the best quality service and value for money dependent on the ever-changing needs of the Town Council services and employment growth.

Research:

IT Services are exceptionally complex and many providers offer a variety of services.

Five quotes have been received from five suppliers, one of those being the Town Council's current provider. Local companies, as well as those from further afield have provided quotes. All of these companies offer different packages subject to the needs of the Town Council.

Please note that costs can vary. This is due to costs either being charged per user or as a standard monthly fee based on the Town Council's size. It is also worth noting that these costs fluctuate depending on the number of users, usage and data. Therefore, a yearly cost would be estimated and not confirmed. All total costs are subject to fluctuation dependent upon the Town Council's requirements.

It is required that Members should consider the options and the initial capital costs for IT Services. It is considerably cheaper to remain with our current provider as there are no capital costs. However, it must be considered whether this is in fact the best working practice for the Town Council when allowing for future service requirements.

Company A – Current Provider:

IT Support and Maintenance	Cost Per Month
Support / Maintenance:	£140.00
Office365 Business Standard:	£148.20
Office365 Exchange:	£100.80
Anti-Virus:	£44.00
Online Backup	£27.50
PSTN Line Guildhall CC Machine:	£14.00
Email Protection:	£96.25
Email Signatures:	£47.25
Duo Security:	£63.05

Broadband Services	Cost Per Month
Library – Lease Line	£309.00 **(Contract ends 31.03.22)**
Longstone – Unlimited Business ADSL	£25.00
Guildhall – Unlimited Business Fabre Broadband	£36.00
Guildhall – 10GB Business ASDL CC Machine	£15.00
Pontoon – EE Dongle B Sim Unlimited 1	£23.00 **(Contract ends 24.10.22)**

Total Cost Per Month	**£1,089.05**

Company A Summary:

- These prices are to increase with the CPI average of 2.5% for the year 2022/23 with an estimated total amount of £1,116.27.

- Although a local company, due to their size, IT issues incurred by employees of STC can vary in time for resolutions to be reached therefore creating a loss of service STC are providing to its residents.

- Due to the Council's continued growth the services provided have been added over time with many areas identified as areas that can now be consolidated to achieve cost savings for the Town Council and streamlined to assure less operational impacts on IT services across all departments.

- Library Lease line contract is up for renewal and will be considerably cheaper with an estimated saving of around £250.00 per month.

Company B:

IT Support and Maintenance	Cost Per Month
Support / Maintenance:	£305.50
Office365 Business Premium:	£202.80
Office365 Exchange:	£98.00
End-Point Threat Management:	£227.50
Acronis Cloud Backup	£78.00
Clip Training	Free for 3 Months

Broadband Services	Capital Cost	Cost Per Month
Library 50-100Mb 36 Mths	£0.00	£275.08
Longstone ADSL 12 Mths & Managed Router	£197.00	£25.00
Guildhall FTTP 1000/115 12 Mths & Managed Router	£160.00	£102.50
Pontoon – FTTC 80/20 12 Months & Managed Router	£197.00	£24.60
Station – ADSL 12 months & Managed Router	£197.00	£13.95

Set Up	Capital Cost
Transfer and Audit	£300.00
Set Up and Migration	£4,000.00
Classroom and Virtual Training	£2,000.00
Total Capital Cost:	**£6,770.00**
Total Monthly Cost:	**£1,386.83**

Company B Summary:
- IT Support and Maintenance from the IT Technical Centre between 8am and 6pm with support available 24hours for an additional cost per user per month.

- Office 365 Business Premium accounts required for maximum security and allows for secure remote working.

- MS Teams Business Voice available if the Town Council wished to combine IT Services with telecommunications at a cost of £14.50 per user per month.

- Clip Training available per month at £2.50 per user with any new starter to receive first 3 months free of charge to ensure full training and knowledge of IT systems and functionalities used within the various Town Council departments and auditable by their line manager.

- Has offered to present to the Town Council how their services would operate in practice.

- Data Migration, regarding moving Microsoft Tenant confirmation has been received that there will be no disruption whatsoever, when migrating the data from the server to SharePoint, the company would normally perform this out of

hours or over a weekend to limit any disruption, unfortunately they cannot guarantee that there will be no disruption, but it is priority to keep this to a minimum.

- SharePoint access, SharePoint is a full Document Management platform that has access control and permission sets from site to folder to file, this will allow restricted access to a folder but should there be a specific document that needs to be shared outside of the permission set the staff would be able to do so, this can also be done the opposite way around, a file can be locked to anybody but the owner while the folder is open to the permission set.

- Ticket and Support Priority, the company will liaise with staff to work out the process of the requirement priorities i.e. system crashed should be a P1, I want to change my signature a P3 (happy to share examples of what is in place for other customers). P1 being critical, P2 urgent, and so on. All users will have a helpdesk email they can send to as well as a phone number to call. Weekly ticket reviews to see what tickets had been created, what the action was to resolve, time opened, and time closed. These reviews are very helpful and can assist in future training.

- Device Management and Auditing. With Microsoft Intune (Part of the current MS licenses) all devices are managed and maintained, the company will also keep a register of IT hardware and equipment and do a quarterly, biannual, or annual review with the Town Council, in the review the company will look at what options are available to the Town Council.

Company C

IT Support and Maintenance	Cost Per Month
Server Standard Support:	£50.00
UTM Firewall Standard Support:	£250.00
Network Device Standard Support:	£35.00
PC Standard Support:	£200.00
1 Hour Block Time:	£140.00
Managed Backup & Disaster Recovery:	£135.00
Office365 Managed Backup:	£90.00
Office365 Business Premium:	£122.20
Office365 Exchange:	£69.00

Broadband Services	Capital Cost	Cost Per Month
Library 100/100Mb Est.. 100Mb Down 100Mb Up (Includes Managed Router)	£400.00	£49.50
Longstone ADSL2+ Broadband (Inc PSTN Line and Router)	£300.00	£39.50
Guildhall FTTP Est.. 160Mb Down 30Mb Up (Includes Router)	£400.00	£49.50
Pontoon FTTC 60Mb Down 12Mb Up (Includes PSTN Line and Router)	£300.00	£39.50
Station FTTC 80Mb Down 20Mb Up (Includes PSTN Line and Router)	£300.00	£39.50

Set Up	Capital Cost
1 x SOPHOS XGS107 Wifi Next Generation Firewall with 3 Year Extreme Protection Bundle	
4 x SOPHOS XGS87 Wifi Next Generation Firewall with 3 Year Extreme Protection Bundle	
5 x Estimated Configuration & Installation	
25 SOPHOS Central Endpoint Protection Advanced 3 Years	
25 SOPHOS Central Intercept X Ransomware Protection 3 Years	
1 x SOPHOS Server Protections Advanced - 3 Years	
1 x Estimated Configuration and Installation	£11,247.65

Total Capital Cost: **£12,997.65**
Total Monthly Cost: **£1,308.70**

Company C Summary

- Option to pay capital costs over 36 months - Example 3-year Lease Rental Option for £12,997.65 Capital Cost. Initial Payment of £410.34 followed by 35 monthly payments of £410.34. **Please note**; this is through a in-house finance broker (Southwest Comms), 50% deposit is required to secure the order.
The rate is based on **£34.54 per thousand borrowed**. This is a lease purchase, so all equipment would be the Town Council's at the end of the term.

- Provisions to consolidate IT & Communications partnership, streamlining support and costs into a single relationship, offer to contribute towards a fully featured Unified Communications within the IT Support contract. Wildix software is **free** when initially registering for IT Services RRP worth in excess of £368.35 with handsets included. This cost would be for the 36-month term when contracting to IT services.

- SOPHOS is a reputable and recognised supplier of security software. Company C believes prevention is better than a cure. For example, if one ransomware was to succeed in infiltrating the Town Council's anti-virus software this could create a massive GDPR issue with costly fines occurred and additional costs to obtain any recoverable data. This also may include a loss of data due to it not being recoverable which could have a huge impact on the Town Council's services.

- Has offered to present to the Town Council how their services would operate in practice.

Company D

IT Support and Maintenance	Cost Per Month
Server Standard Support:	£240.00
Office365 Business Standard:	£122.50
Exchange Mailboxes	£81.25
DUO 2FA Security	£63.05
Email Signature Software	£46.00
Email Filtering Software	£91.00
AntiVirus Cloud Hosted	£24.00

Broadband Services	Cost Per Month
Library FTTC Line	£38.00
Longstone	£38.00
Guildhall	£38.00
Pontoon	£38.00
Station	£38.00

No set up costs.

Company D Summary

- The company has assured transgression to this company will have little impact across departments and services.

- To note the company runs a minimal service to clients on a Friday due to COVID. Priorities will be answered if they arise.

- The company assures the Town Council that all security currently in place is sufficient to the needs of the Town Council.

- The company works in partnership with the Town Council's current telecommunications supplier.

- The company has offered to present to the Town Council how their services would operate in practice.

Company E

IT Support and Maintenance	Cost Per Month
Managed Workplace for Desktops and Laptops	£712.50
Managed Servers	£259.20
Managed Network Service	£201.60
Cloud Services Office 365 Management	£157.50
Sophos Yearly protection	£137.50

Set Up	Capital Cost
5 x SOPHOS XGS107	£2,900.00
Network Firewall Deployment	£3,000.00

Broadband Services	Cost Per Month

Advised

Total Capital Cost: **£12,997.65**
Total Monthly Cost: **£1,554.20**

Company E Summary

- Proposal submitted at a late stage when compiling the report therefore information has been limited and does not include broadband costs however, they can be supplied if the Town Council wish to pursue further with this proposal.

- Company E is not local to the southwest.

- Security is a key factor in the proposal with the suggestion of a SOPHOS network firewall rather than email / cloud security.

Finance Summary:

Available Budget for IT Maintenance 2022/2023:
6306 IT Maintenance   £8,624.35

Available Budget for Capital Costs:
6370 Computer Equipment Renewal   £7,000.00
6274 Internet Redevelopment (to be vired)   £5,000.00

Please note no computers are due for renewal in the year 2022/23 with sufficient funds still available for Councillor IT Equipment should this be required.
Internet redevelopment funds (£5,000) are no longer required. The Town Council have the option to vire the funds.

If Members chose to appoint Company C, it would have a total amount of £1,000 added to the precept for the year 2022/2023.

Overall Summary:

IT Services are crucial to the Town Council's day to day operations. Any negative impact caused by deficient IT services has a knock-on effect to all departments. As a consequence, employees cannot complete work that is heavily reliant upon IT services in an efficient and timely manner.

The impact of a change of IT supply and differing working practices could affect services provided by the Town Council. Please note; any change in IT services would require training of the software packages and processes if they were to be implemented.

There are a vast amount of competing IT services available in the current marketplace. It has been difficult to determine exactly what is required to streamline the Town Council's IT services and working practices. Additionally the identification of services which may not be suitable anymore due to the Town Council's increased size has proved challenging.

Therefore, Members are requested to consider and approve one of the following options:

Option 1:
To reappoint the Town Council's existing IT Consultant for a period of 3 years.

Options 2:
To appoint an IT Consultant based on the information provided.

Option 3:
To appoint a qualified and experienced external IT specialist to write a specification to go out for tender.

Option 4:
To create a working party to further investigate the proposals received and report back to Members with a recommendation.

END OF REPORT