



TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL

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## Report To Resources Committee

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<b>Date</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>IT Upgrade</b>

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update Members on the current set up of the Councils IT system and the impact on productivity.
2. To consider upgrading the system ahead of the office move to ensure no work is lost in that process.
3. To consider how an upgraded system could help support productivity of the Council.

### BACKGROUND

4. Todmorden Town Council currently runs on two Microsoft 365 Apps for Business subscriptions which are shared between Officers and those Councillor's with laptops provided by the Council. As these subscriptions are shared it means that basic but very useful functions such as a shared calendar and discrete cloud document storage are not available.
5. Todmorden Town Council currently uses a NAS<sup>1</sup> box to hold all Shared drives and documents. NAS boxes are becoming outdated and are not recommended now as a reliable system for storing and backing up documents.
6. The NAS box does not offer Cloud functionality for document sharing or access via VPN, this means that when working from home Officers can only access documents on the networked shared drive by connecting to the office PCs using AnyDesk remote accessing software. Accessing documents this way can be time consuming and unreliable largely due to the very slow internet connection speeds at Tod College. Additional problems arise because there are times when the staff who are working from home need to log in using any desk to the office PCs for documents/work and this disrupts the staff who are in the office working on the PCs.

<sup>1</sup> Network Attached Storage box - a data storage device that connects to and is accessed via a network.

7. Todmorden Town Council is looking to relocate to Todmorden Town Hall to increase office space and therefore allow all staff to have their own PC and workstation that can all be used at the same time if needed.
8. Todmorden Town Council's current email hosting provision is secure but has limited storage space which is frequently at capacity which risks system failure – when at 100% capacity the system stops receiving and sending emails.
9. At present, annual costs incurred for IT are £1,734.50 with the additional Officer time for clearing mailboxes and sorting out any IT issues.
10. Quotes have been sought from IT providers for the provision of alternative IT systems that remove the problems currently being experienced. The provider which has come out as offering better value for money specialises in IT services for Town and Parish Councils.

## **FINANCIAL**

11. Two companies have been asked to quote for the works and the one that has come out most cost effective has an initial cost of £3,637.50 for full cloud based system with individual Microsoft subscriptions for all Officers and Councillors. This quote includes full set up and training for staff and Councillors on the cloud- based system. (Appendix 3)
12. Todmorden Town Council has an earmarked reserve of £6,000 for an IT upgrade and this budget would cover the costs associated with the proposed new IT system.
13. Savings could be made on the need for a Zoom subscription (£119.90 per annum) as all Councillors and staff would have access to Microsoft Teams.
14. There is a monthly cost (specification in Appendix 2) of £303.90 totalling £3,646.80 per annum, however it will be only £3,039 for the remaining 10 months of this financial year. If the Council go forward with this upgrade there will be £2,362.65 remaining in the EMR leaving £676.50 of the annual cost which could be covered off by no longer having the costs for Any Desk (£1,194 per annum), the two Microsoft subscriptions (£189.60 per annum), Zoom (see above) and email hosting (£231 per annum)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

15. That the Committee note the information provided and recommend the upgrade to Full Council and that the EMR for IT upgrade be used to fund this project ahead of the office move.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

16. To allow the IT system to be upgraded and be more suited to the larger number of services/projects that Town Council are taking on.
17. To allow the transfer of the EMR to cover the initial costs of the project.

18. To support staff to work in a more effective way without interruptions from other staff who are having to work from home due to the office constraints currently in place.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

19. None.

**CLIMATE CHANGE:**

20. None.

**IMPACT EQUALITY ASSESSMENT**

21. Microsoft has a very high standard of Accessibility within their software.

**SUPPORTING PAPERS:**

Appendix 1 – Key facts sheet

Appendix 2 – Monthly costs of new system

Appendix 3 – Initial costs for new system

**FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: Naomi Crewe**