



TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

REPORT AUTHOR	General Purposes Committee
TEL NO	01706 548135
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Date	9th September 2019
SUBJECT	Future Information Technology Provision

PURPOSE:

1. To update Members on the current state of IT Provision
2. To seek budget approval in an amount of up to £8,500 in order for quotations to be sought for provision of a comprehensive IT upgrade to the Town Councils' systems and hardware.
3. To inform Members that in seeking alternative quotations local companies will be considered and invited in to review our existing systems as part of the information gathering and quotation seeking exercise.
4. To advise Members that a sub group of the General Purposes Committee will be convened once up to four potential providers have been shortlisted and invited in to present solutions to this sub group as part of this formal selection process.

BACKGROUND:

5. The current level of IT provision is not fit for purpose and leading to inefficiencies within the office administration process not least the lack of support when connectivity is frequently interrupted.
6. Specific areas of concern surround:-
 - a. Separate suppliers of internet provision, MS Office 365 and web hosting
 - b. Lack of responsiveness to issues requiring remedy – mainly one- man bands
 - c. Two PC's need memory upgrades to deal with Windows 10.
 - d. One PC is not worth upgrading given processor speed and is recommended be replaced by a lap top /docking station to enable future remote use – including at Council meetings.
 - e. Switching infrastructure/cabling is of poor quality.
 - f. No external back up capability – this is of serious concern in that the internal capability if damaged would leave us with no back up of files at all and saves only on to a disk – if shatters we are exposed.

- g. Limited cross functionality between PC's
 - h. VPN Access at the moment be difficult to achieve in terms of connection speed.
 - i. Ineffective Firewall provision
 - j. No Wi fi access
7. As part of the research process a known quality external provider has already been invited in to provide potential recommendations for improvements following which an indicative figure of up to £5k looks likely to provide:-
- a. Watchguard Firewall for current network and sufficient for upgrade from ADSL to when FTTC is available.
 - b. Network switches to provide Local Area Network infrastructure for all PC's and printers – providing power for potential future provision of VOIP phones and Wi-fi access.
 - c. 2 * Memory upgrades
 - d. Replacement of one desktop with laptop with docking station
 - e. Full MS Office suite and user licencing configured for optimal use within the existing office set up including external use via MS Office 365 web interface.
 - f. Multi factor authentication to enhance security to help prevent all MS Office 365 accounts from being compromised.
 - g. Back-ups would be introduced to provide automated secure, encrypted off site back- ups on a continuous data protection basis.
 - h. Fully managed support – support desk, proactive network monitoring, secure off site back up, Network Connectivity ,Anti Malware Security, hosted cloud services, telephones and calls and VOIP solutions if required.
8. Whilst initial proposals lean towards a Cloud based back up Members of the General Purposes Committee also wish to explore the provision of an “in house” server as well as cloud back up and hence why a provisional budget of up to £8,500 has been requested order to be able explore this additional possibility.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9. There is no current budget provision and it is proposed that a sum of £8,500 be moved from General Reserves to an Earmarked Reserve entitled IT project.
- 10. Current year end General Reserve levels are currently forecast at £88,300 assuming all in year budget is used. In reducing this to £79,800 there is still sufficient to provide a minimum of three months general expenditure cover and compliant with latest Auditor requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

- 11. That Full Council Resolves to Agree to a budget provision of up to £8500 and that this be Earmarked for IT project, that this sum is moved from General Reserves, and that in doing so

the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer be authorised to prepare a brief for future IT provision and to seek quotations from a minimum of four potential suppliers, and that the General Purposes Committee be delegated to authorise the procurement of new IT provision and to advise Full Council in due course of such procurement having been made.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

12. To provide the authority for making available a budget of up to £8,500 by movement from General reserves to Earmarked Reserves.
13. To provide the authority for the Town Clerk/RFO to seek quotations for potential providers.
14. To provide authority to the General Purposes Committee to appoint such future providers

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

15. Protection of Data integrity is a core requirement and in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

CLIMATE CHANGE:

16. None arising from this report.

IMPACT EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

17. None arising from this report.

SUPPORTING PAPERS:

18. None arising from this report.

FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: Colin Hill