

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 31 January 2022
Title: Office 365/Computer Software
Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk, Adam Clapton

Background

Members may recall that at a meeting of this committee on 27th September, the migration of the Council's emails to Microsoft Office 365, use of SharePoint and an intranet was agreed and delegated to Officers to pursue.

Current Situation

Officers have confirmed with the Council's IT provider that there is no discounted Microsoft 365 licence rate for Government institutions as there once was, it is only available to Academia and Not for Profit organisations.

As budgets are stretched, the Council's IT provider has looked again at the quote provided in September and is able to offer a 10% discount on their professional services on the email migration and monthly fees, if they can schedule this work during February:

Email Migration

Professional fees: £1575.00 (exc. VAT) reduced to £1417.50 (10% discount)
Monthly fees: £349 (exc. VAT)

As well as the Office 365 migration, the Council's IT providers contacted officers at the beginning of January to advise they were able to migrate the Council's users onto Windows 11 at a reduced cost of £50.00 per user until the end of January, after that date the licence fee would increase to £250 per user from then on. As best value to the Council and to future-proof its systems, officers agreed this as an operational decision. The total potential cost being £1,100 (exc. VAT).

A supplementary estimate was established following the last meeting totalling £3,000 for the email migration and the Intranet. If the Council agrees to the revised quote on email migration, it will leave a shortfall of between £500-1,000 to be able to install an Intranet given the Windows 11 expenditure.

As previously advised, an Intranet for a team of 15 officers, works team and caretakers based in different work areas, would be desirable in communicating up-to-date information and act as a repository for key personnel documents. In order to complete this project in the quickest possible time, there is an opportunity to vire funds from underspends on budget lines 4020/602 (copier rental) and 4022/602 (postage) before the end of the fiscal year. The virement would be in the region of £650 from each budget to cover the one-off costs previously quoted, of £1,210 (ex. VAT). Exact costs have been requested ahead of this meeting.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- The Council should seek best value in any procurement and plan for the future where funds allow.

Financial implications

- As outlined in the report.
- There is a supplementary estimate of £3,000 towards Office 365/IT Office upgrade included under budget line 4962/800. There is a further £2,000 on this line for equipment to enable future hybrid meetings of the Council.
- There are underspends on budget lines 4020/602 (copier rental) and 4022/602 (postage) which will not be used before 31st March which could be used to complete all three projects.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. A virement of £650 from each of 4020/602 and 4022/602, totalling £1,300 to cover the cost of creating an Intranet for the Council.