

# REPORT TO ASSETS AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

## VOIP SYSTEM



**Report Reference** A-22-08  
**Meeting Date** 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022  
**Agenda Item** 6  
**Prepared by** Town Clerk

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### 1.0 BACKGROUND

In July, the Personnel Committee recommended that this committee consider introducing a VOIP telephony system to replace the existing single line. The principal benefits of a VOIP system are:

- a) Additional incoming/outgoing lines to enable multiple calls to take place at once
- b) Ability to transfer calls outside the office e.g. directly to Cheshire East Council
- c) Enables officers to work from any location with full access to telephony

The move to a VOIP system will improve the public/council telephone interface by enabling multiple incoming calls and enabling all officers to be reached at all times via the system. The systems generally offer additional benefits including call recording, direct dials and global directories.

### 2.0 COSTS

The Town Clerk obtained proposals from three companies, Abzorb<sup>1</sup>, Virgin and Commercial Business Communications. The specification was for 8 licenses with both hard/soft phones.

Abzorb is the recommended solution. The annual cost of an eight-handset system is £1,279 with an installation/set up cost of £395. From the product demonstration, they provide the best software to run the system including a straight-forward user interface and cordless handsets.

This compares with Virgin (£1,700 pa) and CB Communications (£1,440 pa). Virgin did not demo their system and the CB Communications system, whilst broadly comparable to the Abzorb system, did not seem as intuitive.

The projected 2022 and draft 2023 budgets made provision for the cost of the VOIP system based on the Abzorb system (which was the quote received when the budget was drafted).

### 3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should consider approval of the procurement of a VOIP system as outlined.

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<sup>1</sup> This company was recommended by the Town Mayor.