Telephone System

Purpose of Report

To seek approval to progress the transition of the Council's telephone system to an alternate Voice over Internet Protocol (VOiP) system.

Background

We have been informed by British Telecom (BT) that our BT OnePhone system contract is ending early around September 2026, but to be confirmed. The original contract term is 2029. This is due to changes within BT. In the immediate term there is no change to our BT supplied internet access, but what it will mean is an increase to the Council's telephony costs because historically call charges have been incorporated into the internet charge. The reasons why are unclear.

Quotations

The following alternate quotations have been obtained which include expansion in our phone provision because of increasing resource demands:

Supplier 1: 5 year contract
Initial charge £124.00
Monthly charge £56.26

Supplier 2: 5 year contract
Equipment one off charge £140.00
Monthly charge £67.07

Supplier 3: 5 year contract
Hardware credit £2000 in case of need
Monthly charge £95.00

Supplier 4: No fixed contract term
Would use existing hardware where possible + cost of new desk phone + cost of new mobile phone
Monthly charge £35.00

Supplier 5: 5 year contract
Monthly charge £103.26 with no increase over the contract term

Financial Implications

Provision for the separation of call charges from broadband is new so did not form part of the budget setting considerations. This budget line may need review and adjustment later in the year

Recommendation

That Council approves the transition across to supplier 4. The Council has an existing relationship with this supplier. It is also worth noting that regrettably other suppliers have used scare tactics to try to secure a sale.

Thank-you to Administrative Officer, Davina Davies for her work to unravel the existing service and for exploring and obtaining new options.