IT & Programmes Infrastructure Investment Plan 25/26

1.0 Purpose and Scope:

1.1   Every autumn IT & Programmes conducts an extensive review of the IT estate and identify areas where capital investment is required to maintain or enhance the IT estate on which BCP Council operates.

1.2   The activity primarily focuses on ensuring IT equipment or supporting infrastructure that is due to go "end of life" in the coming financial year is identified and costed for replacement.

1.3   The activity also seeks to identify where additional capacity or enhancements are required to ensure the IT estate remains fit for purpose and enables wider BCP Council teams service delivery.

1.4   The activity includes an assessment of whether the infrastructure is due to be replaced or enhanced (and therefore funded) via other projects, such as service led transformations. Items that are already funded from elsewhere are not included in this capital request.

1.5   The purpose of this document is to describe the high value capital requests made as part of the detailed IT& Programmes capital infrastructure investment plan for the financial year 2025/2026.

1.6   All current year activity and spend is tracked by the Head of IT Infrastructure within Dynamics F&O Project Management interface and tracked monthly as part of IT Infrastructure Board.

1.7   For further details on these, or any other items of spend within the plan for 2025/26, please contact the Head of IT Infrastructure, Marc Biondic.

2.0   Summary of activity:

2.1   **IT & Programmes requires investment of £1,480,000 in 25/26 to complete ALL the identified activity within the plan**.

2.2   **Additional capital budget is required for the following high value item of work (£1,175,000):**

2.2.1 *Laptop Replacement Programme - £1,175,000 (Line 223)*

As Council colleague and member laptops reach their end of life (5 years), IT & Programmes is required to conduct a rolling programme of activity to replace these devices to ensure service continuity and efficiency for users.

Over the next few years IT & Programmes is expecting to replace approx. 1,000 devices per annum. £1,175,000 is the investment required within 25/26 to ensure Council colleagues and members have equipment that meets the needs of the business but also remains supportable for IT & Programmes. As devices reach their supported lifespan (5 years) hardware failure rates increase which result in effort spent for support services as well as lost productivity for the end user.

This specific financial requirement has been discussed with Financial Business Partners and Finance Capital Accountants and is now included within this capital bid so the rolling replacements can commence in the new financial year.

2.3 **Existing reprofiled capital budget will be used to fund the following items of work (£90,000):**

2.3.1 *Wi-Fi Access Point replacements - £20,000*

Continue a rolling programme of Wi-Fi Access Point replacements. These access points provide staff and visitors access to the internet from Wi Fi enabled devices from all Council offices. In 25/26 30 Access Points at sites across the Council reach their stated "end of life" and require replacing with up-to-date equipment.

2.3.2 *Mobile Telephone Replacement Programme - £35k, Line 109*

Every year IT & Programmes Governance and Compliance staff are involved in a rolling project to replace end of life mobile phones used by approved business users.

This year the capital is required to replace devices due to go end of life within 25/26. This work goes hand in hand with an ongoing project to reduce corporate mobile phone provision generally across the userbase in favour of a Bring Your Own Device policy where safe and effective to do so.

2.3.3 *Datacentre modernisation - £10,000*

To support BCP Council Datacentre modernisation and provide suitable specialised shelving units as storage space for IT equipment spares (line 18).

2.3.4 *Wide Area network connectivity - £25,000 (lines 73-94)*

To provision new fibre runs between Beach Huts and Tourism offices along Bournemouth Seafront. An opportunity exists to connect multiple sites along the seafront with BCP owned fibre runs. The sites are currently connected through revenue funded wide area network circuits. Replacing these with BCP

owned fibre, with a one-off cost, is expected to save the Council up to £6,000 per annum.

2.4   <u>Additional one off Revenue budget (covered by one off business rates resources) is required for the following items of work (£215,000):</u>

2.4.1   *Public Services Telephone Network decommissioning - £50,000 (line 107)*

In January 2027 the UK will be retiring the old copper based Public Services Telephone Network, or PSTN.

Unmitigated, this event could potentially cause severe disruption to any services still reliant on the older PSTN infrastructure. These can include:

- Lines attached to service specific telephone numbers *OUTSIDE* of Teams Telephony or the Call Contact Centre.
- Lines attached to service specific devices or services, such as building alarms, lift alarms etc.

Starting in early 2024, IT & Programmes have been supporting BCPs preparedness for this event by identifying and making recommendations on where PSTN circuits are still in use across the Council.

So far, this audit has resulted in identification of approx. 800 PSTN lines from various departments and services. Approximately 400 of these lines are expected to be cancelled as are now surplus to requirements post service migration. £50,000 is requested to enable the procurement of alternative and appropriate digital ready telephone lines to support circumstances where migration has not been funded as part of service led modernisation by the departments themselves.

2.4.2   *Wide Area Network and Internet Capacity – 45,000 (lines 73-94)*

BCP Councils reliance on internet and wide area network connectivity is increasing. As more Council services either are delivered from, or to, the Internet then so does the need for appropriate bandwidth to service that demand.

- £45,000 To increase BCP Councils back-haul bandwidth over which all cloud and internet activity is delivered. Our metrics has shown that BCP now regularly hits its allocated bandwidth limits. Increasing this will ensure BCP can continue to deliver its internet facing services without issues arising to lack of available capacity.

2.4.3   *Service Management Replacement Tool Implementation - £50,000*

Council departments that deal with requests from internal customers (IT, HR, Finance etc) currently utilise a single ticket management system to log, track and deliver "I want" or "it's broken" style requests from Council Officers and Members. The contract for the current tool has reached its end (including

available extensions) and therefore we are required to procure a new product that will meet the demand management requirements of these departments. The primary user and contract lead is IT & Programmes.

Most of the funding needed to replace the tool is coming from IT Reserves. However, an additional £50k is required to support the project to implement and deliver the new tool before the existing contract expires in December 2025.

2.4.4 *Miscellaneous smaller revenue requests to support other end of life hardware and platform replacements - £70,000:*

- £22,000 – To support provision updated cyber security tooling that protects the Council from Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks (line 29).
- £10,000 – To implement an updated API between The Access Groups Synergy platform used by Children Services and connecting it to the BCP Councils data-lake, supporting the single vision of the customer.
- £18,000 – To fund consultancy required to support the ongoing modernisation of Geographical Information Systems (GIS).
- £20,000 – To provide additional consultancy from Puzzell, providers of the Councils Call Contact Centre software, to explore use of AI Chatbot functionality within the solution.