The Telephony project will procure and implement full replacement and modernisation of our contact centre technology and contact handling processes; focussed on initially increasing core operational stability, moving to full omni-channel and channel blending capabilities to improve the citizen experience. The project will also transition traditional telephony provision for staff to internet-based (IP) calling through Microsoft Teams and decommission existing technology and close related contracts.

1. *Introduction*

This project aims to improve both staff and citizen experience/satisfaction with improved contact centre functionality and reliability through the procurement and implementation of a market leading solution and connecting infrastructure with delivery partner support. We aim to modernise and improve the council's contact handling capabilities in alignment with the IT strategy and digital ambitions, by moving to fully hosted cloud solutions, reducing operational risk, increasing compliance and improving the Council's position for transformation. Replacing the contact centre solution is one of the critical enablers for the 22-27 Corporate Strategy and for the Common Activities Programme and contact handling savings.

2. *Why do we need to replace our contact centre solution? What are the drivers for change?*

The current telephony and contact centre contracts are due for renewal, we currently pay around £600k of annual costs per year and functionality updates are infrequent, or long out of support causing a lack of operational stability and resilience as well as limited opportunities for digital transformation. There is a need to increase BCC's compliance in key areas, as well as enabling more flexible, joined up and automated data handling. The replacement solution needs to provide contact channels that citizens 'expect and deserve', as well as meeting the needs of the future channel-shift strategy.

The instability and constraints of the current solution is heavily impacting Citizen Services and other teams who rely on the solution through:
- time lost managing and reporting technical issues
- remotely managing staff handling of the solution to maintain minimum viable standards
- re-keying data into non-integrated systems
- core functionality of the solution not working, creating costly workarounds
- limitations on functionality creating and necessitating additional manual processes

Key outcomes of the replacement solution include:
- increasing reliability and resilience by implementing fully cloud hosted telephony services with delivery partner support and improving business continuity provision
- full omni-channel solution, offering a range of contact channels for citizens and enabling a contact 'blending' approach for citizen services staff including fully integrated customer record management and user interface improvements
- improving the citizen experience and satisfaction; improving contact resolution time, reducing follow-up contact, offering more flexible contact options,

Therefore, in summary, the three main drivers for going out to the market to replace the contact centre solution are **modernisation, resilience and improving the citizen experience**

3. *Project Objectives*

The project objectives for the current Full Business Case Stage are:
1. Develop and sign off the Full Business Case including approval for necessary funding and resources for delivery stage, by May 22   **Status:** On Target
2. Complete tender and procurement activity through to contracting by June 22

The project objectives for the delivery stage are currently being developed through the FBC process.

4. *What approach is being taken and what are the timelines?*

- The project will be progressing with a fully compliant open OJEU tender process, as agreed at the Digital Transformation Projects Board (DTP) on 22nd December. The process will select and procure the vendor who best fits BCC's functional and non-functional requirements for the replacement contact centre solution (full omni-channel capability) and connecting infrastructure to enable the roll out of internet-based telephony for BCC staff (internal & external calling) as well as providing support in the implementation phase.

- Current agreed timelines are as follows:

Feb 22	March 22	April 22	May 22	June 22	July 22	Aug 22 >
		Full Business Case production	Full Business Case sign-off			
Tender pack production		Open OJEU procurement	Evaluation & award	Contract specification		Delivery stage (plan in development)

- All incumbent contracts are being tactically extended until March 2023 (Avaya/4Net) or September 23 (Virgin/Centrex) to ensure there is no lapse in provision.

- The ongoing/annual costs of the new contract will not come into force until financial year 23/24.

5. *Financial summary table*

The tables below summarise the costs and funding, split by one off and ongoing:

Telephony Project Cost Type	Amount (£m)	Funding Status & Source
One-off costs		
Full Business Case incl. Procurement & detailed Planning (Nov 21 - June 22)	£0.14	
Total FBC Stage Costs	**£0.14**	**Yes** Approved/ allocated as part of Digital Transformation Sep 2021 Cabinet paper
Delivery Stage Costs (July 22 -)		
Approx. One-off Technology Cost Total	£0.19	
Remaining Available Resourcing Total	£0.24	
Total Delivery Stage Costs	**£0.57**	
Total One-off Costs	**£0.57m**	
Estimated Annual/ Ongoing costs		
Estimated Per Annum cost	£0.55m	**No** Seeking approval as part of this paper. Funded from IT revenue budget/ costs of current contracts.
Total Revenue cost *(Over intended 7-year Contract Term)*	**£3.85m**	