

This report will be made
public on 9th July 2021

Hythe Town Council

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Report number F&GP **08/21**

To Hythe Town Council

Date 10 June 2021

Status **Non Exempt**

Responsible officer Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Subject **SCRIBE ACCOUNTS REPORT F&GP/08/21**

SUMMARY:

This report provides a recommendation for the transfer of use to an alternative accounts software package.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because:-

- a) Hythe Town Council is committed to improve efficiency for the users and transparency to the public.

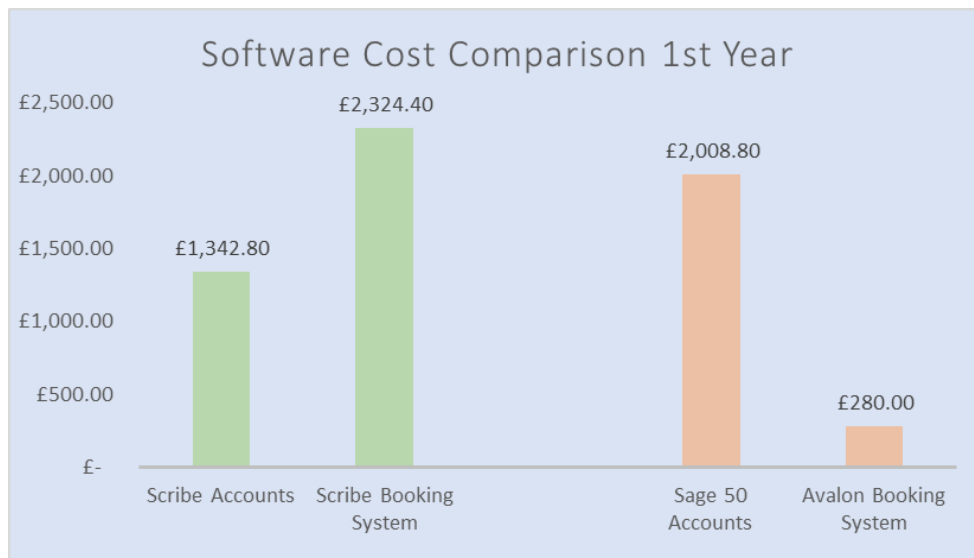
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note the report F&GP/06/21.

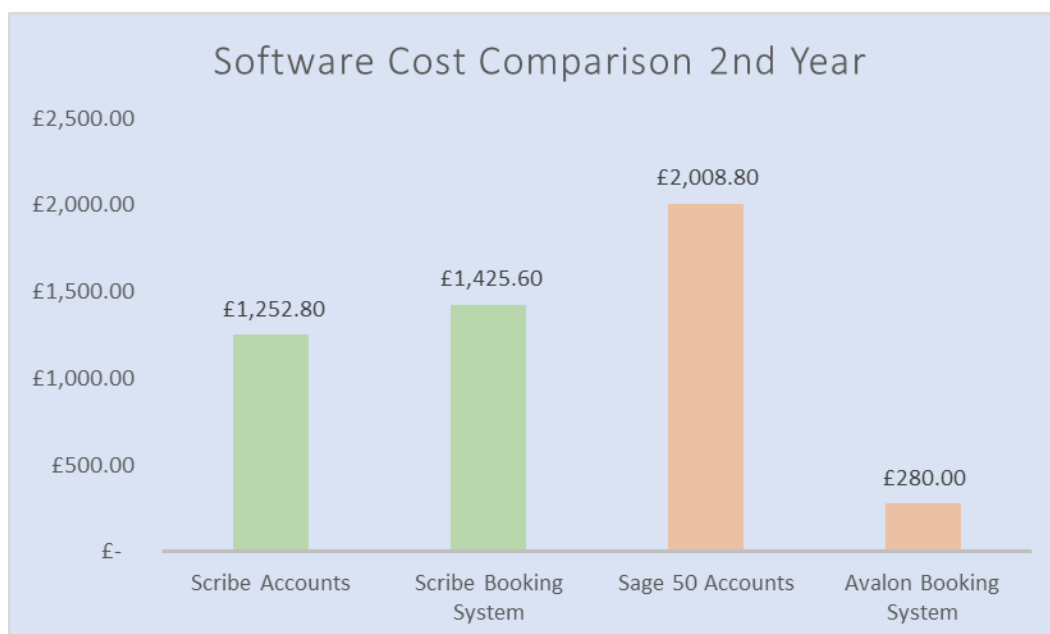
INTRODUCTION

The Council is currently using Sage 50 accounts as its accounts software, it has proven to be functional with the intended purpose of providing reports and recording financial transactions. We are planning to convert our accounting software from Sage 50 Accounts and Avalon Booking System to Scribe Accounts and Scribe Bookings as it is more suitable to use with the current Council's objectives.

Scribe Accounts Cost Comparison



Scribe shows a higher price for the first year due to set-up costs for Scribe Accounts and Scribe Booking System. Scribe Accounts has a one-off set-up cost of £716.40 with a 50% concession on Scribe Accounts of £626.40, Scribe Booking System also has a one-off set-up cost of £898.80 both including VAT. For Sage 50 Accounts and Avalon Booking System, only the subscription cost is represented.



Once set-up costs have been settled for Scribe in the first year, we can now only see the annual subscription cost for the second year for Scribe, Sage and Avalon. The total cost of Sage and Avalon is £2288.80. The total cost of Scribe Accounts and Scribe Booking System is £2678.40, Scribe is more expensive by £389.60 per annum. However, with the compatibility of Scribe Accounts and Scribe Bookings, it will improve work and time efficiency for finance and administration which will prove Scribe to be a reasonable cost.

Benefits of using Scribe Accounts and Scribe Bookings:

- Scribe is web-based software, can be accessed from home and office
- Scribe is purposely built for running Parish and Town Council accounts
- Reports produced will improve transparency for the Councillors and for the public
- Scribe Bookings can be integrated on the Hythe Town Council website for customers to request their own bookings and encourage customers to pay online
- Scribe Accounts is compatible with Scribe Bookings
- Automatic tracking of AGAR for the financial year-end
- Fully inclusive training available with no charge

Issues with Sage and Avalon:

- When producing reports in Sage 50 Accounts, report is converted to Excel to adjust figures for the month
- Sage 50 Accounts can be time-consuming when preparing for the financial year-end due to manually adjusting transactions to Excel
- Avalon Booking System is used by the administration team to record bookings from customers which can be time consuming when there are many bookings
- Avalon Booking System is incompatible for transferring data to Sage 50 Accounts
- Data from Avalon Booking System needs to be manually transferred to Sage to account for all the bookings received monthly.
- Time spent on correcting issues on the Avalon bookings system could be better spent by Officers on other functions.

We have looked at other financial software suitable for running Parish Councils such as Rialtas. However, Rialtas does not offer customers being able to set up their own bookings online and will therefore need to contact administration to request bookings. The total cost of Rialtas Accounts and Bookings is £3,910 with £399.00 extra charges for training.

Contractual Terms:

- Scribe Accounts and Scribe Bookings quote is valid from 10th June 2021 for 30 days with extra 7 days agreed by Scribe for Councillors approval.
- Scribe Accounts and Bookings is set to a rolling year contract and annual payment.
- Sage 50 Accounts is paid via monthly Direct Debit of £167.40 on a 30-Day rolling contract with no exit fees.
- Avalon Booking System contract has been paid for the year and will expire on the 13th December 2021. Giving time for the integration of a new system

Link for more information on Scribe Accounts and Bookings:

[Scribe Accounts - Purpose Built Software for Town Clerks](#)

SUMMARY

By transferring Hythe Town Councils accounting package from Sage to Scribe the booking system will be integrated and will automatically record funds. The public will be able to book activities such as Tennis and Bowls online thus reducing the need for cash transactions.

This will improve staff efficiency and reduce the risk of manual errors that could occur when transferring data from one package to another.

The Scribe package also produces an year end report for use with the Annual Governance Return.

RISK MANAGEMENT

A summary of the perceived risk follows;

Perceived Risk The Council continue with separate software packages for bookings and accounting and transfer figures manually between systems increasing the risk for manual errors.

Risk Low

Likelihood Low

Preventative Action Council Officers are trained to be competent with the use of new integrated software and a more robust system is implemented.

CONTACT OFFICER

If you have any queries about this report, please contact The Town Clerk of the Council

Tel: 01303 266152 or email Clerk@hythe-tc.gov.uk prior to the meeting.