**ODA PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 14th June 20233**

**Transition to a Paperless Council – Proposed schedule of equipment and support Introduction**

The Parish Council is aware of the need to move to a 98% “Paperless Office” because the vast (approx. 97%) majority of our communications are now on-line. Including all planning applications

**Rationale**

The benefits of such a change to a ‘Paperless Office’ are legion: a clear saving of Manager/ RFO time and Parish Council costs in terms of printing, (which could be better spent on other parish work); costs (stationery, printer ink, postage, etc); and equally as important is the environmental gain from not using vast quantities of unnecessary paper. The move will also enable us to consolidate the retention of confidential information in a single system.

Many local councils have already seen the benefit of moving to a “paperless office”. Northwest Leicestershire District Council has switched many paper-based functions over to electronic versions and now runs Council Meeting documents all electronically since 2019 all Members are provided with a laptop unless they prefer to use their own device. This year the devices are due to be replaced so members are being offered a choice of devices including laptops and tablets. The chair of the meeting still has a hard copy as it helps when manging the meeting and also any members that really need one such as those with medical issues. We also print a few hard copies as spares for the meeting in case there are any issues with devices. This should be the same for ODAPC.

LCC are also paperless, and they issue devices too with Councillors working off tablet computers. Nearly all the organisations we subscribe to / receive documents from are issuing them online. Therefore, the case is now compelling.

**Provision**

With each Parish Councillor having a tablet (a smaller version of a laptop) those electronic documents can be viewed and referred to (at council meetings or elsewhere) without the need for paper versions of the documents. The provision of tablets for councillors would also allow the Councillors to access their email address and paperwork online as the paperwork is stored on Microsoft share point. This is recommended as best practise.

**Costs and Specification**

In the light of previous discussions on this matter, the 2022/23 budget included the sum of £1000 which at the end of the finical year was put into reserves to obtain computer equipment. The bulk of which was based on purchasing several tablets at an approximate cost of £299 each.

Subsequent discussions with other councils have indicated that tablets operating on an Android operating system would be a more compatible with the e-mail service already used by council – Microsoft 365. A further benefit of using tablets with an Android operating system is that they are somewhat cheaper to purchase than Apple tablets.

In terms of cost, the following information was noted from Amazon website on June 5th, 2023:

Cost of possible tablet devices, all with 2-year guarantee (no discount for multibuy):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| £650 iPad mini-8.3” screen - 2021 spec iOS |  | x8 = £5200 |
| £319 iPad 10.2” screen - 2021 spec, iOS |  | x 8 = £2552 |
| £150 Samsung Galaxy Tab A7 lite 8.7” screen Android |  | x 8 = £1200 |
| £130 SGIN 10.1” screen Android  £220 Samsung Galaxy Tab A8 2022 3yrs guarantee |  | X 8 = £1040  X 8 = £1760 |
| £150 Lenovo Tab M10+ 10.6” screen (Android 12) |  | x 8 = £1200 |
| Plus, memory expansion card - circa £20 per tablet |  | x 8 = £160 |
| Plus, Microsoft Office 365 online budgeted for |  |  |
| Plus,Virus protection software subscription - included in Microsoft package |  |  |
| Plus, protective case – estimate £25 |  | x 8 = £200 |
| Plus, insurance |  |  |
| **FIRST YEAR COST (based on Android)** | | **£2000** |
| ONGOING ANNUAL COST | | £500 + Insurance cost |

From the above the likely first year cost of £2000 is above £1000 budgeted for.

The Manager will continue to use a Parish Council provided desktop. Required training on the use of the tablets has not been accounted for.

Council would need to budget for a new Manager computer in the future and replacement councillor tablets.

**PROPOSAL**

1. **The Council agrees to move to a 98% “Paperless Office” by the acquisition of 8 tablet devices and associated items as detailed above at a cost of circa £2000 in the first year.**

1. **The Manager to arrange for insurance for each tablet acquired including against theft & accidental damage.**
2. **If required Manager to arrange training to support setting up and councillor training on tablet use.**

**K Grove**

**Manager/R F O**