

REPORT 21.149 LAVERSTOCK AND FORD PARISH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: IT Upgrade Cloud-based systems

DATE: 14th October 2021

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1. Report Summary

A report to councillors on proposed changes to IT systems and data storage.

2. Background

At the Parish Council meeting on 19th July, the Parish Council agreed to establish an IT working group to investigate possible improvements to current IT systems, consisting of Cllrs Maskell and McDonald, and the Deputy Clerk.

3. Summary

The IT working group agreed a specification of requirements and seven companies were invited to submit their proposed solutions. One failed to respond. All six responses recommended migration to Microsoft 365.

At a meeting of the IT working group on 6th September, the six responses received were considered. One was rejected at this stage due to concerns over their ability to provide support.

The group identified additional questions that required answers, which were distributed to the remaining five. Two failed to respond.

The three remaining proposals were considered at a meeting of the IT working group on 4th October.

4. Conclusions

The monthly costs for licences and backup were similar in all three cases. The provision of support and training, and the facilities provided for migration led the group to favour the quote provided by Hive Communications, based in Old Sarum. Cllr Maskell and the Deputy Clerk had both discussed areas of the proposals with Hive during the process, and were impressed by their knowledge and professionalism.

A cost breakdown for the services from Hive is :-

Monthly Costs: £202.60 (licences and backup)

Set Up: £1205 (£450 to setup 365 for all users, including .gov.uk email addresses, £455 for domain purchase .gov.uk and two year registration, £300 365 Training webinar)

Migration costs: £2720 estimate (data migration costs will be charged at £85 per hour so this estimate is based on forecast of 2 hours per user – some will take longer and some less. Some users may be happy to migrate their own data after viewing the training webinar)

Laptops : £1240 each (including build and setup)

Helpdesk support : £85 per hour

The recommendations below allow for some flexibility in these figures.

5. Recommendations

That the council resolves to appoint Hive Communications to set up and provide Cloud Based Office 365 services to Laverstock and Ford Parish Council for an initial fee of up to £1500 and up to £250 per month thereafter.

That the council considers the provision of migration assistance, helpdesk assistance and new laptops in accordance with the budget available.