

Agenda Item 14 – .gov domain and new website

Recommendation – It is recommended that the Parish Council appoint Active Council as the provider and host of the new .gov domain and website and approve the set up and ongoing costs set out in this paper.

Following on from the October meeting where transition to a .gov domain and a new website were approved in minute 1010/12, the Parish Clerk has considered the three quotes provided, only one of which meets the specification in full. The Clerk met with the potential provider, Active Council, online to see a demonstration of the proposed website and ask questions to clarify some points in the proposal.

Key points to note:

- The website is easier to use and amend than the current Word Press website.
- Creation, re-ordering, amending and archiving is simpler.
- Uploading documents can be done straight from the file folders rather than uploading each one separately to a media file before adding to the website.
- It will include a direct link to the Mid-Devon Planning Portal for planning applications and decisions removing the need for the Clerk to add these in separately.
- Active Council can take on the hosting of the current Microsoft account, add the .gov domain to the account and manage it for us for no extra cost. This will also enable a smooth transfer of emails and no loss of emails from the .org account, with any emails sent to that account automatically redirected to the new .gov account. This addresses the concerns raised by Councillors around any potential loss of access to emails.
- The Parish Council will pay the Microsoft fees annually to Active Council by Bank Transfer rather than monthly by credit card.
- Timescale – once instructed the provider can complete the work to set up and go live within 1-2 months and are happy to work to the Parish Council's timescale.
- Full ongoing support is provided within the costs quoted.

Costs:

Year one set up and support: £1,534 plus VAT – this includes setting up the website with 10-15 pages of information, the domain registration, all emails set up and 12 months Microsoft costs.

Item	Recurrence	Price (ex VAT)
WCS Software & Setup	One Off	£455.00
WCS Support (Yr1) inc .gov.uk Domain	Annual	£274.00
.gov.uk Domain Registration	One Off	£50.00
12 x Microsoft Business Basic Email License & Support	Annual	£660.00
1 x Microsoft Business Standard License & Support	Annual	£140.00
Email Setup	One Off	£55.00
Less Cabinet Office Grant	One Off	£100.00
TOTAL (Ex VAT):		£1,534.00

Additional pages can easily be set up by the Clerk or, if requested, this can be done by the provider at a cost of £40.00 per hour.

Please note that the £100 Government funding is only available in this financial year.

Ongoing Support and Hosting: £1,074 per annum plus VAT. This may be subject to annual price changes i.e. if Microsoft raise their annual fees which, as currently, will be allowed for in the Precept.

Item	Recurrence	Price (ex VAT)
WCS Support (including a .gov.uk renewal)	Annual	£274.00
12 x Microsoft Business Basic Email License & Support	Annual	£660.00
1 x Microsoft Business Standard License & Support	Annual	£140.00
TOTAL (Ex VAT):		£1074.00

The prices above are based on the full basic package for 12 Councillors including all the 365 applications. A saving of £120 per annum can be made by providing email/outlook only rather than the full 365 package – many individuals already have their own Microsoft subscriptions that provide access to Microsoft applications.

Currently the Parish Council budgets £1,000 per annum for website and IT support and £925 for Microsoft subscriptions and domain renewal (£1,925 in total). £600 was paid last year for website support, Microsoft charges are £829 per annum and domain renewal around £25 every 2 years. An annualised cost of £1441. Switching would reduce the annual ongoing costs to the Parish Council by around £367 per annum.

As year one would be a transition period there would be some costs for the old and the new systems. Additional Year 1 costs can be funded from the Capital Budget set aside for Office Equipment and CCTV (the upgrade for the Village Hall CCTV having been funded from Reserves).

Debbie Bird
Clerk to Willand Parish Council
October 2024