

Title	Proposal for IT Infrastructure
Authors	Burial Ground Clerk
Meeting	Finance Committee Meeting – XX October 2024

Proposal: Approve purchase of 2-off Dell Latitude Laptops (max budget £1000 excl VAT) and additional Microsoft Licence (Budget £10.30 monthly)

The Assistant Clerk and Facilities Assistant laptops were purchased in early 2020, at a cost of approximately £1000 each.

The Assistant Clerk Laptop, is now end of life – the most used port, HDMI is no longer working optimally, which is vital for Planning Committee meetings.

Further, the Burial Ground Clerk has been using their personal laptop, as the position was originally temporary, and piggy backing off the Assistant Clerk’s Microsoft 365 licence. Issues relating to the current set up include:

- Data protection issues. The Parish Council’s data us being held on an unsecured personal laptop. The ICO provides a document on “[Bring Your Own Device](#)” which lays out the steps and measures which should be in place to support the use of someone’s personal device. The cost and duty of complying with this measures to the council are more than likely to outweigh the cost of purchasing a stand-alone device, which can be handed over to any future user.
- Data fidelity issues. Piggybacking off the Assistant Clerk’s MS365 account not only contravenes the Microsoft policy, but it is possible that the “same user” is trying to modify the same document at the same time. Equally in arranging meetings, both parties are being alerted to the other person’s meeting invitations etc and makes for more confusing mailbox management. It should be noted that MS365 account is required as all of our data was transferred to a sharepoint in 2020 and is still managed this way.

Whilst some may consider that a £300 generic laptop and replace every 2years is an appropriate use of public monies, the £1000 laptop has worked well and been carried around by successive Assistant Clerks for almost 5 years before reaching the end of its life, justifying it’s £200 per year price tag.

On the recommendation of the director of [FibreFly](#), I have purchased products from Dell Outlet “Scratched and Dented” or “Certified Refurbished” categories for a number of Councils I have worked for, and indeed myself, always maintaining the minimum specification of:

- Latitude Models
- At least 16GB Ram
- At least i5 or i7 processor

- At least 15” screen – which is then accompanied generally by a keyboard with separate number pad.

The stock rotates and changes regularly, so it is impossible to identify an exact model in advance, however budgeting a maximum of £500 per machine (excluding VAT) and realistically expecting it to last 3-4 years under normal parish council use is a realistic use pattern. A great saving on what the original machines were purchased for. Additionally from time to time, some of the stock may even have an additional 12% off and will be dependent on the day / stock available.

Review of the net position to date £1000 remains in the budget for “office equipment”. When the budget was set for this financial year, there was no intention to create a permanent burial ground clerk position, and this £1000 budget is allocated for a rolling programme of replacing old technology.

Considering the above propose, Laptop for the Burial Ground Clerk is purchased from the excess from burial ground income for this year rather than the £1000 budget available, we operate with a surplus each year and this is a legitimate burial ground cost for a now permanent position. The position of Burial Ground Clerk allows for working from home, where I already provide my own office equipment such as monitor, desk chair, desk etc including a dell dock, to enable me to safely work, meeting all requirements for extended use of display screen equipment. A machine such as that listed will allow it to work with all equipment I already own and incur no additional costs to the Council.

Similarly, the Assistant Clerk would benefit from a similar machine. However I would also recommend on the matter of health and safety, that a formal assessment be made of the way the machine is used and consideration be given to providing them (and the Clerk in fact) a proper separate screen to prevent injury or strain from using the laptop screen only for extended periods of time. The £1000 budget therefore allowing for a replacement laptop for the Assistant Clerk and potentially separate screens for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

Going forward, I further propose to this committee, whilst considering budgets for the coming years, that the £1000 as per this years budget remains in every year, with a specific EMR being set-up for any monies remaining at the end of year specifically for office equipment. Also to schedule the Facilities Assistant Laptop next year (2025-2026) and the Clerk’s the year after (2026-2027) as a minimum as the machines will all be over 5years old at that point.

Further, consideration will need to be given to a rolling programme of changing the mobile phones, as the oldest ones will soon be 5 years old also.

£1000 per year should be sufficient to replace 1 laptop and 1 mobile phone each year, across 4 members of staff, this makes a 4 year rolling cycle of replacement, which I believe offers excellent value to the public purse.