WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

13 MAY – AGENDA ITEM

Proposal to subscribe to Scribe Accounts

As a parish councillor with a neighbouring Parish I have experience of how that Parish, and other parish councils, have successfully used the Scribe accounting systems.

Currently, Walton Parish Council use a spreadsheet with a number of unlinked sheets to hold the accounts. There are pages that hold payments and receipts as well as pages that have been created to populate items such as the bank reconciliation, financial officer's report, monthly budget etc. When completing a VAT reclaim this is done by clerical submission following a search to find the payments that have included VAT which are then copied to a different spreadsheet from which to make the return.

The Scribe system uses a cloud based system which will be set up for us and can then create reports at the touch of a button and from a specific date range. It can be accessed by multiple people, for example an account can be set up for each councillor that wishes to have an account so that they can then view the accounts in real time.

Scribe Accounts provide free unlimited training and support which provides reassurance around continuity.

I believe that moving to the Scribe system will be useful should grant funding be sought. It demonstrates auditable controls and transparency with GDPR compliance as well as bringing about other improvements in the system as detailed below.

Cost : initial one-off set up cost which includes transferring all data £348.00 with monthly payments of £24.00

It is my recommendation that we should adopt the system as soon as possible.

Ian Blythe - Clerk to Walton Parish Council

	Current/Excel	Scribe
Set up	Already set up for 2023-24 but requires the spreadsheet to be set up again form a template each year	One off set up cost from Scribe £348
Built in data protection(GDPR) and data recovery/back-up	Lacks compliance with GDPR. Relies on data copied to memory stick.	Fully compliant with data protection requirements and has cloud based back-up

Bank Reconciliation	Has to be carried out at the start of each month and cannot have any new payments entered onto the system before the reconciliation is run or errors occur	Can be run at any time as payments are date stamped rather than occurring when they are entered. E.g. a recurring payment can be set to come out on a specific date
Ongoing Cost	Free as already set up	Monthly subscription £24
Payments	Each year payments are entered as they are made – including company, bank details, etc	Payments made to beneficiaries already set up from previous years are pre-populated with their details
Budgeting	Difficult to create a new budget under a specific heading – e.g. maintenance might have benches and noticeboards but requires playground to be added, requires re working of spreadsheet	Easy to set up budget headings and then have cost centres associated with them.
	Income does not automatically go back into a cost centre	Income can be set to go back into a cost centre
Receipts	Invoices need to be created manually	Invoices can automatically be created
Payment of invoices	No facility to store invoice against reference number	Each invoice can be scanned and attached to the payment made
AGAR	Report has to be created manually	Automatically created
User	Requires some knowledge of how I have set up the spreadsheet, would be an issue in the event of illness, incapacity or change of clerk.	Training can be provided by Scribe to allow another person to use the system if necessary.
	Only one person can access the spreadsheet or it can lock others out	Multiple users can access the system