

RMCC - Recommended to move to Office365 - October 2024

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Introduction: In our continued efforts to enhance the security and compliance of our communications, it has become essential to review and update the current practices regarding email usage among our community councillors. Councillors are using personal email accounts, which poses several risks and challenges.

Recommendation: We propose providing all community councillors with Office 365 accounts. This recommendation aims to address three critical areas:

1. **Compliance with UK GDPR:**
 - **Data Security:** Office 365 offers robust data protection features that ensure all communications and data are stored and managed securely, meeting the stringent requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
 - **Data Control:** With Office 365, we have better control and oversight of the data shared among councillors. This centralised management helps in ensuring that all personal data is handled appropriately and reduces the risk of data breaches.
 - **Subject Access Requests:** Protect councillors from data subject access requests on their personal email accounts by ensuring all official communications are conducted through a secure, managed platform.
2. **Enhanced Cybersecurity Practices:**
 - **Enhanced Security:** Office 365 offers advanced security measures, reducing unauthorised access and cyber threats.
 - **Standardised Email:** Consistent security policies ensure all councillors adhere to best practices for cyber hygiene.
3. **Protection from Unfriendly Emails:**
 - **Shield from Harassment:** Office 365 includes advanced spam filtering and email management tools that can help shield councillors from receiving unfriendly or hostile emails from angry members of the public.
 - **Professional Boundaries:** Using dedicated Office 365 accounts helps maintain a clear separation between personal and professional communications, providing additional protection for councillors.

Licences Required: To implement this update, we will need the following licenses:

- **12 Office 365 Business Basic licenses:** These will be provided to all community councillors to ensure access to essential Office 365 services, including email, online storage, and collaboration tools. The cost is £4.90 per user/month.
- **2 Office 365 Business Premium licenses:** These will be allocated to the clerks, providing additional features such as advanced security, compliance tools, and desktop versions of Office applications. The cost is £18.10 per user/month.

Current Situation: Our community councillors use personal email accounts for official communications. This practice has several drawbacks:

- **Lack of Control:** We need more control over the security and management of the data than personal accounts.
- **Inconsistent Security:** Personal email accounts may not have the necessary security measures, making them more vulnerable to cyber-attacks.
- **Compliance Risks:** Using personal emails increases the risk of non-compliance with UK GDPR due to the lack of centralised data management.
- **Vulnerability to Harassment:** Personal email accounts are more susceptible to receiving unfriendly or hostile emails, which can be stressful and disruptive for councillors.

Benefits of Office 365 Accounts:

- **Security:** Enhanced protection against phishing, malware, and other cyber threats.
- **Compliance:** Better adherence to data protection regulations.
- **Efficiency:** Streamlined communication and collaboration among councillors.
- **Support:** Access to professional support and regular updates from Microsoft, ensuring our systems remain secure and up-to-date.
- **Harassment Protection:** Better tools to manage and filter emails, reducing the impact of unfriendly communications.

Cost Details:

Microsoft 365:

- **Microsoft 365 Business Premium NCE Commercial:** £18.10 per month per license (£36.20 total for 2 licenses)
- **Microsoft 365 Business Basic NCE Commercial:** £4.90 per month per license (£58.80 total for 12 licenses)

Note: These prices are based on a 12-month commitment with monthly payments. Monthly licenses without the annual commitment are approximately 20% higher.

Support:

- **Monthly End User Support:** £15.00 per month (covers 12 Business Basic users). This includes telephone and remote support only.

Optional Backup:

- **Datto SaaS Protection:** £2.70 per month per mailbox (£32.40 total for 12 Business Basic mailboxes). This is in addition to 2 existing licenses for Clerks' mailboxes and SharePoint.

Total Monthly Cost: £142.40 (before VAT) for all licenses

Conclusion: To protect our councillors and the sensitive information they handle, we must transition to using Office 365 accounts. This move will ensure we comply with UK GDPR, uphold the highest cybersecurity standards, and provide a safer communication environment for our councillors.