

REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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ROLL OUT of MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 to COUNCILLORS

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To seek approval to the roll out of Microsoft Office 365 to all Councillors to deal with insecure and complex methods of accessing Council email from personal devices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That preparatory training sessions be arranged together with and support for individual Members on the use of Microsoft Office 365 by 31st March so that all will be on the system by the time of the next Annual Council meeting.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To enable a more efficient and secure way of working.

ISSUE

1. The Council is currently running on premise Exchange 2013 Server cluster for Members' email. This has presented challenges when it comes to providing mobile connectivity to email. Due to Public Sector network (PSN) security requirements Members have to connect by a virtual private network (VPN) and then use ActiveSync or equivalent on their mobile device to get their Council email.
2. This two-step process although secure has proved quite inconvenient. Although ActiveSync without VPN is not currently blocked it is not supported by Liberata. Mimecast is an alternative solution which could be used for accessing email more seamlessly; however, this solution does not include calendar functionality and so is not used by Members. Therefore, we have a situation where many Members are resorting to personal email to conduct Council business. This in itself represents a security risk of data inadvertently getting into the wrong hands.
3. At the same time Members are now expecting greater flexibility in the way they access Council information. It has become clear that the Council's aging VPN infrastructure is holding this

back. Also increasingly, as has become commonplace in organisations across the private and public sector, they want to be able to use the same devices at work that they use at home, and they do not want to be limited to one device.

4. To achieve both the flexibility and security of access to Council email we are proposing to migrate all Members to Microsoft Office 365. This will allow them to access their Council emails from any device from any location providing there is internet connectivity. Microsoft Office 365 is a cloud based solution which seamlessly coordinates familiar programmes such as Outlook, Word, Excel, etc.
5. It offers anytime, anywhere access to email, important documents and contacts on almost any device—including PCs, iPhones, Android phones, and BlackBerry smartphones. It frees you to work where and when you choose, letting you respond to important requests right away, from almost any location.
6. Last year at the behest of the former Scrutiny Management Team 10 Members from all parties volunteered to take part in a pilot in the use of Microsoft Office 365. Feedback gathered in January 2018 was very positive with participants reporting it easy and convenient to use. The proposal is now to roll this out to all Members as recommended by the Scrutiny Management Team.
7. Training sessions will be held and initial support for each councillor on an individual basis will be provided by Liberata IT so that all Members including any elected for the first time in May will be on the new system by the time of the next Annual Council meeting.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy:	The proposed change is in line with the Council's Strategic Plan and Digital Strategy.
Financial:	The cost for the additional licences required is £1926 which will be met from existing IT budgets.
Legal:	None arising directly from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising directly from this report.
Health and Safety:	None arising directly from this report.
Sustainability:	None arising directly arising from this report.
Community Safety:	None arising directly from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	None arising directly from this report.