

Committee	FULL COUNCIL
Date	15 April 2024
Agenda Item	10

To consider secure emails for councillors

This subject has been visited before, and councillors were not happy with what was provided, and therefore continued to use their personal emails. However, GDPR rules and the ICO must be followed, and there are concerns particularly when councillors are viewing all council emails on their personal devices using personal email addresses, and even more so, when the councillor leaves the council, as to how the data is safely removed from the device.

One way of dealing with this would be to set up .gov.uk email addresses for all councillors. Our IT provider has experience of doing this for other councils, and would be best placed to do this for us. This would just be for the emails, and we can maintain our .org.uk website, and staff email addresses.

Our IT provider explains:

In terms of making them as secure as possible, I think we should for sure stick with Microsoft 365 for this. We can set up 2 factor Authentication (councillors would require a code from their phones to sign into new devices) and this should suffice. We provide this service to a lot of town & parish councils and we have never (touch wood!) had any incidents of emails being compromised

In terms of costs for this project, I will outline these below;

1. Setup cost – 2/3 hours of IT Support labour at your standard rate. (£50 per hour)
2. Annual cost – the annual cost for the gov.uk domain name is £60 per year (not much I can do about that I'm afraid, this price is set by the Home Office)
3. Monthly cost – the monthly charges for the emails would be £4.50 per user per month.

In terms of how the councillors would access these, I would recommend them using the online mailbox by going to <https://outlook.office.com/mail/>. This is relatively straight forward, and is the easiest way of accessing. Of course, we are here via phone if any councillors needed help with setup.

If a councillor was to leave, or a new one be elected then we can simply back up the mailbox to the server (so we have a record if needed) and then delete the mailbox and license, saving you £4.50 per month. Or, if a councillor leaves and a new one is elected we can re-use that license for the new councillor, meaning the price won't go up.

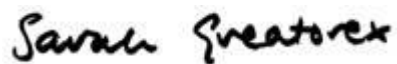
Rest assured that we've done about 5 of these switches to .gov.uk secure emails in the past year for various parish / town councils so we know the process very well and what will happen along the way!

Contact has also been made with BDC and EALC, but although they gave us some links to information on how to do this, they would not carry out the process for us.

Costs

Set up	£150
Annual cost for .gov.uk	£60
Annual cost for 12 email addresses	£648

Recommendation: that HTC goes down this route for security reasons, and takes the cost from the computer maintenance budget.



S Greateorex
Town Clerk