

Appendix 2 – Benefits of MS365

Microsoft 365 (MS365)

Microsoft 365 is a bundle of services including everything in the Office 365 subscription, plus several other services such as Windows 10 Enterprise and the Security and Compliance features in one simplified subscription package.

Microsoft Office 365

Microsoft Office 365 is a cloud-based suite of productivity apps such as Outlook, Word, Excel, and more. A fully integrated collaboration platform to enable a digital workforce to work more efficiently from any location on any device. The product would include a subscription based pricing model that would allow the Council to review the licenses it required, access the latest version of the Office apps and pay the appropriate cost each year. The product would provide the necessary tools to increase collaboration and productivity between staff and reduce cost by providing our workforce with tools to do their job more efficiently.

MS365 Features and Benefits

The introduction of Office 365 and its associated tools and infrastructure will bring the following benefits:-

Empower workforce & support modern working

The way Microsoft Office is used in the workplace hasn't changed much in ten years. The workforce has transformed in that time with digital and smarter working. Office 365 brings a platform that reflects, supports and drives modern working practices.

Teams

Reflects the structure of the organization, not technology. It allows each team and department to have their own working space that is designed to integrate communication and information that they need, to make it easy to allocate and track tasks and workflows, to create their own knowledge areas. This in itself can have a significant impact on the service provided to residents as information on-line can be much wider, facilitating self-servicing, reducing demand on officers and the contact centre. By placing the right tools in the hands of all colleagues, it will spark innovation.

Office 365 is designed to allow colleagues and teams to be self-sufficient.

Anywhere access

Having a cloud based infrastructure will allow access to documents, spreadsheets, calendars, emails, etc. from anywhere, anytime and any device with an Internet connection.

Access of a wide variety of devices

Office 365 is supported on a wide range of devices, including Windows PCs, Apple Macs, iPads, tablets and smartphones. This freedom of device choice allows colleagues to choose the product best suited to their needs, and also gives potential for cheaper devices with same functionality.

The tools to manage mobile devices are built into MS365 and will support some element of Bring Your Own Device should the use comply with Information Governance policies.

There is a time and cost saving as the current resources will not be required to set up devices.

The mobile functionality is built into Office 365 which means a better and more streamlined experience for colleagues.

Single integrated platform

All the elements of Office 365 are integrated leading to reduced time required to achieve tasks. A Forrester report commissioned by Microsoft found an average time saving of 2.5hrs per week for knowledge based worker. Across the workforce, and over the period of a year, these savings are very significant – freeing colleagues to focus on adding value and providing better service.

A single login means all the tools you need are automatically available. The integration means that, for example, if composing an email, it is shown whether the recipient is available for instant messaging, and this is launched directly – nudging the behaviors of colleagues and improving communication and productivity; encouraging agile working practices.

Collaboration

In Office 365, it is possible for multiple people to work on the same document simultaneously, making it much easier and simpler to collaborate as there is no need to send versions around participants and the inevitable editing/collating responses element is removed.

It is simple to collaborate with people in your own team, own organisation, partner organisations or anyone that would need to be involved in a project, discussion or activity. This support for collaborative working is key to achieving good outcomes when working together. The current tools are cumbersome and not always intuitive (or suitable), and cause frustration within the workforce. The integrated collaboration tools will rectify this.

With easier and clearer file management, it is much more possible to have a single version of the truth for a document - no need to have multiple instances of documents which can lead to inconsistency and confusion.

Increased storage

Users will get 100Gb of email storage. Currently the standard limit is 500mb on our current email system.

Aligns with Smarter Working Initiatives

The ability to access files and information from anywhere and on multiple devices supports a variety of working scenarios, which underpins the building strategy/plans to make best use of our office buildings.

Data Centre

Office 365 has cloud based elements that will reduce the need for on-site infrastructure and support. This means less money will need to be spent on internal hardware servers, a reduction in the burden on staff to manage, maintain and update servers, and will reduce the energy requirements and costs for having hardware on site.

Microsoft provides SLAs on uptime and availability, shifting the responsibility from the ICT service, reducing pressure and workload on ICT colleagues.

Microsoft operate Data Centres within the European Union, they are backed up by multiple redundant data centres and have excellent availability statistics.

Most modern tools for the job

The Office 365 subscription model means that Dover will always have access to the latest versions of software, ensuring secure operation and being in a position to exploit the benefits of any new developments as they become available. This will equip the workforce with the best tools for their jobs.

Having the latest versions of software will go towards mitigating the risks of cyber attacks.

Intranet/Internet

The SharePoint platform, on which Office 365 is based, could replace our current Intranet and Internet. Each team can easily manage their own area of the Intranet ensuring information is relevant and up to date.

Video conferencing/instant messaging

Office 365 comes with Skype for Business, which is a well understood and simple to use video conferencing system and instant messaging service (soon to be replaced by 'Teams'). Its simplicity and ubiquitous availability will encourage more collaborative working and reduce or remove the need for staff to travel to meetings - both within and outside the district, saving time and travel costs.

The wider use of the inbuilt communication tools is also likely to reduce the need for telephone calls and their associated costs.

Resource booking

Office 365 has inbuilt resource planning and booking tools which make arranging meetings much easier, reducing administration effort and time.

Project Management

Office 365 includes Microsoft Planner which provides a project management tool to support better delivery of projects in the Council. Because all the tools are integrated, allocating tasks, monitoring progress and reporting is much simplified. It may reduce the need for expensive Microsoft Project licenses.

Familiarity/Continuity

The main tools in Office 365 are well known to colleagues, so there is no big shock in software change at changeover. It is possible to introduce new functionality gradually, to minimise training needs and culture shock.

Audit capability

The EU General Data Protection Regulation places an obligation on organisations like ours to use 'appropriate technical and organisational measures' to protect data. There are extensive and powerful auditing and monitoring tools in MS365 to manage this. This enables the organisation to understand where/how/when Office 365 is used where activity is and to identify where improvements can be made.

Licensing cost grow/shrink

The licensing model is annual and per user - so the costs will grow/shrink in line with the actual needs of the Council.

Information Governance

Information security and the ability to comply with GDPR is built in from the ground up in MS365. The platform contains tools that will allow the council to demonstrate good practice and provide evidence of compliance with the GDPR Accountability principle and 'Privacy by Design' concept. Tools are available to monitor information stored, to report on compliance of information, to properly categorise files for sensitivity and if required, to actively manage information compliance by enforcing "delete by dates" and other GDPR obligations.

Given that GDPR fines can amount to £20m, not to mention the impact on data subjects of data leaks and reputational damage to the Council, it is clear that these tools are increasingly important.

Sophisticated data loss prevention and information distribution tools built into Office 365 prevent inappropriate sharing of categorised documents, reducing the risk of data leak.

Emails can also be encrypted end-to-end to ensure privacy. The cloud technology and contractual obligations offered by both Microsoft are suitable for processing Personally

Identifiable Information (PII) and/or Special Category Data, as long as the service is properly configured and used responsibly by staff.

Credential Security

Multi-Factor Authentication will be used to reduce the very real risk of credential theft and account compromise. With all data in the cloud, if a user account or device is compromised, the scope for problems is much greater. Access can be from anywhere in the world at any time of day. Multi-Factor Authentication effectively mitigates this risk.

Spam and Phishing

Phishing is the term used to describe an email that tries to trick someone into revealing sensitive information - usernames, passwords, bank details. Often, there may be an urgent message inviting someone to click on a link or open an attachment. The council receives 1000's of these sort of emails every day and EKS filter almost all of them out.

Research on Office 365 in the cloud, evaluation of a trial environment and conversations with neighbouring authorities has given reassurance that Microsoft services are enterprise grade and can be used to reduce this risk.