

Response to Member Questions/Suggestions:

	Issue/Concern Raised	GBC response
1.	Implementation of Microsoft 365 including specific training for Members on its use.	The rollout of Microsoft 365 will continue over the coming months and arrangements will be made with Members on their individual migrations. As part of the process, training will be arranged at a suitable time.
2.	Provision of improved hardware – iPads are very restrictive. Consideration of a change from iPads to windows based platforms and devices to enable IT to access devices remotely to resolve issues but also provide greater range of packages (Word, Excel etc.). Consideration of Laptops/Surface Pro (or similar device).	The original intention of providing iPads for Members and Officers was to replace printed report papers with the electronic equivalent in the Modern.Gov app while at in person committee meetings. With the transition to online meetings as a result of the pandemic the demands placed on the equipment are significantly different to what was originally intended. Keeping open a video conference application at the same time as reading reports in modern.gov is difficult on a small screen. Furthermore, limitations in iPadOS (for privacy) limits the use of the camera to foreground applications only, so any member connected to the meeting but reading papers on modern.gov cannot be seen by attendees. An assessment will be made on the suitability and financial impact of alternative hardware.
3.	Provision of improved hardware – additional monitors/screens to assist virtual meetings, headset, keyboards, etc. Providing ability to see the agenda and meeting on separate screens.	An assessment will be made on the benefits of additional hardware along with the financial impact.
4.	Concerns regarding the reliability of the e-mail server. A number of Members have commented about lack access to e-mails creating a backlog and raising concerns about missed casework	The core email server has not suffered any downtime for a considerable period of time, but reports from Members with e-mail problems have usually been related to local issues with the SecureMail iPad app. Once Members are moved to M365 the Outlook app will be used instead of SecureMail and will hopefully improve reliability.

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5.	Redirection of council e-mails to personal e-mail accounts or access to e-mails on personal devices.	<p>There are a number of legal and data protection issues with council e-mail being forwarded to personal e-mail accounts. Co-mingling of personal and council e-mail brings personal e-mail accounts in scope for Freedom of Information searches, puts council data at risk of unauthorised access on external e-mail systems for which the council does not have a legally enforceable contract, and could result in accidental breaches due to human error (confusion because council and personal e-mail is in the same place).</p> <p>Access to Microsoft 365 e-mail from personal devices will be preferred rather than forwarding to personal accounts.</p>
6.	Provision of remote access to council systems, including Modern.gov is lacking. Implementing a VPN access to GBC Servers for Members.	Remote access to Modern.Gov via the Pulse Secure VPN is already possible. Training on how to access this can be built into the members training programme for IT. There is also a Windows 10 version of the Modern.Gov app which can be used to access papers from a windows device which doesn't require VPN access.
7.	Virtual Meetings – additional training to support Members outside of committee meetings to enable them to set up their own virtual meetings within their constituency.	Training on M365 including how to set up virtual meetings will be arranged.
8.	<p>Social media – exploring ways in which social media can be used at a 'macro' level to keep constituents informed on area specific issues but also to enable them to raise concerns.</p> <p>Training to be provided to Members on the safe use of Social media.</p>	<p>It is possible to target social media at specific areas, but only on Facebook. The facility is not currently available via Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn, for example.</p> <p>Budget would also be required - not a substantial one, but to target specific geographical areas is a charged service on Facebook.</p> <p>It is simple to do. During the autumn when there were concerns over the rate of increase of Covid cases in a specific ward, we identified a road in the middle of that ward and targeted Facebook messages at users whose address was given as within 1 mile of that road. The user can specify the radius they would like the messaging to reach and the charge varies depending on distance specified.</p> <p>The process for this can be included in training for Members on the safe use of social media, which the Communications Team will be happy to facilitate.</p>

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9.	Assistance to be provided to enable Members to collect resident feedback in a more straightforward way i.e. through use of surveys etc.	There are a number of easy to use and simple survey platforms available online. The Communications Team would be happy to work with Members on formulating survey questions, setting up surveys and promoting them via social media.
10.	Exploration of a confidential case management system to assist Members in managing their caseload	<p>The imminent introduction of Microsoft 365 (365), and the Teams package that sits alongside this, will provide an opportunity to review integrated case management functionality to members. As 365 and Teams will provide new tools that will be of great use to Members it is also expected to take a few months for Members to fully utilise the product and understand how it can be used.</p> <p>It is suggest that once 365 and Teams is embedded further investigatory work is undertaken on the software on the market, which integrates within the Teams environment to evaluate the costs and benefits.</p>
11.	Review of the council website is required – a number of constituents have raised issues about the ease of finding information on the council website.	<p>The corporate website is under continuous review by the Digital Team working with our colleagues within service departments. We have mechanisms in place on every page of the website and on all our online forms to ensure residents, visitors and businesses have a way of providing their feedback.</p> <p>In January 2021, 1,268 pieces of customer feedback were received about our online services, 90% of those rated our services 4-5* out of 5. Regular website content reviews are completed to ensure our content is fit for purpose, easy to find, navigate and accessible. The council's website is currently ranked No1 out of all UK local authorities for having the most accessible website in the country, demonstrating our continued commitment to accessibility for all.</p> <p>If Members do receive any website feedback from constituents the Digital Team would be grateful if they're passed via email to digital.team@gravesham.gov.uk. All feedback will be reviewed and a reply will be provided.</p>