COSTESSEY TOWN COUNCIL

Delivering a reliable communications network within town councils.

breakwater IT

COSTESSEY TOWN COUNCIL

Industry: Public Sector

Location: Norfolk

Costessey Town Council is dedicated to serving the local community whilst owning and managing three community centres and open spaces within the area, maintaining them to a high standard and responding to any issues that arise.

The Council provides a number of valuable services within Costessey, including the administration of allotment plots, supervision of the cemetery, organising the annual fete, consideration of planning applications and continual improvements to facilities within the town such as play areas.

Within the Council there is an ongoing resolve to enhance the land and buildings within its remit by earmarking funds and obtaining grants for specific projects.

www.costessey.org.uk

@costesseytowncouncilofficial

Lord Stafford's
historic estate of
COSTESSEY
Please drive carefully

Costessey
Town Council

CHALLENGE

With staff requirements for greater efficiency, aided by remote working and an increased expectation from the sixteen Town Councillors to access documentation more effectively, it became necessary for Costessey Town Council to consider a re-think of its core IT solutions to promote successful collaboration for its Councillors.

An ageing infrastructure, including laptops, desktops and server, required upgrading to encourage a swifter, more reliable exchange and management of information. The Council wanted to invest in new hardware as the first step in instigating improved communication but needed to be mindful of budget and the restraints of not having an in-house IT department. A low-cost independent security report highlighted some vulnerable areas.

In addition to the physical enhancements of its IT systems, the Council was open to considering a move to the cloud and the benefits Office 365 would deliver in terms of helping Councillors to disclose information and work together on documents and projects.

Improved reliability and a focus on being able to easily contact each other and external stakeholders was also a requirement for the Council's phone system; as it looked towards a truly hosted set-up and the consistency in service that this entailed.

SOLUTION

Breakwater installed a new server within the Council offices, enabling all Councillors to make use of a range of additional network resources, regardless of the device or location they are working from.

The server provided the Council with a dependable way of storing and processing data, speeding up the running time of applications.

With a move to the cloud in the pipeline, and therefore a secure new platform for storing data, a smaller server could be installed on-site – reducing costs whilst still improving productivity. Breakwater ensured external software for payroll, accounts, publishing etc. were successfully installed without any disruption or loss of data.

In pairing a new server with the replacement of aged desktops, the Council had a much more reliable infrastructure to work from.

The cloud capabilities of Office 365 were introduced across the Council, a really positive way of making the most of their infrastructure and applications and all within the budget they were working to.

A move to the cloud supported the Council's objective of finding an efficient, affordable way of collaborating on projects and important documents such as planning applications – making the process more efficient and ensuring a well-rounded response.

Breakwater worked with the Council to plan their adoption of Office 365 and identify the key features that would benefit them. It was important to keep the process simple and to inform all Councillors how the migration would impact them and the detail of the new functionality on offer.

Office 365, is not just about Microsoft Office, there is a wealth of capabilities within it, but one of its attractions is the easy roll-out of features as and when required. The Council opted to focus on some of Office 365's key collaborative functions including Mail and Calendar – scheduling meetings, sharing diaries and contacts from wherever the Councillors may be working.

The Council also employed the cloud-based backup solution, CloudBerry, ensuring important data is regularly backed up and protected against loss or security breaches.

A new hosted phone system was installed, a solution that sits in the cloud using BT's core network – making it hugely reliable. A cloud-based telephone system gave the Council much more flexibility as they can manage calls from their desk phone and from computers and mobiles. New handsets were installed within their main office and also in the ground keepers hut and community centre.

RESULTS

Costessey Town Council now has an IT infrastructure that they can rely upon to consistently perform, supporting their objective to offer easy routes through which to communicate, helping Councillors make informed decisions and proposals that will enhance the local area.

A new server and desktops offer a solid foundation from which the Council can work from, delivering a secure and dependable service. The processing of information is more efficient and cost-effective as a result of the new server and cloud storage capabilities and Councillors are safe in the knowledge that important documents are protected and backed-up.

Office 365 introduced flexibility, with emails, calendars and contacts updated in real time across all devices and locations. Meetings can be easily scheduled as shared calendars allow users to see when attendees are free and Councillors can engage from wherever they are – sending emails from their main office or when they are working from a mobile location. The Council also has the added protection of industry-leading anti-malware and spam filtering to safeguard their emails.

The Council's hosted phone system has provided a robust service that naturally incorporates a full disaster recovery solution, as it sits in the cloud, meaning Councillors can log in using any broadband connection and continue working as normal.

"

We found Breakwater really knowledgeable when they met staff & Town Councillors to progress a contract and service level agreement.

With the reassurance professionals are supporting us with problem solving and updates to software and security, we can be more business-like and efficient when serving our communities."

www.costessey.org.uk

 @costesseytowncouncilofficial

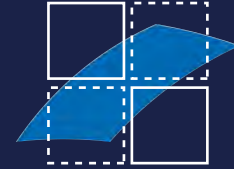 **Costessey** Town Council

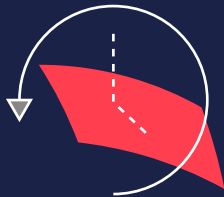# OUR SERVICES

IT Support

IT Systems

Microsoft 365

Cyber Security

CCTV

Cloud Solutions

Backup & Recovery

Telecoms

Consultancy

Get in touch for a friendly chat today:
T: 01603 709300
E: enquiries@breakwaterit.co.uk

www.breakwaterit.co.uk

breakwater IT