Gloucestershire County Council Microsoft Teams Usage Policy

1. Policy Statement

Gloucestershire County Council (the Council) accepts that use of Microsoft Teams is essential to enabling the Council to meet its aims and objectives. It is a requirement that your use of this software is legal and appropriate for delivering the Council's responsibilities does not create unnecessary risk.

Microsoft Teams enables you and your colleagues to send instant messages, make video calls and keep up to date with your teams. Over time we will be adding more functionality allowing you to better collaborate, share and edit files as a Team and with external partners where appropriate. For now you should use Teams as you would Jabber and WebEx.

Because Teams allows for greater interaction between Council employees, the Council must ensure that it is used appropriately and responsibly. This usage policy sets out how to do this, makes staff aware of how Sites should be managed and how new Sites can be requested. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Code of Conduct for Employees
- ICT, Information Management and Data Protection Policies, in particular;
    - ICT Equipment Policy
    - Information Protection and Handling Policy
    - Information/IT Access Policy
    - Data Protection Policy
    - Software Management Policy
    - Social Media Policy
    - Password Policy

You are also bound by any relevant legislation, such as Data Protection and Copyright laws and the information below.

Misuse of the service can be investigated and lead to disciplinary action. The council reserves the right to monitor use and compliance with the law and policy; we may use system analytics to achieve this.

2. What can you use Teams for?

Currently you should use Teams for the following:

- Chat and call with Council colleagues,

- Use Teams to create meetings with Council colleagues and partners from other organisations

Once we have ensured that appropriate security and protections are in place staff will be able to use Teams to work more collaboratively internally and with third parties.

3. Best Practice

Below are some best practice guidance you should follow or be aware of.

Chats

- You should not create separate channels for private one-to-one chats or group chats. You can do this without creating new Teams Sites or Channels.
- Do not share sensitive information through the chat. Teams is not an appropriate way to share sensitive information about customers. We have implemented security policies in place to prevent this.
- If you are asking a colleague to check a certain record in a system, use reference numbers instead of names to minimise the risk to personal data.
- You can get a colleague's attention by typing @ and their name into the chat, but please try to avoid them whilst they are in meetings so as not to disturb them. Their presence status will tell you if they are busy.
- Any instant messages you receive while offline for under a week will be available next time you come online.
- Remember that all chat content, whether direct or within channels is searchable and therefore could be disclosable under FOI or Subject Access requests.

Meetings and calls

- Double check you have sent any meeting invites to the correct attendees.
- Follow our guidance on when and how to safely record meetings in Teams.
- Be careful not to enter information into the chat rather than discuss it in the meeting. Anyone invited to the meeting can see what is written in the chat, even if they do not attend.
- Do not use one meeting to meet with multiple guests, where they need to be met with individually. Guests to a meeting have full access to the chat that is created from the meeting, even after leaving.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

There are two roles within O365 for a Team; Site Owners and Site Member. Most users of a Teams Site will be members. There are three types of site members;

- Site Member (internal)
- External Member – Someone from outside the council who has been invited to a specific meeting
- Guest – an External Member who has been given access to a Teams Site.

Within GCC we have an additional role, with a senior officer being allocated accountability for the information within each site – this is the Information Asset Owner (IAO) or Manager (IAM).

Site Owner (Accountability) – IAO

IAOs are **accountable** for ensuring that any of their information assets, or extracts from those assets, are managed appropriately within Microsoft Teams, in line with their responsibilities.

Site Owners (Administrative)

Site Owners are **responsible** for:

- Adding or removing members and guests when necessary.
- Creating and deleting Teams Channels when necessary and in accordance with the council's design principles.
- Ensuring there are sufficient active system owners for the specific Team site (a minimum of 3 per site).
- Ensuring that the use of information on the Teams site is compliant with this AUP and council policies.
- Ensuring that chats within Teams Channels are used in an appropriate manner and follow council policies on appropriate behaviour.

All staff (site members)

All staff are **responsible** for:

- Their own activity within Teams.
- Ensuring that the use of information on the Teams site is compliant with this AUP and council policies, and
- Ensuring that chats within Teams are used in an appropriate manner and follow council policies on appropriate behaviour.

5. Retention & Monitoring

- One-to-one and one-off group (e.g. non-Channel) chats are retained for 24 hours.
- Teams sites are retained for 6 months after last use. At that point the Site Owner will be contacted and asked whether there is any business need for the Teams site to be kept for longer. Otherwise, the Site will be deleted.
- Team channel chats are retained for 3 months after last use.
- Please note that the system may retain chats, channels and sites beyond the retention periods above, even if they are no longer accessible to you. These can also be used in e-discovery activity.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every 3 years.