Local Authorities: Is your tech up-to-date?

Are you using hardware or software that is no longer compatible with the latest software updates? It may not seem like a big deal to have the latest anti-virus update on your office PC when it's running on an older operating system, like Windows 7, but it is. The latest anti-virus programmes work to detect malware and Trojans that are constantly evolving. At the end of 2019, some Local Authorities were still found to have been using Windows 7, and were prompted to make the move to Windows 10 before February 2020 as Windows has ceased to provide support to Windows 7 users. If you're running an old operating system that is incompatible with newer anti-virus programmes, you are opening your system up to these threats – which can cause devastating outcomes for departments running financial applications.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council dealt with a ransomware attack that cost them more than £10 million in damages. Most recently, Hackney Council suffered a cyber attack, the extent of the data breach is not yet clear. However, this is not a position you want to be in and it is avoidable when you ensure you have up-to-date security protocols in place.

As government organisations are now subject to compliance and fraud checks, any breach of regulations can lead to disciplinary actions including fines and dismissal of personnel. To pass a compliance check like ISO27001 you not only need to have updated software but updated hardware.

It may seem more cost-effective to continue running older operating systems for your organisation however, in the long run it will cause more harm than good. Keep on top of your software and hardware updates so that your citizens and suppliers can trust you with their information.