



Trafford modernises telecoms system and makes £500,000 savings with Freedom

“...The new Voice over IP system cuts the cost of office moves considerably...”

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council is one of the largest councils in the UK, providing services to 220,000 residents and more than 1,000 businesses based in the Southern and South Eastern part of Manchester. Trafford Council employs more than 1,500 people in 228 locations and has a total of eight main council buildings. Like most councils throughout the country, Trafford is nearing the end of a major modernisation programme. This programme, driven through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister’s Implementing E-Government strategy, is due for completion in all local councils by the end of 2005.

The programme is designed to offer UK citizens more direct interaction with their local council - via the internet and telephone as well as by post. People today expect a rapid response to enquiries and requests for services. This in turn has required councils to invest in new voice and data networks to support the handling, routing and storage of requests made via phone and email by residents and local businesses.

After an open tender process involving 50 other providers, Freedom Communications was selected to work alongside IT services partner EDS Memorex Telex to provide and integrate eight Alcatel OmniPCX Enterprise systems serving the eight core Trafford council offices at Altrincham, Carrington, Friar’s Court, Sale Town Hall, Stretford Public Hall, Timperley Hall, Trafford Town Hall and Urmston. The system provided a mixture of IP and TDM voice services to more than 2,000 extensions integrated into Alcatel’s

Carrier Class OmniSwitch data infrastructure. The system has now been rolled out to a total of 228 council facilities including council-run libraries, schools and sports centres. Call costs between council offices and facilities have dropped dramatically as a result of the new system, such that Mark Gibbison, head of e-government at Trafford Council, estimates that return on initial investment of £1.5 million for the whole system will be achieved within 15 months of completion of installation.

Mark Gibbison, reinforces: *“We have cut inter-office telephony expenditure by 50 per cent since installation across the whole council. These savings will be diverted into delivering higher quality services to local residents. The new system will enable us to manage organizational changes more effectively and serve Trafford citizens better on the phone and via the internet.”*

Another key benefit has proved to be the ability for specialist community support units to retain their same telephone numbers regardless of which council office they are working from.

These units have numbers which are widely publicised via leaflet and poster drops to all relevant locations. Reprinting and redistributing this information is an expensive task so if telephone hotline numbers can be retained when the unit moves locations, resulting savings run into tens of thousands of pounds a year per move.

Mark Gibbison concludes: *"The new Voice over IP system cuts the cost of office moves considerably not only because units no longer*

need to re-advertise new support lines. Moving desks becomes like switching computers, it's simply a case of logging off one phone and logging onto the next with no need for an engineer to be deployed to make it happen.

Freedom Communications' team has worked hard to put our new voice systems and ensure tight integration with our data infrastructure during the last year and Trafford is now reaping the rewards in terms of the costs savings and efficiencies we are able to pass onto to Trafford residents and businesses based here. It is a good example of how the Government's modernisation programme has generated very positive returns for council staff as well as the citizens they serve".

Quick Glance

The Organisation

- Eight key council offices employing key services, over 2,000 staff
- 228 council run locations employing over 1,500 staff
- Serving 220,000 residents
- More than 1,000 businesses in the region
- Operating over 41 square miles

The Product Solution

- 8 x Alcatel OmniPCX Enterprise switches
- Alcatel Carrier Class OmniSwitch data infrastructure
- Mixture of IP and TDM Voice services across the network
- Voice & Data Integration over one network
- Implementation split into two distinct phases
- 500 new staff handsets

The Results

- Inter-office telecoms costs cut by 50%
- Response times for Resident requests below 48 hours
- Unified messaging, voicemail, fax and web conferencing delivered to over 3000 extensions
- Call Centre handling 60-70% more calls
- Over 80% of Calls solved at first point of contact



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About Freedom Communications:

Freedom is a secure communications technology provider with extensive expertise in IP telephony, voice, contact centre, converged voice and data services and unified communications.

Delivering solutions and consultancy to a wide range of businesses throughout the UK, Freedom's market experience spans public sector, education, health, retail, property and leisure.

Over the last two decades, the Company has assisted over 2,500 organisations in achieving their communications objectives. With a partner network including BT, Cable & Wireless, Gamma Telecom, Khipu, and easynet, Freedom is also Alcatel-Lucent's largest reseller in the UK. A specialist in multi-site deployments, Freedom's consultative approach ensures that it works together with its clients in order to deliver a solution that provides true business advantage.