

## Overview and Scrutiny: Single Front Office

### Telephony Review

#### Introduction

1. The current telephony has been in use since early 2008. The current Siemens contract expires on 31 March 2016 for both the corporate telephony and the Contact Centre software.
2. The limitations of the current telephony include cumbersome Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and voice message functionality. This makes it difficult to respond quickly to control call demand or unexpected events which impact upon incoming call volumes. The reporting software is inflexible and call data is only stored for twelve months which restricts historical reporting.
3. Initial enquiries were made some months ago into Microsoft Skype for Business (formerly Lync). This is the same system used by Preston City Council. The contact centre software at Preston is a bolt on to the corporate telephony.

#### Guiding principles

4. The new telephony needs to support the aspirations of the council's digital agenda and support service delivery on a day-to-day basis.
5. The current training programme is moving the Single Front Office away from a generic call-handling structure towards a 'specialist plus one' approach. The flexibility to distribute calls in line with this principle is imperative.
6. A further principle of the SFO is to make maximum use of available technology. The improvements afforded by an upgrade of the telephony will allow improvements in this area and associated efficiencies to be realised.
7. The functionality of any new telephony needs to allow increased flexibility and productivity.

#### VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) or Functionality of MSforB

8. Delivery of voice communications over the internet provides a number of operational benefits. VoIP allows users to make telephone calls from a desktop computer or suitable mobile device.
9. As telephone numbers are virtual, this provides mobility and flexibility of location including the potential for home working and remote working.
10. The ability to check whether colleagues are online, offline or busy in a more integrated and intelligent way including quicker responses from the Instant Messaging facility.
11. VoIP allows for federated services which can facilitate use of Skype for business with external organisations using the same technology if required.
12. The voicemail facility is much improved, allowing voicemails to appear in a user's inbox as an email.
13. There is potential for integration with other applications such as email, social media, 'click to call' functionality on a website
14. VoIP also allows for more flexibility with conference calls and video conferencing.

#### Call routing

15. Contact Centre telephony allows for intelligent call routing to be configured allowing for the most experienced available advisor to receive the next call in the queue. The call routing needs to facilitate the SFO approach to individual advisor skill sets, i.e. specialist plus one.
16. Other important features required are:
  - a) Customise messages for individual call queues
  - b) Call recording which is Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCIDSS) compliant and can be configured for all, a percentage, on demand or none with an override at queue or agent level
  - c) Improved message recording and IVR options
  - d) Web based call flow editor which easy and quick to configure

- e) Web-based Interactive Voice Response software offering speech recognition
- 17. The potential for integration with other web-based applications and a web-based agent console
- 18. The potential for more intelligent use of email allowing the routing of emails directly to inboxes of suitably skilled agents based on content or to/from addresses

#### **Web chat**

- 19. The current web chat facility is no longer in use. It was not possible to prioritise the web chat contacts in any way. This meant that a customer could have a lengthy wait before their contact was responded to. Also, the functionality was not compliant with PSN requirements.
- 20. The web chat facility needs to be easy to configure and integrate with the council's own website and should match the look and feel of the website.
- 21. Skills based chat routing should be available so that enquiries can be directed to the most experienced available advisor and options to save web chat transcripts.

#### **Reporting and analytics**

- 22. Reporting facilities need to include both real-time and historical data for agents, call queues, incoming numbers and an intelligent dashboard facility with proactive alerts and notifications when pre-defined criteria are met. This will allow us to take action before there is a problem.
- 23. The ability to report on how customers are using the call flows within the IVR will allow us to tailor them to encourage and maximise the use of this facility.