



Navigating the Digital Shift in Local Councils

Five considerations to transform your organisation, services and delivery with cloud communications



Introduction

Amid growing demand for services and shrinking budgets, local councils face significant pressures to do more with less, resulting in a marked shift in frontline services.

In spite of funding cuts, there is a clear desire and willingness of local authorities to improve citizen interactions, collaborate with colleagues and partners, combine health and social care programmes and achieve efficiency and cost savings.

However, people expect public services to offer the same seamless experience they've come to expect from an online retailer, bank or a travel booking site.

So how do local government organisations transform themselves for the digital age and respond to the pressures they face?

This eBook discusses cloud communications considerations to help accelerate transformational change in local government.

We propose cloud tools and technologies that simplify the way you work with colleagues, partners and suppliers, reducing costs and ultimately making lives better for citizens and communities.

With funding cuts of nearly 50% since 2010, local authorities face increased demand and cost pressures, but no reduction in their statutory obligations to provide services.

— National Audit Office

Consideration 1:

Integrate your communications systems in the cloud

Legacy communications systems form the most significant capital investment taking the greatest resources in personnel, upgrade and support costs.

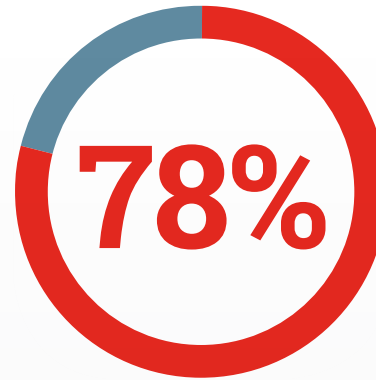
Approach

Moving to a fully integrated cloud communications platform is the first step in the digital transformation journey.

Councils can realise savings with no upfront capital investment or initial hardware purchases, eliminating annual PBX maintenance and support contracts.

A single solution that brings together telephony, messaging, video conferencing and contact centre in the cloud can improve internal collaboration with colleagues and partners to address residents' concerns.

Simplified management allows IT to quickly add, move or delete users with just one application to administer and without worrying about hardware upgrades or software updates.



of local government staff are confident that cloud communications technologies support better public services and reduce costs.

An 8x8 cloud communication solution can help councils eliminate the enormous time and cost associated with deploying, integrating and managing disparate multi-vendor technologies.





Consideration 2: Use web messaging to engage citizens and collaborate across departments

Local authorities provide a wealth of web-based information, but finding the right information quickly on council websites can be a challenge for residents, often resulting in frustrating calls to councils.

Approach

A world-class public service combines a residents-first attitude with smart communications tools. Real-time web messaging, accessible from any device, helps residents get answers quickly to general enquiries.

Citizens have better interactions with service agents who help them complete online forms, resulting in more personalised experiences. Customer advisors can handle multiple customer sessions simultaneously, improving the productivity and efficiency of advisors while preconfigured responses ensure speed and accuracy, guiding residents to appropriate information.

Instant messaging also facilitates collaboration across council departments, not just within small groups or pockets of the organisation. It bridges islands of communications with other councils and agency partners even though everyone continues using the messaging application of his or her choice.



of local councils
use web messaging
to communicate
instantly with citizens,
improving satisfaction
and responsiveness.

Creating better citizen interactions is a top priority for every local government organisation. An 8x8 contact centre gives council staff the tools they need to create positive, engaging experiences that improve resident satisfaction and council reputation.

Consideration 3: Connect with citizens across all communications channels

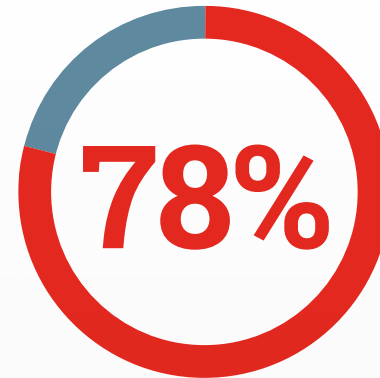
Citizens expect to interact with public services easily and conveniently, just as they do with their friends or popular online services, using any device.

However, supporting multiple communication channels in legacy call centres is complex and makes collecting, aggregating and analysing citizen information increasingly difficult.

Approach

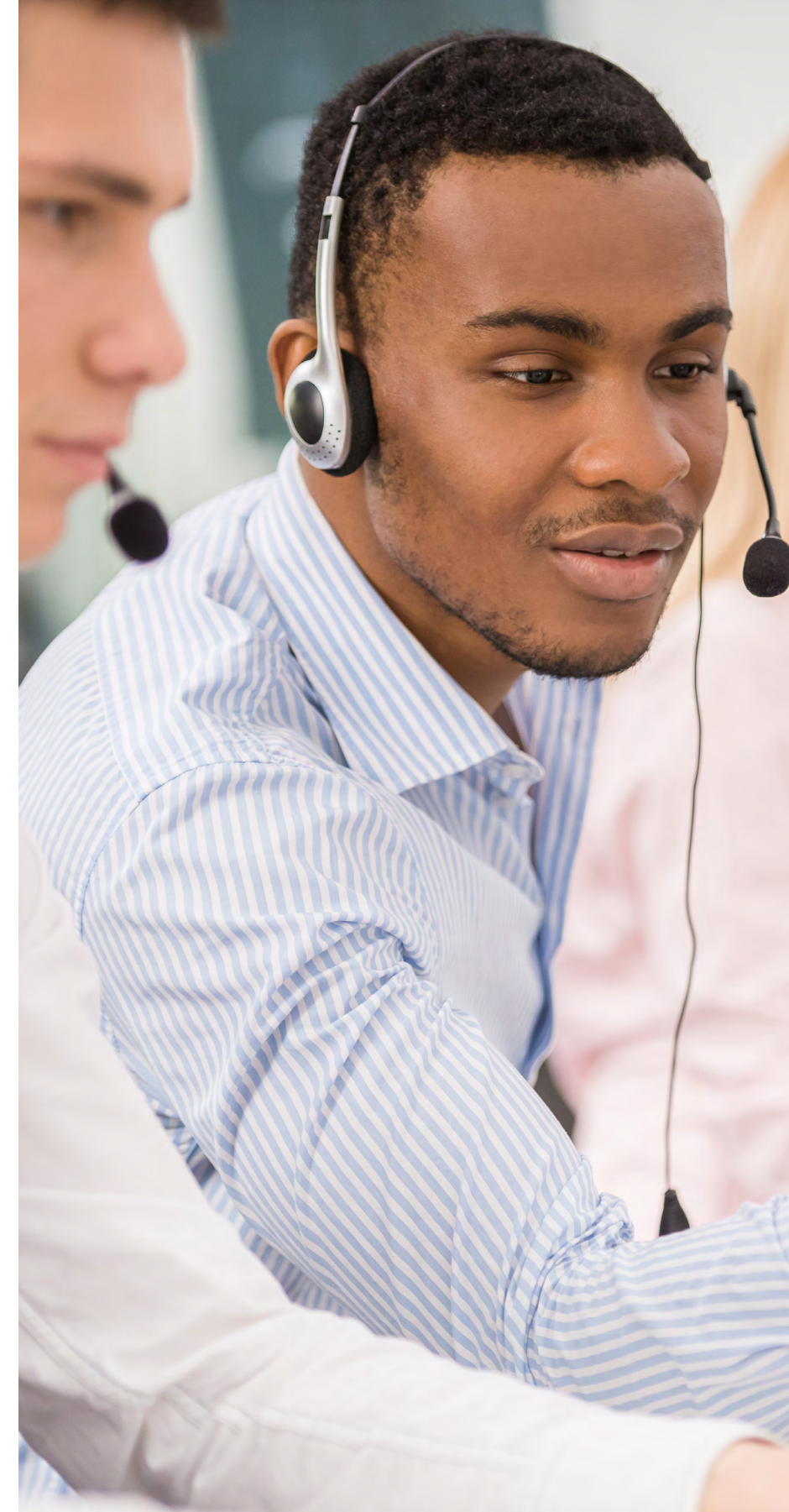
Cloud contact centres that combine voice, chat, email and social interaction channels enable customer service agents to react rapidly to citizen queries and maintain the context and content of each engagement.

Managing omnichannel citizen interactions centrally with the right tools and knowledge drives first contact resolution and increases critical resident satisfaction ratings, including responsiveness, trust, service-related metrics and the perceived value of council-run services.



of local authorities have contact centre. Of these, 37% carry both inbound and outbound calls and 41% just inbound.

An 8x8 contact centre modernises citizen interactions. Satisfy your constituents with omnichannel communications that include text, email, Facebook, Twitter and web chat channels.





Consideration 4: Make it as easy for staff to use video as it is to use voice, regardless of location

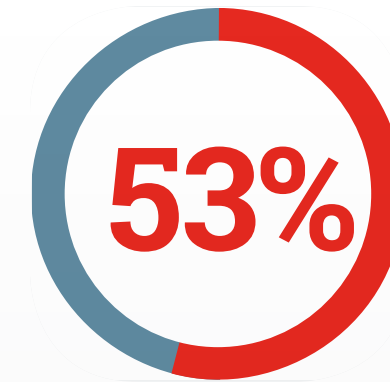
Flexible working is used widely across local government organisations, but research suggests some councils lack formal policies on flexible working. Advances in technology can facilitate flexible working arrangements, enabling staff to connect with colleagues face-to-face from any location.

Approach

Cloud-based video conferencing technologies promote real-time interaction between staff in local authorities, agency partners and key stakeholders, improving service efficiencies.

Flexible working arrangements allow council staff to meet virtually using high-quality video conferencing from wherever they are, helping to improve relationships while saving time, travel costs and reducing the environmental impact through lower emissions.

Combining flexible working practices with video conferencing also improves staff retention and helps councils achieve savings through reductions in office size.



of local government organisations use video conferencing to enable flexible working, achieve costs savings through reduced office sizes and lower their carbon footprint.

8x8 Meetings enables council employees to collaborate internally or with external partners and stakeholders from anywhere on any device with HD quality video, voice, messaging and instant screen sharing.

Consideration 5: Transform public services, improve outcomes and drive efficiencies with analytics data

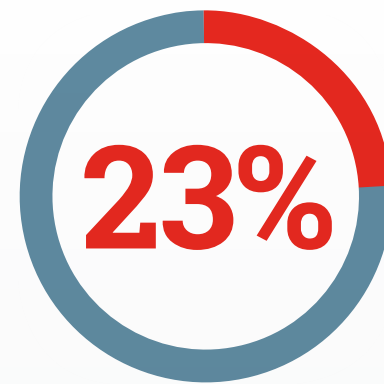
Local governments collect reams of data about local citizens, businesses and public projects in the community, which can be used in increasingly sophisticated ways to gain better insights into citizen and community needs.

Approach

Analytics data from cloud communications systems give local authorities full visibility into inbound and outbound calls to manage workflows, identify trends and improve citizen experiences and perceptions of the council.

Managers can use analytics dashboards to dissect information and pinpoint problem locations proactively before they become widespread. Data from analytics can be used to prioritise local issues and eliminate information blind spots, leading to better outcomes for communities.

Citizen experience can also be improved with data from communications systems, resulting in faster responses to applications, enquiries or complaints. High-performing customer service agents and those in need of coaching can be identified, while measures can be implemented to boost performance and public sentiment.



of local government organisations use call analytics to gain real-time insights to improve decision making and responsiveness of frontline staff.

8x8's one system of intelligence delivers data-driven insights, based on all of the communication interaction points with citizens.





Bringing it all together

Local government organisations are adopting a “cloud-first” approach in greater numbers.

Local authorities have a lot to offer their communities. However, in a climate of continued budget cutbacks, forward-thinking councils are adopting integrated cloud communication solutions that make it easier to manage people, reduce costs, collaborate and ultimately make lives better.

These five steps summarise approaches local governments can take to reach their digital ambitions:

Step 1

Integrate your communications systems in the cloud.

Consolidate voice, video, chat and contact centre in the cloud to enhance communications, simplify management and lower IT costs.

Step 2

Engage citizens, staff and agency partners with web messaging.

Real-time web messaging provides quick answers to residents’ queries and improves internal and cross-agency collaboration.

Step 3

Support all communications channels used by citizens.

Omnichannel citizen interactions drive first contact resolution and increase resident satisfaction ratings.

Step 4

Use video and voice, from anywhere.

Flexible working practices with video conferencing improves staff retention and helps achieve cost savings through office size reductions.

Step 5

Use analytics to transform public services.

Data-driven insights from analytics help spot trends, improve citizen outcomes and change public perceptions.

8x8 in the public sector

“With 8x8, we’ve got a strong partnership and a shared vision. They are willing to work at our fast pace, stay with us on the journey and take a risk that’s paying off.

— Andrew Grant, Chief Executive, Aylesbury Vale District Council

Some of our UK public sector customers





The world's first communications cloud

8x8 is a government-approved supplier on the G-Cloud 10 framework. Our cloud communications solutions help public sector organisations enhance and manage citizen interactions, collaborate with colleagues and agency partners, combine social care and initiatives and achieve efficiency improvements and savings.

With one system of engagement for voice, video, collaboration and contact centre and one system of intelligence on a single technology platform, local authorities can now communicate faster and smarter to exceed public expectations.

Mission-critical reliability

We provide customer engagement solutions to over a million business and public sector users worldwide, employing extensive measures to ensure high availability, business continuity and disaster recovery, delivering an average core call-flow processing uptime of 99.9999%.

Dedicated support

8x8 public sector specialists are entirely focussed on our UK public sector customers, working with local and central government customers to understand their diverse needs and to offer expert advice on how best to procure and use cloud communications technology to improve services and make lives better.

Our compliance helps secure yours

No other cloud communications provider does more to safeguard the security and compliance of mission-critical communications than 8x8.

The 8x8 X Series for voice, video, chat and contact centre is fully compliant with the standards below:

- ISO 27001 and ISO 9001 certified
- US/EU Privacy Shield certified
- Cyber Essentials Plus
- UK Government Authority to Operate (ATO) Certified
- Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM3825 or 1045 dynamic purchasing system (DPS) compliant

Get in Touch

For more information on how 8x8 helps public sector organisations streamline operations and enhance citizen communication contact our public sector team on

uk-publicsector@8x8.com or 0333 043 8888



8x8

8x8, Inc. (NYSE: EGHT) cloud solutions help businesses transform their customer and employee experience. With one system of engagement for voice, video, chat and contact center and one system of intelligence on one technology platform, businesses can now communicate faster and smarter to exceed the speed of customer expectations. For additional information, visit www.8x8.com, or follow 8x8 on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook.

