

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council has completed an overhaul of its communications infrastructure and moved to Internet Protocol (IP) telephony and applications.

Working with Sabio, the innovative contact centre services and solutions company, Bury Metropolitan Borough Council (Bury MBC) has installed and unified messaging to improve communication across its network of 150 sites to serve its 2,300 telephone users. This should allow the Council to save money and provide more effective communication with its 181,300 citizens.

Following the installation of the new system, Bury MBC is now in a better position to meet its e-government objectives, using IP telephony and contact centre applications as a platform for delivering electronic services to citizens. Bury MBC, one of the 10 Councils in Greater Manchester, has faced a variety of challenges in overhauling its communication infrastructure. The Council provides a full range of local government services such as street cleaning, bin emptying, highways and footpath repairs, housing provision, education and libraries.

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council wanted to take advantage of the interoperability and open standards of Avaya's IP telephony by integrating it with the existing Cisco data network.

IP telephony was implemented to

reduce overall telephony costs compared to the Council's previous BT FeatureNet system. This includes expected annual communication cost savings of about 20% - in addition to major improvements in features and facilities.

The new system provides voicemail and fax fully integrated with the Council's email system. Also, the system includes industry leading features and these are already in use in three of the Council's busiest service areas. Conference call facilities are available to all staff too.



Bruce Cape, ICT services manager, Bury Metropolitan Borough Council said, "We're now using IP telephony with 2,500 IP phones at over 100 sites across the borough - and the whole system is working very well. We've cut our telephony costs by 20% and are providing much better facilities - including excellent easy-to-use handsets, a corporate voicemail service integrated with email and also conference call facilities for all staff."

All staff now have "unified messaging" software to centrally manage their voice, fax and email communication from their inbox rather than having to monitor each area individually with the risk of missing messages and enquiries.

Using "softphone" software with the new system, staff have the flexibility to use a phone from



home. Via their broadband connection and the council's own IP network, they can access email and have their phone calls automatically diverted to their home. Also, as a result of using one line for IT and telephony, communication and administration costs are reduced.

The contract was won as part of a competitive tender carried out with assistance from consultants. The tender from Avaya and Sabio was chosen because the IP telephony system and applications met the requirements and the overall value for money demonstrated by the proposal.

Buddie Ceronie, vice-president for Avaya in the UK, Ireland and Southern Africa said: "Drivers such as modernisation of technology to support e-government services are increasingly leading local councils to look at new ways of working with technology partners to get the best results for their citizens. Bury Metropolitan Borough Council deserves recognition as it has taken the next step in using converged communication to drive down costs and improve its services, providing a benchmark for the rest of the sector to follow."

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