



# Eight Weeks to Excellence

How One Government Agency's  
Contact Centre Went From  
Bottom to Top Performing



HM Government



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- 3 Clearing the Backlog with a 'Fire Break' Strategy
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# Delivering Service Excellence through People, Process and Planning. Not Technology

**A major UK Government organisation plays a vital role in supporting citizens through some of life's most significant and sensitive processes. Each year, it manages hundreds of thousands of applications and enquiries, working to ensure services are delivered efficiently, fairly, and with care for those navigating complex situations.**

In 2019, the organisation launched a new service centre, bringing together specialist teams and fresh approaches to managing citizen applications. However, when new legislation was introduced in 2022 simplifying one of its key processes, demand on the contact centre rapidly increased; placing pressure on telephony and email channels.

Building on an established partnership with FourNet, the organisation turned to FourNet's expertise to improve efficiency, streamline operations, and enhance the customer experience for citizens and staff alike.

**See what the agency was able to achieve with the support of FourNet**



“ ”  
**Nothing short of a miracle, 138 people feeling good about the difference they make to the service users**  
 Project Lead, Government Agency



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# Performance



First Contact Answer Rate

88.7%

25.6%

Service users that are answered on their first attempt and don't call back within 7 days



Abandonment Rate

1.5%

55

Number of service user calls that are abandoned before they are answered



CSAT

90.5%  After Project

79%  Before Project

Satisfaction Survey score



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# Making a Complex Process, Simple to Manage

**Like many organisations handling high volumes of complex cases, this agency faced increasing demand in their contact centre and administrative processes. Over time, a backlog of emails and administrative tasks began to build, and contact centre resources were stretched as they worked to support citizens effectively.**

At the start of the project, the key challenges included:



## Email Backlog

Response times had grown to 21 days, with a backlog of approximately 13,000 emails. The target was to maintain a response time of just 5 days.



## Administrative Tasks

Around 3,000 admin pending tasks needed to be processed, which contributed to delays.



## Telephony Demand

The Average Speed of Answer (ASA) for calls had reached 46 minutes, and call abandonment rates stood at 55%.

The FourNet team advised that these challenges did not need additional staff or technology, simply strategic optimisations of processes that would enhance efficiency.

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# Impact on Citizens

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Average Speed of Answer (ASA)

**47**

**2,760**  
Seconds

The average time taken to answer an incoming call



Response Times

**3-5**

**21**  
Days

The average time to respond to court user emails



Processing Time

**5**

**10**  
Days

The average time to advance a case

**After Project**

**Before Project**

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# Clearing the Backlog with a 'Fire Break' Strategy

To tackle the email backlog and maintain service levels for new enquiries, FourNet introduced a 'Fire Break' strategy. This approach split the team's efforts between clearing existing backlogs and handling incoming emails to ensure no new delays developed. A dedicated task force was created to focus on the backlog, achieving initial productivity rates of 12 emails per hour during the project. Once the backlog was cleared, email productivity stabilised at 8 emails per hour, up from 6 before the project began.

**Within just 8 weeks, response times improved to a consistent 3-5 days.**



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# "Killing the Spin" Saw a 30% Drop in Call Volume

By addressing the email and admin backlog, FourNet eliminated the need for users to call the contact centre to chase updates on their emails or the progress of their cases. This resulted in an impressive 30% drop in contact volume, as many of the calls were purely repeat contacts driven by delayed responses.

With this reduction in unnecessary demand, the agency gained a clear view of the true workload on their contact centre, unclouded by the noise of follow-up calls. This allowed them to accurately assess their resource needs and adjust staffing levels, enabling them to deliver exceptional service while requiring fewer operating hours.

By breaking the cycle of "spin", our client is now better positioned to manage genuine demand efficiently and sustainably.



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# Making Results Consistent with Data-Driven Tools

To sustain these improvements, FourNet refined existing PowerBI dashboards that provided real-time visibility into email, admin, and telephony performance. Team leaders can now monitor productivity, identify bottlenecks, and manage their teams with confidence.

The dashboard now supports day-to-day decision making around workload and prioritisation, empowering team leaders to make informed decisions and engage with staff constructively. As the customer noted:



Once the team leaders understood the data, they could manage performance confidently and proactively.



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# Optimising Telephony for Faster Response Times

With email and admin processes optimised, the focus shifted to improving telephony performance. FourNet worked closely to refine workforce planning, scheduling, and forecasting. By aligning resources with actual demand and reducing failure demand caused by duplicate enquiries, the agency achieved a remarkable transformation.

**The Average Speed of Answer (ASA) dropped from 46 minutes to just 47 seconds, and call abandonment rates fell from 55% to 1.5%. These improvements ensured that users received timely support.**

**See the Impact**





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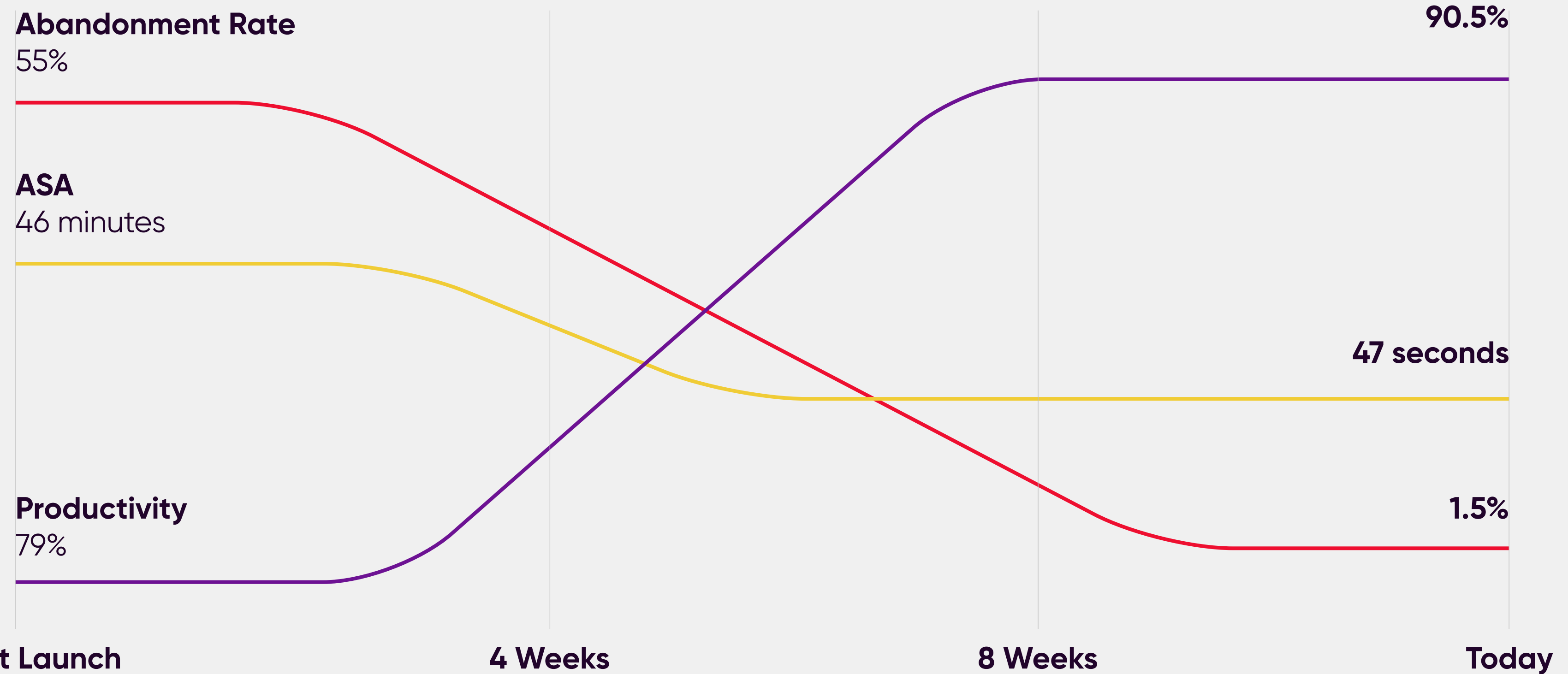
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# Measurable and Sustainable Results

The collaboration between the agency and FourNet delivered significant, measurable outcomes:



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# The Impact

See the transformation in user satisfaction that these changes made



Ease of Access

80.6%

67%

How easy users access services, based on answers in surveys



Handle time

763

998

The average time to deal with telephone calls



CSAT

90.5%  After Project

79%  Before Project

User Satisfaction Survey score

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# Giving Agents Breathing Space to Deliver Better Service

**At the project's outset, agents faced a relentless workload, leaving little time to step back and prepare for the next task. While change was met with natural resistance, FourNet's coaching and data-driven tools helped shift entrenched ways of working. Real-time performance insights empowered team leaders to manage confidently, while clearing the backlogs gave agents the breathing space to work effectively.**

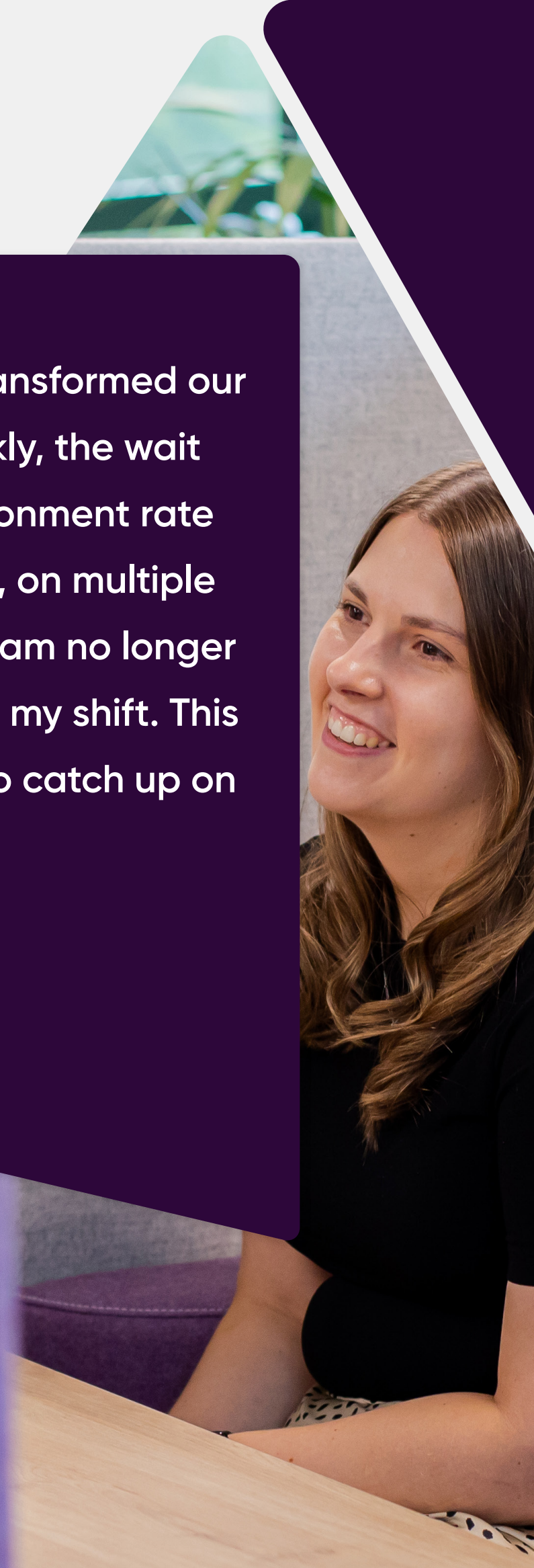
The results were transformative. Agents now experience an improved quality of work life, and have a new sense of achievement and pride knowing that they can now reach more citizens in need of divorce support and guidance.

Due to the cleared backlogs and shorter answer times, the contact centre agents were able to clear the queue of people waiting to speak to them, meaning that natural breaks began to occur between calls. This meant that agents didn't spend every moment on their shift finishing one call and moving directly onto the next person in the queue. These breaks give agents a moment to pause and prepare for the next call, which in turn results in a positive impact on the service that they deliver from a user perspective; which is evident in CSAT scores.

“ ”

Whatever you have done has literally transformed our phone service. Calls come through quickly, the wait time is virtually nil for customers, abandonment rate has drastically reduced and we actually, on multiple occasions have gaps in between calls. I am no longer going home feeling totally frazzled after my shift. This time between calls allows agents time to catch up on service updates and e mails.

Service Centre Support Officer



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# A Commitment to Continuous Improvement

**This project demonstrates our clients dedication to delivering efficient, citizen-focused services. By embracing optimisation and leveraging FourNet's expertise, the agency has not only met its efficiency goals but has also laid the foundation for future enhancements.**

Now that the team isn't focusing all their efforts on tackling backlogs, they are now able to divert attention to refining processes. One of the ways that they aim to do this is by finding ways to provide updates or clarification to users; averting contact centre demand with better communication strategies.

Looking ahead, the customer plans to further enhance their services and ease the pressure on the workforce by leveraging technology to handle routine tasks, allowing sta" to focus on more complex, citizen-centred work. This vision reflects broader ambition to deliver excellent standards of service.



**We can now deliver the performance required with the resources we have, ensuring citizens receive the support they need when they need it most**





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# FourNet's Impact

## Leading the Charge

At the heart of this transformation was the project leader who brought together the right expertise and providers to turn ambition into results. The approach centred on sharing best practices and contact centre expertise, ensuring the customer didn't just get solutions, but the right solutions for their unique challenges.

## Transforming Processes, Changing Mindsets

In just eight weeks, FourNet helped the agency achieve what had previously seemed impossible; embedding changes that would have taken years to implement without external expertise. By clearing backlogs, streamlining processes, and tackling the root causes of inefficiencies, the team enabled the customer to focus on ongoing service improvements rather than constant firefighting.

## Transforming Processes, Changing Mindsets

1

**Assess the Challenge**

2

**Build the Right Team**

3

**Focus on the Root Causes**



You're not telling us about our business; you'retelling us how contact centres could best be run.

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