



Two councils, One Team, one secure ICT infrastructure

FourNet delivers future-proofed comms, contact centre and secure IT infrastructure for South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils





Two local authorities, South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils, merged their teams in a formal partnership of collaboration in 2018.

The Councils' ambition was to have a modern, resilient and streamlined architecture that enabled future transformation for the benefit of their residents. While the council teams worked as one, and planned to move into one shared HQ building in Norwich, the telephony, contact centre, and IT infrastructure were legacy systems which did not fully cater for the councils' future transformation ambitions or enable the most effective ways of working.

FourNet has designed and delivered a new fully integrated solution, including a new secure Wi-Fi system across the councils' estates including headquarters and other buildings and local leisure centres; highly secure Fortinet firewall infrastructure replacing outdated systems; NICE CXone contact centre on FourNet's Agile Cloud for front and back office employees integrated with Microsoft Teams.

Working with FourNet's expert technology, public sector, contact centre and CX consultancy teams, additional digital transformation is now on the cards which will streamline both councils' operations further.

The project illustrates how FourNet's recently expanded team and expertise - through strategic acquisitions of companies including C>Ways, Nowcomm, and 01T - are helping to deliver new, secure, integrated, end-to-end market leading solutions for all our customers.

Key Statistics

2

councils

6

sites

1

contact centre

260

front office agents

800

employees



Background



As a result of the decision by both South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils to become One Team that serves two autonomous councils, a number of communications and IT upgrades were required where there were duplicate, siloed legacy systems or multiple systems within services, streamlining processes and reducing duplication.

The previous public cloud contact centre solution was also failing to fulfil the two councils' requirements.

The initial project for FourNet was to design and install a new Wi-Fi system which was fully secure, covered all relevant council locations, catered for both council employees and members of the public – for instance at local leisure centres – and was fit for the future. FourNet embarked on a series of predictive and real-life surveys to establish key requirements, and as a result supplied a market leading solution from [Extreme Networks](#) – future proofed in terms of security, coverage and number of users.

Although two organisations, locations and teams had come together as one, the legacy IT infrastructure was still very much separate and disparate with multiple teams, various ways of deploying WAN environments, different MPLS environments, connections and domains. FourNet was tasked with bringing those IT systems together as one, as part of a fully future proofed system.

FourNet chose a global-leading [Fortinet](#) firewall solution with Fortigates installed at all locations, enabling the councils to migrate away from MPLS to more cost-effective circuit-based connections in future.

Conscious of keeping costs as low as possible for these two public sector organisations, FourNet was able to supply different types of Fortigate devices based on the size of the environment, ensuring local authority budget was not wasted.

The solution means that eventually all of the sites will be able to 'talk' to each other over the Fortinet fabric, giving one true network and full collaboration between all sites, and will mean in future all other services can be migrated to one single domain and one core business.

[NICE CXone](#) was the contact centre solution of choice, integrated with Microsoft Teams for the back office, and delivered in just 12 weeks, yielding a much-improved end user experience.

Although the two councils required the contact centre solution to be voice only, the solution is now fully enabled for further digital transformation – including webchat, email, social media and other digital channels. FourNet's CX team is now undertaking a detailed data diagnostic, which has laid the foundations for future transformation.



Challenges

1

The previous contact centre contract was coming to an end, which meant a swift solution was required within 12 weeks.

2

As two councils came together as one team, duplicate and siloed IT systems were integrated with each other.

3

Multiple locations, multiple systems and multiple different security policies.

4

A significant challenge was to examine all of these separate policies, decide what was relevant and what was not appropriate, and to establish a new integrated security policy.

5

Because of the number of potential issues of various locations and systems, FourNet embarked on a detailed pre-planning exercise to ensure that switchover was smooth.

6

Two data centres which could have led to downtime issues at switchover to the new firewall infrastructure. This was avoided with full and detailed FourNet pre-planning.

7

Number porting was a challenge because the project was moving so fast, which meant direct connectivity wasn't available, which required a work-around using diverts, but resulted in no downtime for the customer.

8

Large number of remote users migrating to the new system on new machines with new connections.



Outcomes

Market-leading NICE CXone contact centre solution for back office and front office, with Microsoft Teams integration.

FourNet assisted two complex organisations with disparate IT systems to become one merged, integrated IT infrastructure across many locations, with a highly successful and smooth switchover and minimal problems.

FourNet's in-house expertise enabled our teams to choose the best market-leading solutions from two vendors – Fortinet and Extreme Networks – to fully match the two councils' requirements.

Future proofed Wi-Fi solution which more than meets the number of user, coverage and security requirements for council employees and members of the public who can use virtually any device across all council locations.

True secure network for staff and the corporate environment, and a completely separate segregated network for members of the public – meaning minimised security risk.

Centralised IT management solution which is available on a single portal and dashboard.





Customer Views:

"From project initiation to implementation, FourNet worked alongside us as colleagues to ensure an easy transition. The implementation of the CXOne system couldn't have been more seamless. This was credit to those from FourNet who provided us with their expertise and support throughout the project."

Hannah Mawson, Customer Experience and Insight Lead, South Norfolk and Broadland

FourNet have enabled us to streamline our technology architecture and save money, all with the benefit of the end user in mind. The collaborative nature of delivery enabled a smooth and effective transition to a more modern architecture that has pathed the way for us to deliver our digital transformation ambitions.

Corinne Lawrie, Assistant Director of ICT digital transformation, South Norfolk and Broadland

FourNet Views:

"When it comes to taxpayers' money we are always determined to ensure that the solution is best value for money and best in breed and best for the organisations involved, so we put a lot of thought into the design and installation so that the council's IT environment works for the council and citizens."

"The old legacy systems weren't fit for purpose for a new merged council team, and the systems are now fully integrated and fit for the future - with a single firewall dashboard and best in class security."

Paul Amoah, Technical Architect, FourNet

"This project highlights exactly what FourNet is all about. We have brought our broad expertise of contact centres, secure network infrastructure, and even our CX consulting practice, all into the frame to ensure the absolute best outcome for South Norfolk and Broadland District councils. The solutions from NICE, Fortinet and Extreme Networks are world leading, best in class and meet exactly the requirements. And we have delivered a future-proofed solution that lays the pathway to further digital transformation which will deliver for citizens and the councils."

Richard Lott, Government Account Director, FourNet

"We have delivered a single contact centre solution which works seamlessly for both councils, keeping their data, services and citizens separate but which works as one fully integrated solution and which can be built on for further digital transformation in future."

Amanda Henderson, CCaaS Solution Architect, FourNet



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integrated and
secure solutions.**

0161 864 5130
publicsector@fournet.co.uk
fournet.co.uk