

## CASE STUDY

# The Highland Council



## Wavenet's\* Cloud solution modernises services for enhanced community and business experience

### Overview

The Highland Council is a local government authority responsible for over 400 sites, including 200 schools. It employs thousands of staff who provide essential services to residents, businesses, and visitors in the Highlands. Their duties include education, housing, social services, waste management, transportation, public health, and community safety. In addition to supporting construction projects, business operations, and community events, they also manage environmental hazards, food safety issues, and escalated complaints.

Given its vast scope and crucial role in promoting the well-being and prosperity of communities, the Highland Council recognised the urgent need to modernise its outdated telecommunications infrastructure. The goal was to improve the efficiency and reliability of services, particularly considering the upcoming Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) switch-off.

### Situation

The Highland Council's telecommunications system was outdated, heavily relying on traditional phone lines across its schools, corporate offices, and two contact centres. This posed several issues:

- **PSTN switch-off:** With the PSTN due to be discontinued, the Council needed a solution to upgrade the 5,000 lines across corporate sites, schools, and the contact centres – one being the Council's public-facing service desk centre.
- **Limited call capacity and poor call quality:** The contact centre was limited to 30 calls at a time, resulting in busy signals and poor customer experience. Additionally, the systems call quality was subpar, and reporting features were basic and unintuitive.
- **Remote working challenges:** With 50% of staff working from home, the system was not equipped to support this transition. There was also a lack of business intelligence and reporting, leaving the Council unable to gauge service performance and manage workloads effectively.
- **Security and maintenance issues:** The system required substantial upgrades to meet security standards and reduce its high maintenance needs.
- **Disjointed communication processes:** The Council struggled with inconsistent communications across different sites, making collaboration difficult.

The Council needed a modern solution encompassing everything before the PSTN switch-off, with enhanced functionality, better call management, and strengthened security – capable of handling remote work and reducing costs and maintenance requirements.

## Solution

The Highland Council has its own IT team with the right technology background to evaluate its challenges and make informed decisions. They had a new IT desk without any legacy equipment, operating successfully on a RingCentral solution, so they approached Wavenet because they have a solid, trusted relationship with us and because we are also trusted partners with RingCentral. So, we streamlined The Highland Council's communications using RingCentral's cloud-based communication platform, which integrated multiple tools into a cohesive system. This solution offered several key features:

- **Modern cloud-based infrastructure:** RingCentral's platform consolidated phone lines and communication tools, improving call capacity and quality while eliminating the hard limit on concurrent calls.
- **Extensive reporting and analytics:** The system provided sophisticated reporting capabilities, giving managers real-time insights into call volumes, wait times, and agent performance.
- **Seamless remote working support:** The new solution enabled remote workers to manage their workloads efficiently, offering flexible communication options via mobile apps, web browsers, and integrated tools.
- **Boosted security and easier maintenance:** The cloud-based solution reduced the need for physical hardware, lowering maintenance costs and optimising security compliance.
- **Flexible transition and support:** Wavenet helped with a seamless transition, including supporting legacy systems during the migration period, deploying handsets across schools, and assisting with number porting from the previous supplier.

## Results

The new unified communications system implemented by Wavenet was easily administered by the hands-on technical team, who managed the solution effortlessly in comparison to others. It has delivered significant benefits across The Highland Council's operations:

### 1. Superior call handling and customer experience:

- Call capacity increased, eliminating busy signals, downtime and long wait times and reduced instances of reporting outages.
- Call quality considerably improved, especially for the contact centre.
- In-depth reporting features provided valuable insight into call volume and service demand, allowing better resource allocation during high-demand periods.
- Message set-up for important community messages has allowed the Council to be proactive and work smarter, leading to 100% of calls in an emergency being answered.

### 2. Streamlined operational efficiency:

- The system allowed quick overviews of performance and easy configuring for skill sets and Controller
- IVR (Interactive Voice Response), allowing better governance of skill sets, call routing, and real-time control, elevating contact centre performance.
- Workers benefited from flexible, familiar communication options, including mobile and browser-based tools. With management tools allowing transparency and easy scheduling for employee breaks, employee experience and productivity are boosted and have led to an overall happier workforce.

### 3. Cost-effective and sustainable solution:

- The cloud-based platform reduced the need for multiple systems and extensive hardware maintenance. Built-in call features, including internal communication across sites, eliminated the need for separate call logging systems.
- Inclusive calls and predictable costs simplified budgeting and eliminated recharging complications.



One of the most successful projects we have done. We have a huge project team, and this is by far the biggest project. 5,000 users and 2 contact centres all up and running in less than a year is incredible.

It isn't just the configuration and the deployment; it is also the adoption of the end users. We have gone from not having a solution to now having a great one for all our people who are using it well, every day. Our work processes have been optimised and the senior management team is very happy with the capabilities. We would recommend Wavenet and the solution wholeheartedly.

**David Johnstone**

ICT Technical Operations, The Highland Council

#### 4. Enhanced reporting and business intelligence:

- Advanced analytics allowed the Council to monitor advisor performance, manage workloads, and drill into specific metrics such as abandon rates and queue times.
- The ability to schedule reports and extract data easily gave managers clear and deep insights into operational performance, helping with KPIs and service levels.

#### 5. Smooth transition and business continuity:

- Wavenet provided hands-on support and additional services throughout the project, migrating the contract through the transitional time to avoid existing supplier contract renewal and assisting with handset deployment at every school, number porting, and staff training.
- The system's user-friendly design allowed staff to adapt quickly, with minimal disruption to daily operations.
- Business continuity was advanced as the cloud-based system could be accessed from anywhere, ensuring operations continued smoothly even during disruptions like building closures.

#### 6. Future-proofed and scalable:

- The workforce and quality management tools introduced significant operational upgrades, boosting productivity, scheduling, performance tracking, connection with remote workers, and customer service.
- The system is highly scalable, enabling the Council to continue optimising its service delivery as future needs evolve.

## Results

Overall, the project was deemed one of the most successful undertakings by The Highland Council, maximising service delivery for residents, businesses, and tourists. The new solution modernised their communications, elevated collaboration, and allowed for better operational control – all while ensuring a smoother experience for both employees and the community.



**This solution has been game-changing. As a Contact Manager, I want to see the full picture of the day with engaging dashboards without having to drill into the data. I can quickly glance and make decisions. Call quality is no longer an issue, and reporting and drilling into insightful data is incredibly valuable. Having worked in the service centre since 2006 and experienced many call handling technologies and CRM systems, this one stands out as exceptional compared to the others.”**

**Kelly MacKay**

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