



# OPUS™

## Communication, Engagement and the Customer Experience

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Driving Digital Dialogues

The way people and businesses communicate has changed significantly since the pandemic. Our communication options are constantly evolving. There is a visible shift in citizen behavior in our increasingly mobile world, and there is a growing demand for more digital platforms to conduct business and access services. Because of technological advancements, citizens are increasingly needing digital experiences. Even before COVID-19, the younger generation was driving this change, emphasising the need for government to adapt to changing citizen expectations.

The internet is now much more than a well of information; it's now used as a major platform by which many people choose to carry out their daily interactions.

The imperative for local government organisations is to meet the needs of a changing digital world, delivering consistent and joined up public services that can be accessed across any device and in any digital channel. So, whether it's a housing enquiry, household waste issue or council tax bill complaint, citizens should be able to communicate with their councils in any way they choose.

As a sector that is diverse and locally responsive, local government has the opportunity to exploit technologies that can achieve its overarching goal is to strengthen its relationship with citizens through digital transformation, using modern tools to stay relevant, collaborative and connected.

Creating an efficient citizen experience can no longer be seen as a nice to have; it is essential to

give citizens and service users the ability to digitally interact and engage with their local service providers, offering greater choice and satisfying citizen needs.



# Every Council's Challenge To Connect

Delivering services to meet customer needs, however, is not an easy task for councils. Local authorities has struggled to respond to citizen needs as they are faced with a unique set of complex technological infrastructure. Working amongst thousands of legacy systems that are no longer fit for purpose, local authorities have struggled to progress its digital agenda to drive public services forward. These systems have performed in disjointed, fragmented ways and are now ineffective due to their lack of connectivity.

Expected to do more with less, whether due to austerity measures or pressure from the public, councils must find ways to redesign their services so that citizens, and other users, have a more coherent experience when interacting with public services.

## **Stimulating a shift in communication**

Many private sector businesses are enjoying the emerging innovations in communication technologies, which is becoming one of the most dynamic areas to enhancing the customer experience. Synergizing communication tools can radically reshape how local authorities deliver public services. So how can you achieve this synergy?

Businesses are currently experiencing rapid transformation in the shape of Unified Communications (UC) technology. Proven to meet the demands of the citizen experience, UC technology should be integrated into every council's digital strategy. Not only is UC



technology a critical differentiator for staying ahead in a digital world, it immediately releases savings for councils, delivers efficiencies across a wide range of areas and empowers civil servants to work in more flexible and productive ways.

# A Family of Technologies

Significantly better than a single solution, Unified Communications is an all-encompassing family of technologies that deliver new options and features for local authorities to change the way they communicate and collaborate.

Unified Communications is more than a single piece of technology, it's a family of technologies, a combination of innovations that seamlessly join up across multiple devices and media types. With UC, all types of communication channels are available from messaging to video conferencing, call control and speech recognition, as well as the integration of voicemail, email and SMS.

Unified Communications tools can even transform the way civil servants work, enabling rapid business decisions, immediate responses and significantly reducing human latency. They can communicate efficiently no matter where they are or what kind of device they're using – desktop PC, mobile, tablet or VoIP phone.

IT leaders can enjoy the ability to easily manage systems at reduced cost, moving away from system complexity and allowing them to adapt to an evolving business environment. Citizens needs are met as they are able to seamlessly communicate in their preferred channels. Unified Communications has the capability

"In order to transform the relationship between the citizen and the state, in the period to 2020 the government will continue to deliver world-class digital services and transform the way government operates, from front end to back office, in a modern and efficient way"

Ben Gummer,  
Government Transformation Strategy,  
2017-2020

to make councils an environment – from front to back office - that is dynamic, modern and that delivers excellent public services.

# Unifying Communication For Councils

Imagine your council achieving a myriad of successes with only one communication ecosystem. Here are some key areas that Unified Communication tools can support you with:

## Audio & Web Conference

A special suite of audio conferencing and web conferencing (screen sharing) applications that are designed to improve collaboration and information exchange between colleagues and with customers, partners and stakeholders.

## Video Conferencing

Achieve better collaboration, use time more efficiently and improve public interactions with HD quality video conferencing over standard IP networks.

## Collaboration Tools

Enjoy seamless communication regardless of location or device with tools like visual voice mail, conferencing, desktop and application sharing. Bring together all methods of communications that works anywhere, any time, on any device.

## Unified Messaging & Auto Attendant

Unified Messaging (UM) solutions simplify message retrieval and improves productivity, but allowing users to access and manage their voicemail, email and even fax messages from one synchronised message store, via the device that suits them best.

## Instant Messaging and Presence

Facilitate rapid information exchange and real time decision making, improving organisational responsiveness and enhancing the customer experience. Offers colleagues a visual indication of your status and availability on a range of devices – PC, mobile or desk phone.

## Gaining Efficiencies in ICT

On-premise, hybrid or cloud-based, cloud telephony systems can deliver enhanced productivity, management reporting and citizen experience benefits to government organisations. It requires minimal-to-no on-site equipment, eliminating the need for equipment that requires valuable time from IT staff and space in your building.

# Reinventing The Citizen Experience

The citizen experience isn't just another programme or initiative. It's a way of business. It should be integral to everything government does. Local government's progress in digital transformation depends upon an investment in Unified Communication technologies as it can accelerate greater efficiencies and contribute towards better public services. Local government must commit to the transformative power of this unique family of communication tools to help adapt to the modern age, keeping government's value-based public service ethos alive and well.





# OPUS™

Opus is a customer-driven and results-oriented technology company that provides end to end communications, contact centre solutions, mobility, IT and managed print services, to private and public sector organisations across the UK and beyond.

Founded in 1992, our aim is to be the most successful independent technology partner in the UK. Our purpose is to enable enterprises to succeed and thrive by providing purpose driven technology, backed by caring personalised service.



This paper was built in partnership with GovNewsDirect. GovNewsDirect specialise in facilitating innovative and engaging partnerships between the private and public sector.

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# Features of Unified Communications

## Unified Collaboration

Benefit from tools that deliver seamless conversations, independent of channels and platforms.

## Cloud Based Telephony

Enable users to easily communicate in any workspace using any media, device or operating system.

## Microsoft Teams

Integrate existing solutions with Microsoft Teams for voice, video and contact centre solutions.

## Omni-channel Contact Centre Solutions

Benefit from enhanced citizen engagement, by allowing them to contact you via the channels of their choosing and automate repeat questions with chatbots and self-serve solutions.

## Mobility

Benefit from collaboration, video, voice and communication with contact centres, enjoying compatibility with multiple devices, apps and operating systems.

