



## Medway Council

### Consona OneServe Employee Portal 5.0

#### Medway Council Puts Customers First with a Consolidated Contact Centre Built Around Consona OneServe Employee Portal

*Technology enables the city of Medway to align the delivery of services with a "Customer First" vision*

Medway is a city in the making. Situated in north Kent in the southeast of England it is a unique urban area in the heart of the Thames Gateway, a national priority for regeneration and growth. Being a unitary authority, Medway Council provides the full range of local government services, including education, environment, social care, housing, planning, and much more. It serves a population of a quarter of a million people across the towns of Rochester, Strood, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham and more rural areas including the Hoo Peninsula, providing high quality, value for money services with one of the lowest council tax levels in the UK.

#### A Joined-Up Approach to Deliver Improved Services

Created in 1998 as the result of local government reorganisation that pulled together the previously separate administrative areas of The City of Rochester Upon Medway and the boroughs of Gillingham and Chatham, Medway is one of the largest unitary authorities in England. As a result of this merger, Medway was heir to a range of technologies and divergent processes. The need was to review and challenge inherited working practices and systems to improve the customer experience and deliver value for money.

#### Putting the Customer First

Under the banner of "Customer First" Medway set out to provide easier access to Council services ensuring—whatever the method of contact—a consistent, high quality and efficient service was provided. With the help of a partner, Medway chose Consona OneServe Citizen Management (formerly Onyx eShop), a Consona CRM solution, as the platform on which to build a purpose designed Contact Centre. This opened in 2005 and it is now the first point of contact, by phone, email, and via the web, for an increasing range of council services including; street scene and environmental services, Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Social Care enquiries.

Although technology was a big part of this effort, an even bigger consideration was the overall approach of focusing on the customer first, and then aligning the service delivery accordingly. "This was a culture shift," said Martin Garlick, Head of Customer First, "with a new focus on customer service and the customer experience."



#### Return on Investment at a Glance:

Implementing Consona OneServe Citizen Management as a component of the overall Customer First programme has realised the following benefits:

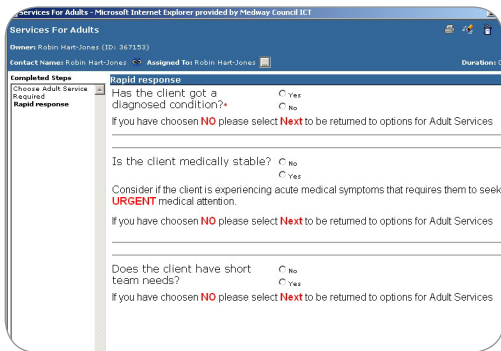
- An efficiency return equal to £775, 000 over 5 years.
- Complete contact centre centralisation.
- A single holistic view of the citizen (or business, where appropriate).
- A true shared services platform to support county and district, as well as agency-partner configurations.
- Industry-leading process management capabilities, which now drive and monitor service delivery across departments.
- World-class analytics to support operational and strategic decision-making to help anticipate citizens' future requirements.
- Dramatic improvements in citizens' perceptions of service level and responsiveness.

"We would have been inhibited by our old technology, but that's not the case with Consona CRM, and the new 'Customer First' processes we have put in place."

— **Ashley Bryant**, Customer First Business Development Manager, Medway Council

### Integrated Tools Help Provide the Right Service at the Right Time

The Contact Centre provides a single, seamless gateway into the council. The Consona OneServe Citizen Management portal is integrated with supporting technologies such as electronic document management, back-office systems, and payment management.



"The case-based reasoning (scripting) tool has been especially useful," said Garlick. "We're now using this tool to help our Customer Service Officers arrive at the right solution for the customer, ensuring the right – and more importantly – relevant question is asked at the correct time and we are consistently achieving our 80% 'One and Done' target."

### Getting it Done

Commenting on the upgrade from eShop to Consona OneServe Citizen Management, Ashley Bryant, Customer First Business Development Manager, said, "It went very smoothly with the Consona professional services team working effectively with the council. The new system was very well received by staff with the automation of previously manual process steps making the system easier to navigate and learn to use."

The upgrade and other developments under the Customer First umbrella have been financed by the council on an invest to save basis with borrowing being repaid from a

targeted efficiency return of £775,000 over 5 years. Customer First further received the Public Private Partnerships Programme (4ps) award for excellence in Customer Service and was also awarded the Charter Mark, the government's award for excellence in customer service.

### Looking Forward and Predicting the Future

Customer First is key to Medway's drive for excellence and the desire to continue to do things better for less. A priority at the moment is to gain an even better understanding of customer needs and expectations and then fine-tune services and technologies to continue to improve service delivery and the overall customer experience. Garlick added, "A challenge for Medway and local government generally is to maximise the opportunity of self service via the web. To do this we need to maintain an effective dialogue with our customers and potential service users to better understand the barriers that continue to inhibit use of this increasingly relevant, cost effective channel."

A linked challenge will be to exploit the extended range of information now available to predict and prepare ahead of time for citizen's future requirements. In support of this objective, Medway is using the Cognos business intelligence tools to analyse requests and follow-ups to determine trends and profile demand against the council's current capabilities. "We would have been inhibited by our old technology," Bryant stated, "but that's not the case with Consona CRM and the new 'Customer First' processes we have put in place."

Garlick sums it up this way: "The future for us at Medway is certainly very bright."

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— **Martin Garlick**,  
Head of Customer First,  
Medway Council

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