

Fingal County Council

Improving customer care during the pandemic with Enghouse Interactive and Microsoft Teams

ENABLING GREATER CONTROL AND UNDERPINNING REMOTE WORKING

Fingal County Council is an Irish local authority located to the north of Dublin. Ireland's fastest growing county with a population of over 296,000 people, Fingal provides a wide range of services and facilities from roads and infrastructure to parks, open spaces, community centres, libraries and housing, supported by 1,400 staff. The Council celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2019, and is home to several key elements of national and regional infrastructure including Dublin Airport.

DELIVERING ANSWERS ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

As part of its commitment to its citizens, Fingal County Council is continually looking to improve the level of service it provides. Its frontline Customer Care Unit handles queries that span a wide range of topics, from complex housing questions to more routine calls about the opening times of Council services.

These were handled through a traditional PBX solution, meaning that it was difficult to monitor and report on activities and performance – something that the Council was keen to remedy over the medium term through a corporate move to Microsoft Teams and a specialist contact centre solution.

INDUSTRY

Local government

GOALS

To enable remote working and provide greater control of operations

SOLUTIONS

Communications Center

BENEFITS

- Able to switch to remote working for all customer care agents within one month
- Average wait times reduced to 19 seconds while number of calls increased
- Increased visibility of performance and incoming call loads
- Greater collaboration between front office and other departments
- Faster, more detailed reporting to spot trends and areas for improvement.



**Enghouse
Interactive**

enghouseinteractive.co.uk

RAPID DEPLOYMENT TO MEET URGENT ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS

The arrival of COVID-19 dramatically accelerated Fingal's plans to move to a more digital, Teams-based workplace – particularly within customer care.

"In March 2020 everything changed and all our offices closed to the public.

However, while we couldn't provide face-to-face service, our customer care team still had to come in to answer calls as our traditional phone system meant they couldn't work remotely and they were providing vital frontline services to the public,"



"This accelerated our move to Teams to warp speed – we knew we needed to enable our agents to work effectively from home, keeping them safe and secure while still taking calls."

Bronagh Corry, Administrative Officer
Corporate Affairs & Governance

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL



As a first step, the Council aimed to provide agents with the ability to work remotely through the telephony elements of Microsoft Teams, before rolling out full contact centre functionality to its 23 agents. Following a competitive tender, it chose to work with Microsoft Gold Partner MJ Flood Technology and Enghouse Interactive Communications Center (CC), thanks to its key fit with the Council's needs and strong experience working with other Irish local authorities.

Enghouse Interactive's Communications Center is a total contact centre solution designed to cover all interactions and channels. It features a user-friendly interface, powerful reporting and seamless integration with Microsoft Teams.

Understanding that time was vital, MJ Flood Technology implemented Teams telephony within a month for the Customer Care Unit, allowing agents to work effectively from home – one of the first local authorities in Ireland to achieve this. It then worked with Enghouse to rollout Communications Center, which went live in November 2020, backed up by full remote training of agents. Teams has now been deployed across the entire Council.

"Working with MJ Flood Technology and Enghouse Interactive was a really positive experience," adds Corry. "Both teams really worked with us, understanding our needs and giving us all the assistance we needed to get up and running phenomenally quickly."



**Enghouse
Interactive**

enghouseinteractive.co.uk

DELIVERING GREATER COLLABORATION AND FASTER COMMUNICATION

The new system provides a complete solution that brings together the power of Teams and CC. Calls are automatically logged and forwarded onto available agents, who have complete visibility of their queue. They can then answer queries directly or if required transfer to back-office colleagues in other departments, such as housing or planning, for more complex issues. Presence indicators make it clear who is available and full end-to-end monitoring gives detailed reporting on performance.

Through the combination of CC and Teams, Fingal County Council has been able to improve the levels of service it provides to the public, increase control and better support agents – especially vital during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council is now receiving nearly 15,000 calls every month and achieving First Contact Resolution (FCR) rates of over 80%, despite the complexity of many queries.



“Since we changed over the whole customer experience has become much better – calls are answered much more quickly and people are not spending time waiting,”

“We used to get lots of complaints about time spent on hold and not being able to get through to specific departments – we now have an average wait time of just 19 seconds and can see the entire history of a call from cradle to grave, including tracking transfers to departments.”

Marion O'Connor, Senior Staff Officer, Customer Care
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL



Greater visibility not only provides Customer Care managers with increased control, but drives greater confidence and enables proactive improvements. For example, if there are spikes of calls on particular topics, they can ask for more assistance from back-office staff in relevant departments, and request further training and information so that agents can provide answers without needing to transfer callers.

“We now have much better oversight – before we had no eyes on anything. Agents can see their own statistics, such as the calls they've taken and how long they have taken,” notes Corry. *“As everything is tracked it is completely independent, meaning we can report and drive improvements in performance quickly and easily. It has been a really positive experience for both us and the agents.”*



GIVING AGENTS THE TOOLS TO THRIVE

Agents now feel better supported and safer as they can work from home. They also have greater visibility of incoming call queues, increasing their control over their workload. Thanks to Teams they can collaborate and

communicate easily with their colleagues and across departments, wherever they are based, for example through team chat that enables them to share information in real-time.



“It was a great relief for agents once they could work remotely – and Teams also helps provide them with greater support.”

“Some of the calls that come in, particularly in areas such as housing, can be very emotional and distressing. In the office you can talk to colleagues about it – but if you are working from home it can be very lonely. Being able to turn to the group chat is hugely beneficial for our agents.”

Marion O'Connor, Senior Staff Officer, Customer Care
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL



More detailed reporting, based on rapid access to complete data, has increased confidence for managers, providing them with solid evidence around performance and enabling reports to be created in seconds. Overall, the combination of

Teams and CC has transformed customer care for Fingal, and helped it to deliver high-levels of service all the way through the pandemic and beyond.



Enghouse
Interactive

enghouseinteractive.co.uk

ABOUT ENGHOUSE INTERACTIVE

Enghouse Interactive's integrated suite of solutions includes multi-channel contact centre, self-service, attendant operator consoles, video collaboration and workforce optimisation. This wide portfolio places us in the unique position to offer customers and partners a complete, fully featured solution from a single vendor.

These solutions support the full range of deployment methods from premise-based to private, public or community cloud and even hybrid requirements.