Harrow Council regain control and elevate their IT service delivery

Customer Overview

Harrow Council has a workforce of more than 5,000 employees, serving more than 240,000 residents and thousands of local businesses every day.

Harrow Council's ambition is to increasingly make Harrow a better place to live and work – for residents, businesses and visitors.

The Challenge

Harrow Council decided to move away from relying on a single outsourced supplier, and as part of a refreshed IT strategy they wished to move to a nimbler Service Integration and Management (SIAM) model, allowing some towers to run in-house, and others to be outsourced to smaller specialist suppliers instead. The key reasons behind this decision included the need for better visibility and control of their internal IT systems, for Harrow this was a big step forward to better service delivery after a long engagement with a single partner.

To enable this bold new approach, Harrow needed to have a suite of business processes and a platform that could handle a variety of suppliers in a robust and scalable manner that delivered clear analytical insights into service performance.

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The Solution

Harrow had been planning the move to a SIAM model for some time and ran a competitive RFP process to select a product that could handle their expected needs, with flexibility to handle other requirements in the future. The outcome of this selection process in Q1 2020 was to select ServiceNow as their ITSM platform and Unifii as their implementation partner.

ServiceNow stood out by offering an industry leading ITSM capability with great ability to provide rich reporting and data insights. In addition, it had been deployed in various councils across the country running in-house and SIAM operating models already, and was proven to be able to support Harrow's needs and vision well. The breadth of ServiceNow's capabilities also provided options to support Project Management, Asset Management and other services that were under review.

Unifii was selected as the implementation partner of choice as they brought a strong background in the delivery of IT service management and other capabilities using the ServiceNow platform and were successful in the rollout of this for various local government organisations. Unifii's understanding of how SIAM needed to be approached and experience in delivering SIAM for public and private sector meant they would anticipate challenges and proactively call out areas for the collective project team to focus on together.

"Unifii built up that level of trust by understanding our requirements so quickly and suggesting the right solutions for our organisation."

In Q2, Harrow's new Director of IT, Ben Goward, joined the council and with the help of the wider team, they ensured the IT transformation initiatives were set up to deliver the best possible service delivery, underpinned by the migration to SIAM.

The project was delivered over a 6 month process with Harrow working in close partnership with Unifii throughout. With the unexpected arrival of COVID-19 we collectively had to adapt our plans and ways of working almost overnight whilst overcoming technology challenges and ensuring stakeholders could still focus on supporting their customers. Working in close partnership allowed the project team to further refine the delivery approach, ensuring user facing processes had additional testing and validation time. In addition to this, Unifii moved to a more hands-on requirements gathering model where Harrow staff built out their Service Catalogue in tool to help understand how it would be used by customers.

The key test for the project team came two weeks before the planned go-live, when a critical supplier had suffered a major outage. Within 24 hours of an initial discussion about accelerating the roll out of ServiceNow for the internal teams, the platform was being used by the newly launched Service Desk allowing staff and customers to gain support and help for their critical issues. The remaining towers also onboarded early and the entire service went live a full week ahead of schedule.

The solution has resulted in significantly better management in information being instantly available for everyone from the IT Director down. Supplier performance is easily tracked and internal customers have started to adopt self service capabilities, resulting in a drop in calls to the Service Desk. The desire to embed SIAM into the working practises has been successfully achieved with a roadmap for future service improvements identified to gain even more value.

Through the implementation of the platform, Harrow can now look into constant service improvement, using statistics from the way the portal and phone lines are currently being used and making the journey easier for users. The project has been a resounding success and Harrow are looking to introduce ServiceNow to other areas of the business.

The Benefits

SLA performance was great but above that, it was found that:

- First Time Fix (FTF) is up at almost 60%

- Agents can now quickly and seamlessly get access to knowledge to better support callers

- Major Incident rate is down

- CSAT is at 97%

- No complaints

"The project has been a resounding success, it exceeded all of my expectations and everything I have heard has been completely positive!"

Catherine Little,
Head of IT Operations

- Customer satisfaction of early service users provided a strong positive start, especially considering the circumstances of the accelerated go live

- Users can now get access to understand progress of their incidents and request

- Introduction of the self-service portal means that 40% of incidents and 70% of requests are now raised this way

- The calls to the Service Desk are as a result getting answered quicker, further improving the customer experience.

- Tickets via email are now a thing of the past, this introduces significant benefits through more controlled ticket management system and the user visibility of real-time updates on their tickets through the portal.

- Requests raised using templated forms now go directly to the correct teams with automated tasks to speed up processing times. This has all contributed to requests going to the right team every time and the time to deliver service has therefore been reduced, resulting in much happier customers.