

Surrey County Council Reduce Ticket Backlog By 88%

Formed in 1889 and based in Kingston County Hall, Surrey County Council has responsibilities to a large number of public sector services such as transport, education, housing, recycling and the local environment. The service desk team at Surrey County Council comprises of 16 staff, including the Service Desk Manager, who support all departments within the Council including a number who provide external services to the general public. This equates to approximately 11,000 service users ranging from social workers, highway engineers, County Councillors, fire & rescue and administration staff. In 2017 there were on average 9,200 tickets logged on the service desk per month.

Challenge

Increase productivity and overall effectiveness of the service

The service desk was experiencing a number of challenges which were all contributing to a low team morale, such as a large ticket backlog, high abandoned call rate and low resource levels. Collaboration and communication between 1st, 2nd and 3rd line support teams was also in need of improvement, therefore the service was not operating at an optimum level. Recent organisational changes had led to further challenges within the service desk which at times were proving to be counterproductive, resulting in unclear core objectives. The team knew they needed to focus on tackling these problems to provide a more productive and efficient service for their customers, along with a more positive and aligned team effort for the service desk staff.

Solution

Use the SDI Health Check to refine the service improvement plan

The solution was to work alongside the Service Desk Institute to further develop the service improvement plan they already had in place. The service desk was broken down into tactical areas to reveal which current processes required change. An improvement and integration plan was put into place to refocus strategic initiatives. There was a strong need to achieve a consistent message across the wider IT structure which would cover key functions, service definitions, enhancement initiatives and engagement plans.

“Damian (the SDI consultant) was really informative and knowledgeable and very easy to work with.

It was definitely beneficial to go through what our current processes were and it helped highlight ahead of the report which areas we needed to work on.”

Emma Faller, Operations Delivery Manager, East Sussex, Surrey, Brighton & Hove City Councils.

Result

Service improvements already having positive effect

Despite the significant challenges faced by the service desk team at Surrey County Council, they also had many strengths as a team which drove them to initiate their service improvement journey. The team's significant expertise and knowledge combined with a strong commitment from the management allowed them to focus on their improvement plan which has already produced some brilliant results. One recommendation produced from the Service Desk Health Check was to invest in recruitment to fill the service desk vacancies as soon as possible and create a robust training plan and cultural engagement programme to involve all members of the team. Recommendations focused on promoting collaboration amongst the staff and creating a more efficient service to all customers.

Self-Service usage increased from 39% to 60%

Surrey County Council have now fully removed email as a support channel except for two external departments who are still currently reliant on it. The self-service portal which had already been in place for several years has now been developed to remove the manual logging process. This has resulted in an average of 60% of all tickets being logged through self-service compared to 39% before the email support channel was removed.

Abandoned call levels reduced by a third

In addition to changes in ways of working and more effectively processing the workload coming in, 5 people have been recruited into the team on a temporary basis which has assisted in significantly improving the abandoned call rate and reducing the ticket backlog.

“Abandoned call levels have reduced to an average of 10% over the last 2 months, in comparison to 36% in the 2 months previous. Our ticket backlog has reduced by a huge 88% since the 1st February.”

Emma Faller, Operations Delivery Manager, East Sussex, Surrey, Brighton & Hove City Councils.

Improved collaboration between teams

Regular monthly team meetings have been reinstated and include all members of the team. The service desk team has been relocated to the same area as 2nd and 3rd line support teams, which has already shown an improvement in collaboration and communication between the teams.

The plans from the service improvement strategy which have already been implemented are having a positive, significant impact on the wider IT structure, end users and staff at Surrey County Council. This is expected to progress as they continue their improvement journey and planned integration into 'ORBIS' – a shared IT Service that will also be provided to East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council.

SDI is delighted with the progress made by the Surrey County Council service desk team and looks forward to seeing further improvements as this integration into 'ORBIS' continues to develop.

To find out about how SDI can support your service desk just get in touch - we'd love to hear from you!

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