



FUTURE
NORTHANTS

REPORT



Soft Market Test

For

North Northamptonshire
West Northamptonshire
Contact Centre solution

Section 1: Introduction

1. General Requirements

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to briefly explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements and the expected scope of the contact centre solution in order that suppliers can explain the relevance of products, services and their experience to the requirements. Please note that the corporate telephone system is out of scope.
- 1.2. **Please note:** this market testing exercise is **not** an invitation to tender or a request for formal expressions of interest. This document does not form any part of an invitation to tender. Future Northants is issuing this request for **information only**. Any supplier invited to present to FUTURE NORTHANTS is doing so to support market research only and to help make any potential procurement process more focused and efficient. No supplier selection or supplier preference is implied.

2. Confidentiality and Freedom of Information (FOI)

- 2.1. We intend to publish a summary of our market engagement on the Future Northants Contact Centre system, including this document. We would like to be as open as possible and share as much as we can, however we do anticipate that you may wish to keep some information confidential and we will not share any information that you do not want us to. For this reason, we strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such.

3. Background

- 3.1 FUTURE NORTHANTS is the Programme team set up to deliver the Local Government Reform to create two new Unitary Authorities in Northamptonshire. The Government has agreed to create two new unitary councils in Northamptonshire to provide all local government services in the county.

This will come into being on 1 April 2021 and Northamptonshire's current eight councils will cease to exist.

The new North Northamptonshire unitary authority will cover the areas of Corby Borough Council, East Northamptonshire Council, Kettering Borough Council and Borough of Wellingborough Council.

A new unitary council for West Northamptonshire will cover the areas of Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council and South Northamptonshire Council. Services currently provided by Northamptonshire County Council and the districts and boroughs will be delivered by the two new councils.

The creation of North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council is an opportunity to develop and transform services so they deliver what residents and businesses need, they should be modern and provide good value for money.

- 3.2 FUTURE NORTHANTS is governed by two joint committees, North Northants and West Northants Joint Committees. Within FUTURE NORTHANTS there are 13 Programmes under the 7 Senior Responsible Officers (SRO) headed by the Chief Executive of Northamptonshire County Council.

4. Soft Market Test Timetable

- 4.1. Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation is able to contribute to this exercise please complete the questionnaire at the end of this document and return, via messaging facility on the FUTURE NORTHANTS Procurement Portal (ProContract) by 12:00; 21st February 2020.

Following receipt of the questionnaires, if time and numbers allow, Future Northants may decide to hold further short sessions with providers. The decision whether or not to meet individually with providers will be at Future Northants absolute discretion. Any meetings will follow the same format for each provider and the same questions will be asked of providers. Suppliers will be asked to provide a demonstration giving an overview of their product and explain their companies roadmap for the future development of their product and how they see it delivering the new needs of the two new Unitary councils and their customers. Future Northants will be seeking responses to specific questions and the meetings, if held, will be used to enable providers to present relevant ideas for the future solution. The sessions will be held in Northamptonshire (exact location TBC).

- 4.1. Please register an interest and message through the Pro-contract system to confirm attendance at a potential event along with your name, contact and organisation details by 17:00; 21st February 2020. Due to room capacity, attendance at the engagement event will be limited to a maximum of two (2) representatives per provider. At least one representative should have the knowledge to answer any functional, process and technical questions about the solution.
- 4.2. Following receipt of supplier responses and any additional sessions and/or follow up questions a decision will then be made internally on next steps and the best procurement approach.

- 4.3. The expected timetable is provided below:

Stage	Date
Deadline for receipt of responses to Soft Market Test.	12:00; 21 st February 2020
Suppliers presentation session week	9 th - 13 th March 2020
Decision on next steps	End March 2020
Tentative tender publishing	April 2020

- 4.4. Potential responders will not be prejudiced in any future procurement processes by either responding or not responding to this soft market test exercise or by attending or not attending subsequent workshop sessions.**

Section 2: Identification of Requirement

5. Current Situation

- 5.1. We are running this soft market test to help us gain an understanding of the market and current technological capabilities to help us inform the strategy for the Contact Centre solutions for North Northants and West Northants.
- 5.2. Please respond in full to both section 3 and section 4.
- 5.3. Each sovereign council currently has their own:

Contact centre solution. We are looking to implement two telephony contact centre solutions - one per Unitary by 31st March 2021. Therefore we are looking to appraise the market for a technologically relevant, practical and cost effective solution suitable for disaggregating County Council Services and aggregating District and Borough Services to provide one contact centre per unitary.

- 5.4. We are looking to build a strong, long term stable relationship with the right solution provider to work with us to develop and build our offering to our partners/customers ready for vesting day and beyond.
- 5.5. The solution that we seek, will be hosted as a cloud solution and should allow us to continue to operate as we are able to now with no service impact on the residents.

5.6. Current Systems:

5.6.1. The existing councils are currently using the following contact centre solutions:

- Mitel
- 8x8
- Avaya
- Alcatel-Lucent
- MacFarlane

5.7. Further information: In North and West Northamptonshire, per day in each authority there are approximately:

- 2000 telephone calls received per day
- between 300 and 570 emails received per day
- 100 FTE work in each region

6. Our Requirements

6.1. Key objectives:

- FUTURE NORTHANTS are seeking for a solution focused on both quality and reliability, allowing us to handle customer contact by telephone, email and other future contact methods adopted in the most efficient way;
- The solution must provide value for money services in an increasingly financially austere public sector environment;
- The relationship with our supplier must support us in providing the above.

6.2. We are looking for a solution that will enable us to :

- Operate and offer all county and district and borough services to our residents easily and practically (e.g. accommodate for potential increase or decrease of volumes and new services),
- Provide our services in a cost-effective manner (i.e. software and support service costs)
- Provide a solution that is maintained and upgraded in line with regulatory requirements;
- Be supported 24/7

The system must also:

- Support the use of auto-bots enabling further introduction of this technology
- Support soft phones and remote access for all users e.g. via Mobile App
- Allow Interactive Voice Response (IVR) messages to be updated in real time
- Offer Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) function to direct calls to multi-skilled agents
- Allow advisors to be assigned skillsets which in turn are given priority levels
- Allow advisors to be assigned to multiple skillsets depending on level of training received and service demand
- Allow supervisors to block incoming calls from identified numbers
- Allow call volume and associated Service Level Agreement (SLA) statistics to be available in real time
- Allow historical call volume and associated SLA statistics to be available to view
- Record calls and store call recordings for future playback, enabling deletion according to data retention schedules that is dependent on service
- Enable supervisors to listen to agent contact as it is happening
- Enable calls to be transferred within the contact centre (e.g. to agents or supervisors) and outside into the wider organisation
- Enable supervisors to change the status of an agent remotely
- Integrate with workforce management solutions or offer an integrated WorkForce Management solution
- Allow each agent to have a separate, internal direct dial for transfers
- Allow agents to be assigned a specific amount of time to deal with call 'wrap up'
- Enable incoming calls to be placed in a queue and answered according to pre-set priorities when call volume exceeds available agents
- Be compatible with robust, durable user headsets
- Be compatible with wallboard software so real time information can be displayed
- Able to offer management of contact across all channels i.e. voice, e-mail, web chat, SMS, social media
- Allow for a directory of people and services to be held within the contact centre solution rather than in an external programme (e.g. Outlook)
- Allow for the sentiment of customers to be analysed automatically across each channel
- Allow for messages to be recorded and played to waiting callers
- Ensure that details relating to card payments are not recorded
- Offer automatic call backs to customers who prefer not to sit in a queue
- Allow for current wait times to be read out to waiting callers
- Allow customers to leave a voicemail message if no agents are available
- Ability to integrate with office 365 telephony system (proposed corporate telephony solution)

Question	Response	
9. How many applications are required for the administration of the system? I.e. will multiple programmes need to be used to administer the system?		
10. Do you have a demonstration site for your solution?		
11. Do you have customers you are willing for us to approach? Please provide basic details		
12. Please provide a roadmap for your solution for the future and describe how the solution is future proofed?		
13. Can you provide estimated costs for providing your solution to a mid-sized unitary authority including setup, design, hosting and support over a 5 year period?		
14. How long will it take to deploy your solution? Please also outline your implementation plan		
15. What is your approach to testing & defect management?		
16. What is your approach to system upgrades and are they included within annual maintenance (do you install as a supplier FOC or Charge extra)		
17. Please describe the support provision you offer		
18. Does your solution provide an API, if so, do you have documentation AND what features does your API cover/enable/expose?		
19. Can your solution integrate with other systems like CRM? Please provide details		
20. How reliable is your solution? In relation to availability, security and uptime?		
21. To what extent are you able to provide comprehensive and user friendly reporting?		
22. To what extent can your software adapt and successfully run system customisations?		
23. Dependant on hosting location of the system what are the underlying network speed requirements for running your system Internet / Local and Wide area Network?		
24. Is your solution able integrate with the existing telephone systems? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mitel ▪ 8x8 ▪ Avaya ▪ Alcatel-Lucent ▪ MacFarlane 	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>