



WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL

South West Communications Group provides West Somerset Council with a high quality wide area network (WAN) for converged voice and data use.

West Somerset Council serves a community that encompasses a large area including Exmoor National Park and the Quantock Hills area of outstanding natural beauty and the west Somerset coast. The Council operates out of a main head office in Williton and a customer centre in Minehead.

The Council had been a long-standing telephony client of **swcomms** when they began to implement plans to rebuild their head office. The Council asked us for **advice on the move** and how best to implement a voice and data network. The relationship that had developed with their dedicated account manager for their existing telephony contract meant the Council entrusted **swcomms** with their extra communications needs.

We originally installed a 2Mbps leased line from our data centre in Exeter to the new headquarters. The connection to the data centre gave the Council the **Internet connectivity** they needed. The data centre benefits from high speed circuits that give direct access to six telecommunications networks and could therefore offer superior connectivity. We also provided two further 2Mbps leased lines between the head office and their Williton and Minehead sites.

The physical upheaval of a new-build can be very disruptive, but our team of designers and engineers ensured there was no stress suffered in creating a new voice and data network. **swcomms'** expertise in providing single solution networks and understanding of a public sector body's need to be constantly available to their customers, meant there was **limited downtime** between the switch from the old offices to the new headquarters.



More recently, the data centre link has been replaced with a 50Mbps Internet leased line with a managed router and firewall that connects directly to the Internet. The leased lines between the offices have been upgraded to 100Mbps. These point to point connections are constantly active and are **completed uncontended** to give the best quality of service.

Network security is provided by a managed Cisco firewall installed at the head office to protect the entire network and to provide remote virtual private network (VPN) access for staff and councillors.

VoIP telephony was achieved by using the data network for voice to gain the **financial savings** of toll-free calls between the Council's sites and users.

Their Alcatel-Lucent OmniPCX Office telephony system has also benefited from incremental upgrades to enable the Council to enjoy additional features and functionality, such as VoIP.

Alcatel-Lucent's Solution Premium Services software assurance scheme provides a complete protection package that ensures their solutions are running at peak efficiency and capacity. It provides essential software maintenance and proactive evolution to enable stability and to **delay obsolescence**.

The Council still benefits from a single point of contact should any issues arise. Their account manager remains in regular contact to advise on any changes or additions that would be of further benefit.