

Suffolk County Council employees benefit from self-service initiative

Suffolk County Council is the administrative authority for the county of Suffolk, England. It is run by 75 elected county councillors representing 63 divisions, 5,400 employees, and 740,000 citizens.

Until recently, all enquiries from staff working for the Council were being run through the HR department. With a high number of inbound requests and questions, pressure was being put on the already stretched HR team to improve employee communication in a timely and consistent manner. Documentation was being stored in disparate places (including on their intranet and being stored locally), which was leading to inconsistent advice.

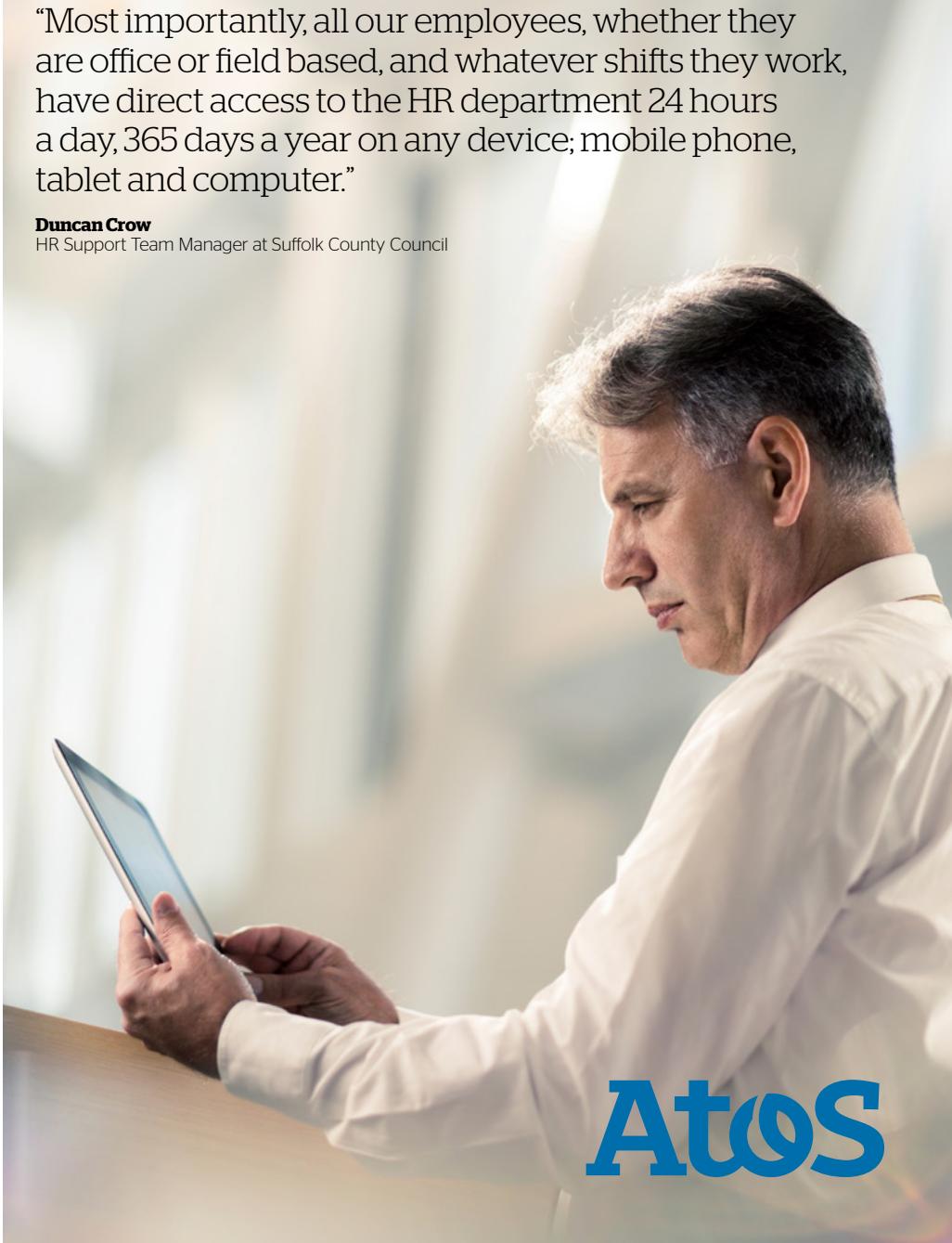
In order to better manage internal demand and ensure all employees had access to the same, accurate information Suffolk County Council set out three goals:

- ▶ To enable the HR staff to free up more time to deal with more complex employee queries
- ▶ To ensure all employees had access to consistent, accurate information – 24/7
- ▶ To reduce the number of internal enquiries escalated to the HR team.

By working with cognitive knowledge solution provider [Transversal](#) and information technology services company [Atos](#), Suffolk County Council has implemented an enterprise HR solution – a centralised knowledgebase that allows employees to serve themselves online – enabling its HR team and employees to benefit from a more efficient HR operation due to the single point of reference for employees and an easy to manage database.

“Most importantly, all our employees, whether they are office or field based, and whatever shifts they work, have direct access to the HR department 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on any device; mobile phone, tablet and computer.”

Duncan Crow
HR Support Team Manager at Suffolk County Council





The Challenges faced by Suffolk County Council

- ▶ **An increasingly mobile workforce:** With employees working in many different locations around the county, the Council wanted to ensure phone and email contact were not the primary methods of communication for employees with HR queries.
- ▶ **Non-traditional working hours:** With many employees working shifts, Suffolk County Council needed a solution to deliver HR support outside of traditional operating hours.
- ▶ **Local language:** The ability for staff to search for answers using their own language, rather than having to learn HR language.

The Solution

Transversal and Atos: A partnership delivering knowledge management to the public sector.

The Transversal and Atos solution provided Suffolk County Council with a secure, scalable, and future proofed tool that enables employees to find the information they need, when they need it. At the heart of the solution is the centralised knowledgebase that can be continually updated based on feedback from users who have the opportunity to rate answers, depending on how satisfactory they are.

The enterprise HR solution has enabled Suffolk County Council to effectively distribute a range of corporate information in a timely and consistent manner - breaking previously wordy council policy and procedure documents into more dynamic, bite-sized chunks.

The patented search technology at the heart of the Transversal solution searches based on the meaning of words, not the words themselves. This means that people can search for information using natural, conversational language and be confident that they will find the right answer first time, even if the actual words do not appear in the information they are searching for.

For example, the Transversal technology knows that questions involving holiday, annual leave and time-off are all potentially asking the same thing so it uses the context and meaning of the words to better understand the question to provide more accurate answers first time.

"As a public sector organisation we are under increasing pressure to improve the speed, consistency and quality of our employee service, whilst also reducing costs" said Duncan Crow at Suffolk County Council.

The Results

Since implementing Transversal's enterprise HR solution Suffolk County Council has:

- ▶ Greater control over HR information available to employees
- ▶ Enabled employees to access HR information 24/7
- ▶ Empowered staff to self-serve, confident that the information they are using is the most current and up to date.

About Atos

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Atos is focused on business technology that powers progress and helps organizations to create their firm of the future. The Group is the Worldwide Information Technology Partner for the Olympic & Paralympic Games and is listed on the Euronext Paris market. Atos operates under the brands Atos, Atos Consulting, Atos Worldgrid, Bull, Canopy, Unify and Worldline.

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