

# case study

Situated in the North West of England, St Helens Borough Council delivers a wide range of crucial services to a population of around 179,000 residents.

The borough has unique challenges which arguably place an increased focus on the ability of the local authority to ensure it is effective in developing and maintaining a relationship with its customers.



St. Helens  
Council

## St Helens Council's social media requirements

St Helens MBC had numerous different social media accounts across the organisation, ranging from corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts communicating broadly across the organisation, to specific niche accounts for services such as libraries, leisure, events, health and children's services. This situation presented the Council with a number of challenges that it wished to address.

- Individual service area accounts were controlled and managed by staff in those service areas, meaning that every account had a different tone of voice and style of communication.
- The ease with which staff in different service areas could set up accounts meant that there was a proliferation of accounts which then had little or no regular content populating them.
- Social media accounts were managed via shared log in details, meaning that the Council had no control over who had access to accounts being operated in its name, nor over the content of those accounts.
- The Council's marketing team ran lots of cross-departmental campaigns, meaning that it was hard for them to get key messages across to citizens without having to log in and out of numerous different accounts.
- The Council's emergency planning team wanted a solution that would enable them to get a single message out to citizens from one place.

With these concerns in mind, St Helens Council began looking for a solution that would enable it to bring all of its social media accounts under control in one secure place and offer the ability to validate content before it was posted and create an audit trail of communication.





## Why St Helens Council chose CrowdControlHQ

The digital transformation team at St Helens Council looked at a number of different social media management tools including Hootsuite and Sprout Social before deciding to go with CrowdControlHQ. This decision was made largely because CCHQ offered the broadest range of functionality at the most competitive price.

“Other systems we looked at were very expensive and a lot of the functions we wanted to use came at an extra cost. For example, if you wanted to do any analysis there was always a hidden cost that we couldn’t manage.”

*Karen Gillis, Customer Relationship Manager*

An additional consideration was the fact that St Helens already had an existing relationship with Abavus, as an established user of its My Council Services platform.

“Because of the relationship we have with Abavus already and our experience of working with you on other projects, we knew that any suggestions we had would be listened to.”

*Karen Gillis, Customer Relationship Manager*

The team at St Helens prepared a business case for consideration by the Council’s IT Programme Board, tasked with ensuring that CCHQ offered value for money and fit with the Council’s other IT developments. Once that was approved, the team from Abavus and CCHQ began work on setting up the relevant workspaces and training users.



# The benefits of CCHQ for St Helens Council

## More effective timing of messages

"So far it's gone really well. Scheduled posting has helped a lot, particularly on bank holidays. It's been great to be able to do that across all our platforms."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## Moderation of incoming abusive comments

"The moderation functionality has been great, particularly for Facebook comments. It really helps to take the pressure off from constantly having to look through things. People can sometimes post comment on our Facebook page using pretty colourful language. Now we know that if anyone has posted anything like that overnight, CCHQ will have picked it up for us."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## More efficient management of conversations

"The conversations tab is really good on the desktop version. All the comments and contributions are in one place and you can just work through them and systematically reply to them and forward them to the right people."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## Enhanced peace of mind from moderation of outbound messages

"We have peace of mind now that everything that goes out goes through a moderation system. If we have a new user on the system, we can set up validation on their account to look at what they've posted before they post it."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## Enhanced reporting and analytics

"The reporting and analytics function is very useful. It's very hard and time consuming to get reports directly through Facebook or Twitter. It can take all day to get that information. However, with the analytics report in CCHQ can you get quick snapshots, dig into different bits in more depth, see most popular posts, most engaged users and so on. It saves a lot of officer time which would otherwise be spent pulling all of that together."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## A better understanding of what works and what doesn't

"Now we can easily see which services aren't performing so well and which accounts aren't being used any more. Then we can offer help to the owners of those platforms – 'You're not making the most of this platform. Do you really need it? Is there something we can help you with?' The time it takes to keep things updated and current can be saved now that we can easily pick up the accounts that are struggling."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## Enables easy auditing

"Now all our accounts are under one roof which makes the auditing process much easier. We've recently been audited on social media and having CCHQ has contributed to us getting a really good report on our audit."

*Karen Gillis, Customer Relationship Manager*

## Saving staff time and effort

"CCHQ has made life much easier for our staff, particularly when it comes to scheduling things in advance and making sure that messages are consistent across different services. You only have to post things once to reach multiple channels. You can also see when other people are sending messages out, and avoid everything going out at the same time, which is something we couldn't do before."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## Support from Abavus

"There've been a few minor glitches and it's been really great having someone get back to us quickly about it. We've got a good contact that we can get hold of and things get worked out really quickly. The 'ask it' function within CCHQ is really useful as well. It's good to be able to get in touch with someone who can help quickly."

*Kirsty Watkinson, Customer Intelligence and Consultation Officer*

## What is CrowdControlHQ?

CrowdControlHQ is the UK's leading social media risk management and compliance platform built for enterprise. It gives you access to all your organisation's social media channels from a single dashboard, accessible online from anywhere. CCHQ supports your channel shift strategy by enabling your communications and customer service teams to manage social media communications across complex networks of multiple accounts. It also gives you a complete social media audit trail and includes the advanced security features needed to ensure that your organisation's image is protected and compliance regulations are met.

## About Abavus and Crowd Control HQ

CrowdControlHQ has agreed a partnership with Abavus to accelerate growth throughout the public sector. As the UK's leading social media risk management and compliance platform, CrowdControlHQ, is credited as being the first and only British tech business to enter the Forrester Social Media Risk Management Top 10, earmarked as a 'genuine worldwide contender'.

Meanwhile, Abavus have developed a very strong insight into the role of technology within the Public sector, having spearheaded the roll out of 'My Council Service' online, across some of the largest local authorities in the UK. As an accredited trainer, they ensure that public sector clients having invested in new technology also deliver significant return on investment through the training and development of software users.



**For more information about CrowdControlHQ  
or to book a demo:**

**Visit [www.abavus.co.uk](http://www.abavus.co.uk)**

**Email [info@abavus.co.uk](mailto:info@abavus.co.uk)**

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