



Derby City Council

Journey to the Cloud

The logo for 'risual' features the word in a lowercase, sans-serif font. Above the letter 'i' are three small, white dots arranged in a slight arc.

the customer

overview

Customer

Derby City Council

Website

www.derby.gov.uk

Number of employees

Approx 7500

Region

Derbyshire, United Kingdom

Industry

Public Sector

Customer profile

Derby City Council provides its residents with vital services including schools, libraries, social services, highways and planning.



Derby City Council

"We knew we needed to change how we utilised our IT services at Derby City Council. At a time where we were exiting our long-term contract and having to make serious organisational changes due to austerity, moving to a cloud consumption model made sense."

Nick O' Reilly, Director of Digital Services,
Derby City Council

the problem

Derby City Council was exiting a long term IT outsourcing contract with a large multinational supplier.

The Council was looking to change their IT strategy and needed a more flexible approach that was easier to adjust as the needs of the Council change, and as the impact of budget cuts takes greater effect.

The Council explored a number of service delivery models and decided its future would be based on cloud computing, initially through Infrastructure as a Service but moving to Software as a Service. Derby City Council were keen to explore suppliers who were experienced in cloud migration projects, as well as offering long term support to cloud environments.

migrating to the cloud

Derby City Council decided that the ideal solution would be to adopt a cloud first design model, but recognised there would be a need for some traditional "on premise" services. Derby City Council engaged with risual to help design this hybrid cloud solution, to ensure greater agility and meet targeted budget savings.

Following this initial design piece, the Council used the G-Cloud framework to seek proposals for implementing the solution and after a thorough evaluation the implementation contract was awarded to risual. Derby and risual worked together in a number of planning sessions to identify the business priorities for the cloud and to finalise a migration plan of IT services from the existing datacentre to the Microsoft Cloud. This included performing a number of test migrations in order to determine the speed at which migrations can occur.

Over the following months, IT services hosted in the datacentre were migrated to the Microsoft Cloud. This was conducted as a phased migration, moving singular business services at a time to ensure disruption was kept to a minimum and ensure integration of IT services was maintained. The process worked by copying the server and its associated data to a target location within the Cloud; dependant on the size of server or service and the available network capacity, this can take anything up to one day for a set of small servers or a week for a larger IT service.



migrating to the cloud

During this process, users were still able to access the service, as nothing had changed within the datacentre. At a pre-determined point in time, the servers being migrated were then subject to a planned outage, where all access is removed while the final copy is taken and the service itself is switched over to the Microsoft Cloud. After the service has been switched over, a number of other configurations take place, replacing existing management software with new cloud-based software. Once this had been completed, the servers themselves are added to the backup and are subject to full monitoring by the new cloud service.

The total planned outage for each service was no more than two hours in total and took place out of hours to minimise disruption. Nick O'Reilly spoke of the migration service: "The integration was really first class, with minimum impact to the business".



Richard Proud, Director at risual, spoke of the migration project:

"What Derby City Council and risual achieved is on the bleeding edge of cloud technology. A migration of this scale has not been attempted by a public sector organisation in the UK. To successfully complete this piece of work with Derby is testament to the skill, care and commitment of everybody involved."

As a result of their move to the cloud, Derby have seen:

- Increased organisation agility
- Achieved both greater agility and met targeted budget savings
- Quicker support SLAs
- Improved server monitoring and optimisation
- Scalability of software as a service

managing the project

Derby City Council were leaving a previous supplier and moving to the cloud in partnership with risual, and multiple vendors using new migration techniques many of which were some of the first to be undertaken in the UK. Due to the nature of the project, there were going to be issues, both technically and due to the number of parties involved.

risual provided an Engagement Manager, who acted as a single point of contact for all stakeholders. This project required close communication, planning and organising by the engagement manager to ensure stakeholders from multiple organisations were all aligned. By working together, all parties were able to deliver a stable cloud environment within the timeframe required by Derby City Council with minimal disruption to end-users, despite the technical and budgetary challenges.

All parties involved can be proud of the communication between project managers, senior managers, technical staff and solution architects. Multiple organisations and stakeholders worked extremely hard to meet objectives when security or communication issues inevitably did arise due to the scale of the project and number of people involved.

All parties will have lessons learned from the project, but all can also walk away pleased that despite immense odds and external pressure they succeeded in delivering a cutting edge, hugely transformational piece of work which will benefit the local area for years to come.

managed service

The cloud solution is a key enabler for further transformation projects at Derby City Council. A key component of risual's offering is the managed services package, this enables risual to essentially offer a huge range of skills and extend an IT department through the cloud, ready to be used when needed. Derby City Council can now enjoy the benefits of risual's Core Services team who specialise in infrastructure and strategic changes co-ordinated with Derby's IT department over time. This will ensure that Derby's infrastructure is optimised and can quickly adapt to any changing priorities in the organisation, whilst the Incident Team can ensure any support issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

This cloud migration and maintenance can also be used to accelerate many other business transformational changes, encouraging a flexible and agile approach to services. The cloud migration is the first step into enabling larger business change, risual's managed services team can deploy any strategic changes to Derby' City Council's IT environment with no huge investment in on-premise infrastructure changes or additional staff required in the short term to build the new solution.

The cloud migration program is the key to showcasing the power of the Microsoft stack, and the scalability of cloud technology means that SME's can deliver a service which technically matches any large multinational, combined with the customer service and local investments that risual is famous for.



benefits

Although still early since the migrations Nick O'Reilly has spoken at length about the project from a customers' perspective:

"We have already decommissioned and rationalise racks and servers in the old datacentre. We've started to address some active directory and group policy management issues that became apparent and undertaking a strategic review of our remote access, thin client and hot desk solution.

Could we have done it better? I am sure the answer is yes, but at the same time I think we have done a great job thanks to the commitment of all involved. The bottom line is we had to achieve flexibility, agility and scalability. We have done that by exploiting the cloud, not just swapping on premise for cloud datacentre, we now have scalable work contracts, and are contributing hugely to savings targets"

There has already been a return on investment for Derby City Council; they are saving huge amounts thanks to breaking away from their previous fixed contract based on buying capacity. They can now refocus staff from maintaining legacy hardware and can rely on the cloud to deploy new software.

By embracing the cloud, Derby City Council are now better prepared for likely future changes to the organisation, and to assist in reaching any further savings targets. They can be confident when rolling out any further digital services that they have a scalable and responsive infrastructure that can adapt to the ever changing needs of its population.

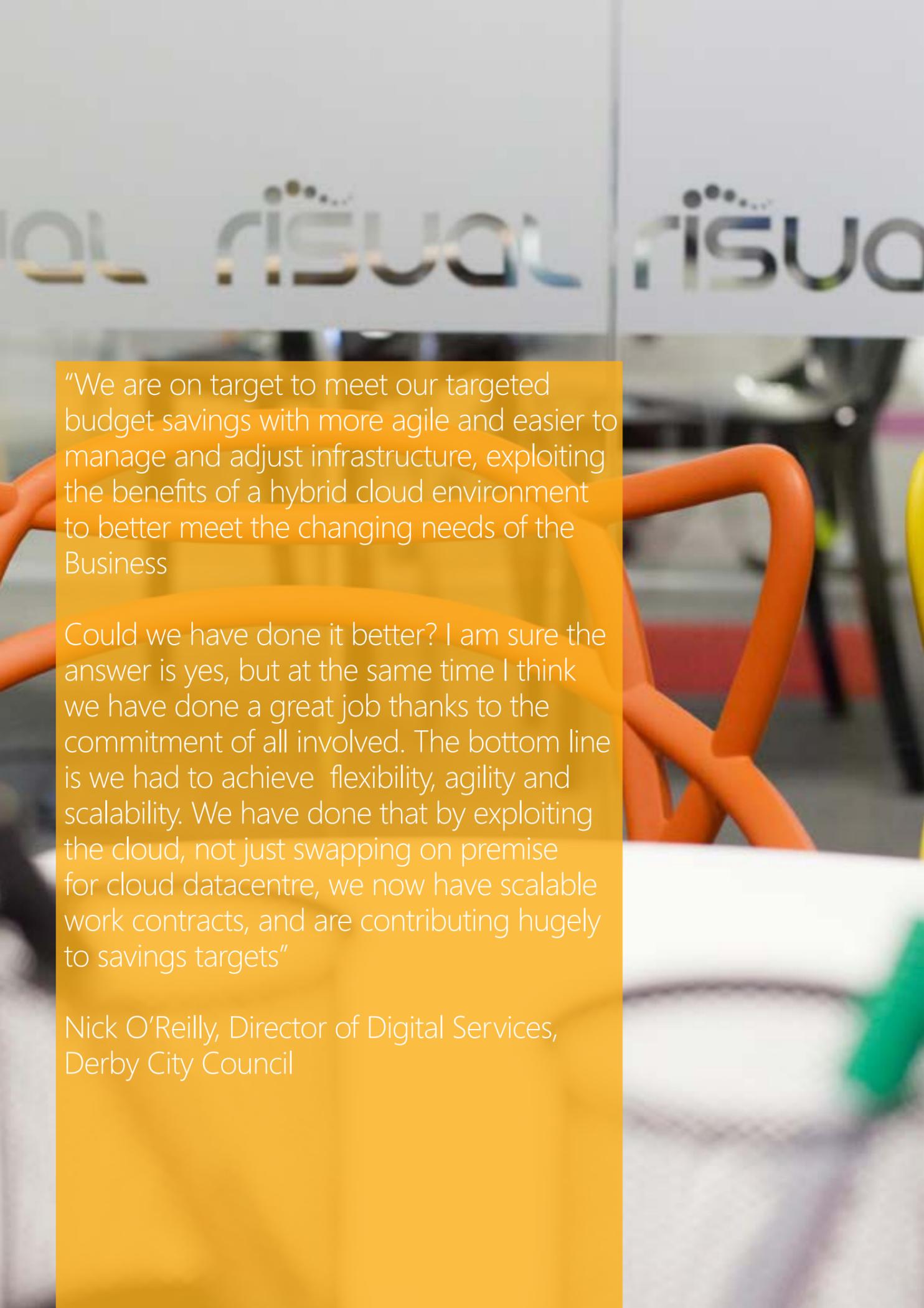
benefits

As a result of their movement to the cloud, Derby have seen:

- Increased organisation agility
- Achieved both greater agility and met targeted budget savings
- Quicker support SLAs
- Improved server monitoring and optimisation
- Delivered an improved IT service desk portal and better IT asset management tools
- Scalability of software as a service
- Making better use of SCSM

Derby's cloud solution has a repeatable delivery model with proven results. risual have worked hard to deliver a migration with a minimum impact on the organisations day to day activities. From the migration planning to deployment and optimisation of services is a system which can be rolled out to any organisation.

Nick O' Reilly has shared his journey to the cloud internationally at Major Cities of Europe Conference in Florence, with Soctim Scotland and with many of his peers. This project has been the catalyst for many other Councils to view the cloud as a business enabler to change the way they work, and all parties are really proud of what risual, Derby City Council and Microsoft have achieved together.



"We are on target to meet our targeted budget savings with more agile and easier to manage and adjust infrastructure, exploiting the benefits of a hybrid cloud environment to better meet the changing needs of the Business

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Nick O'Reilly, Director of Digital Services,
Derby City Council

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