

# Winchester City Council Deploys Evidian's Single Sign On Solution for Secure Application Access



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## The Challenge

Winchester City Council provides a range of services including housing, education, environmental, business and health services to its residents. With access to a large amount of confidential citizen and government data, the Council places great emphasis on data security.

Following the introduction of the Government's GSi Code of Connection (CoCo) policy, which lists the security standards that organisations must meet in order to connect and remain connected to the Government Secure Intranet (GSI) in early 2009, the Council wanted to ensure it was compliant with CoCo requirements ahead of the policy deadline.

With over 300 staff needing access to multiple different applications per day, Winchester Council saw **that** having to remember and manage complex passwords for each application was placing a burden on its staff and IT support team.

The Council therefore decided to look for a cost-effective, flexible and easy-to-use solution which would simplify the login process for staff, reducing the problem of forgotten passwords, whilst increasing security.



## Benefits

### Customer needs met with Evidian's SSO solution

- Enhances login security ensuring council security guidelines are adhered to
- Simplifies access to key applications, improving working practice and productivity for staff
- Enables Council to comply with government security requirements
- Reduces burden on IT support staff and cuts helpdesk costs

## The Evidian Solution

Winchester City Council opted for a single-sign on (Enterprise SSO) solution from leader in identity and access management Evidian, to increase login security, improve staff efficiency and cut IT support calls.

The Enterprise SSO solution, which is being used together in conjunction with two-factor authentication to secure systems and application access, was implemented as it met the Council's key requirements for security and flexibility, and is a core part of the Council's compliance with the GSI CoCo.

The solution enables authorised staff to login to multiple unique applications simultaneously with a single user ID and password instead of having to log in to each individually.

Council staff use the Evidian solution when signing into a range of back-office and citizen data applications. Enterprise SSO enforces security policies by clearly linking application access to user identities, and by enforcing the use of strong, complex passwords.

Enterprise SSO secures access to all types of corporate application – whether Windows, Citrix, Linux, Unix, web-based or mainframe. It combines multi-factor authentication with a plug-and-play SSO solution, replacing user passwords with digital signatures based on certificates, smart cards, USB keys, or biometrics. Access is authorised according to existing security policies and enterprise directories.

## The Benefits of Single Sign-On

The Enterprise SSO solution delivers security where it's most often needed, for user identification and authentication when accessing key applications - which is now a key requirement for security compliance, especially in the public sector under the CoCo policy.

Key benefits of Enterprise SSO are it simplifies access to key applications, which improves productivity for staff as it eliminates the need to juggle and remember several passwords – which

is often time consuming, improves working practice - helping public sector organisations to comply with government requirements - whilst improving security. The solution simplifies access for both office-based and remote users, and makes single sign on easy to deploy and manage.

Its ability to quickly and securely switch between users on shared computers means staff are able to swiftly login with a single user ID and password instead of having to switch back and forth logging into multiple applications. This no-nonsense approach to accessing applications is not only more efficient but more importantly, also more secure.

An additional benefit of the solution is its unique offline self-service password reset function, which lets staff reset passwords themselves by going through a series of pre-set security questions. As well as encouraging employees to use the full range of applications available to them it eliminates a significant number of password reset calls coming through to the IT helpdesk, this helps cut costs as the IT department can focus their time and resources elsewhere.

Enterprise SSO also encourages a greater level of compliance as it creates an audit trail of users, this minimises potential security breaches.

## Achieving CoCo Compliance

Winchester City Council Head of IM&T, Sheila Davidge, said: "We wanted to ensure we were compliant with CoCo ahead of the Government's original deadline. Evidian's Enterprise SSO solution exceeds the CoCo requirements for password strength, and saves users' time by negating the need to sign in to multiple applications. It also cuts the number of helpdesk calls from users for resets of forgotten passwords. It gives us a single, consistent security policy that's easy to apply, with minimal support overhead."

The Council is also now confident it has the solution to help it maintain compliance with the Government's GSi Code of Connection policy.