Service Definition for

Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Table of Contents

Service Definition for
Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Page 2 of 11
01/05/2018
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0   Preface

Meritec is an established and highly respected professional and technical services company based in Skipton, North Yorkshire. We provide a range of specialist business and support services to deliver performance improvement and realise business benefits to primarily the public sector. Our customers include the majority of local authorities and are spread far and wide throughout the UK.

In addition to providing high quality digital solutions and technical support, our services also include consultancy and training, project/ implementation services and Revenues & Benefits Processing. We have delivered major change to many Authorities of varying size and profile since the company was formed in 1996. In particular, our services are complemented by a portfolio of e-awareness products in key areas such as Fraud Awareness, Risk Management, Information Security and GDPR, together with modern technologies that support the cost-effective delivery of projects and change programmes.

Meritec prides itself on its strong relationships with its customers. We are friendly and easy to do business with and our core value is to exceed our customers' expectations.

Any questions should be addressed in the first instance to Steve Wilkinson.

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Service Definition for
Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Page 3 of 11
01/05/2018
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1   Overview

Meritec Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service provides ready access to a highly secure, scalable and high performance suite of platforms for a wide range of public sector users. Meritec Cloud Hosting Service delivers hosted managed services including but not limited to each of the following: Windows, Intel, SQL Server, Linux, Oracle. Users can readily obtain new services quickly and easily and pay for them flexibly, including on a Pay as you Go basis (PAYG). Meritec Cloud Hosting Service can, and commonly does, include a full application managed service.

Service – Key Features
- Very cost effective solutions tailored to your needs
- Services hosted in State of the Art Data Centre(s)
- Various DR options available
- Fully Managed Infrastructure and environment
- Proactive Applications Management and Support
- Flexible Take on approach – new equipment, our equipment, your equipment, spare equipment – many ways to get best value
- Service Level Agreements tailored to client needs
- High Availability, excellent incident response and resolution – measured and reported against SLA
- Responsive Help Desk (Meritec ServicePoint) and web enabled call logging and monitoring
- Virtualised and non-virtualised platforms.

Meritec Experience
- Broad experience across many platforms and applications
- Excellent References from many satisfied customers
- Have leveraged previous Mainframe Hosting and Managed Services experience going back many years.

Service Take On
- Tried and Tested methodologies
- Tight control of Take On projects (through effective and pragmatic use of PRINCEII)
- Excellent record of achieving (or exceeding) targets
- Flexible approach to keep costs down
- We ensure excellent communications with client team throughout
- Utilise shared Project and Service document area (version controlled) to ensure effective access to all documentation.

Service Agreement
Detailed SLA agreed at service Take On ensures all parties have shared understanding of Service Requirements and clearly defines:
- Scope of Service
- Respective responsibilities
- Availability, Response and Resolution measures
- Escalation procedures
- Service Management processes
- Change Control processes.

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Data Centre

- 10 MW of power delivered to a dedicated sub-station
- Internal and external CCTV systems with 24x7 monitoring and support
- FM200 Fire suppression and VESDA smoke detection system
- High speed resilient internet access with fully triangulated network for resilience
- 550KVA Fully maintained generator UPS N+1
- N+1 air-conditioning units, Electronic key access system and full audit trail of movement
- Perimeter security monitored 24x7x365.

Application Support

- Where application support is within scope, the service is tailored to your requirements and can include the following main components and more:
- Provision and regular execution of housekeeping routines
- Providing a technical response to incidents
- Monitoring database space
- Ensuring regular execution of data securities and database exports
- Provision and maintenance of scripts for database housekeeping and performance
- Software Upgrades, Scripts to Live, Test and Training environments
- Application of patches
- Recovery of data from backups in the event of loss due to hardware failure.

2   Information assurance

Meritec is ISO 27001 and Cyber Essentials certified and GDPR compliant. We apply the highest levels of security – a copy of our Information Security Management System (ISMS) is available on request.

3   Backup/restore and disaster recovery

Backup

The service is backed up to local disk area every day before being copied to another, off-site location. By default all backups are retained for 30 days, but other retention periods can be accommodated.

Disaster Recovery

Our service includes a Disaster Recovery (DR) facility. The level of DR service may vary depending on each customer's requirements; however a typical service would be treated as a managed service in its own right and would involve 2 tests per year. DR is always provided at a geographically redundant location. The standard service level provides for 99.9% availability.

Service Definition for
Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Page 5 of 11
01/05/2018
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4   On-boarding and Off-boarding

Meritec provides an on-boarding facility comprising:

- Customer account created
- Network connection created (if WAN access)
- Service setup (customer details added on Service Desk/ Change Management system etc.)
- Access details provided (credentials etc.)
- Data migration arrangements planned with customer. CSV file format is the preferred format for data to be migrated
- Tight control of service take on through effective and pragmatic use of PRINCEII
- Notification of service ready for operation
- Customer provisions initial services.

Off-boarding consists of the following:

- Notification of services to be terminated
- All customer data securely, compliantly and fully erased from storage used
- Server/Storage decommissioning
- Final invoice
- Account closure.

Our Cloud Hosting Service can be provisioned with one day from the point of order. Where application management and support is within scope, configuration could take between 1 week and 3 months dependent on the customer's requirements.

5   Pricing

The base price for this service is £7.98 per user/ per month. This is the price for Windows and SQL Server which is likely to be the most commonly used. A "user" is defined as a named user. Minimum number of named users is 50. A separate document that fully details the pricing is provided as part of our documentation set for each Meritec service entry in the catalogue. Please refer to the document entitled: "Meritec Public Sector Cloud Hosting Pricing".

Pay-as-you-go quarterly billing is available, subject to a minimum initial term of 6 months.

6   Service management details

Meritec provides Service Management based upon ITIL principles, complying with defined service levels covering response times, resolution times, maintenance updates, systems upgrades and change controls.

The Meritec Cloud Hosting Service will be managed in accordance with the Service Levels set out in Section 8 below.

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Support Service

Meritec provides a full support service, including first line during service set-up. Our ServicePoint Helpdesk facility communicates with customers via phone, email, fax, chat (Instant Message), and portal. The latter self-serve facility provides customers a way to track the progress of any issues they have reported.

The standard levels of support are outlined below (section 8) – but we can also meet local preferences.

Our support facility is designed around ITIL standards and includes full facilities for monitoring calls, reporting and escalation.

Supported strategies

Information Principles: Meritec supports in our service the Government's Information Principles - see HM Government document entitled "Information Principles" (Information_Principles_UK_Public_Sector_final.pdf) for details.

ICT & Greening Strategies: Meritec supports in our service the Government's ICT Strategy and Greening ICT strategies (see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-government-ict-strategy-resources for details).

7   Service constraints

Maintenance Windows

Meritec will perform non-essential updates on a defined schedule, normally outside of standard working hours. Customers will be given at least 2 weeks' notice where possible of scheduled maintenance tasks. Essential updates, e.g. security patches, would be installed as the first available opportunity, to be agreed with the customer.

Permitted Customisation

We can readily localise our Cloud Hosting Service to meet specific requirements. These services are subject to additional charges based on the published rate card.

Application Libraries

We have particular expertise in supporting local government Revenues & Benefits and Financial (Accounting) systems. We can also support any kind of business application required by a customer that is compatible with our service – e.g. ERP, CRM, digital by default transactional services.

Other

Other relevant information is specified defined in the SLA as agreed with the customer.

8   Service Levels

Performance and Availability

An organisation's data is freestanding to ensure that performance is not impaired by competing demands. Moreover, we focus on removing single points of failure to avoid risk to sustaining performance.

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Meritec uses monitors and alerts for key elements such as CPU, Storage and network connection conditions as well as other key components which are normally deemed less critical. Moreover, the underlying system service has extensive monitoring in place for hardware and system failures.

Service Availability	99.9% (uptime) per month
Service Availability Window	7*24 hours (all days) – 24 hours a day
Response time for accessing screens (application support)	Should be within 3 seconds (at a minimum) 99% of the time
Response time for searches (application support)	Response time for basic system searches for information and return of results system should be within 5 seconds 97% of the time

Support Hours

The Meritec Cloud service will be supported in accordance with the standard Service Levels set out below, which can be tailored to suit individual requirements.

Incident Handling	5*9.5 hours: Business days, 0800-1730
Query Handling Window	5*9.5 hours: Business days, 0800-1730
Complaint Handling Window	5*9.5 hours: Business days, 0800-1730
Change Handling Window Standard	7*24 hours (all days), 24 hours a day
Problem Handling Window	5*9.5 hours: Business days, 0800-1730
Support Language	English
Service level dependencies	Service level dependencies are documented in relevant SLA

Bursted services

Meritec Cloud Hosting Service provides bursted services. In operation, users simply select the expanded resources, where they appear alongside the internal Meritec computing infrastructure. When requested, services can be provisioned to appropriate cloud resources without the need for IT department action or involvement.

Guaranteed resources

Meritec Cloud Hosting Service is supplied on the basis of guaranteed resources. This translates into a solution that is guaranteed to scale when you need it to, rather than when there's resource available to.

Persistence

Meritec Cloud Hosting Service delivers persistent resources. Once created whether a server is started or stopped it will remain in that user's account ready to use. Likewise, all storage is written to a user's virtual drives. Data written to virtual drives persists and is available in the future whether or not the server that the drive is currently associated with is running or not.

Service Definition for
Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Page 8 of 11
01/05/2018
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9 Financial recompense model

Meritec will work with each of our customers on an individual basis to determine if a recompense model is required to meet the needs of the specific council or public department/ organisation.

We strive to exceed, wherever possible, our SLA targets for service levels. In the unlikely event of failure to meet our SLA targets we would invoke the agreed process which would award an appropriate level of service credits by way of compensation.

10 Training

Meritec provides effective and appropriate training facilities for its customers, designed to address all typical needs in taking up our services. Our approach to training comprises:

- User manuals
- e-learning
- On-line knowledge base
- Workshop training
- Skills transfer.

Workshop training and specific skills transfer are charged at the relevant daily rate.

11 Ordering and invoicing process

Placing an Order:

- Simply phone or email Service Point - 0845 345 1144 ServicePoint@meritec.co.uk for immediate assistance with placing an order.

Invoicing Process:

- Customers will be invoiced on a quarterly basis in advance (adjusted according to previous quarter usage)
- Payment must be made within 30 days of invoice date using bank transfer.

12 Termination terms

- By consumers: 90 days rolling contract after Initial Term of 180 days
- By supplier: 6 months.

Service Definition for
Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Page 9 of 11
01/05/2018
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13 Data restoration/ service migration

Meritec provides full failover facilities within the context of a comprehensive Disaster Recovery plan. Meritec supports failover topologies at the web server, application server and database layers and supports infrastructure components that can be manual, partially automatic or fully automatic failover options.

Within the hosting service we can include switching of service to a disaster recovery site. The time taken to implement this process depends on the level of DR provided but can range from 15 minutes to 48 hours depending on the specific service requirements.

14 Consumer responsibilities

Generally the Consumer shall:

- Be responsible for providing all agreed information and data to enable Meritec to perform its obligations under this Agreement

- Provide Meritec with reasonable access to appropriate members of the Consumer's staff

- Provide suitably qualified staff to fulfil the Consumer's roles and duties under this Agreement

- Comply with any obligations placed on it in the Security Policy

- Provide to Meritec timely notification of Consumer policy and/or regulation changes which impact on the provision of the Services

- Make best endeavours to perform those obligations specified in any agreed implementation plan

- Ensure that all staff using the service are given appropriate training

- Provide assistance and guidance on the use of the Services to Consumer staff.

15 Technical requirements

Access

As the system will be accessed via a web-browser, no proprietary software needs to be installed, allowing users of standard operating systems such as Windows to access the system, as long as they have an Internet connection and a supported web browser.

The browsers officially supported are:

- Microsoft Internet Explorer v11 +

- Mozilla FireFox 3.5 +

- Google Chrome 11 +

- Apple Safari 4 +

- Others supported by special arrangement.

Our Cloud Hosting Service does and can work alongside a range of web based thin client pieces of software.

Bandwidth Requirements

As with any browser based system, the greater the bandwidth that the end user has available the faster their connection will be to the hosted server side application. The time required to upload/download documents will be dependent on the document size and the speed of the internet connection.

16 Details of any trial service available

Trial service available by arrangement – costs are refunded if service taken up.

17 Relevant Lot

This document refers to our Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service which relates to the following G-Cloud 10 Lot.

Lot 1	*Cloud Hosting*

Service Definition for
Public Sector Cloud Hosting Service

Page 11 of 11
01/05/2018
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