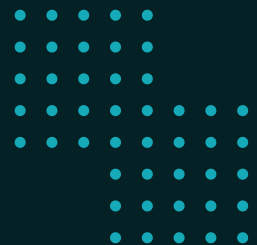

A CASE STUDY IN CITIZEN SERVICES

Reclaiming time for **human** connection

How Sheffield City Council reclaimed **£7,297** of professional capacity per employee, every year, and reinvested it in the community.



PARTNERSHIP

Sheffield City Council × Earlybird

01 — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Earlybird gives Sheffield City Council
£7,297.30 of professional capacity
back per employee, every year. The council
is re- investing it in the community.**

75%

Reduction in overall admin time
across frontline teams.

84%

Of residents rated their
Earlybird experience
excellent or very good.

100%

Of participating staff voted to
keep the platform
permanently.

THE ENGAGEMENT

Sheffield City Council partnered with Earlybird to test whether voice-first AI could remove administrative friction without compromising the human relationships at the heart of citizen services.

Over a seven-month pilot, the platform was deployed across three areas: triage on the council's public website, key worker appointments inside Youth Hubs and Connect to Work, and contract management with delivery partners.

The pilot closed with 100% of participating staff voting to keep it. Earlybird is now a permanent fixture across the council and it's now been rolled out across 21 delivery partner organisations. The reclaimed capacity is being reinvested into employer engagement, intensive 1:1 support and same-day employment outcomes for residents.

A NOTE FROM EARLYBIRD

"The true potential of AI lies in how it enhances human connection at the core of citizen services. By reducing the time spent on admin, we return the focus to what advisers do best: providing bespoke, empathetic value that genuinely changes lives."



Claudine Adeyemi-Adams FIEP

Founder & CEO, Earlybird

02 — THE BRIEF

Prioritising high value human connection.

Across Triage, Youth Hubs, Connect to Work and Contract Management, professional time was being absorbed by the same set of tasks: information gathering, note-taking, follow-up emails, CV creation, supplier meeting minutes.

SITUATION

Demand for Sheffield's employment, skills and youth services keeps rising. The Council's frontline teams are absorbing it.

CONSTRAINTS

Hire-and-train is slow and expensive. Cutting service quality is not an option.

THE QUESTION

Could AI help frontline professionals spend their time where it most changes outcomes for residents?

Key workers were typing while residents talked. Triage officers were filling forms during conversations. Contract managers were reconstructing meeting notes from memory after the fact.

Sheffield's Partnership Manager, John Powell, framed the brief in plain terms: the council needed a way to handle significantly higher volumes without compromising the quality of support, or the wellbeing of the team. Not a software roll-out. A capacity strategy.

"We viewed the Earlybird pilot as a capacity builder. It's like a car that still needs a skilled driver; it just gets our staff where they need to go much faster."

John Powell

PARTNERSHIP MANAGER,
SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

03 — THE APPROACH

Three areas. One platform. One method of measurement.

Earlybird and Sheffield co-designed a deployment that mapped the platform onto the three points where administrative load was heaviest. Each area was scoped, measured and reviewed independently, then combined into a single picture of impact.

PHASE 01

01

Scope & baseline

Three workstreams agreed: Triage, Key Workers, Contract Management. Baseline data captured for note-taking time, admin time, resident satisfaction and out-of-hours engagement.

PHASE 02

02

Deploy

Conversations embedded on the council's public website. WorkScribe rolled into key worker appointments and supplier meetings, both in-person and online, with structured staff onboarding.

PHASE 03

03

Measure

Pre and post comparisons across the same teams. Resident satisfaction surveyed continuously. Staff sentiment captured through structured feedback at month one, three and six.

PHASE 04

04

Decide

End-of-pilot vote among participating staff: 100% in favour of permanent adoption. Platform extended beyond the pilot to all three areas and made a permanent fixture.

WHERE THE PLATFORM WAS APPLIED

Three deployments, designed for the way the work actually happens.

01

Triage

A 24/7 digital front door.

CONVERSATIONS

Conversations was embedded directly on Sheffield's public website. It handles a proper two-way conversation in 50+ languages, captures the mandatory information the Triage team would otherwise gather by phone or email, and hands a pre-qualified profile to a human officer. Residents engage on their own terms, including outside office hours, and staff start every conversation with the admin already done.

02

Key workers

Youth hubs and
Connect to Work

WORKSCRIBE

Frontline advisers use WorkScribe inside 1:1 appointments. The platform listens to the conversation, generates structured case notes, action plans, ATS-compliant CVs and follow-up emails in real time. Notes are written before the resident has left the building. Advisers stay 100% present in the room. The capacity that returns is reinvested in employer engagement and intensive 1:1 support.

03

Contract management

Multi-stakeholder oversight.

WORKSCRIBE

The Contract Management team replaced an incumbent AI tool that could not reliably distinguish between speakers in supplier meetings. WorkScribe accurately attributes voices in rooms full of people, generates summaries and action logs in minutes and removes the admin backlog that used to follow each supplier review. Managers focus on relationships and target tracking, not minute-taking.

04 — THE IMPACT

THE HEADLINE OUTCOME

£7,297.30 PER EMPLOYEE,
PER YEAR

The annual productivity value Earlybird returns for every participating employee at Sheffield City Council.

Calculated from 7.5 hours reclaimed per week - 345 hours per year - valued against blended frontline professional rates.

HOW TIME BECOMES VALUE



WHERE THE RECLAIMED TIME IS BEING INVESTED

Strategic employer engagement

More time spent in the community, building direct leads with local businesses to secure job starts for residents.

Intensive 1-to-1 support

Deeper advocacy and coaching for residents with complex barriers, including health, language and caring responsibilities.

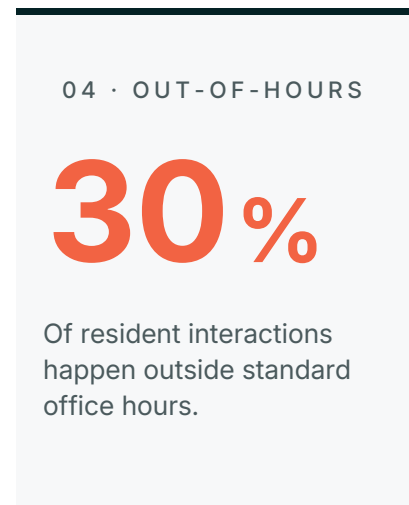
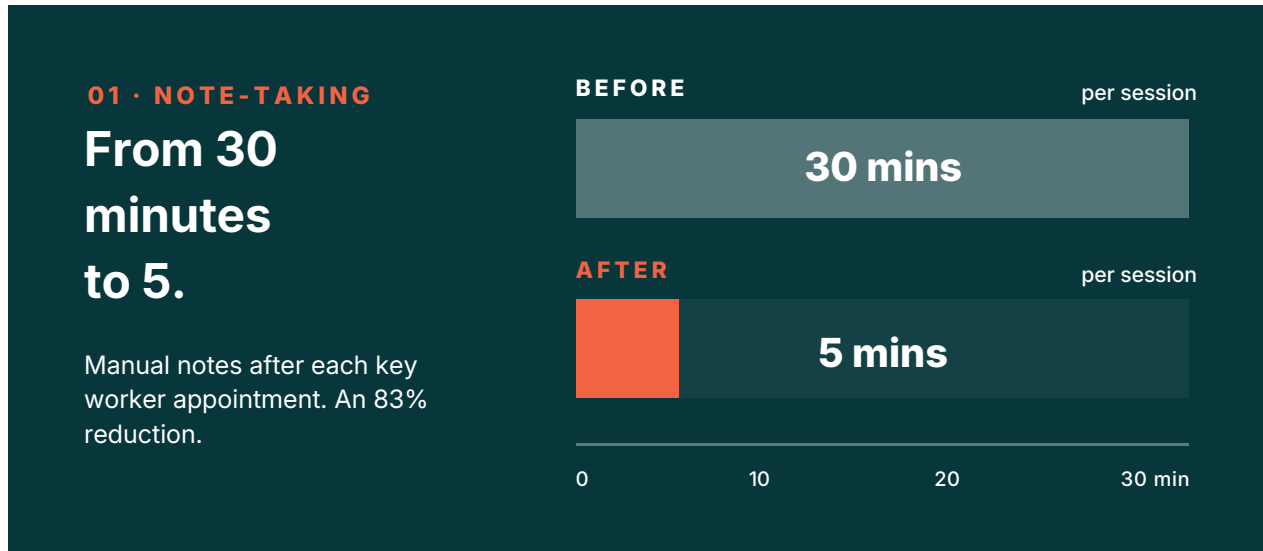
Immediate employment outcomes

ATS-compliant CVs and cover letters generated during the session, while resident motivation is highest.

Continued overleaf→

SECONDARY OUTCOMES

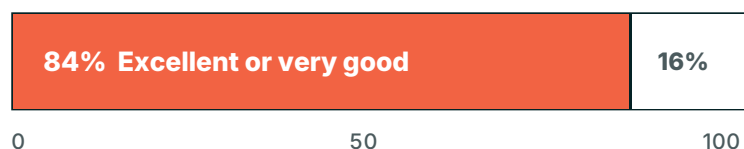
Five measures across admin, residents and staff.



05 · RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

84% rated their experience excellent or very good.

Digital-first triage that feels personal, accessible and supportive.



"We wanted our team to be able to look residents in the eye rather than at a computer screen. By removing admin burdens we've given our staff the breathing room they need to provide really high-quality, personal support. It has allowed us to increase our capacity while actually making the job feel more manageable for the frontline."

**John Powell**

Partnership Manager, Sheffield City Council

TRIAGE

"Earlybird is incredibly accessible. When a deaf resident reached out, I simply sent the Earlybird link - they could communicate with us immediately in a way that was far more inclusive for their needs."

Isabelle

Triage team

KEY WORKER

"I'm able to maintain eye contact, as I'm not typing notes. After an appointment, I send a follow-up email generated through Earlybird before my participant has left the building."

Frances

Key Worker

KEY WORKER · WELLBEING

"I have dysgraphia and I've always found it difficult to put my ideas onto paper. It's helped me a lot in my work. A weight lifted; I have breathing room between appointments."

Craig

Key Worker

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

"In meetings, I don't have to worry about writing notes, meaning I can focus on relationship building and ensuring our providers are on track against targets. Follow-up emails now take a couple of minutes."

Ian

Contract Manager

06 — WHAT THIS UNLOCKS

Three principles, transferable beyond Sheffield.

The pilot was specific to Sheffield City Council. The lessons are not. For any council, professional services firm or operational team weighing AI inside frontline work, three principles travel.



Treat AI as a capacity strategy, not a software roll-out.

The conversation that produced Sheffield's outcomes was not "how do we automate the admin?". It was "where do we want this professional time to go?". That framing is what made the **£7,297 per-employee** figure mean something. Without it, hours saved disappear into the working day.



Deploy where the conversation is, not where the screen is.

The wins came from the platform listening inside live conversations: residents on the website, advisers in 1:1s, contract managers in supplier rooms. That is also where the cultural shift happens. Eye contact returns. Notes are written before anyone leaves. Trust accelerates.



Measure the multiplier, not the minute.

Time saved is the input. Reinvested time is the output. Sheffield's reclaimed hours show up as direct employer engagement, deeper 1:1 advocacy, same-day CVs and cover letters, and a 100% staff vote to keep the platform. That is the number that should sit in front of leadership.

A CONVERSATION, WHEN YOU'RE READY

**Tell us where your
team's time is
currently going.**
**We'll tell you where
it could go instead.**

GET IN TOUCH

getearlybird.ai

Book a demo

ABOUT EARLYBIRD

Earlybird is the AI operating system for frontline citizen services. Voice-first technology that gives advisers, key workers and contract managers their time back, without losing the human relationships that make the work matter.

CREDENTIALS

ISO 27001 certified
Cyber Essentials Plus
Innovate UK grant winner
IEP partner AI for Employability
Cisco Innovation of the Year
EB100 2026