



South Gloucestershire Council increases productivity of Street Scene services by 25%

South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) serves a community with a population of approximately 270,000 in the South West of England. As with many public sector organisations in recent years, the local authority has faced the significant challenge of maintaining service levels whilst undergoing spending cuts.

The Challenge

To proactively tackle this, SGC commissioned a Service Review Programme to uncover potential savings throughout the organisation. The review led to recommendations that could result in £45m of savings, including the implementation of new IT technology to enable front line services to become more efficient.

The StreetCare services were identified as being a prime candidate for this transformation strategy. The service incorporated many front line and safety critical activities including Highway Maintenance, Abandoned Vehicles, Dog Wardens, Fly Tipping, Graffiti, Litter, Grounds and Parks Maintenance and Tree Officers; however whilst the business process relied upon staff being in the field to deliver their service, they were often hampered by not having modern IT systems to support their work in the field.

The Solution

To overcome these challenges SGC implemented Kirona's Job Manager software to provide not only a mobile application for 90 field workers to receive and complete work on a mobile device, but also provided the scheduling software and management capabilities in the office.

Job Scheduling

Whilst the focus for SGC's strategy was providing workers with mobile applications, it was the job scheduling software that proved the initial revelation for overcoming the council's challenges.

As Nina Deverall, SGC Project Manager for Transformation and Efficiency commented:

"The job scheduling software automatically allocates jobs to field worker devices as soon as it is created in our CRM system, rather than relying on a Supervisor to manually allocate the work. Although the system is fully automated, the Supervisor remains in total control of the teams and work and can override any element of the system; for example to deal with a vehicle breakdown. The Supervisor therefore "Manages by Exception" and eliminates hours of time previously required for work allocation, freeing them to improve Planning and Management of their resources. Additionally, the lag between job creation and completion is now significantly reduced, providing a terrific improvement for our Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)."

"The scheduling software is able to automatically allocate work to staff in this way as it uses rules that ensure work is sent to the right person with the right skills at the right time. It even allocates work optimally to ensure high priority work is undertaken first.

In the office, the job scheduling screen is updated with new colours and highlights to reflect the real-time job updates being returned from the mobile application. This is significant as it gives Managers realtime visibility of their service performance". As Nina comments.

"Previously to get this level of information managers would have to visit or ring around 90 field staff, which was time intensive and with other work commitments, often not even possible. Now they have the information to properly plan and react."





Mark King, Head of StreetCare commented:

“The system is able to directly allocate works instructions to active gangs on the ground, mitigating the need for inspection and in turn reducing lost time and paper work. The system is integrated through to the council's front office systems which enables call centre staff to see where jobs are in the process allowing them to give informed responses to repeat calls which in itself has saved repeat visits by busy inspection teams. This is also being rolled out to the Council Web site allowing the same information to be available to residents and users of the services that the council undertake. The support Kirona has provided through development has been first class and enabled all key stakeholders to have their input into the development of the system”.

Mobile Working

Whilst the scheduling software has helped to improve the StreetCare service in the office, the mobile application has had the same effect in the field.

The ability for users to receive their jobs straight to their mobile device, record notes, and then have these automatically update office systems over the phone network, has led to significantly less travel to the depot, as well as reduced administration. They can also take photographs and GPS locations to be uploaded with the job information and even book follow-on tasks from their device.

But whilst the technology had been enormously successful, SGC were initially unsure how it would be received by their field workforce.

As Allan Warnes, ICT Developer at SGC, comments,

“It was important that the mobile application would work both on and offline, and on a range of mobile devices from rugged Windows Tablets to the latest Android Smartphones. But we were also aware that none of this mattered if the users didn't accept it. Kirona worked with us to provide a solution that fitted the business processes that we had across a large number of teams. They also developed the software to be intuitive, fast, easy to use and extremely stable. This meant the users were positive from the beginning. Getting the right device for the field workers is also not only important from a technology perspective but also in achieving user acceptance.” as Allan noted.

“Giving field workers a good quality device is worth 100 hours of training. This showed our staff that we were investing in them and brought them onboard with what their Managers wished to achieve.”

Outcome

South Gloucestershire Council's experience of Kirona's Job Manager software has been a profoundly positive one. Manual planning, administration and travel are all reduced to free up more productive time. As a result they spend over 95% of their time carrying out core tasks rather than 80-85% previously. But it's not just a win for the Council's management, the Supervisors and field workers genuinely enjoy using the technology as it removes many of the frustrations they had from paperwork.

The improvement in efficiency of both office and front line services has:

- Reduced operational costs by £500,000 per annum contributing to £45million saved in the council's transformation project.
- Increased the typical number of jobs carried out by field workers from 11 to 15.
- Improved the service response times from 7 days to 3 days.



Speak to us

For more information about South Gloucestershire Council project or to discuss any of Kirona's products and services contact us at info@kirona.com or **01625 585511**.



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