

Local Authority & Service Providers



Overview

Case Studies | Talks | Publications

Incorporating

Visualising Transformation TM

Speaking Engagements



Support Services Direct

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Local Authority Research Council Initiative / Improvement and Development Agency.

“Performance Management and Systems Thinking”

The Public Sector Network

Key Note & supporting talks provided at national and regional seminars, include:

- Waste -
- Recycling -
- Housing Maintenance -
- Stores -
- Vehicle Management -
- Best Value -
- Street-Scene -
- Continuous Improvement –

The Transformation Forum

“Embedding Systems Thinking into the Public Sector”

The White Paper Conference Ltd.

London / Manchester

“Lean Methodologies in Facilities and how to focus on KPI’s”.



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The Systems Thinking Summit

Cardiff

“VT and Achieving More for Less”

counterpoint to Bill Bellows ‘Beyond more with Less’.

Support Services Direct and The CREST Community.

Symposiums

“Highways and Potholes”

“Anti-social Behaviour”

Deming Alliance.

Key note on ‘Rethinking Waste’

Key note on ‘Visualising Transformation

- Achieving More for Less’.

The Institution of Electrical Engineers

An introduction to the waste directive for recycling small electrical devices (WEEE).



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Books

Quality or Politics

A book to address the issues achieving TQM and Continuous Improvement within the public sector.

The first book ever published about CI in the public sector.

Politics or Quality

A counterpart to the book above; considering the changes and interpretation of laws impacting on service delivery within the public sector.

Visualising Transformation

A significant step forward for the pragmatic application of 'Lean and Systems Thinking' in service sectors.

Magazines

Quality Manager

A series of five articles written for Croner magazine aimed at public sector quality professionals dealing with the introduction and development of continuous improvement;

Housing Maintenance -

Waste Collection -

Sustainability -

Service Delivery -

Local Government Services -

Municipal Journal and Surveyor

Lead article covering safety of waste collection

Contract

A series of articles covering;

The introduction of door to door collections for recycling -

Service excellence for waste collection -

Stores and procurement -

Vehicle maintenance -

Housing management -

The street-scene agenda -

Continuous improvement in public sector -

Highways Magazine

Lead article on Managing Potholes, showing that improved repairs and better management of highways as a system, will both save money and improve safety.

Various.

Numerous short articles and information in Local Government Chronicle, Opportunities, CIWM (Chartered Institution of Waste Management) and other magazines.

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Case Study #1 Unitary Council – Insourcing project

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Case Study #1

Unitary Council - Insourcing Project

Summary

An insourcing contractor working with a Unitary Council was 15 months into a 12 year partnership contract. Major challenges were presented by the previous high proportion of interim managers with an equally high attrition rate creating a number of operational issues.

The division, comprising 75 officers consisted of just 11% of the transferred workforce, but carried 37.5% of the financial risk.

The functions grouped under the title 'Environment' were not allocated to any Service Delivery Manager (SDM) and poor performance had to be addressed urgently.

Challenges

Most SDM's had one or two functions to manage, with a single Service Level Agreement (SLA) to contend with, a single Client Services Officer (CSO) and a handful of KPI's to perform against.

The 'Environment' SDM supplied by SSD had nine SLA's, 105 KPI's and 8 CSO's. 22 of the 75 officers reported directly into the Environment SDM. The trading account for the area was running at minus 3%.

In this volatile arena conditions were nothing short of chaotic and transferred staff were being removed by a stream of interims rather than being developed in relation to targets within a formalised structure.

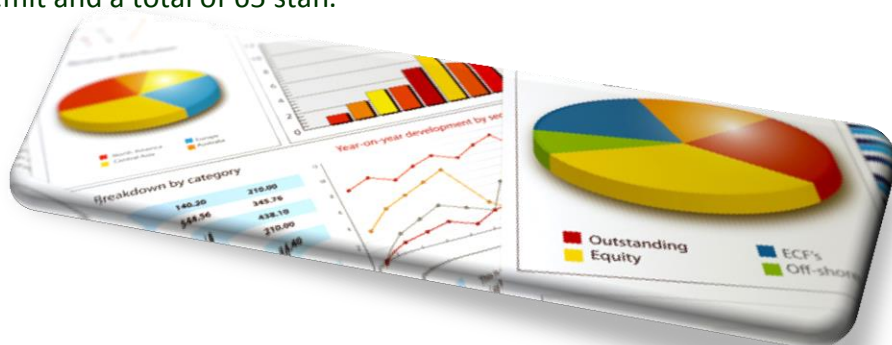
There was obvious conflict between the interests of the staff, the council and the business case seeing people and departments pulling in different directions.

Fire-fighting was also rife seeing a plethora of improvement opportunities missed due to poor resource management.

Case Study #1

Results

Within 12 months all 'Red flag' KPI's were back to green, all backlogs were cleared, and a carefully considered re-structuring programme saw 8 ad-hoc teams comprising 75 staff with 22 direct reports become 4 teams with a wider remit and a total of 65 staff.



Headcount reduced without redundancy. The 4 posts created at the head of each team were filled through promotion.

The minus 3% trading performance was reversed and increased to +4% quickly, finishing the year with a monthly surplus of >20%.

The 'people' aspect was closely attended to and the attrition rate dropped sharply, seeing structure and solutions become sustainable through a stabilised workforce.

This was recognised, winning the Council an improved CPA rating with specific reference to the partnerships capacity adding influence on the council .

Furthermore, the partnership gained a commendation at the LGC annual awards, with two distinct elements of the work recognised as innovative and nominated for further awards.

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Case Study #2

Fleet Efficiency

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Case Study #2

Councils and Private Sector - Fleet

Summary

SSD have delivered results in respect to Fleet Services for a wide range of organisations, from the smallest council to large unitary councils and private sector organisations. We typically apply our 'Visualising Transformation' approach (a combination of *Lean & Systems Thinking*) in such interventions.

One such unitary council engaged SSD with the objective of improving service delivery, enable greater integration and alignment and improve financial performance with a target cost reduction of £100,000.

Challenges

Despite a good team and core systems being established, the extensive data available was not cogent, providing little if any knowledge. The budget structure was fractured causing frustrations and the loss of key staff.

Standard approaches were keeping progress stagnant and apathy had set in.

Results

The delivery of our 'Visualising Transformation' approach delivered the following benefits:

- ✓ A twenty two year capital plan, with a smoothed profile for vehicle replacement
- ✓ £5M capital savings in the first 30 months
- ✓ £800K capital savings per annum there-after
- ✓ £180,000 immediate fuel savings per annum
- ✓ Reduced external hire, increased internal hire, improved utilisation of existing fleet
- ✓ Significant operational savings for waste services
- ✓ A corporate ban on the business units buying vehicles without first consulting Fleet
- ✓ Improved safety and monitoring of external SEN services
- ✓ An agreed plan to save over £1M revenue per annum, with no redundancies.

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Case Study #3

ASB – Anti Social Behaviour

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County Council – Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Case Study #3

Summary

A county council was working with the police and district councils across a large predominantly rural area. Relatively low crime rates were forecast to increase mainly due to unemployment rises following an increase in school leavers and a population increase in the under 30's. A project to assess and address the situation had been started, seeing some inter-agency work producing Geographical Information (using GIS). Police systems were fragmented and 'crime reports' were issued 6 weeks after the end of month in which they occurred. ASB had been the focus of prior studies from which a cost of £2.8M had been attributed to the problem. The Government had requested an 8% reduction, but the project had stalled due to a high attrition rate and the associated loss of knowledge. SSD were engaged to restore momentum to the project and guide developments to attain the time-bound targets.

Challenges

It became apparent very quickly that the good intentions of this partnership initiative were undermined by poor channels of communication caused by systemic inadequacies. The late crime reports were delivered in hard copy format in the absence of alternative data delivery options. Data entered into the CRM system wasn't shared and many efforts to produce it were duplicated by various departments leading to conflict and frustration. Information collected wasn't cross-referenced or correlated to occurrence timings or GIS information making the data of little value in respect to achieving outcomes. The previous review hadn't produced any meaningful findings or recommendations requiring SSD effectively 'start from scratch'.



County Council – Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Case Study #3

Results

Following SSD intervention, the results were wide ranging and extensive, to include;

- Extremely fast project revival in the early stages of intervention.
- In-Year (1st year), 'all-district' 20% reduction in ASB'
- Extensive service savings via integrated GIS data utilised in this area also deployed to other inter-agency functions and areas.
- Identification of 'high call rate' hot spots, previously unidentified.
- Raw data reports produced to demonstrate 'immediate feedback' capability
- CRM system analysis led to a re-design which eradicated duplication and produced timely information (within 24hrs from origin) correlated to high quality GIS information, delivered direct to point of use across the inter-agency framework.
- County wide 'Visual Information' delivered in <24hrs
- Next day localised analysis availability at all times
- Established a new costing model, synthesising ASB costs to show over £70M cost's of which £7M could be saved.
- Delivery of a fully integrated cost-benefit analysis was able to show detailed cashable and non-cashable savings in primary, secondary and tertiary deployment phases.
- In addition to those savings identified, other improvement opportunities included a reduction in insurance costs, improvements to education, lower NEET's figures and opportunities to re-stimulate run down areas bringing them back into active economic usage.
- ASB categorisation and detailed analysis was established and made accessible across the inter-agency partnership.

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Case Study #4

Call Centres

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INTRODUCTION

They have their Pro's and Con's, but do they add value?

SSD have been directly involved with multiple call centre projects, either during creation and when they were developing or maturing. We have found that generally speaking they fail to deliver the benefits imagined when conceived.

PRO's

- They provide a professionally trained interface for communications with the Public
- They can have powerful IT solutions to manage call progression (CRM)
- They can have longer availability times than individual services
- There can be flexible levels of staffing to match forecast demand peaks
- Waiting times for calls are 'Managed', and failure rates are 'Managed'

CON's

- They create a disconnection between the customer and the service provider
- They reduce the flexibility, strength and influence of the back office
- They usually add to overall costs
- They usually monitor the wrong stuff
- They can add to the Contractor costs, by instructing the wrong actions
- They can make services gradually get worse, and yet have a powerful CRM to show control

Two case studies from our experience follow;

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Call Centres #1

Summary

Early on in our call centre experience, we were working alongside a brand new Call Centre (CC) for a District Council (DC). Despite running the most 'customer contact service in the authority (waste collection), we were excluded from the scheme. Prior to the new CC the DC had a fairly good performance record. Most services delivered to customers were of a good standard.

The new call centre was linked to a Government scheme, which required a 'Single Gateway' was provided for the public to contact the District Council and other Government services.

The new centre was launched under a blaze of publicity, but behind the scenes, a number of painful decisions had been made leading to multiple challenges.

Challenges

The back office support to services (such as planning) had admin support stripped down to what many considered less than the bare minimum. This excluded Refuse and Housing which fortunately maintained some autonomy.

On Launch, there were high levels of customer contact, far higher than anticipated in the plan. This high level contact included a great many vociferous complainers. The newly recruited call centre staff quickly found themselves in a high stress environment driving high levels of absence due to stress related sickness, increasing cost, reducing service.

Results

All of this was ignored. In the face of their own 'fear of failure', those at the helm were in denial. Senior members of the team were actively convincing themselves and others, including those they reported to, that the 'high level of contact metric' was a 'positive' indicator. The false rationale promoted was, "If people have easier access to the Council, it must be **good**."

The new CC was running at costs way in excess of plan, but it was under-staffed. More staff were recruited, and the Director of Resources lost her job. Public perceptions of performance fell dramatically, as a direct result of a drop in actual performance and capability. The entire exercise proved the old adage 'No battle plan survives it's first encounter with the enemy'.

Call Centres #2

Summary

Following a BV audit at a London Borough, customer handling and call monitoring performance was under scrutiny in a Call Centre (CC) which had been set up 9 months earlier. It was considered successful as an early part of an integrated reorganisation to create better services for customers.

The CC was bright and airy, had a very good CRM, and performance was largely judged against call handling statistics. The initial training plans were sound, and all PI's were being met.

However the service to the Customers was getting worse.

The rationale provided by the leadership team was that the contract for Refuse was in its last year, seeing poor contractor commitment deliver a 50% drop in performance by comparison to results posted in the previous year.

In addition, it was 'common knowledge' that the Borough had upset the contractor.

Talking to the contractor, it was obvious they were completely committed to doing a good job. The contractor was ISO 9001 registered, with a commitment to continuous improvement. They recorded the same data as the Borough, but reported vastly different results. Their data looked sound, and so did the CC's CRM, yet they were different. No-one involved had identified the difference in reported results and no-one had an explanation for it once highlighted.

Performance criteria within the contract were clear. For example, a missed bin reported prior to noon required 'same-day' rectification. After midday, a missed bin had to be rectified by noon the following day.

The data mainly showed differences in the following:

- Time of receipt
- Numbers of properties affected

Both parameters affected the reported performance.

The data entered by the CC was transferred by an automatic fax, directly to the Contractor. There was no involvement of the Refuse 'Client Managers'. The Contractor dealt with urgent stuff straight away, and recorded all transactions on a spreadsheet. They had actually increased admin resources to handle the imposing pile of paper (two A4 sheets faxed for every fault).

Call Centres #2 cont.

Challenges

The 'errors' in the system were numerous:

- The CRM only polled to the Contractor hourly. This meant jobs raised with Borough after 11.00 were not logged by the contractor until after noon.
- Service fault reports were often entered into the CRM system later than they were received. The contractor therefore received notification of the case with a response time which had been significantly reduced or had already elapsed. Borough assessed performance against the time the complaint was called in by the public, the contractor assessed performance against the time they received the fax; because the fax was automated, human error had been incorrectly ruled out.
- If a call related to whole Street, a note would go in the text file, but only the property associated to the person calling to make the complaint would be identified in the contractor fax. Thus, the single property would be collected from, quickly followed by ten additional complaints from the remaining residents.

The CC focus was on handling calls quickly. Performance was undermined by customer dishonesty. For example; two customers down one street had reported missed collections 17 times between them. This was three times more than the rest of the residents down this very long street combined, over the same period. The properties of these residents were standard for the street, making it doubtful they would be missed.

Contractor feed back about 30 sacks a week identified as non domestic waste languished in the CC without being addressed.

Call Centres #2 cont.

Results

SSD worked to restore communications between Client and Contractor.

Once restored, the issues were investigated.

- The domestic waste issue saw many properties converted to Trade Waste customers, decreasing the costs of Domestic Waste, and increasing income.
- The high level of reporting from two properties saw The Refuse Management team and the Contractor team work together to check for 'waste not out' prior to collection. Within five weeks both residents had been found to be regularly filing false claims of missed collections. In each instance it could be shown the resident hadn't put their waste out in time.
- A hit list of suspect properties was generated for the CC, and the number of false reports started to diminish across the borough.
- Actual 'Missed collection' levels were improved by 40% within a few weeks.
- Levels of rectifications within contract times dramatically increased.
- Contractor costs reduced.
- Client income increased.

All in all, this project provided SSD an opportunity to deliver impressive results in short time-frames. However, more could have been done, had SSD been provided a broader remit from higher up the chain of command.

The attempts our team made to get the CC to monitor causes of failure, and volumes of 'Repeat Calls' unfortunately turned into a lot of effort for little result. This turned out to be a 'Target driven behaviours' issue deeply embedded into the 'Reporting Upwards', fear based culture common across the public sector. PI's stubbornly remained about speed and delays and call drop outs, rather than adding value and identifying root cause as SSD closed the project.

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Case Study #5 Housing Maintenance

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Case Study #5

Housing Maintenance

Summary

SSD were engaged by a large housing association in the Midlands to deliver support against a project with a 'Business Regeneration' title. The scope included the growth of their repairs team, the introduction of new practices, improved 'Ways of Working' (WoW) and to deliver a 'Best Value Review' (incorporating the 4C's).

It transpired a number of operational issues required attention before the commissioned work could be started with any integrity. Failing to address broader issues would have detracted from the possible deliverables. SSD's remit was thus extended to include these development needs.

Challenges

Multiple pay and condition standards required commonality and integration. The primary IT system was going obsolete and would no-longer be supported, requiring a new system costing £270K. The HA had been tasked with moving from the depot it occupied and into a new nearby site to cut costs. They were not competitive when benchmarked and required improved financial control measures urgently.

Dissimilar pay & conditions presented management and administration challenges in addition to causing much unrest between those doing comparable work for dissimilar pay. A number of solutions had been attempted over a 7 year period, but had only succeeded in creating further stand alone systems and confusion.

Results

- **Pay & Conditions** – The entire team were consulted and readily signed up to a bespoke design (& simple) 'Competency based' reward scheme within 2 months.
- **Site move** – The planned move was reviewed for costs and operational impact. It was subsequently shown to be untenable and abandoned, to become a far more effective extension to the head office.
- **The current IT system** - was supported after all. Once assessed, it was also identified as *more than* adequate for the task at hand. The replacement project was cancelled. Once output requirements were understood, reports were generated detailing, Urgent today, Urgent next day and 'Routine'. The already good performance rose to 100% On Time Delivery. Furthermore, Hand held PC's (PDA's) were approved and implemented, delivering a fully integrated inter-agency E-enabled service to be developed, providing 'real-time' completion of documentation from Works Order completion to Invoicing for goods.
- SSD's remit was extended again, to address Call Centre issues, over-seeing a 90% single call handling system established, mainly by co-locating the DLO supervisors next to the call centre.
- A 'Zero Cost' proposal for a new structure was agreed, utilising new technologies which enabled 35% business growth opportunities; identifying £700K of internal growth, and £2M of external growth.
- A vehicle replacement policy was introduced saving an additional £13,000 a year.
- Performance Management was addressed showing significant gains by re-addressing the use of data.

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Case Study #6 Street Scene

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Case Study #6

Street Scene

Summary

SSD were engaged to support an Inner London Borough. They presented a variety of Management issues; none less than a history of indifference for the delivery of results following Best Value Reviews (BVR's).

The Borough were aiming for an Excellent CPA score, but the environment area had slipped from a 2 to a 1. This would inhibit any chance of progressing their CPA.

The Borough had recently restructured its Best Value Review Team, and was recruiting to a wider vision. It was several months into a review entitled "Cleaner Safer Places" (CSP). This needed new thinking in respect to Refuse Collection, Waste Management, Street Cleansing, 'other-area' cleansing & housing 'Caretaking' while also tackling challenges in respect to anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood regeneration and waste education.

This was an extremely wide brief, with enormous potential for impact, covering a budget way in excess of £35M per annum.

Challenges

The service director had left. An assistant was struggling to cover while those senior managers not being 'reorganised' were also leaving. Morale was very poor, and the Waste Manager had resigned. The CEO required a very positive review, as it was a political imperative to build upon other 'Beacon' achieving transformations for other service areas.

The Council culture was generally focussed on achieving PI improvement. However, in contrast to this, the directorate affected by these plans still displayed many 'old-school' methods of conduct. They worked in a strong series of Silos, with little communication from room to room, even within the same sections.

Several processes were happening in parallel. Multiple ideas and methods of communication were being tested internally and externally seeing four steering groups form – 1. Practicable ideas, 2. Performance management and Value for Money assessment 3. a senior management / stakeholder group, and 4. a Members / Chief Executive Board.



Street Scene

Case Study #6

Results

SSD were involved at all levels, Chairing two groups, writing reports for the Board, and acting as an external challenge partner to the Council.

With support, focus and clear communications, significant momentum was generated throughout the team, immediately reducing stress and increasing energy.

Everyone involved offered their support 'Over and above their day jobs'; with such a positive attitude triggered, the pace of learning and discovery increased exponentially.

The CEO and her immediate team, stepped up to lead by example for nothing short of excellence. The CSP review was concluded successfully with detailed implementation plans for the next three years, including core service restructuring.

A 'How to deal with street cleansing' re-appraisal focussed on education and enforcement, removing the mind-set that ever increasing budgets to clean up dropped litter was 'effective' management.

Service delivery became more localised, with generic powers and responsibilities deployed to those on the streets, dovetailed to the Police at ward levels through a simplistic approach (People with barrows who take a pride in work).

Members at all levels including the CEO believed this to be the best BV Review ever conducted by the Council. The approach delivered by SSD now stands as a cornerstone for best practice, having received two nominations for awards at a prestigious nationwide event.

The outcomes exceeded expectations, for £3.5M a year less than anticipated.

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Case Study #7

Trips and Falls

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Case Study #7



Trips and Falls

Claims under Section 58 of the Highways Act - Trips and Falls

Summary

As part of a larger county wide project covering the highly legislated issue of Trips and Falls Claims on Highways, SSD were engaged to identify improvement opportunities throughout the process of; 1. inspection, 2. customer contact, 3. investigation, 4. claims handling and 5. financial restitution. This mini-project was initiated following issue of a PiD showing a potential £25K / annum net saving.



Challenges

It quickly became apparent the management arrangements were complex and inconsistent across the county. Area offices located within each of the 6 District Councils were taking either no responsibility or full responsibility for the front end of the process, on an Ad Hoc basis. The investigation process step was entirely detached, being addressed centrally by head office across all 6 areas.

Data recording was also inconsistent. Various spreadsheets, databases and bespoke systems for insurance claims were all in use independently of each other. There was no attempt to share information or standardise. Manual data entry error levels were high.

Data collected was of an incredibly poor standard, with 'Root Cause' identified with single word entries like 'Trip' or 'Hole' with many variations of spelling. This poor information provided no opportunity for analysis to identify trends and therefore no opportunity to identify solutions.

Case Study #7



Trips and Falls

Claims under Section 58 of the Highways Act - Trips and Falls

Cont.

The greatest challenge was mind-set, how they were thinking and what they were defining as 'good'. Largely because their performance was comparable with other councils in the country, (as assessed by benchmarked repudiation rates), any suggestion of change provoked negative reactions of denial resistance and multiple attempts to justify the current level of performance.

The perceptions of the tasks scale and scope were also misaligned. There were 750 **S58** cases each year with an average 9 month lead time from inception to close. The impact of this lead time was that 550 cases remained open throughout the year at any one time. However, seen through a different lens, the same numbers equate to approx. 3 cases per day, requiring only one clerk & one inspector supported by a single manager. This view also met with much resistance, but this saved £670K / annum based on a 3 month trial. Achieved a 100% correct report first time, increased repudiation and reduced secondary costs.

Results

The time a claim spent in the process from step1. Inspection to step 5. delivery to claims handler was reduced to 2.65 days from 90 days.

The principle allowed the external 'Claims handling' contractor to reduce their process time from 3 months to less than 3 days. The full function was brought back in-house requiring only 3 FTE's.

£723K savings opportunities were identified within a £1.9M budget, allowing investment to root cause solutions.



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Case Study #8

Waste & Recycling

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Case Study #8

Waste & Recycling #1

Summary

SSD were engaged by a large outer London borough to help improve Waste Management, 3rd party service delivery / contract negotiation, recycling recovery and to support an acclaimed PFI waste disposal deal.

The borough had recently implemented a new CRM system, concurrently restructuring to a 'Street Scene' service. The new four borough waste authority was bedding in and new contractors were all going through a steep learning curves.

Challenges

The new CRM system presented challenges. Lines of communication had been extended without adequate implementation support and operational failures were being mis-reported. The contractor had been moved from the council depot at short notice and a number of variations to contract were half finished with claims and counter-claims continuing to build as they had been over the previous 4 years of dispute.

Results

- The contract disputes were resolved within 3 months. All matters were settled £600,000 under budget with no court costs incurred.
- MRF and Pre-sort activities were addressed enabling a step change in materials recovery.
- The PFI deal was seen through and became operational with a high emphasis on Performance management and monitoring following high level lobbying at the Audit Commission and ODPM to resolve fine tuning issues.
- Further recycling funding was secured including a waste education development aspect.
- A new municipal waste and recycling plan was drafted realising a significant increase in trade recycling.
- SSD issued a ghost tender as part of a process to bring in a new waste and recycling contract ultimately seeing the best and final bid come in £300K under expectations.

Case Study #8a

Waste & Recycling #2

Summary

This Case Study can be considered an extension to our 'Case Study #6 (CS6) – Street Scene' as it was with the same Inner London Borough during the same period.

This project was fast-track and very interesting. As mentioned in CS6, the borough was aspiring to gain an 'Excellent' CPA score, but the environment area had slipped the previous year from 2 to 1, inhibiting any chance of progress. SSD were engaged to address two main elements of improvement, 1. understanding and detailing the current quality of performance and 2. developing a template for future performance. The CEO wasn't accepting anything less than excellence in all aspects of service and required the same in 'Waste Inspection'.

Challenges

There was no shortage of information and statistics, but these were often found in silo's, seeing ownership promote 'power' based behaviours, inhibiting progress, while closer inspection often found conflicts and gaps. Exposing the assumption that the data was good, just because it was available.

Results

- All data was aligned and shared between key stakeholders in short time-frames
- A new divisional service plan was re-drafted to make a clear link between corporate objectives, department initiatives and focused work plans which became integral to performance appraisals.
- Previously absent benchmarking was established with dedicated resource.
- A RAG performance indicator system was created allowing urgent (red) issues to be easily identified and addressed while quick wins (amber) were actioned to give a sense of progress.
- Celebrating good practice and success saw morale improve across the board.
- The Inspectors issued a 'Fair service with excellent prospects' assessment.



Waste & Recycling #3

Summary

A hung council was struggling to approve a way forward in respect to an initiative to move from an 'anywhere on property' sack collection service to a planned wheeled bin collection with a box collection for recyclables. They had received a poor BV Review, had recently entered into a partnering agreement with other districts and the head of service was on long term sick leave.

Challenges

Trade waste was being collected free of charge. There were plans to close the local tip and move it farther afield. The workforce were disgruntled over various issues relating to pay and conditions. Recycling vehicles had been ordered with no thought about final specifications to conform to safety standards or to enhance operational efficiency had been included. An initial specification for 240 litre bins was in place where initial assessment identified 180 litre bins made more sense on cost and logistics.

Results

- A transition from 'Hung council' to unanimous agreement was obtained within a month.
- Inception of project to 1st round being operational was achieved in under 5 months.
- Rounds were re-structured using GIS information.
- A new specification was issued for vehicles and the procurement cycle fast-tracked to conform with Standing Orders and European Procurement Directives.
- Bin sizes were standardised to 180 litres.
- The planned tip closure at county levels was appealed with County and over-turned.
- Trade refuse became 'charged for' significantly increasing revenue.
- The council moved from 4% to 19% recycling in-year requiring no additional budget.
- Performance forecast in year 2 was 24% seeing the project featured as a 'Good practice' case study by IDEA.

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Case Study #9

Passenger Transport

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Case Study #9

Passenger Transport

Summary

SSD were engaged to help improve a Passenger Transport (PT) service dealing with special services for the elderly and children, including concessions & SEN (special education needs) via buses and taxis.

This PT service was under constant pressure to ensure they maintained a high quality 'Safe door to door' service, which arrived on time for those who qualified for free transport. e.g. under 10's living >2 miles from school and over 10's >3 miles from school. This PT service had a high budget. Cost's were £34M while only £4M was being generated across the county. The net budget needed to be reduced.

Taxi's were utilised where buses couldn't go, or where a Social Services 'SEN child assessment', deemed it necessary to use a taxi to provide the required service and care.

Challenges

Transportation needs can be numerous and detailed ranging from a personnel attendant, specific vehicle type, specified sitting position, gender of the driver, special equipment needs, etc. These needs can change monthly or even weekly.

Another service requirement is 'one-off' journeys. These are one-time events which require a taxi picks up a person upon the request of social services.

Operationally, the challenges were as much 'in the office' as out on the road and largely revolved around systems and data being poorly utilised by a highly stressed team. Due to attrition over time, few were trained in the correct use of the systems at their disposal, seeing additional paperwork generated to cope with many aspects of the job which didn't require external paper based solutions.

These paper-based 'work-arounds', created in the absence of adequate training was generating much more work than necessary to achieve reduced results. This applied in respect to the use of GIS data, their Routewise system and the use of a non-integrated 3rd party software solution called Mappoint.

One of the biggest issues and complaints from Staff was the sheer volume of Invoices being processed, which, it transpired, were a by-product of the complex system they had created to fill the gaps in their systems knowledge.

Case Study #9

Passenger Transport

Results

With all key stakeholders present, alongside specialists from the 'Routewise' software company, a workshop was arranged and facilitated by SSD to look at the following key areas;

- Invoice processing
- Mainstream & concessions
- Contract admin
- Petrol & oil reimbursement
- Others

Due to time and resource issues not all areas were addressed, but from the work done, the following achievements were realised;

- It was identified that 91% of all 'apparent' incorrect invoices were 'correct at source' and the mistakes were internal. Initial reports showed PT received 110 incorrect invoices from finance per month (approx. 10% of all invoices received).
- Each incorrect invoice could take up to 30mins to rectify and return for secondary processing.
- The error rate from finance was reduced to approx. 1% drastically reducing time, cost and FTE roles by 2.5..
- Subsequently a consolidated invoice process was developed reducing approx. 13,000 Invoices Per Annum (IPA) to 3,500 IPA
- The potential to better procure SEN Taxis using GIS data identified an approx. 18% saving across contracts ≈ £600,000 a year saving.
- Following a 're-classification' of 'Parent payments' to work around the limitations within the SAP system, a new 'oil and petrol payment scheme' was introduced to action £100,000 a year identified savings.
- A latter crossover with Fleet to use spare capacity from Mini-buses and MPV's also saved an additional £300,000 a year.