



Eastbourne Borough Council and Steria

Workforce transformation in action



Eastbourne Borough Council have forged a 15 year strategic transformation partnership with Steria to deliver new ways of working, and innovative approaches to delivering customer service that will yield a £3 million return on investment for the borough.



Client business challenge

Councils are under increasing pressure to cut costs, yet deliver improved customer services. Budgetary pressures can put a strain on operational performance, and because of that councils need to look at innovative ways of delivering public services. Workforce enablement is a critical element of the equation. People need to have the right tools, facilities and technology that will enable them to work effectively. Though Eastbourne Borough Council had offered flexible working in some teams for a number of years, it wanted to extend this and enable agile working across the Council.

Reducing office accommodation was the catalyst to transform the way Eastbourne Borough Council operated. Until recently, the Council worked out of two main office buildings, which created issues for staff, customers and the Council. The end of lease on one of these buildings provided them with an opportunity to put in place agile working – as part of a larger transformation agenda, called the DRIVE Programme. The challenge was to move to a single office and implement the transformation to agile working in just 12 months.

Eastbourne Borough Council realised that they needed a partner to help them implement the transformation changes within an extremely tight timescale whilst ensuring minimal disruption to operations during the transition.

The solution

Eastbourne Borough Council's solution is ground breaking in that it addresses people, process and technology issues. The contract to deliver the Agile Working Programme was awarded to Steria, supported by Civica and Area Sq, with the aim of making 1 Grove Road the main service hub, with staff working in a flexible manner out of this building. Steria was already

responsible for the Council's IT services. With the Agile Working Programme, in addition to the IT modernisation requirements, Steria took on responsibility for delivering business process change and a complete fit-out, redesign, refurbishment and re-cabling of the building.

Highlights of the programme:

- transformation of the office working environment to support modern, efficient and flexible working practices, working with Area Sq
- introduction of mobile and home working solutions
- organisational review covering role analysis, reorganisation of administration support and business process engineering. This included centralising administration and support resources and aligning them with the customer services team
- implementation of the Civica Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) to eliminate paper and create standard workflows.

Julian Osgathorpe, Deputy Chief Executive at Eastbourne Borough Council said "As part of the move, fixed desks were reduced and 'hot desks' made available. These are utilised by staff in any department whose role allows them to work more flexibly. The proportion of staff working from fixed desks has reduced from 97% to 32%, with the majority hot desking when in the office."

Collaboration between Steria and Eastbourne Borough Council

To deliver the Agile Working Programme Steria has been working in close collaboration with staff from across the Council.

Job enrichment and development was a crucial outcome, and as part of that process people were seconded in and volunteers asked to get involved. Staff were consulted at



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Julian Osgathorpe, Deputy Chief Executive, Eastbourne Borough Council.



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Robert Cottrill, Chief Executive, Eastbourne Borough Council.

every stage of the project in an effort to provide business processes and a working environment which will enable them to do their jobs more effectively. This has helped the Council to move out of the leased building and go live in twelve service areas in less than seven months.

A further critical outcome was to create an organisational architecture that was focussed on the customer rather than preserving traditional silo working. Julian Osgathorpe added: "Agile is an important aspect to our development of an organisational culture which places the customer at the heart of everything we do. The programme has created an organisation that has a far stronger understanding of the way we work and how our residents and customers interact with us."

Just one year on from the programme being commissioned, it is on schedule and within budget. Steria have managed the delivery of the internal and external building refurbishment, the introduction of mobile and flexible working technologies and re-engineered business processes which are implemented via the Civica workflow tools in the EDRMS software. As a result, the programme has played a major role in allowing the Council to set a balanced budget for 2011-12, despite the extremely challenging economic circumstances the sector is facing.

Julian Osgathorpe concludes, "Steria and its partners have worked tirelessly to deliver the Agile Working Programme to time and budget. Eastbourne Borough Council now has a more flexible working environment supported by transformed business processes and technologies which enable staff to work effectively wherever their location."

He also believes the programme has improved customer services, "We're turning the current arrangement of bringing the customer to us a full 180 degrees. Because of the changes to working styles, officers will be out in the community they serve providing the service the community needs."

The benefits

The Council's stated objective was to improve services and time spent serving customers, improve work/life balance, motivation and job satisfaction, reduce accommodation pressures, and achieve reduced environmental impact.

Chief Executive of Eastbourne Borough Council, Robert Cottrill said: "The Agile Working Programme is set to not only deliver vast savings for the council but will also allow our staff to take a more flexible approach to their work, which in turn will benefit Eastbourne residents."

Besides the projected productivity and efficiency gains and cost-savings, it has empowered the workforce to provide improved customer services, and has facilitated a positive cultural change. It is also expected to deliver a return on investment of £3 million over 10 years from a budget of around £2.6 million.

The programme is delivering:

- **Cost savings:** the council no longer needs to pay rent and running costs, saving over £300k per annum on the building alone. In addition, 10% efficiency savings are being delivered as a result of the business process re-engineering and exploitation of the new technologies
- **Improved customer services:** through the Agile Working Programme customers now only need to visit a single council office location and the introduction of new processes is enabling staff to spend more time in the community
- **Flexible and agile workforce:** the refitted building is offering a more comfortable and flexible working environment with enhanced capability to accommodate staff - with a ratio of 6 hotdesks available for every 10 flexible/mobile workers
- **Staff benefits:** the technology and new facilities will provide more flexible working arrangements, tools to help staff with their work, with a focus on performance and outputs rather than presence at a desk
- **Environmental improvements:** opportunities were also taken to reduce the Council's carbon footprint during the re-design through new windows and solar shading engineered to eliminate solar gain and avoid the need for expensive and environmentally unsound air conditioning.



About Steria

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Founded in 1969, Steria has offices in Europe, India, North Africa and SE Asia and a 2010 revenue of €1.69 billion. 20%(*) of Steria's capital is owned by its employees. Headquartered in Paris, Steria is listed on the Euronext Paris market.

* including the Employees Shares Trust in the UK

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