SUCCESS STORY

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Driving efficiencies and flexibility for UK local authority with an innovative commercial model

Smooth transition to managed service on a flexible ICT platform provides foundation for council modernisation programmes.

The challenge

Like all local authorities in the UK, Gloucestershire County Council is striving to deliver local services while facing stretching budget constraints. It needs to find innovative approaches to delivering citizen services and managing its own resources efficiently and cost effectively.

With a large property portfolio, the Council identified ways of improving the utilisation of this important asset and how new working practices could support the Council's ambition to free up property for sale or rental purpose. Any cash released could be reinvested in local services and drive valuable income streams.

The Council's ICT strategy plays a part in this and they needed a robust, stable and modern ICT platform to enable them to move to flexible and mobile working and support service transformation.

With only a small internal ICT team, the Council depends on external partners to help it shape and deliver its ICT infrastructure and support services. Following a decision to put out its existing ICT contract to tender, the Council signed a five-year agreement with Sopra Steria.

Key points

- Cost savings accruing from day one
- Usage based pricing to support new partnership and commissioning models in the future
- Modern service on a flexible delivery platform

Our solution

Sopra Steria is a trusted transformation partner with over 40 years' experience in public services. Our solution for Gloucestershire County Council aims to drive down costs through a modern ICT platform and flexible resourcing model.

Sopra Steria's ITIL-based Sustainable Service Delivery (SSD) approach embeds sustainability into our ICT services. All sustainability initiatives, including those addressing community, economy, procurement, recruitment, environmental responsibility and diversity, are managed through a customer and service specific performance management framework.

After transitioning the service from the previous supplier, Sopra Steria began delivery of the contract in April 2014. ICT services are now provided through a flexible charging model based on the Council's demand for ICT services. The service will also see the move to a flexible ICT platform that will enable the Council to introduce new ways of working and support a wider drive to more citizen-centric services.

Delivering Transformation. Together.

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How we worked together

The first challenge was to complete the transition in just nine weeks. Achieving this was as much about managing people, as it was about the new service delivery model. Sopra Steria had to quickly build trust amongst people moving across to its organisation and their support was achieved by complete transparency throughout the process. By getting this right they continued to provide their valuable knowledge of the Council's ICT infrastructure and strategy.

Training on the new tools and ways of working also supported the change process and has facilitated improvements to the service management standards.

The Sopra Steria team works on-site at the Council's own premises. This facilitates face-to-face conversations and enables a swift response and immediate dialogue regarding the service and any ICT issues as they arise. During the transition to the new service, this proximity also meant that Sopra Steria was on hand to support a security accreditation audit taking place at the same time.

In a very short space of time the new Sopra Steria team has developed a close working relationship with the Council. Furthermore, trust has been built by Sopra Steria quickly introducing a strong service management culture for the current service delivery. In turn, this is enabling the two organisations to look to the future, with Sopra Steria suggesting innovative solutions to enable the Council to meet its wider strategic goals.

Results and benefits

Sopra Steria and Gloucestershire County Council have embarked on a commercial partnership that goes beyond purely the delivery of an ICT platform. It is a partnership focused on successful outcomes, such as cost savings and the achievement of high service management standards based on quality and a strong service ethic.

Our first projects will start delivering sustainability benefits this year, including:

- Reduction of green house gas emissions from GCC's end user device estate
- Laptops to be used in a digital inclusion project

Helping to deliver the Council's property transformation strategy is an important outcome. To this end, the next steps on the transformation journey are in the planning stages, including the move to a new telephony system and smarter working initiatives such as secure WiFi/remote access and mobile working.

Looking further ahead, Sopra Steria will continue to deliver the Council's ICT roadmap in the coming years. This includes projects to enable better customer access, integrated document and records management and more integrated working across departments.

> " *With Sopra Steria we have very quickly established a trusted and open working relationship. They have achieved a lot in a very short space of time and the improvements they have already driven in our ICT service are providing us with a solid foundation on which we can build successful outcomes for our strategic change programmes.* "

Andrew McCartney
Director