

SUCCESS STORY

SHEPWAY DISTRICT COUNCIL Revenues and Benefits Digitally Enabled Business Transformation



Sopra Steria worked in partnership with Shepway District Council's Revenues and Benefits service to identify a number of opportunities for cost savings, efficiencies and process transformation.

The challenge

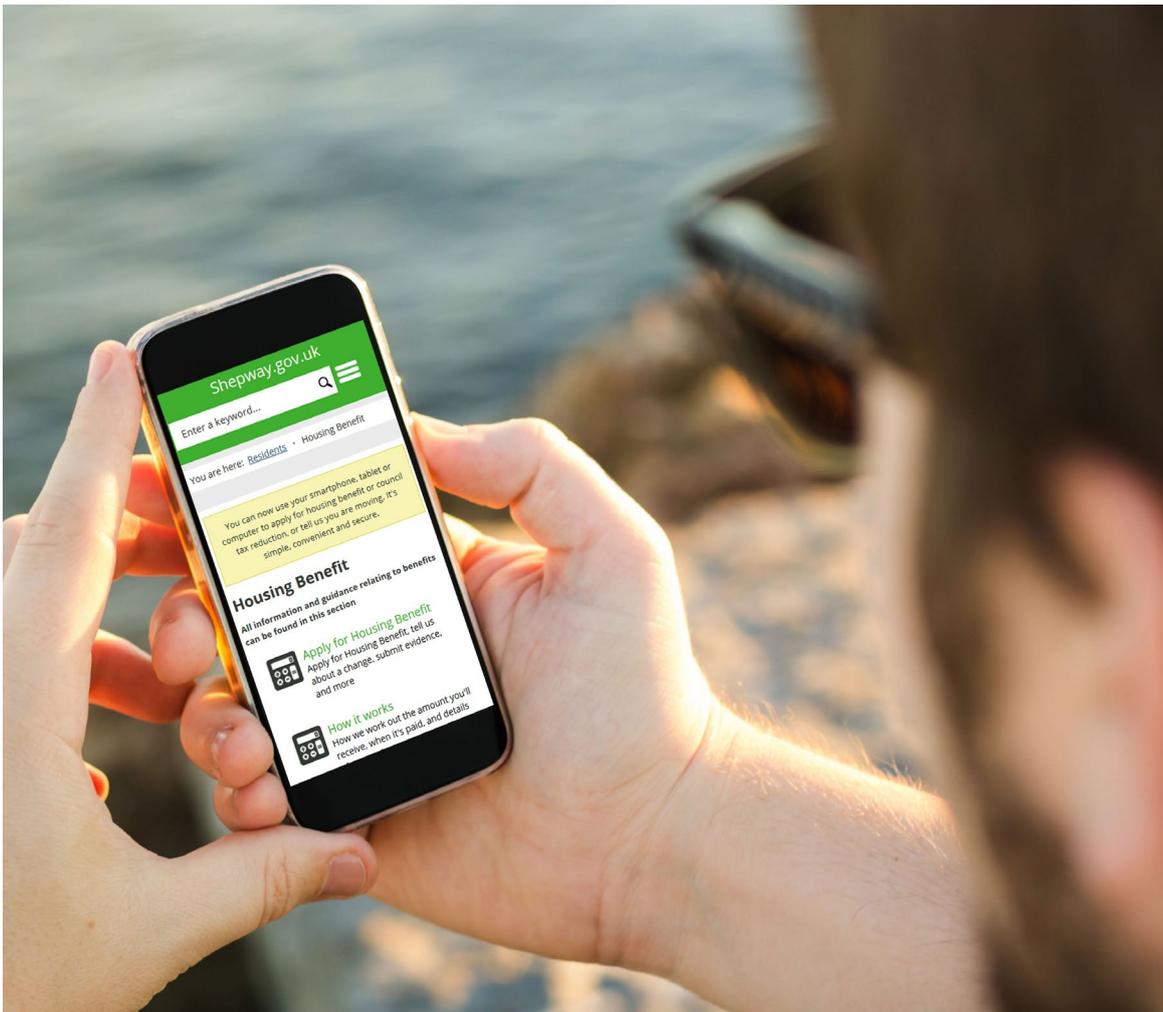
Shepway District Council (SDC) was exploring the development of digital channels for citizen engagement and wanted to look at the efficiency of its Revenues and Benefits service to identify opportunities for improvement and cost saving.

It was felt that there was potential to reduce the amount of time spent by specialists performing time consuming administrative duties. There were particularly high numbers of repeat contacts made with customers. For example Sopra Steria consultants identified that on 70% of occasions staff were chasing for further information to support a claim. The council wanted to eliminate unnecessary contacts, ensure information was provided directly at the first point of contact with minimal handling through the end to end process.

Sopra Steria supported Shepway's digital transformation journey providing an automated solution delivered using our digital implementation capabilities and underpinned by our proven business change methodology.

Key points

- Redesign of high volume, high transaction processes using a LEAN approach
- Benefits Realisation Model identifying realisable savings of up to £600k pa (based on 60% automation)
- Implementation of a digitally enabled solution providing e-forms and process automation technologies to support process and organisational change
- Revised service delivery operating models to improve efficiency
- Embedment of continual service improvement ensuring that the Council continues to identify and implement new opportunities for efficiency savings



Our solution

As Shepway District Council's ICT partner, Sopra Steria had already successfully delivered an initial Ways Of Working change programme across the authority and the Executive management team were keen to use our business process change methodology and digital transformation capabilities to meet their efficiency challenges.

Business Process Services engagement involved Sopra Steria consultants working with SDC's Revenues and Benefits staff to examine the end to end activities performed by the team. A series of workshops with key stakeholders were held to obtain a thorough understanding of the business operations. This output was then used to support service redesign, identify mechanisms for change and build the business benefits realisation model.

The redesigned processes were used to evaluate technical solutions and to make recommendations for optimising digital transformation and channel shift. These recommendations were underpinned by a business case incorporating business efficiency savings and new target operating model.

Sopra Steria led the implementation of the new multi supplier Revenues and Benefits digital solution. This comprised eForms from Victoria Forms, automated Risk Based Verification by Xantura and process automation and integration through GovTech.

Sopra Steria's key deliverables were:

- Redesigned process flows for the high volume, high transaction processes supported by a digitally enabled solution incorporating customer on-line self-service and process automation technology
- A new Target Operating Model for the service to align the management structure across the service and create multi skilled teams
- Benefits Realisation Model identifying the benefits in terms of people, process and technology change and the mechanisms to realise the efficiency savings
- New Service Model covering transition into business as usual and continual service improvement



How we worked together

SDC were keen to replicate the engagement approach used by Sopra Steria for the implementation of the Ways of Working programme where SDC employees at all levels were involved in every stage of the business process redesign.

The initial phase of engagement with the corporate management team set the benchmark for the project and identified the key business drivers, challenges and strategy direction.

Working together with SDC our BPS consultants facilitated workshops to examine and document the current ways of working. From this a set of design principles, aligned with the corporate vision, was established and was used as the basis of the redesigned service.

Close consultation was maintained throughout with the SDC team actively taking ownership and being involved in the reshaping of the service.

At the end of the shaping phase a final presentation detailed the redesigned processes, new target operating model and benefits realisation model. The Council were provided with a range of short and longer term options to deliver the change. Two key elements were a technology refresh to support the new processes:

- Customer on-line self-service and introduction of e-forms to ensure all information is acquired at the first point of contact
- Introduction of process automation technology to reduce the level of officer intervention in the process.

Working strategically together a final action plan was agreed which would achieve the required savings, as well as delivering in terms of both customer service improvement and providing a more effective and productive environment for employees.

Sopra Steria was engaged to deliver the digital solution working within SDC's Digital Transformation Programme. A joint project team was established using Sopra Steria's digitally enabled implementation service skills, supplier application expertise and SDC business specialism. We ran joint workshops to match the new process requirements to the eForms and process automation solution. We worked with the suppliers to refine and test the products, assisted Shepway in the testing and training of the solution and delivered the new processes in two phases - Revenues and then Benefits including Risk Based Verification.

Alongside the technical delivery we worked with SDC to support their communications strategy, business organisational change and acceptance of the new technology into service.

Throughout the engagement, regular project management checkpoints were held with the SDC corporate management team. This ensured they were fully up to date with progress and enabled ongoing strategic input.

Results and benefits

The joint Sopra Steria Shepway project has achieved:

- Target savings of c60% based on the introduction of automated Revenues and Benefits processes and implementation of a new target operating model
- eForm take up of more than 70%:
 - enabling the customer to complete and submit application forms online and reducing the need for Shepway staff to manual handle data
 - with information being provided at the first point of contact
 - providing dynamic, intuitive on-line access to the Revenues and Benefits service 24/7
- Improved service accessibility through alternative channels
- Automated risk assessment of benefits claims enabling officers to focus effort on high risk claimants
- Establishment of a Continual Service Improvement ethos within the Council and the initiation of multiple new digital initiatives and efficiency programmes of work

“*The Sopra Steria Business Process Consultants identified a number of opportunities which have enabled us to deliver more efficient and effective services to the public. They delivered an actionable plan which yielded in year savings and showed how we can optimise processes.*”

Through the introduction of new technologies we were able to provide more accessible web based self-service.

We are really pleased with the digital uptake which is freeing our teams to deliver more value adding, customer focused activities.”

Corporate Director
of Resources



Sopra Steria, European leader in digital transformation, provides one of the most comprehensive portfolios of end to end service offerings in the market: Consulting, Systems Integration, Software Development and Business Process Services. Sopra Steria is trusted by leading private and public organisations to deliver successful transformation programmes that address their most complex and critical business challenges.

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