

Improved culture at East Hampshire District Council

The client

East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) is a local government district in Hampshire, England. Its council is based in Petersfield with other areas under its governance including Alton, Horndean, Whitehill and Bordon. A largely rural district council with high performing services, in 2017-18 EHDC reduced their rate of council tax by two per cent, while other councils were increasing theirs.

The challenge

The Council is busy and the reduced council tax income means efficiency is now of paramount importance. There are no large performance leaps to be made as most teams are already performing well. The Council looked to Visual Management as a way to focus on balanced continuous improvement to make the marginal gains in performance that were necessary. The Revenues and Benefits teams were selected as a pilot for using Information Centres - a highly visible way of securing improvements.

The approach

A two-day workshop was run to set up and embed the Information Centre in the two teams. The first day focused on introducing the overall concept of an Information Centre, establishing long-term content and leading performance measures. At the end of this first day an action plan was drawn up to continue with the implementation for a period of two and a half weeks until the second workshop. Throughout this time, the team took photographs of the Information Centre at set intervals to create a time-lapse of its set up. The second day focused on practical and structured problem solving, where the teams would work through real problems identified using the Information Centre. The second day also introduced the Information Centre audit as a tool for managing and sustaining its use.

The benefits

The teams are now meeting jointly once a day for a maximum of 10 minutes. The staff involved in the set-up workshops will lead the meetings initially, but the expectation is that within the next month everyone will be able and willing to participate fully.

“The Information Centre and problem-solving discussions started a conversation that needed to be had [and] the Information Centre has opened our eyes to new ways of working.”

Louise, Revenues Manager

“The Skills Matrix is a simple tool that makes measuring skills gaps and progression so simple.”

Tracey, Benefits Manager

“Working with Ad Esse to establish visual management for the Revenues and Benefits teams has exceeded our expectations. The Information Centre has empowered the teams to take ownership of their own performance in the pursuit of perfection. Creating time for busy managers to stand back and think.”

Chris Bradley, Head of Commercial Development