

CAPITA

Service Birmingham



*“Business transformation is not something that can be done to us; we must do it to ourselves! Working with Service Birmingham supports us in achieving excellence”
Stephen Hughes, Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council*

Core Contract Value £475million

Start date 1 April 2006

Term Ten years

Services ICT services and Business Transformation projects

Key Objectives:

- An improved ICT infrastructure
- Better use of Information Resources
- Improved Communications with partners
- Transformed services for citizens

Key Results:

- £2m investment in a new server estate
 - Rationalising 550 applications to 150
- Consolidated 7 Service Desks into 2
- 500% improvement in e-mail speed
- Help desk calls answered within 20 seconds increased from 40% to nearly 90%
- Projected cost savings of £1bn back to the Council over the initial 10-year term for re investment in services

Service Birmingham

Background

In April 2006, Capita joined forces with the largest Local Authority in Europe, Birmingham City Council (BCC), to form a Joint Venture Company (JVC) - Service Birmingham. Service Birmingham's goal is to support the Council in transforming the way they operate, improving services, creating efficiencies and improving job satisfaction for staff. Investment in a world class ICT service forms the bedrock of the Council's transformation which aims to deliver cost savings of £1bn back to the Council over the initial 10-year term, some of which will be available for the Council to re-invest in improving services for the citizens of Birmingham.

Flexible transition

The Joint Venture involved the secondment of 500 Council staff to Service Birmingham, and an effective communications plan was implemented to engage all staff involved at a very early stage. During the consultation period two staff days were held to communicate progress. Group and 1-2-1 sessions were organised where staff had the opportunity to meet the Service Birmingham management team, and a weekly bulletin was established to communicate regular progress. The Choices Model was introduced to give staff the opportunity to be seconded to Service Birmingham, remain employees of BCC, or to TUPE transfer. Three months into the contract, staff were given the opportunity to reconsider their decision. The success of this approach is illustrated by the fact that all 500 staff remain at Service Birmingham.

"This is the start of a tremendously exciting venture. This programme will deliver world class capabilities and will help us improve the services to our citizens and businesses so that they too are world class"

Brendan Arnold, Director of Corporate Finance, Birmingham City Council

Transforming ICT

In order to deliver the required systems improvements to transform the Councils ICT services, we have implemented major enhancements to the infrastructure, including a £2m investment in a new server estate. We have consolidated 7 Service Desks into 2 (primary help desk plus specialised educational help desk for schools) and are rationalising 550 applications to 150, replacing departmental solutions with organisation-wide ones. This has facilitated a 500% improvement in e-mail speed and a 30% increase in traffic, as well as a significant improvement in the reliability of existing services. The number of help desk calls now answered within 20 seconds has increased from 40% to nearly 90%.

Business Transformation

The Council is embarking on a radical and wide reaching programme of transformation and Service Birmingham currently supports the council on seven of their nine transformation work streams, providing additional capacity and skills in areas such as:

- Change management
- Programme and project management
- Business consultancy and analysis
- Service design
- Systems and service integration
- Learning and development.



People focus to optimise performance

At Service Birmingham we take the view that our people are at the centre of our success and staff motivation is a critical part of our performance improvement strategy. We have committed a significant financial and time investment into training and developing staff (£2m) who have seconded to the JVC, part of which involves undertaking the largest public sector ITIL accreditation program in Europe. We have also established a training and induction programme called Talent Management to ensure that staff skills reflect the changing requirements involved in implementing a 'world-class ICT'. As part of the Talent Management Programme, all Service Birmingham staff went through a skills audit to identify areas where they would benefit from training and development. We then developed individual personal training plans based on the results.

In addition, staff are given specific training to take on project management roles within the Business Transformation team. We have also introduced the GEM (Going the Extra Mile) Awards to motivate staff, with five award categories encouraging excellence in service as well as innovation.

Prior to the formation of the JVC, members of the Directorates which now form the Service Birmingham team were located across many sites across the city. In September 2007 we brought these disparate teams together into one site.

Community involvement

We introduced the Staff Benefit Scheme (SBS) which receives 5% of the JVC's profits per annum and is administered by seven representatives. Three of these representatives are from the Council and four from Service Birmingham (3 of who are nominated by staff). The representatives can decide what to spend the money on, supporting team based and community activities.

Growing the partnership

Given the joint ownership of Service Birmingham it is very much a partnership approach to governance. Both partners are represented at all levels, including a quarterly strategic partnership board and a monthly JVC Board meeting. In July 2006, it was confirmed that Service Birmingham would support additional transformation programmes focused on Corporate Services and on 21 May 2007 the business case for a new programme to transform Customer Services was approved. The Corporate Services transformation programme has already saved the Council £9.5m and is due to generate savings of £800m over 10 years. The new Customer Services programme aims to transform the way the Council interacts with its citizens and stakeholders, both to increase customer satisfaction and support increased investment in front line service delivery.

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