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SOLUTIONS

Case Study: Lancashire Constabulary

Automation removes transactional friction and delivers immediate cost benefit of £45K.

Overview

Lancashire Police Complaints unit operates within the Professional Standards department.

The Complaints unit is responsible for processing and arbitrating on complaints against members of the force, as such it delivers a very important service and the timeliness of complaint outcomes and the effort taken to reach the right conclusions are very important issues.

They are also responsible for recording and reporting complaint data and submitting this to the Independent Police Complaints Commission. Through this their performance against previous years and how they compare to other police authorities is measured and reported.

Because of this there is an ongoing need to handle complaints correctly and in a timely manner whilst trying to closely manage case progression and resource usage.

Lancashire Police are governed by regulations issued by the Home Office and guidance issued by the IPCC. Any system has to be flexible and configurable to adapt accordingly whenever regulatory changes are implemented.

Business Challenge

Lancashire Police reached a point where requirement was outstripping the



**Lancashire
Constabulary**
police and communities together

capability of the existing system which was deemed not fit for purpose with poor case management and no diary management capability. Lancashire Police were looking for an alternative process management solution which delivered real process management capability.

It was identified internally the existing process was in itself complex and that complexity would only increase. It was also identified that the present solution was very dependent on manual input and resource heavy in the management of each complaint. Any solution chosen would also have to satisfy requirements not only at that specific time but also be able to cope with an evolving requirement scope and have the flexibility to accommodate and reflect this.

The Search

Additional capacity and functionality for upgrading the existing system was not an option and on this basis it was decided to approach the market to look at a totally new solution.

There were no obvious solution providers at this point and even a peer review with other police forces failed to convince Lancashire police to adopt a solution used by many of them. Lancashire took the decision to review the market place independently and drove this forward with a clear idea of what they were looking for.

Shortlisting

The next step was to issue a tender. Following a rigorous shortlisting process Flovate were chosen over three other vendors as the chosen provider.

Solution

A solution was defined based on a combination of capability to deliver the required automation, plus competitive pricing.

A number of key deliverables were identified as follows;

- No duplication of input data
- All relevant information captured up front
- User configurable
- Comprehensive report writing
- Automatic data validation
- Remote access
- User auto prompts
- Performance management capability
- Diary management capability

These were identified as key elements for inclusion in the first solution delivery and as such were incorporated into the solution as specified in the initial consultative period.

Flovate focused on the 20% of the solution that delivered 80% of the benefit. By doing so it was able to deliver maximum benefit for the least impact and use of resource. Reduction of length of elapsed time (from start to finish of a complaint) and resource taken to deliver complaint conclusions were two key outcomes for Lancashire police.

Business Benefits

The Flovate solution has had a big impact on improving service levels and by default the satisfaction of the complainants.

Correct and complete data capture and entry at the front end of the process is vital, this has been driven by Flovate. Because of this Lancashire Police have been able to focus on those complaints that are resource hungry. More routine complaints have a high degree of automation in the process and require less manual intervention. The Flovate solution has also removed a high degree of transactional friction by moving the process to automated management of electronic documentation. The impact of this is shown not only in the complaint handing team but also in the investigations team where big efficiency gains were made. Today, the solution has put an end to handwritten minutes, paper filing, the need to retrieve paper files and to physically post case documents. The exact cost benefit of this is difficult but the best and agreed calculation of this is in excess of £50 saving per case. Based on an average annual case load of 810 this equates to an additional cost benefit of £40,500 pa.

By addressing these critical issues via the Flovate solution, Lancashire Police was able to initially reduce its case worker numbers by 36%. The immediate cost benefit of this was £45,000 giving an up front ROI of two years.

Through a combination of direct head count reduction and process handling efficiency gain the annual cost benefit is excess of £65,000 after upgrade costs and annual fees have been deducted.

The 80/20 rule was constantly applied to all aspects of the process and solution where possible and on this basis continued improvement has been achieved. ■