



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Case Study: Wokingham Borough Council

Iken Case Management is supporting ongoing efficiency gains for Wokingham Legal Services

Situated in South-East England and serving a steadily growing community, Wokingham Borough Council is a forward-thinking authority which aims to create “a great place to live and work” through excellent service delivery and continuous improvement.

This ethos is reflected in the goals of Wokingham’s busy Legal Services team, as Legal Services Manager Colin Lawley explains.

“Our objective is to provide a high quality legal service to members and other departments, at the lowest possible cost. We give legal advice to almost all the departments within the Council, and as we are a unitary authority this can be on a huge range of matters. The challenge lies in performing this function to the best of our ability, whilst working as economically and efficiently as we can.”

For the past five years, the Legal Services team has been using Iken Case Management and Time Recording software to support them in meeting this challenge. Valued by the team for its flexibility, Iken’s role in the work of the department has diversified as they have identified new ways to put the system to use.

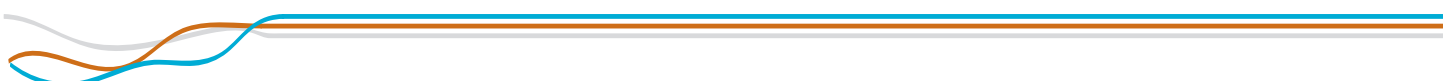
“Exploring Iken’s potential has been a gradual process, and each year we’ve become more and more impressed as we’ve realised how we can use it.”

As the department begins its sixth year using the software, Colin explains the ways in which Iken has benefitted the legal function so far.

“Iken lets us access the most up-to-date information in moments”

Prior to implementing Iken, the legal team’s work was primarily paper-based, meaning information retrieval could be time-consuming. Iken stores all types of documents and emails in a central electronic location and, as all documentation is automatically indexed according to multiple criteria at the point of production, finding the relevant information is straightforward.

“We often receive queries which need to be answered quickly, such as enquiries from councillors engaged on urgent public matters. If we were relying on paper we might have to search all over the office for the information, but with Iken we can find out the latest position in moments. This saves a lot of time, and makes us much more efficient.”



“We are more resilient to staff absence”

For busy council departments, providing an effective service even when staff are away from the office can be challenging, particularly if a professional's most recent work is held on a local drive or in a private filing cabinet. With Iken, all documentation relating to a case is readily available to the appropriate team members, helping the Wokingham legal team to pick up work smoothly on behalf of absent colleagues.

“The amount of administrative work is significantly reduced”

Iken automatically populates documents with frequently used information, such as names, addresses and document references. When combined with a library of precedents and templates, this has considerably reduced the time spent by the legal team on administrative tasks, allowing them to devote more resource to their large and varied legal workload.

“Like most organisations in the current climate, we have to work to a tight budget with limited staffing resources. We therefore have to work as efficiently as possible to ensure that people have sufficient time to get the legal work done. Iken does cut down on a lot of the administrative work, which definitely helps.”

“Iken Time Recording helps us justify charging and expenditure”

When looking for a technological solution to their business challenges, Colin and his team were keen to implement a more sophisticated time recording system to allow them to report accurately on time spent on different cases and activities.

As well as enabling professionals to create detailed time records with a minimum of extra administrative work, Iken Time Recording features a suite of reports which makes interpreting this data straightforward.

“As a team, we are required to justify our costs to other departments within the council, and we also need to be able to bill external clients accurately. Iken has really helped us do this, and we couldn't imagine being without it now!”

“Iken always has further potential”

When asked whether, after five years, Iken has reached its full potential within the council, Colin responds:

“Probably not – I'm sure that there's more that the system can do, and Iken is an integral part of our approach to continuous improvement. One of the next things to look at is how we can use Iken to support flexible working, as I believe that the amount of home working is likely to increase considerably in future. The system's been hugely beneficial so far, and there's no doubt it's here to stay.”

For more information on Iken Solutions for Public Sector Legal teams, visit our website: www.iken.biz/publiclegal or call us on: 0845 450 9201 (0117 373 0790)