

Sandwell increases efficiency through CMIS

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is situated in the West Midlands and serves approximately 280,000 citizens through its approximately 8,245 employees.

Sir Peter Gershon issued a report in 2004 which outlined how Local Government should release major resources from activities that could be undertaken more efficiently into front line services that meet the public's highest priorities.

The Gershon report required Councils to achieve 2.5% per annum efficiency gains on their 2004/05 baseline, of which at least half should be cashable. By 2007/08, efficiency gains equivalent to 7.5% of the baseline should be achieved.

Gershon efficiencies are specific improvements to delivery processes and resource utilisation that achieve:

- Reduced numbers of inputs whilst maintaining the same level of service provision;
- Lower prices for the resources needed to provide public services;
- Additional outputs for the same level of inputs;
- Improved ratios of output per unit cost of input;
- Changing the balance between different outputs to deliver a similar overall objective in a way which achieves a greater overall output for the same inputs.

CMIS allowed Sandwell to attain point two of the Gershon efficiencies as printing and distribution costs were immediately reduced. This was achieved as members, officers, employees and citizens were provided with immediate electronic access to the vast amount of information contained within CMIS significantly reducing needs for hard copies.

Additionally CMIS allows email notifications to provide e-democracy issues to be accessed at home, work or public access points and allows electronic delivery of press packs to the media. All these features have produced printing and distribution savings in the region of £30,000 per annum.

Additional outputs for the same inputs were achieved at Sandwell as CMIS brings a more transparent and dynamic method of working for all officers who contribute to and interact with the Democratic Services discipline. By streamlining and effectively managing the end to end flow of information Sandwell are now able to provide higher quality and a greater volume of output for the same effort. CMIS, through publishing information on the internet and distributing this electronically provides "real-time access" to documents.

The need for duplication of effort within the Democratic Services

process is now eliminated, with CMIS providing efficiency gains that support the 'allocative efficiencies' for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. CMIS therefore supports Sandwell in releasing major resources from activities that could be undertaken more efficiently into front line services in order to meet the public's highest priorities.

"CMIS is the type of system which once seen sells itself but what clinches the deal for me is the commitment given to the customer by Enline plc in establishing a national user group to support the local authorities who use CMIS to continue to be at the forefront of the e-government revolution" Dave Haywood, Governance Services Manager (Democracy), Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and Chair of the CMIS User Group.



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