

Maintaining excellent performance



Client

Worcestershire County Council serves a population of nearly 550,000 people in central England. Its Adult and Community Services department supports over 13,000 adults every year.

Goals

- ◆ Maintain the council's excellent record in the delivery of care
- ◆ Improve the availability of data for performance reporting
- ◆ Ensure the accuracy of data used in performance reporting

Charteris' Role

- ◆ Advise and educate staff about performance reporting
- ◆ Automate the collection of data for performance reporting
- ◆ Verify the data in Frameworki

Results

- ◆ High level of service delivery maintained, despite the wide-ranging system changes
- ◆ Data accuracy and data collection methods improved
- ◆ Project completed ahead of schedule and under budget

When Worcestershire County Council implemented a new case management system, it had to be absolutely certain that the reports it generated were accurate and complete. If not, this information would adversely affect its performance indicators. The council appointed Charteris to help it review its performance reporting, and the project was completed ahead of schedule and under budget.

Worcestershire County Council is justly proud of its record for delivering high quality care for adults in the community. As part of a programme to further improve its services, the council had just gone live with a new case management system, called Frameworki, from Corelogic, within its Adults and Community Services department. The implementation had gone fairly smoothly. However, there was a real concern internally that the council's performance statistics might fall in the first few months, while staff got used to inputting and extracting data using the new system.

All councils are required to supply performance statistics to the Government to help citizens see how well their local council is meeting their needs. It was therefore very important to Worcestershire County Council to ensure that its performance information accurately reflected the high standards of customer service and quality of care provided to residents in Worcestershire.

"We are committed to delivering the best possible quality of service," explains Jenny Bashforth, Director of Adult and Community Services. "Performance information is helpful in showing our service users that we put their care and our quality of service at the very top of our agenda. If any data inaccuracies occurred following the implementation of the new system, we were concerned that this might send out the wrong message to our service users."

Worcestershire County Council had enjoyed positive experience of working with Charteris in the past. It therefore asked the firm to validate the data from Frameworki, to ensure its accuracy, and also advise the council about how best to collect and compile data for performance reporting.

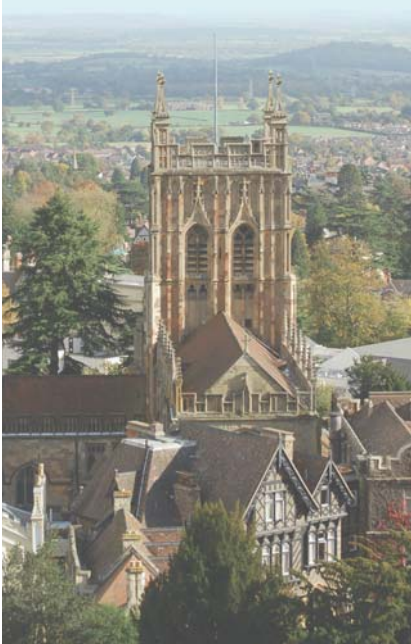
Paul Ellwood is an implementation consultant within the Adults and Community Projects Team. He says: "In many respects, it was a confidence issue. Frameworki was very new to us, and we couldn't afford to make any mistakes with the data."





“In terms of the benefit to the business, Charteris has been very good value for money.”

Jenny Bashforth,
Director of Adult and
Community Services,
Worcestershire County Council



Cutting through the complexity

Charteris had a lot of experience in this field, and worked closely with the Information and Performance Management group, as well as other IT and project team members. “Charteris was very knowledgeable and quickly gained the respect and confidence of everyone,” recalls Ellwood. “The consultants worked well as part of our team.”

Charteris quickly established that actually only a very small number of the Government performance indicators were affected by the introduction of Frameworki. With their thorough knowledge of council performance reporting, the consultants were able to help the council gain a much deeper understanding about which particular datasets were required and how they needed to be compiled. Ellwood explains: “Performance reporting within councils is inevitably very complex. Charteris has a lot of very specific knowledge about how performance indicators are constructed and really helped us gain clarity.”

Frameworki automatically generates data for reports, but the council needed to have confidence in the figures that were being produced by the new system. To address this issue, Charteris worked with council employees to verify the data in Frameworki and ensure that it was accurate. “Our Frameworki reports are now spot on,” says Ellwood. “We have every confidence that the data returned is correct and are now very clear about how the reports are produced.”

As part of the process of generating performance reports, Worcestershire County Council needed to compile data from a range of different sources – not just Frameworki. Charteris was able to use Microsoft technology that the council already had in-house to build a bespoke

programme for automatically compiling the required data. “We effectively now have the figures we need at the push of a button!” says Ellwood. “A data collection process that used to take us three weeks at the end of each year can now be accomplished in a few days.”

This time-saving enables employees within the Information and Performance Management group to work much more strategically. “Instead of report writing and report creating, the team can now immediately see the data that it needs and instead invest time in analysing and using the data.”

Delivering good value for money

The migration to Frameworki meant a big change for large numbers of staff. Inevitably some people had difficulties adjusting at first, but the outlook is now very positive. “Charteris helped us to overcome a number of misconceptions and concerns, and the majority of staff use the solution really effectively,” says Ellwood.

As Director of the department, Bashforth monitored the progress of the project very closely – and she is pleased with the result. “Charteris has played a very important role in helping Worcestershire County Council to embed its new case management system and streamline its performance reporting. The firm is very capable and professional and actually completed the project more quickly and at a lower cost than we had anticipated. In terms of the benefit to the business, Charteris has been very good value for money.”

She concludes: “In a year when we installed a completely new case management system across the entire department, our performance information continued to reflect the high standards of service that we deliver. That’s a significant achievement.”

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Business specialists who speak IT
IT experts who think business



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