

OVERVIEW

Historically a difficult task for councillors, managing casework underwent a digital modernization in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council with the help of govService. The portal developed for Sandwell helped councillors be more responsive to requests and became quickly popular with residents.

SITUATION | A DIGITAL, BUT SLOW, PROCESS

Doing the important work of representing ward constituent needs is a vital duty of any ward councillor. For Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, however, relying on email systems to raise and advance resident issues to ensure positive the outcomes prosper across various social and economic issues created bottlenecks. This relied on councillors knowing who to contact and other institutional knowledge that created a disadvantage to those new or less experienced councillors looking to work efficiently.

SOLUTION | A PORTAL TO MEET MODERN NEEDS

As part of an effort to modernise management of this casework, officers from the Council's Digital Transformation and Civic & Member Services teams worked with govService to create the "MyCouncillor Port." This secure environment provides a hub through which councillors can manage casework with easy access to a range of useful council and partner information.

Furthermore, the platform works seamlessly with "MySandwell," the council's online resident portal, also powered by govService. This integrated digital service channel allows councillors to report problems in their wards proactively or on behalf of constituents and be kept updated on the outcome

RESULTS | FASTER RESPONSE, IMPROVED RELATIONS

Since its launch, the system has provided new data insights to help the council understand the operational significance of customer contact and review operational practices across all departments. Data showed that the portal had improved the support offered to residents and supported councillors in brokering the best outcomes for them in the most efficient way available.

Councillors are now better able to understand which services generate the most contact from customers via their local councillors, allowing them to review how this is resourced and managed in a way previously not available.

As well there has been an increase in digital confidence and skills across the ward councillor group with over 12,000 items of casework and a reduction in the average response time to a councillor enquiry decreased from 13 days in 2021 to 8 days in 2022. The portal has also opened potential opportunities for using big data to achieve the council's broader goals.



MUST HAVE SOLUTION

govService

METRICS



FOI casework responses from 2,536 in 2019-20 to 5,486 in 2021-22



Over 12,000 items of casework processed by 82 councillors



Response time reduced by 5 days from 2021 to 2022