

## Northamptonshire Achieve Efficiencies with CMIS

Northamptonshire lies at the southernmost edge of the East Midlands region bordering eight other Council authorities. Northamptonshire County Council is the largest single organisation operating within the county, providing more than a hundred different services and employing almost 12,000 people. The Council's purpose is to serve the people and communities of Northamptonshire, making sure they get the priority services that they need and make a real difference to their lives.

### The Problem

Northamptonshire County Council were spending a vast amount of money distributing hard copy democratic documents to a wide audience. They sought to cut back on this expenditure by publishing documents online.

The Council recognised that by making democratic information available online they would also be able to provide a more effective means of communicating and accessing democratic documentation. Information would then be engaged in a more up to date, dynamic, interactive and manageable manner encouraging public engagement in the democratic process.

Northamptonshire were lacking a democratic services process which was visible to both councillors and the public. They required an improved process which was visible to all from one mutual location.

A number of the Council's key committee processes were lacking consistency in agenda management and report production.

Northamptonshire County Council identified a need to put into place core processes within the management of these processes to ensure efficiency, structure and consistency to aid ease of use for new staff.

### The Solution

It was decided a committee management system was required. Following a review of all products on the market, and consideration of developing their own system, Northamptonshire County Council selected CMIS from Enline plc as the best fit solution to address their business case.

An implementation plan between the Council and Enline was agreed at the start of the project. The delivery of the implementation ran accordingly and the live system was fully installed on schedule.

Robin Parr, Head of Democratic Services at Northamptonshire County Council stated "Enline have been excellent at helping us address issues as we uncover them and have attended on site to provide additional training days as we have needed them."

CMIS now manages the democratic process and framework and has developed operational efficiency and effectiveness whilst working in line with current legislation. Committee agenda and minute information are

now simply published via the Council's internet site.

CMIS also allows citizens the option to review and comment directly on the Council's forward plans and gain feedback.

### The Benefits

Members and citizens alike can access information from home, work or any public access point (for example local libraries) within Security parameters set by the Council.

CMIS has provided more opportunity to involve the public in the democratic process within viewing activities and participating in events. The simplicity of the system has encouraged public engagement further.

Northamptonshire County Council have been impressed with how easy the website is to use and how simple the system enables administering of the democratic process.

"We have received many comments from officers, members and the public about how easy it now is to find the information they need"  
Robin Parr, Head of Democratic Services at Northamptonshire County Council.

The Council have recognised the potential CMIS provides them within increasing sustainability due to a majority of printing needs being replaced with electronic agendas, minutes and reports. This has

provided the Council with a more environmentally friendly process and has contributed to an efficient document retrieval system as well as a good return on investment.

#### Future Plans

Sitting neatly within the Council's existing IT infrastructure CMIS is

flexible enough to fit into their future IT plans.

Northamptonshire County Council are still rolling out the full functionality of the system, but have plans to discuss with Enline plc ways of using the system to publicise their "empowering Councillors scheme". In time they also plan to reduce duplication of effort

further through streamlining other processes.

As the Council are still in the early days of working with the solution they will in the future be utilising the CMIS user group and contributing to developing the system in line with evolving requirements.



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