

AGMA Collaborative Efficiency Programme



Delivering Improvements and Efficiencies with a Collaborative HR & Payroll System

Background

SWiTch is one of the largest, collaborative efficiency projects currently being undertaken in Greater Manchester. Trafford, Stockport and Wigan have jointly procured and are about to implement a new HR and Payroll system creating a 'virtual' IT network across Manchester. The project aims to achieve efficiency savings of £2.2m in the first 2 years with the potential for that figure to increase should other authorities/partner organisations decide to join the project.

Key Aims

- Implement an single HR / payroll system
- Joint management of resources and shared skills
- Design, implement and embed more efficient processes using Systems Thinking approach
- Give managers and employees ownership of personal data via self service options
- Realise financial and non financial benefits

The Process

The current systems were outdated and inflexible and not fit for purpose, several

options were evaluated before deciding on MidlandHR's single iTrent solution as the system of choice, while allowing authorities to maintain services in-house. Procurement of the iTrent system is now complete. It will be hosted by Wigan Council and operate on three separate databases creating a Greater Manchester virtual network that other authorities and organisations could utilise in the future. The implementation which is one of the largest in the country will handle the HR and payroll records for over 30,000 employees.

Steve Houston Stockport's Corporate Director, Business Services and chair and the SWiTch Programme Board, said 'over the last 2 years we have been working in a collaborative partnership to exploit the savings that can be achieved through joined up working. Savings of around 260k were realised as a result of the joint procurement exercise. A significant amount of work has already been undertaken to get us to this stage and the programme has the potential to fundamentally change the way in which HR/payroll services are delivered in Stockport, Wigan and Trafford and potentially across Greater Manchester'

Iain Moffat, Director at MidlandHR explains: "We are delighted to be working

in partnership with the SWITch project to provide HR and Payroll services to Trafford, Stockport and Wigan. The iTrent solution provides a single centralised platform for strategic HR across Greater Manchester, enabling the authorities to benefit from the latest web based technology and the most efficient operating model. We have already supported a number of customers with the process of building an effective and efficient shared service and look forward to the iTrent solution going live with the three authorities realising the true efficiency, savings, process improvements and workforce benefits of this solution.”

Systems Thinking

Crucial to the success of the overall project is the development of new ways of working. Systems Thinking methodology is being used to fundamentally change the way services are being delivered and provide improved performance.

This element of the project is integral to the implementation of the new IT system, ensuring it supports effective and efficient service delivery.

NWIEP funding

NWIEP funding of £490k has been granted and will be used to set up the Programme Office which will be based at Stockport and will be fully operational by July 2010. This will complement the operational teams involved in the implementation programme in each of the three authorities.

Implementation is split into two phases – phase 1 is the core HR/payroll system and will go live in 2011. Phase 2 is the Manager and Employee Self Service functionality due to complete in March 2012.

Key Lessons Learnt

During the course of the project the team have identified several lessons learnt that are key when working collaboratively with other authorities to ensure success:-

- Strong Governance
- Realism about achievable savings
- Strong project planning and management
- Shared goals and objectives and a clear vision
- Consultation and engagement with key stakeholders

Benefits of Implementing the Programme

Will include:

- Potential to deliver HR/Payroll services in new and innovative ways
- Continued IT efficiencies through a shared hardware platform and discounted software licence costs
- Shared systems administration resource, consistent system management and system development to support ongoing processing efficiencies
- Increased use of workflow to support administration of employee benefits and records management
- Improved access to manager/employee self service administration
- Opportunities for skill sharing across authorities
- Reducing hard copy payslip costs

For more information on the project please contact Chris Hudsmith (Trafford) on 0161 912 4251; Sharon Stanley (Wigan) on 1061; or Julie Lowe (Stockport) on 0161 218 1433