

Dacorum Borough Council

Realises £100,000 of Resource savings and builds long lasting positive relationship using Capacitygrid's Anytime Service.

Overview

Dacorum Borough Council is a Non-metropolitan district council that provides services to around 140000 people across 25 different wards in the county of Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire is one of the Home Counties in Southern England and it is bordered by Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire to the North, Essex to the East, Buckinghamshire to the West and Greater London to the South. The county is well-served with motorways and train lines providing good access to London. The largest sector of the economy is in services and the county is home to the headquarters or major production facilities for many large well-known UK companies. The main town and administrative centre for Dacorum Borough Council is Hemel Hempstead.



The challenge – why help was needed

In 2012 Dacorum's Benefit department found that experienced assessment staff were leaving and it was proving difficult recruiting candidates of sufficient quality. For longer term planning they had recruited 5 apprentices and so in the short term required some good quality, experienced assessors to maintain productivity and to offset the loss of experienced staff committed to training and developing the apprentices. The area was still feeling the effects

of the recession, with their HB caseload peaking in August 2012 and with growing pressure to improve performance (new claims processing times had regularly exceeded 30 days on average). Dacorum had previously relied on temporary and agency staff for a number of years but they had often proved to be expensive, difficult to source and often of poor quality. Ultimately this resulted in inconsistent performance and backlogs of work.

Why Liberata

Dacorum's Benefit department had already been using the CapacityGrid performance toolkit to help monitor staff productivity and accuracy and there was therefore an existing positive and professional relationship. A particular selling point of CapacityGrid was the fact that they line managed their own staff, removing a burden on management resources that had existed when we utilised temps and agency staff. This allowed the department to focus management time on improving performance. Similarly a big positive was the fact that CapacityGrid conducted their own quality checking in addition to our own, giving the client confidence in the accuracy of the work being carried out and providing the balance between productivity and accuracy they had not always experienced previously by other resourcing means. CapacityGrid provided a service that was both flexible and cost effective.

The outcome

We have continued to work together due to the high standard of work, value for money and good relationship. Assessors consistently perform to the highest level and where any performance issues do arise, they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. We have established excellent communication with CapacityGrid, resulting in day to day work running with little effort. CapacityGrid gives us the flexibility we require to manage peaks and troughs in work – something we had previously struggled with. Being able to flex this resource up and down within a couple of weeks means that we can manage the service performance with greater confidence. For example, the recent pandemic resulted in our workload doubling overnight, however we were able to reduce the impact of this by immediately flexing up the resources available to us. Although HB caseload has fallen significantly over the last 18 months, much of this work (if not more) has been replaced by increased UC related work for our CTR cases. Therefore, it has been important to us to maintain resources in order to cope with this.

"Levels of performance have been high with accuracy and productivity comparable to our own staff. During our time working with CapacityGrid, we have improved our performance – the contribution being the flexibility of resource creating consistency in work outstanding and processing times. The flexible resource has meant that we have been able to make savings through not replacing staff who have left – we have been able to use the resources available in a more intelligent way. This also offers us protection going forward as UC reduces our HB caseload. Savings have been excess of £100,000 over the last 3 years."

Matt Kelly, Benefits Team Leader, Dacorum Borough Council

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