Supporting services to become a more data-driven council

Customer: *East Riding of Yorkshire Council*

"This project has created an opportunity and a springboard to bring together in one place important data and information about our most vulnerable children and young people which can be used to inform service planning and service delivery"

Paul Elliot, Head of Service for Participation, Innovation & Improvement

East Riding of Yorkshire Council was looking to become a more data-driven council to make insight-led decisions that improve service delivery, particularly in social care.

The council had identified two key areas for improvement:

- **Systems**: Business systems relating to children's services were largely 'on-premise' and not joined up, this meant it was difficult to see the bigger picture surrounding data - for example what made someone in their community vulnerable? They needed a single view of their residents, and data that was accurate and reliable to make near real-time decisions on the ground - as well as saving time manually inputting data.

- **Skills:** The need for better data in children's social care was also being driven by Ofsted, and whilst the council had implemented a new social care system, reporting and predictive views still need improvement. Skills in data engineering and modelling were also required.

Our brief and *project goals*

Socitm Advisory was engaged to support a data maturity assessment and delivery of some proof of concept data development work including introducing a cloud-based data platform into the organisation:

- To evaluate the council's data systems to they could use and share data more effectively

- To deliver a practical strategy and recommendations from the findings as to how they could move forward with using data in their organisation

- Build two proofs of concept to demonstrate the value

Overall, the objective was to be able to manage, report on, distribute and share data much more seamlessly than they had been doing. This was addressed through the lens of how to better understand and identify factors that made a person vulnerable.

"I gained insight of what can improve the way we work and how we can turn our data into intelligence that supports service delivery"

Kate Jagger, Performance Team Leader (Children's)

⚠ Biggest challenges

Moving to a cloud data platform: Prior to this project, the council's systems were largely 'on-premise', so new infrastructure in Microsoft Azure was required. The move to the cloud was a big change to the way many people in the council were used to working which needed significant support to be successful.

Sustained period of change: Projects like this take time to get live. The two proof of concepts took 12 weeks alone to build, and that was after a period of assessment, analysis, design, review, and agreement for the work. So the partnership between Socitm Advisory, its partners Simpson Associates and East Riding of Yorkshire has been a sustained one, and it has taken focus, strong communication and engagement to ensure the wider project team stayed focused and motivated on the project.

Our approach

Socitm Advisory's consultants worked with the team at East Riding of Yorkshire Council to understand the challenges they currently faced and put together a bespoke package of work.

Initially, we delivered a data maturity assessment, followed by the co-design of a practical data strategy and target data operating model that considered business performance and intelligence as well as data.

Next, we provided a data road map for the council, with a specific focus upon children's and adults' social care and then, in conjunction with Simpsons Associates, we built two proof of concepts (POCs).

These were about bringing together data from multiple data sets to present insights and demonstrate the value of new ways of working collaboratively on data and modern cloud technologies for accelerating and enabling advanced capabilities.

For children's, the POC presented service leads and locality teams with intuitive visualisations and insights into vulnerability factors across social care and education, matching records of children and young people from multiple sources to give a single view of those factors to ensure the right support is in place and resources can be planned effectively. This also lays the foundations for moving toward things like predictive analysis and earlier intervention.

In adults', it was about combining package costs and involvement information to show a joined-up model of complexity, initially with a focus on learning disability, mental health,

dementia, and autism cohorts to identify indicators of complexity and risk, again to allow pro-active interventions and resource planning, with a view to understanding future demand and how the market can be shaped.

Finally, Socitm Advisory created a detailed recommendations report for the Corporate Leadership Team, with the project team's vision to roll-out a tailored operating model, active data management, new ways of working collaboratively, and modern data platform capabilities across the council to ensure a 'One Council' data culture.

> "Socitm Advisory understands local authorities, and their insight from other organisations has been invaluable. We would not have succeeded with this project to date without their expertise. Nothing has been too much trouble, and the team have been very flexible to us. I hope this is the beginning of our journey with Socitm Advisory"
>
> **Kat Taylor,** Digital Facilitator

Outcomes and benefits

East Riding is looking to take the proof of concepts into a trial phase, before implementing the work across other council departments. Council staff have been upskilled with Socitm Advisory consultants embedding themselves into the council, so that knowledge has been transferred and the council's staff owns skills and capabilities have been developed.

> Setting and communicating a clear purpose helps manage and achieve expectations