Braintree District Council

Developing a digital framework that drives citizen engagement and improves end-to-end efficiency

"Our long-term relationship with Idox has meant they've built up a really good knowledge of the Council and our needs – they listen to us and are willing to deliver bespoke solutions."

**Cherie Root
Corporate Director
Braintree District Council**

Challenge: Implementing the right technology to support a three-tiered digital strategy

With an ambition to continually develop its service delivery, Braintree District Council was keen to implement new technology that would allow it to better accommodate both internal and external needs and expectations.

Reducing costs, consolidating services and minimising manual, paper-heavy processes were all key objectives, as well as a desire to deliver a digital strategy focused on: a digital council, a digital customer and a digital district. Ultimately, the strategic aims were to ensure both staff and citizens could work and access information far easier than before, with the Council's own internal workflows running more cost-effectively and efficiently.

Solution: An integrated suite of services designed to save and streamline

The Council partnered with Idox more than 20 years ago and the team has been working closely ever since, establishing a robust, digital infrastructure that offers the flexibility, scalability and usability required to evolve in line with business and citizen need and demand.

The Council's suite of front and back-end services include:

» **Uniform** – powering several core processes across departments, including Planning, Building Control and Licensing

» **EDRMS** – for secure and efficient document management, removing paper filing, reducing costs and boosting productivity by facilitating the timely retrieval and sharing of documentation

» **Local Land Charges** – automating land and property processes and improving response times

» **Public Access** – enabling 24/7 online citizen access to local planning and licensing applications

Cherie Root, Corporate Director at Braintree District Council said: "We use Idox in most of our Council departments. It's given us a real critical mass to help us reduce duplication, improve data accuracy and drive efficiency across the organisation."

"We are improving our processes around administration and using Idox to do that through improved workflow, better document management and better integration with services which reduces the need for the staff in the back office to undertake cumbersome processes. This will reduce costs and will essentially free them up to add more value to the customer."

Cherie Root
Corporate Director
Braintree District Council

As Idox services provide end-to-end solutions, the Council has been able to consolidate and streamline internal workflows and put integrated technology in place for true back-end efficiency. The Idox solutions have also offered citizens an easier, quicker way to access information and complete transactions and service activities and requests at the other end of the process. Given each Council department has slightly different needs, each module and service is customised, with collaboration and frequent patches and upgrades ensuring that the Council now benefits from a fully-functional, fit-for-purpose and futureproof system that runs efficiently across the board.

Cherie continues: "It means that in the back office, we are improving our administration processes and using Idox to improve workflow, better manage documents and better integrate our services. All this reduces cumbersome processes for our back office staff reducing costs and freeing them up to better help our customers.

"We wanted to become more mobile and flexible in the way that we work, helping us to improve our efficiency and process performance, while making more services available online and looking at where we can reduce costs. We also wanted to focus on how we can improve services for customers, making it easier to find things, easier to use and encouraging our district to interact with us and each other more digitally."

Outcome: Improving citizen satisfaction, enhancing accuracy and boosting productivity

With the support of Idox, the Council has built a strong digital base on which to develop.

Cherie comments: "Each different piece of technology has offered us a different benefit. For example, the Land Charges System has removed duplication of records, so it's improved efficiency and accuracy in the service and made life a lot easier for the staff. With Public Access, it's been much more about improving usability for our customers and that's been a key driver for us all the way along. It's improved the service for them because it means they can access information 24/7.

"We've also had good feedback via our customer satisfaction surveys about our website, including how residents can easily access planning applications online thanks to the Idox software."

And the Council is already looking to the future at how it can continue its successful partnership with Idox, and introduce mobile working through app technology and tablets.

"By working with Idox, we can help get staff out and about more using tablets", explains Cherie. "This will ensure our planners, building control inspectors, landscape architects and many others can access the information they need on-the-move.

"As part of the launch of our new Digital Strategy we invited some of our key partners including Idox to come along for the day and show staff what is possible through the use of technology. Our long-term relationship has meant they've built up a really good knowledge of the Council and our needs – they listen to us and are willing to deliver bespoke solutions. The quality of their products is excellent and their customer service and flexibility is very good."

For more information please visit **www.idoxgroup.com**, call **0870 333 7101** or email **marketing@idoxgroup.com**.

www.idoxgroup.com