

Based in the West Midlands and covering eight other local authority areas, the legal team at Staffordshire County Council is responsible for a broad practice area. Managing legal work from commercial property to child care the team needed a system to help them make savings and support their Lexcel compliance.

“The reason we wanted a case management system was to become more Lexcel compliant and make sure that fee earners could follow Lexcel processes. The use of court bundling and the time and money we could save by reducing our use of paper were also contributing factors.

We went out to tender and Iken was thought to be the most productive and efficient system and so we decided to procure Iken for the legal team.

Our biggest challenge is the ever increasing demand to generate income. We have become a commissioning authority so we are selling our services.

Due to the financial climate we've lost the privilege of only having internal clients and unless we expand our external client base we could face an uncertain future. It's a new challenge but we're already generating an external income by winning tenders for work with other public sector organisations.

We wanted to use Iken as a catalyst for transforming Legal Services into a cutting edge modern legal team. Using Iken has allowed us to update Legal Services and then promote our selling services across the public sector. It was part of our drive for the project known as the Modern 21st Century Legal Department.

One of the main benefits of Iken is the time recording. We use it to report on whether people's targets are being met and to drive their performance by using Iken generated workload reviews and file audits. We can be really clear now about achieving targets.

Recharging is completely transparent and much easier for clients to understand, which assists in supporting our income generation.

We want to be an excellent legal team and Iken has supercharged our ability to do this.

We've used Iken as a gateway to promote home working and flexible working patterns for all of our staff.

Iken supports the significant increase we've seen in the number of people working from home because everyone has central access to Iken, the offices are far quieter which means less office space is required.

Iken has also enabled us to introduce paperless files. The child care team no longer require their hard copy correspondence files as they can remote into Iken to access their documents while they are at court, so paper files are now a thing of the past. Our storage requirements have dramatically reduced with the lack of paper files which has resulted in significant cost savings because our documents are all held in Iken, therefore we don't need to buy archiving facilities.

“Iken helps us maintain Lexcel standards”

The biggest benefit of Iken is definitely how it supports our Lexcel compliance and assists with the important task of mapping our processes. The Iken reporting facility also identifies areas of risk for monitoring.

Iken workflows can be used to ensure that basic, but compulsory, tasks are being completed by producing simple reports. It is possible to check who isn't completing risk or conflict checks, if anyone is not using essential key dates and if files haven't been worked on for three or more months by the fee earner. As a direct result of using workflows our file audits are being completed more quickly and any problem areas can be readily identified. Standardising our transactions has helped to improve the quality of our legal work, reduce risks and cut costs.

Iken has led to the re-engineering of the business support function in Legal Services, improving business administration and maximizing efficient support for our busy fee earners.

We also have bespoke training workflows identifying all training received and all information recorded, including the amount of CPD points accredited."

“We'll keep up with the Courts”

Iken Court Bundling will be a contributing factor to reducing the level of resources we dedicate to preparing and managing court bundles. It will assist us in reducing non-chargeable time spent manually paginating, as well as reducing our paper costs and printing charges. Automating the compiling, storage and creation of our documents for court bundles will help to maximise our efficiency and the reliability of the bundles we produce.

We are determined to get on board with the HMCTS electronic bundles pilot and make this a success. We are extremely focused in achieving our vision of not just being a paper-lite office but succeeding in becoming a paperless office in the very near future."

If any problems arise the Iken support desk offers dedicated support and assistance. They are extremely helpful and experts at resolving any issues you may have. I personally have found this to be an excellent form of support.

I have always found the User and Focus Groups arranged by Iken beneficial and well worth taking the time to attend. User groups are also an ideal opportunity to network with other Iken users, to let your voice be heard and to find out about what Iken are planning for the future. I would definitely recommend attending these groups!

For more information please call
08448 933 910
or fill in a contact form on our website.

www.iken.co.uk



Iken Business Ltd
3rd Floor, Suite B One Georges Square
Bath Street, Bristol BS1 6BA



Trading name of SN Registrars (Holdings) Ltd



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