



## Case Study: Smarter Ways of Working Southampton City Council

The Southampton & Fareham Legal Partnership started to look at smarter ways of working in 2014. With a highly varied workload, including adult and children social care, corporate, information law, environment and property, litigation and procurement, our in-house legal department had many different needs from a system.

After researching which case management systems were relevant for us, we invited five technology providers to present their solutions. Several legal specialist technology providers had offered their services, but Iken seemed to be the best fit for a local government in-house legal department. We decided to make an investment in Iken, knowing that the savings made over the course of the next few years would offset the upfront payment.

### Sarita Riley

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#### The Challenge

Managing our case work was challenging before we began using Iken. Everything was stored on network drives and filed in different places. We relied on colleagues being in the office to transfer knowledge, which made working across teams difficult. We struggled to prove our value for money against outsourcing proposals, as we couldn't track our activity. We needed a file system that could give us the functionality to collaborate more effectively on cross-team projects, better track our activity and manage our varied workload more efficiently.

#### The Solution

Iken did everything we wanted it to do from the outset – even before we knew what we wanted from a case management system. It was easy to get to grips with.

A key driver for me with Iken has been workflows, which have really increased our productivity as well as supporting the flexible working ethos of our department. People from across a number of teams within the Partnership are able to help other teams when they are snowed under and don't need to be shown how to do something with workflows in place – our processes are all set out in Iken.

***“Without workflows, this would not have been possible without significant resource implications and impact on colleagues.”***

The software has also supported our work with interns and apprentices. We now dedicate a new intern or apprentice's initial weeks to training them on Iken and our Lexcel research tools, alongside desktide support from a department mentor. Within a few months, they can now become fee-earning members of the department.

## The Results

Using Iken has helped us manage our workload. At a glance, we can see who has and hasn't got capacity, assess productivity levels and analyse our performance. Workflows have helped us develop efficiencies in the department. Now we are able to delegate tasks to more junior staff - solicitors just need to check a process has been completed correctly rather than doing the whole thing themselves. We've significantly increased the number of workflows we're now using because we've seen their value as a self-learning tool that lets our staff get on with their workload rather than invest significant chunks of the day in training.

Iken has helped save us a lot of time and resources on reporting: our department produces monthly, quarterly and annual reports for the management team. I can now report on value for money and cost recovery - I even use Iken for our billing. We are a shared services department, so we have to bill half our department quarterly and provide data to show value for money for our service. We've had a few very big cases where we've had to produce reports for the scrutiny of the councils, including the total spend for each case and how much of that money has been recovered. It has been much easier to pull this type of information together with Iken MI, which is the software's management information reporting module. Using Iken MI means we no longer have to ask the Finance department for figures or search for information, and it has been a great boost for our internal efficiency.

Iken enables us to do more for less. The volumes of work going through the legal department, including some major projects completed in-house, would not have been possible without Iken and would have been outsourced. We have been able to stop outsourcing large amounts of work as we can do more in-house and our lawyers can get valuable experience working on high-level projects. Iken has saved us costs on external legal work where there is overflow, which has a clear cost benefit for us.

## The Future

I would definitely recommend the software and the people at Iken - and I have actually already recommended Iken to a number of peers in the legal sector. Iken has also been used in our HR department since 2017. I am proud to say that our department has become one of the most efficient in the Council. We are looking forward to hosting the next Iken User Group to showcase some of the projects we have delivered using Iken.

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