



Stirling Council

Case study

 **Maintaining Collection
Levels in the Credit Crunch**



Our Team

Council Tax and Benefits

26.1 fte Employees
39,000 households
£56 million CT & Water Charges
7,500 Benefit recipients
6,500 council tenants for rent
2,500 Footwear & Clothing Awards
£20.5m paid in benefits last year.

Arrears

5.6 fte Employees
2,000 Rates reminders pa
40,000 CT reminders pa
10,500 Sundry Accounts reminders pa

Benefit Compliance & Monitoring

4 Employees
616 Fraud referrals
12 Legal referrals to Procurator



Employees of the Year 2007 -
Innovation & Improvement



How we work

- **Support Unit** (scanning, indexing, ETD's, benefit & council tax reviews, mainstream council tax processing, visiting officers, rent accounting etc)
- **Customer Service Advisers** (generic-process council tax changes & new benefit claims, phone & counter rota, specialist processors:deceased notifications, homeless benefit claims, new council tenants, new properties, landlord schedule accounts etc)
- **Corporate Debt Recovery** (council tax, sundry accounts, rates, HB overpayments)

Our Approach

Influenced & Informed By Our Customers

- Customer survey & Pledge
- Ownership of the query
- Consistent and fair (especially in arrears recovery)





Collective - Everyone & Everything Involved

- Electronic daily briefings (key facts)
- Regular team meetings (visiting speakers)
- Weekly manager and team leader meetings
- Monthly staff reps meetings (no greetin allowed!)
- Brainstorming sessions with action plans (ownership of ideas)



Systematic & Sustained Improvement

- Emphasis on direct debit 71% (paperless, on-line, 11 options)
- Encourage self service & telephone updates
- Annual billing (no down-time, minimal IT support, benefit & ctax enveloped together, payment schedules, special payment arrangements:significant reduction in phone calls)
- Bulk texting
- Use of plain English
- Claim by appointment (diary on shared drive)
- Ownership of procedures (shared drive)
- School clothing grants & free school meal
- Reduce failure demand

Our Technology

- Core Systems Exploited
- Performance & Workload Managed
- Multi-channelled for our Customers:
 - Investment in web interaction
 - Efficient Text & Telephony
 - Traditional Mediums Streamlined
- Knowledge/Information Exchange Maximised.

Customers ↔ Employees ↔ www.



No Silver Bullets.
Just embedded, innovative
use of IT to support
continual improvement.

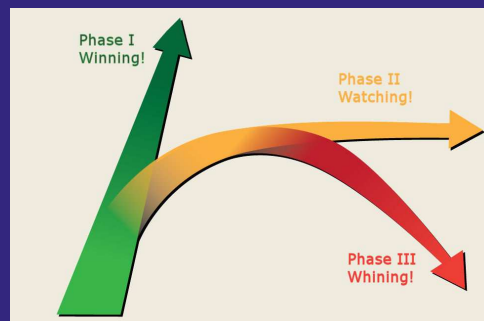


Our Results

Excellent Business Results (ctax: 97.1% in year, right time: 6.2 days)

Excellent Customer Outcomes (92% satisfaction)

High Performing, Highly Skilled People



...but ever mindful of the complacency curve!

Our Plans

- Short Term
- More Interactive (especially in benefits)
 - More Self Service (use of CRM & web)
 - More Proactive (especially in recoveries)

- Long Term
- Aligned to the new Strategic Plan
 - Agile, to absorb National Developments
 - Capitalising on emerging technology



According to
company rules
there can be no:
* Innovation
* Fun
* Creativity
* Change

Now run along.

...Except at Stirling Council !!