

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT | CASE STUDY

A business transformation project which combined a culture change with simplified, streamlined ways of working.



At a glance:

Client: Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

Location: England

Industry: Public Sector

Challenge:

A budget cut of 37%, increased caseload and falling staff numbers was the perfect storm facing the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Solution:

Streamlined processes and significant culture change were the answer. The Workpro case management system was able to adapt to the new processes with new performance targets built in to the workflow.

Local Government &
Social Care
OMBUDSMAN

A straightforward, simple and flexible system that adapts to your changing business needs.

Faced with a budget cut of 37%, increasing caseload and falling staff numbers, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in England (LGSCO) went through a radical process transformation project.

Simplified, streamlined ways of working resulted in increased productivity and reduced cost per case. Performance targets were exceeded, and quality standards improved.

LGSCO uses Workpro case management system to manage all complaints and enquiries. Workpro is used throughout the organisation, from frontline staff in the intake team, to caseworkers in the assessment and investigation teams. An update of the Workpro system to match and support LGSCO's new business processes was key to the project's success.

Process Transformation

Prior to the organisational revamp, the process was over-complicated and too many cases were being passed to investigation. This caused a bottleneck in the system, with little differentiation in the handling of complex and less complex cases.

This mattered. By the time people contact the Ombudsman they have usually gone through a lengthy complaints process with the service provider. Patience is wearing thin and, crucially, systemic injustices could keep occurring if not quickly identified and put right.

The process was radically re-designed.

An assessment stage was added to identify high risk cases. Like a hospital triage system, this enables LGSCO's handling of cases to be proportionate to the issues raised. New performance targets were adopted and built into the workflow, with alerts and reminders to keep staff on track.

Frontline Empowerment

One of the big winners was giving frontline staff the power to act and make decisions. The intake team can quickly resolve many queries at first contact by responding to the caller's questions and concerns, providing advice about LGSCO's role or how the complaints process works. The Workpro system provides step-by-step process guidance, with the ability to escalate for investigation when needed.

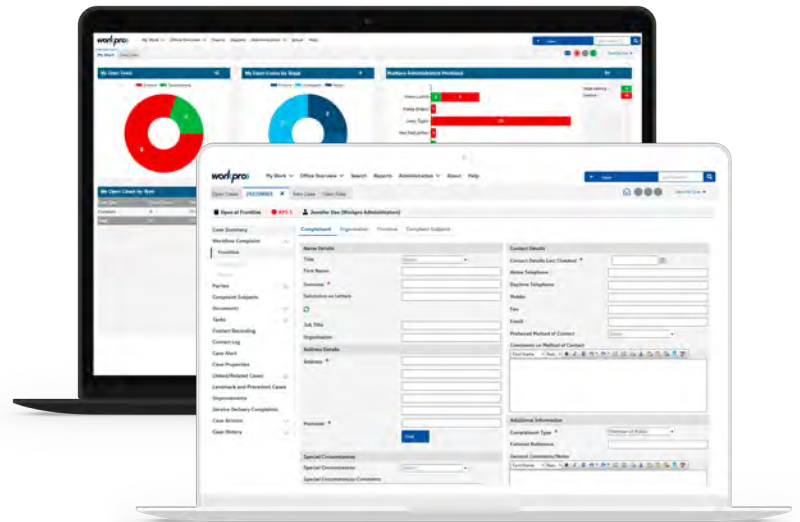
“Our business is looking into complaints and the vast majority of LGSCO's staff rely on an effective case management system every day, if not every hour. The Workpro team supported us to make our system as straightforward and simple to use as it can be, yet flexible enough to adapt to our changing business needs. This partnership approach was an essential component in helping us to manage a successful change programme in very challenging circumstances.”

Nigel Ellis, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, LGSCO

“An honest, frank and collaborative relationship.”

“Both LGSCO and the Workpro team were willing to be flexible on the smaller issues, knowing that we had a shared understanding of the system we needed to develop and the timescales we were both working to. The product was delivered successfully and on time.”

Nigel Ellis, Executive Director Operations at the Local Government Ombudsman



Performance Benefits

In 2019-2020 LGO dealt with 19,625 complaints and enquiries, with 78% of cases completed within three months. Even in 2020-2021, when Covid-19 caused a pause in casework and staff capacity was reduced, they remained above their target of completing 65% of investigations in 13 weeks. 42% of cases were dealt with by initial check in 2020-21.

Workpro supports this productivity increase by:

- Validating case entry for accuracy and completeness, saving time and duplication of effort later.
- Ensuring consistency and speed, for example with email and document templates
- Prompting action with alerts and reminders, including “third party chase ups”.

Key project elements

The Workpro upgrade went like clockwork but this was no happy accident. Priority was given to ensuring this part of the transformation project was a success.

Two key elements were critical:

- Joint development of a clear specification.
- Joint top-level commitment to project success.

Workpro staff participated in LGO team meetings during the process design stage to ensure that expectations were met and to ensure that work could be fully completed on time. Realistic and achievable aims for the upgrade were agreed by both sides.

Lines of communication were also agreed from the outset, with time taken to understand what had worked well in the past and what not so well, and to adopt new ways of joint working. This honest, frank and collaborative approach continues with ongoing meetings to agree future joint roadmaps.

Ready for a more reliable complaints case management system?

Find out more about Ombudsman Case Management Software at workpro.com, or email us for a free demo at workpro@casltd.com



Workpro case management system is developed by CAS - an employee-owned technology company.

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