

Birmingham city council harvard

Business



Company: SAP Customer: Birmingham City Council Submitted by: Harvard

In 1998 the Property Maintenance Management (PMM) division of Birmingham City Council's (BCC) Economic Development Department was almost breaking under the strain of managing an increasing number of properties, complex maintenance projects and major changes in funding sources. In addition, the department's existing computer system was inflexible, was unable to provide the management information needed, could not be developed to meet the government's requirements for Best Value and was not Y2K compliant. Action had to be taken and the Property and Repairs Information System project (PARIS) was initiated. PMM has an extensive and varied range of properties to maintain. It is responsible for the Council's repair, maintenance and adaptation of all city buildings, including schools, libraries, homes for the elderly, leisure facilities and administration offices. In addition it is responsible for aids for the disabled being installed into residential properties. The Council spends over £36 million doing this each year. Its remit includes over 3, 500 buildings and property sites, including Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and City Centre properties where rents on prime sites can be higher than in London. PMM needed a system that could provide access for all 85 staff. The department manages more than 50, 000 scheduled maintenance jobs annually of which 35, 000 are emergencies. Crucially, the department also wanted to reduce, and where possible eliminate, the laborious task of manually inputting information, often several times, into a variety of different systems.

The project specification for PARIS was put out to tender to find the best solution specifically to meet the PMM needs. Of the 51 responses to the <https://assignbuster.com/birmingham-city-council-harvard/>

tender, seven were short-listed for interview and five were chosen for the tender list. The project was finally awarded to SAP and ITNET on April 1st 1999. The SAP R/3 software met all of the functional and managerial requirements, and with ITNET's proven implementation capability and its approach to ongoing support and maintenance services, the overall solution was the best to satisfy the price and quality criteria specified. A fast and efficient implementation, using the ASAP project methodology, then took place and PARIS went live in only 6 months – on October 18th 1999. PARIS was the second SAP R/3 project implemented by ITNET at Birmingham CC and it was launched to coincide with the first project, GLAMIS, the General Ledger and Management Information System.

The PARIS implementation, as with GLAMIS, was managed by ITNET with teams appointed from within the council for the duration of the project. Communication and excellent team work were the key to the project's success. The department also created a special project room specifically for the PARIS implementation with the project team meeting weekly and a steering committee monthly. The old system used in PMM was very labour intensive. Every emergency phone call was logged manually on a hand-written form, and later entered onto the computer system. Following this, a telephone call would be made to the relevant approved contractor.

Routine, day-to-day maintenance requests also relied on an outdated paper intensive system. There was only a basic system in place to track the status of a job or to trigger an invoice for payment on completion. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that jobs were outsourced on occasions to other Council departments, thus further complicating the manual chain of activities

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and the chance of communication breaking down. The existing system was therefore totally unsatisfactory, inefficient and obviously needed to be improved. With PARIS fully implemented PMM now has on-line, up to the minute access to accurate information and is able to carry out the job of property maintenance and management in an efficient manner.

The PMM team is now able to respond to their customers' requests within minutes rather than hours. Reporting is immediate and up to date, more flexible and much easier to use. The system enables the customers to liaise with PMM electronically by email and also to view a single, accurate version of information. The new system allows users to track progress of projects from start to finish with total confidence that the information is up to date. It has also eradicated the need for laborious manual entry of information as everything is input directly and once only. This has led to improved project management, which meets the demands of the 21st century and has also raised staff morale and performance in the department.

“ The PARIS project has been another great success for Birmingham City Council.” Steve Vickers, the project manager for PARIS, said; “ SAP is a powerful tool and we are only utilising part of it currently. When we fully integrate our system with GLAMIS the council will be operating very efficiently. We will then be able to offer the kind of service we would expect to find in a commercial environment with complete support for the Government's Best Value initiative. In the future we will also be able to move forward and use the power of the Internet to allow Birmingham's citizens more and easier access to information about the City Council and the services it provides.”

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