

CAPITA

Integrated business solutions

Integra delivers a solid base for financial process excellence for The Highland Council

Capita Integrated business solutions (Capita) provided Highland Council with Integra, a fully integrated enterprise wide financial management solution. Integra was successfully implemented to stringent timescales and has enabled the Council to introduce new and more efficient ways of operating. Although still in its infancy, Integra has already enabled Council staff to work more flexibly and has given the Council the scope to develop and refine its processes to become more efficient and effective.



The Customer

Highland Council is the largest geographical local government area in Scotland. It covers most of the mainland and the Inner Hebrides, parts of the former counties of Inverness-shire and Ross, Cromarty, all of Sutherland, Caithness and Nairnshire. The Council provides local residents, businesses and visitors with information, advice and assistance about a broad range of local services. A key challenge for the Council was to update its out-dated finance system to streamline processes and maximise interoperability with other key systems, enabling it to offer an effective and responsive service to its stakeholders, citizens, partners and suppliers.

The Challenge

Following an extensive procurement exercise, Capita began working with Highland Council in 2014 to deliver a new, enterprise wide finance management system. The Council had started looking for a new, fully hosted service to replace its old, unsupported system as it felt the

risks of maintaining a legacy solution were becoming too high. Integra from Capita provided Highland Council with the core functionality it required, but more importantly offered a platform for growth and development for the future. And with increasingly tight budgets and the need to boost productivity and reduce costs, it was clear that a new, more automated way of working was required. A key challenge for Capita was the ability to introduce a new system and train a high number of users spread across a wide geographical area to time (and budget). A joint team of Capita and Highland Council staff was appointed to manage all aspects of the implementation. Council employees worked with the Capita team to define an initial implementation, which would support key functionality from day one. A key challenge for the team was to ensure sufficient support to all Council staff on 'go live' day, but all worked hard to pull together an implementation plan which included the Council providing the immediate support to all system users backed up by the Capita Help Desk.



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The Solution

Capita and Highland Council teams worked closely together to ensure a smooth and successful 'go live' date. And although (at the time of writing) it's only been 6 months, the Integra implementation has given the Council a very solid and fully supported platform for growth and space to develop and refine its processes and ways of working. A dedicated team of 10 Council staff, from various disciplines worked with the Capita implementation team to extract data from existing systems and ensure it was in the right format before being loaded into Integra. A key strength was that the Capita implementation consultant was on site throughout the project which ensured continuity and inspired confidence amongst the team, boosting levels of involvement and support at the go live date. Due to this joint hard work and commitment, the system was successfully implemented across the entire Council area in April 2015. A key aspect of the successful deployment was the use of Capita's e-learning modules to educate and train all Council staff to support the roll out of the new system. These online, intuitive training modules helped to introduce Integra to all staff and made the transition process as easy as possible. For some this was the first time they had used an e-learning solution and the culture change required to adopt an online way of working was challenging for some, but overall, this method of training staff was well received and highly effective. A key strength of the implementation has been the commitment and flexibility of Capita staff to engage with Council employees to respond to and deal with issues quickly and efficiently. Council staff were delighted with Capita's refreshing 'can do' and 'will do' approach.

As well as offering the assurance of a fully supported and hosted system, Council staff have found that they can now access improved management information and produce enhanced financial reports via a single user interface. Data is kept up to date and is easier to maintain and payment processing has become more efficient. The modern and intuitive user experience combined with greater visibility of all

financial activities has enabled employees to work efficiently and effectively whilst realising some early cost cutting.

What's more, Capita and Highland Council are working together to define new and ambitious functionality for Integra moving forward. This will form part of the Integra development roadmap and will be incorporated into future releases to ensure Integra continues to lead the financial solutions marketplace.



Benefits

- Reliable, fully supported and hosted system ensures high SLAs at all times
- Data is kept up to date and easy to maintain
- Enhanced financial information
- Improved management information and enhanced financial reports
- Increased visibility of all financial activities
- A modern and intuitive user experience
- A single efficient interface to the cash receiving system
- A platform for growth

Why Capita?

Margaret Grigor, Finance Manager for Highland Council commented: 'The process of implementing Integra for Highland Council was challenging but due to the consistent commitment of the Council project team and the team from Capita, it was also highly rewarding. The implemented system provides the Council with a solid base from which to develop further improvements over the next few years'.