

Digital Housing Project

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How to run a successful digital project in a changing environment

Drivers for Change

- Our Policy did not align with the HRA – it incentivised homelessness
- Legislation
- Making the best use of stock
- Improve our negotiation tools to prevent homelessness
- Delivery was required by Autumn 2019 – had we not done this the Policy would have likely faced revision or freeze due to Unitary
- Dated form – the existing form was 5 years old

Context

- Project kick off April 2018
- Key deliverables:
 - New GDS styled housing register application form
 - Homelessness triage self help digital toolkit
- Dependencies
 - New county wide allocations policy delivery
 - Supplier constraints
- Constraints
 - Resourcing within the context of a single Unitary Council announcement on 1st November 2018
 - Managing multiple layers of political and internal pressures from the new landscape
 - Balancing political desire to reframe the policy for the forthcoming authority

Balancing priorities – the perfect storm

- Not skipping the project fundamentals
 - Stakeholder engagement and user feedback
 - Consultation and critical friend review by HAST
 - Absolute focus on the **Must Have's**
 - Project roles & planning
 - Lessons learnt and shared space and learning
 - Communication, communication communication!
- Working with ever reducing service resource, within the context of the Unitary preparations

How did we work with the LGA?

- Smarter Digital Services undertook ‘as is user testing’ of our old application form & findings were fed into the development of the form
- Specific areas of form development were;
 - Working using an Agile approach
 - Removing repetition & ambiguity
 - Managing customer expectations
 - Addressing old style format
 - Building in continuous improvement & efficiencies
 - Consideration of accessibility & plain english
- Support from the LGA within the Unitary environment
- Peer project support, sharing and learning

- From this.....

1. Introduction
2. Eligibility
3. Local Connection
4. Qualification
5. Your Household
- 6. Current Accommodation**
7. Housing Options and Advice

Current accommodation details

Have you been asked to leave your current accommodation? Yes No

What are your current housing circumstances?

- Sharing accommodation
- In hospital / prison / supported housing or other institution
- Living in hostel or bed and breakfast **not** provided by the Local Authority as part of their homelessness duty toward you
- Council tenant
- Housing Association / Registered provider tenant
- Street Homeless
- Home owner, part owner or shared owner of a

Introduction Eligibility Local Connection Qualification Your Household **Current**

^[P56] **Are you already registered with Home Choice?**

Yes

No

^[C3] **Would you like to**

Start a new application

Finish a partial application

Cancel assessment

Continue

[◀ Back to Previous Screen](#)

.....to This

A little snippet of the user journey

End user testing included unanticipated issues with the functionality of the new postcode gazetteer, so we video tested it.....



Outcomes

- The project has been delivered
- Further improvement and enhancements are planned
- User feedback is now part of BAU
- We are realising early benefits in terms of homeless prevention
- We move into a new Authority with a Policy that will serve residents for 2 years
- We have a commercially aware and client centred policy approach
- We have built new and important relationships within the project group and the LGA
- We listened and continue to listen to our customers



www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Self help homeless triage tool kit: https://eforms.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=419

Bucks Home Choice: www.buckshomechoice.co.uk

Contact: scrawford@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk