

## CASE STUDY

How Croydon Council boosted SLA efficiency while slashing running and admin costs



### ABOUT CROYDON COUNCIL

With a population of more than 390,000, Croydon is London's most populous borough and England's sixteenth-largest district.

Croydon Council is responsible for a comprehensive list of services, from all aspects of housing and social care to waste management, parks, leisure facilities and more.

To meet the wide-ranging needs of the area's diverse customer demographics, Croydon Council employs more than 10,000 frontline staff - from teachers and social workers to binmen and lifeguards.

### THE CHALLENGES

Alongside its customer-facing operations, the council must also ensure the effective management for the thousands of time-sensitive communications and requests received each year.

These include:

- Customer complaints
- Freedom of Information (FOI) requests
- Subject Access Requests (SAR)
- Members' enquiries

### AT A GLANCE

#### Challenges

- Multiple inefficient systems
- Increased admin resources
- Escalating costs
- Greater risk of customer escalation

#### Benefits

- Reduced admin demands
- Enhanced performance
- Quicker logging
- Improved SLA response
- Reduced licensing costs
- No extra costs or delays



*"We now have a single overarching system that links our customer information... at a significantly reduced cost..."*

*"Infreemation allows us to be more responsive - enabling us to offer our residents a better level of service."*

## DISCONNECTED AND DIFFICULT SYSTEMS

The council relied on three separate, unlinked processes: one for FOI, one for complaints and another for SARs. Members were not recorded as they were dealt with - via email locally.

Some processes were easier than others, as a council product and project support officer recalls: “The location of logged cases: - especially for FOI and SAR - often meant processing took significantly longer.”

These difficulties created contributed to issues such as delayed response times, high administrative costs and higher risk of customer escalaton.

## HIGH-LICENSING COSTS

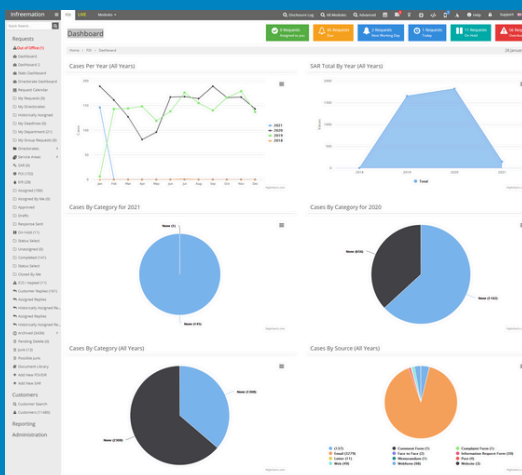
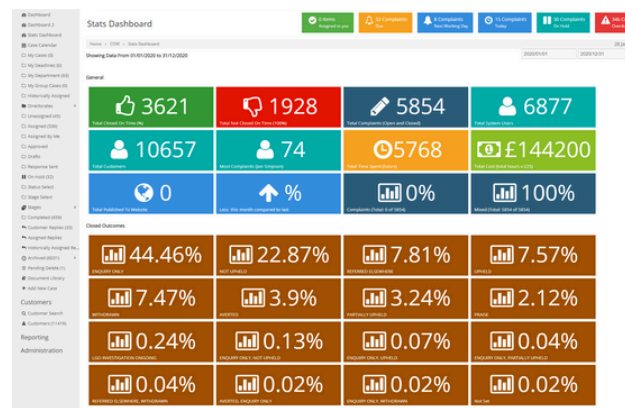
Management also expressed concerns about the timeliness of updates and licensing costs between the systems. She explains:

“While our complaints system required every one of our more than 500 active users to be licensed, the system for SAR and FOI was significantly more expensive. We also had to pay the two suppliers for any changes to the system - even simple template changes. And sometimes it took weeks for them to implement.”

## WHY INFREEMATION FROM DIGITAL INTERACTIVE?

With so many systems and locations involved, the council recognised the need for an easier way of handling communications.

In 2020, they put a new complaints system out to tender. That’s when they discovered Digital Interactive and Infreemation, its case management software specially built to manage FOI, EIR and SAR requests in compliance with UK legislation.



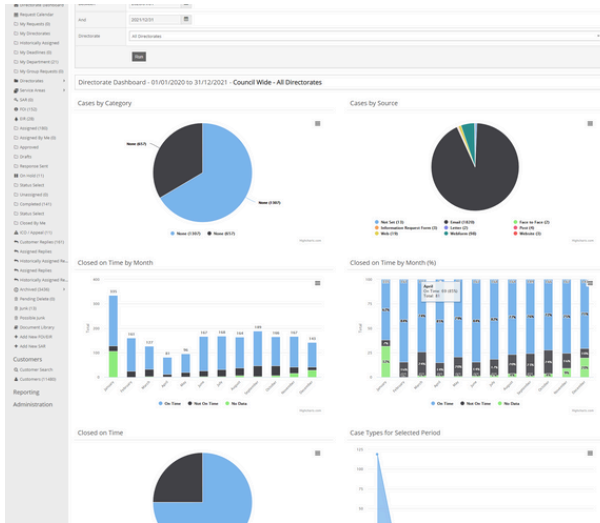
*“Infreemation does not feel like a generic CRM that’s been tweaked to meet a need.*

*“It’s a system built and designed for the complexities of managing complaints and information management requests - without making the user journey overwhelming and complex.*

*“It’s powerful in what it does and simple in how it does it!”*

# TOP FEATURES

## ACCURATE REPORTING



Using Infreemation has transformed administration operations across the council, thanks to its powerful reporting capabilities.

Infreemation includes more than 50 types of reports. Customisation options allow users to export data exactly how its needed whether it's in Excel, PDF or graph formats or in compliance with UK legislation.

"Infreemation has enabled us - for the first time - to have live, accurate reporting. It's cut our admin time in half while improving our response times and performance."

## EASY MAINTENANCE

One of Infreemation's best features, according to the product and project manager is its easy maintenance. Many changes can be made immediately - without getting a developer involved.

"We are able to maintain a lot of the system in house. That means no additional costs or delays.

"When additional help is needed, we have found the response from the support portal to be quick and extremely helpful. Almost all tickets are resolved same day."



## CUSTOM SUPPORT

Alongside the speed and quality of support, the officer is impressed by the team's proactive customer-focused approach.

"Digital Interactive are open to develop and meet our needs where possible. We also enjoy the fact we "own" our modules. It means we do not need to rely on outside support for the majority of our functionality. That saves us time and money!"

# ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2023/24, the council received 9,500 complaints, FOIs, SARs and Member enquiries. Officers logged and managed all requests through Infreemation. During this period, they've noticed several big developments, such as:

- **50% less user admin**
- **Faster response times**
- **Enhanced performance**
- **Quicker logging of complaints, FOIs and SARs (2 mins faster per request)**
- **Improved SLA response (40% to 75%)**
- **Reduced licensing costs**
- **No additional costs/delays for updates**

The product and project support officer reports 100% satisfaction with Infreemation and Digital Interactive. Since its introduction, the officer has seen its positive impact on users, customers and the wider organisation.

*"We now have a single overarching system that links our customer information... at a significantly lower cost."*

*Overall, Infreemation has cut our user admin in half, while enabling us to benefit from live, accurate reporting and updates. That's most certainly saved us time while improving our performance."*

*"Infreemation allows us to be more responsive - enabling us to offer our residents a better level of service."*

## LOOKING AHEAD

Pleased with how the project and its partnership with Digital Interactive, the officer is already looking forward to building on the success to date.

"We are currently adding other modules - including Data Breach."