

ePCS solution delivers greater efficiency for Walsall Council

WALSALL COUNCIL | Local Government | West Midlands

Efficiency and cost-saving

New purchasing card solution supports supplier management for Walsall Council.

A review of their existing purchasing card service led Walsall Council to transfer to Lloyds Bank in a bid to secure cost-savings and enhanced efficiencies.

When Walsall Council put their purchasing card operation out for tender, they were looking to reduce costs and to make their operations run more efficiently. Danielle Russell, Purchasing Cards Officer at Walsall Council, explains why it became clear very early on that Lloyds Bank could provide the solution they needed. "The presentation from the Lloyds Bank team was very professional," she says. "They took time to understand what we needed from the system and the fact that the Commercial Card Data Management solution they offered was delivered by Fraedom, a supplier we were already familiar with, was a huge bonus for us."

Effective supplier management

The nature of the services the Council delivers means that there are a variety of transactions passed through their purchasing cards system. The provision

of an automated payment system using virtual cards with existing suppliers, not only allowed the council to lock down approved spend and manage suppliers more effectively, but eliminated the manual processing and reconciliation that the Council previously undertook.

Louise Pearl, Client Development Manager, Commercial Cards, Lloyds Bank, has worked closely with the Council across the implementation. "Lloyds Bank is a Commercial Card supplier to the UK public sector under Crown Commercial Service's ePurchasing Card Solutions (ePCS) Framework Agreement, giving us the experience to respond to the needs of Walsall Council. The greater automation of services has been a huge win:win for the Council, not just in terms of reducing admin, but also in terms of enhancing security."



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DANIELLE RUSSELL
Purchasing Cards Officer, Walsall Council



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Walsall Council

Smooth implementation

As with any transfer of services, one of the Council's greatest concerns was around the implementation process. As Danielle points out, however, this was handled professionally. "The turnaround time was really good," she says. "It was a very smooth and professional transition. The team had really put our minds at rest in the early stages pre-implementation and the fact that the new system wasn't too dissimilar to what we were used to made it much easier for users and administrators."

Louise agrees: "The transfer was seamless and the intensity of the work we undertook, really paid off."

Looking ahead, Danielle is keen to develop the relationship with Lloyds Bank even further. "The automation of the payment system works so well that we're looking to expand the programme. The improvement in relationships with suppliers and the ease of using the automated service is a clear factor in this drive to expand across our supply chain."



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