



Salford City Council: The benefits and efficiencies to be gained from operating an award winning website

Briefing to the Business Processes and Technology Advisory Group

By David Hunter and Antony Golding

"Thank you for your helpful reply to my request about Helping Hands.

"I am given to understand that your website is one of the better local authority ones, so it is reassuring to know that comments and requests will be acted upon!"

(julian.smith@---.net,
Manchester resident)



Award winning – how pretentious!

'Local Authority Website of the Year'

Good Communications Awards 2007

- *"An excellent all-rounder with clear, consistent navigation and proactive approach to both usability and accessibility."*
- *"There is evidence of take-up with increases in the site statistics, online payments and exit surveys. Innovation is demonstrated with their use of multiple languages, cross-selling of services, interactive maps and searches, and all services are online with payment enabled."*
- *"A strong 'duty of care' approach is demonstrated with accessibility efforts. There is evidence that they have carefully considered the user and designed the site well, armed with this knowledge; their use of cross-selling of relevant pages in strategic places is impressive; the site is clear, consistent and has all the relevant information available online."*
- *"Cost effectiveness is demonstrated through the volume of services online and the high volume of payments that they receive online."*



Award winning – Accessibility!

Accessibility in Focus Awards 2007

- *"Selecting a winner for the Not-For-Profit category was a particularly hard job. There were a lot of very high-standard entries, all of which showed a good grasp of design alongside excellent accessibility. However, as a Mancunian myself I am proud to say that I really felt that the best of these was Salford City Council."*
- *"The site utilised a fresh and clean design, with an immediately obvious, and clearly user-focused, navigation. On top of this, they have created a multitude of accessibility features, including the innovative Browse aloud system, to help blind users navigate the site."*
- *"Design-wise, the sensible use of colour was impressive, and small touches, such as the changing background in the header, drew users into the site. The site is incredibly information-rich, but it seems sensibly structured and easy to find the required information."*



Award winning – Excellent

'Better Connected 2008'



- **salford.gov.uk** is regarded as "Excellent", one of just four councils to do so. But the only one to pass a wide range of accessibility tests
- **salford.gov.uk** is in an exclusive club of 165 (121 in 2007) local council websites to have achieved '**transactional**' status.
- **salford.gov.uk** is one of the 2008 Socitm Top metropolitan district authority websites.
- **salford.gov.uk** is cited in the 2008 survey report as an exemplar of best practice in a number of key areas.

Salford City Council

Bright, clear, attractive home page with useful links and interesting options. Excellent range of links in A to Z with clear concise descriptions. Search fast and efficient, easy to understand titles. This was not only fun to use but very illuminating. Dispelled all my previous preconceptions about this area! Does an excellent job of combining a public relations exercise with providing comprehensive information for residents, businesses and visitors. I'm going to visit with opened eyes next time.

Socitm reviewer, 2008



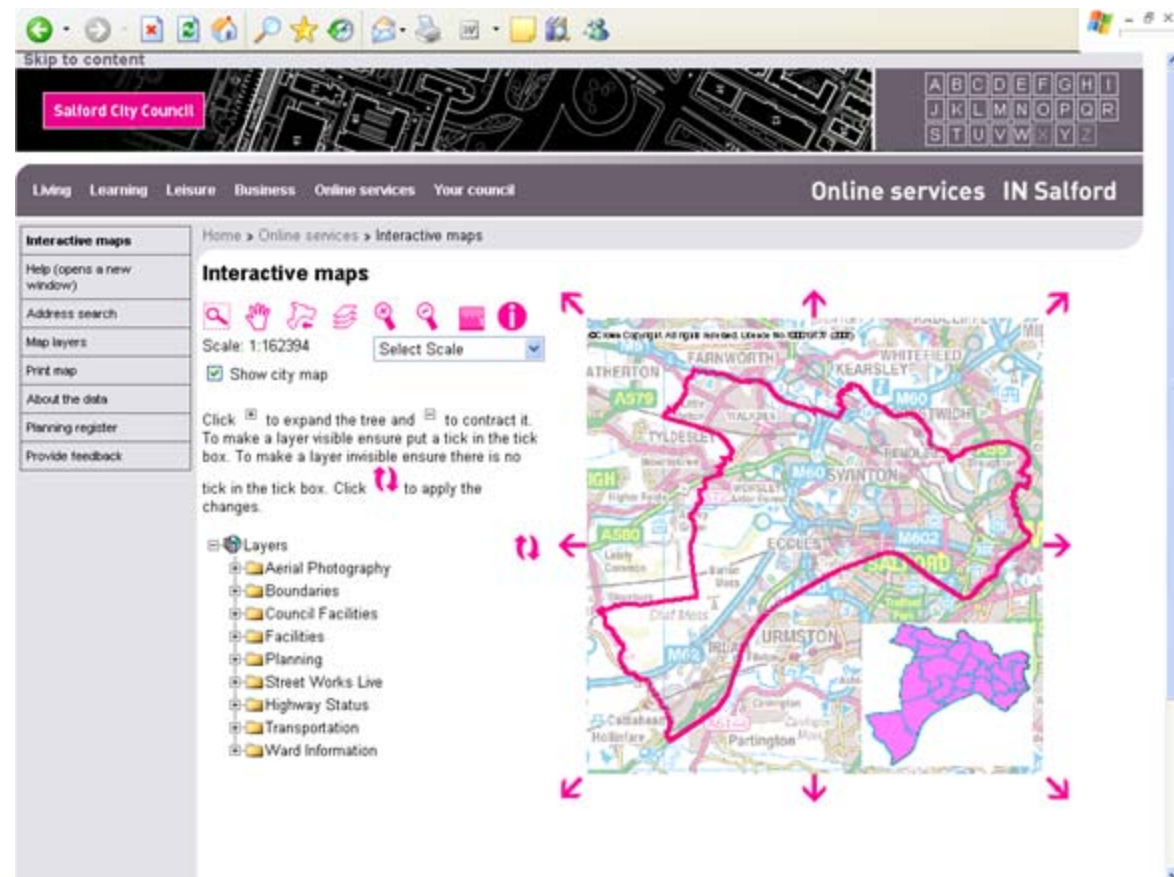
Better Connected 2008 – exemplars of best practice

'Better Connected 2008'



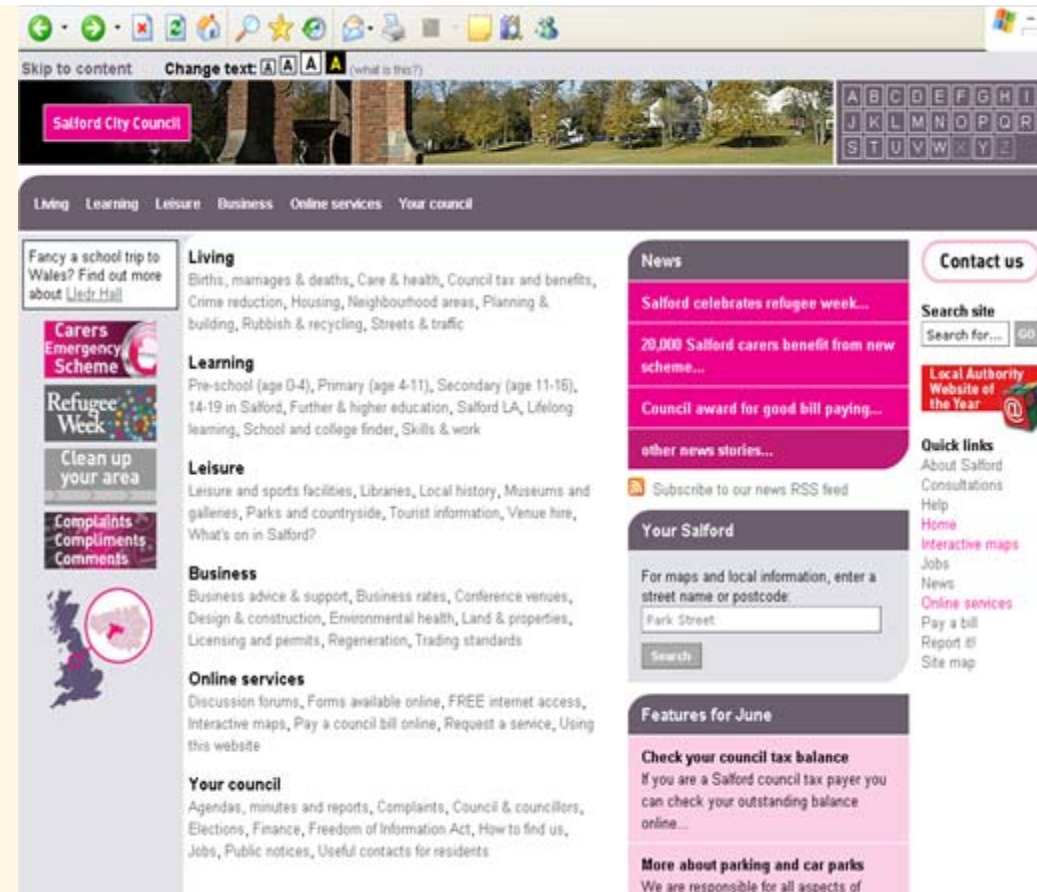
Salford's website has been highlighted as an exemplar of best practice in a number of key areas:

- Looking for information about libraries
- Currency - is the site up to date?
- Links to other websites
- Participation - how we interact with customers via the website
- Accessing the website from mobile devices
- Use of A-Z lists
- Interactive mapping
- Site navigation
- Readability of content



You've got to be in it to win it – So why do we bother?

- To raise awareness of the Councils website both internally and externally.
- To demonstrate to services managers that there is great operational and commercial benefits to delivering services via the web.
- It develops greater trust and confidence as a medium for directorate reps and service managers.
- Because success encourages greater investment in capacity building and technology infrastructures.
- Provides positive feedback to the excellent team of web managers and authors.



Why is the web such a valued delivery asset?

- Beginning to put into practice the principles of transformational government, as outlined in the Service Transformation Agreement for CSR07.
- Improving understanding of customers' lifestyle preferences for service delivery.
- Provides greater access to a wider 'need rich' community in a way that suits them better.
- Creates opportunities for the council to deliver services in a more efficient and effective way.
- It allows us to advertise services that work particularly well in an online context
- It enables greater collaboration of data and information with our partners

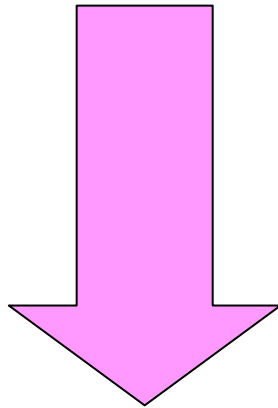




Customer Service and Communication

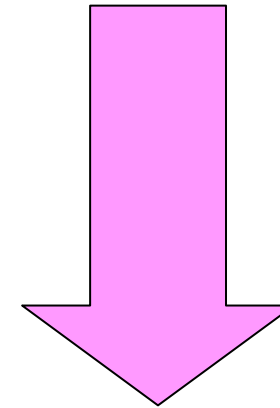
What is the Primary Focus for the Councils website?

Customer Service Access and Delivery



- Streamlining transactional processes
- Enabling 24/7 Self Service
- Providing greater choice and convenience

Marketing and Communication medium



- Encourages participation and consultation
- Immediate information delivery
- Data 'rich' and relevant content



Customer Services: 'Striving for Customer Excellence as One Council'

- Providing excellent customer service to the citizens of Salford is a fundamental objective of the city council. The council has made good progress in joining up some elements of the ways in which customers access and receive council service. Overall, however the council does not have a joined up or consistent approach to the provision of customer service which means that citizens have different experiences dependent upon where they access council service and in some case have to make contact with several departments to notify a change in circumstance.
- To address this Salford City Council has set itself the objective of 'Striving for customer excellence as One Council'. What this means in practice is that over the next three years the council will introduce a consistent council-wide approach to dealing with citizens requesting service. Citizens will be first and foremost customers of Salford City Council rather than being associated with a particular service area.
- The council will adopt a multi-channel approach to customer service using one customer database. In order to drive efficiencies citizens will be actively encouraged to participate in self service where appropriate. Face to face contact will be focused around the Gateway centres and maximum use will be made of the existing contact centre.
- Introducing a One Council approach to customer services should ensure citizens receive a consistently high quality service which accurately reflects their bespoke needs. In order to achieve this the council will seek to introduce an approach to customer segmentation based on customer needs. The corporate customer service function and the organisation will then be aligned to this segmentation model.



Key benefits from adopting a One Council approach to customer service

There are a number of key benefits to be realised for the customer and the council from adopting the new operating model for customer service.

- **Key benefits to the customer**

- More opportunities for self service
- Services that are simple to access and navigate
- Consistency in the support received
- Direct access to a wider range of relevant services, and
- Quicker resolution of issues.

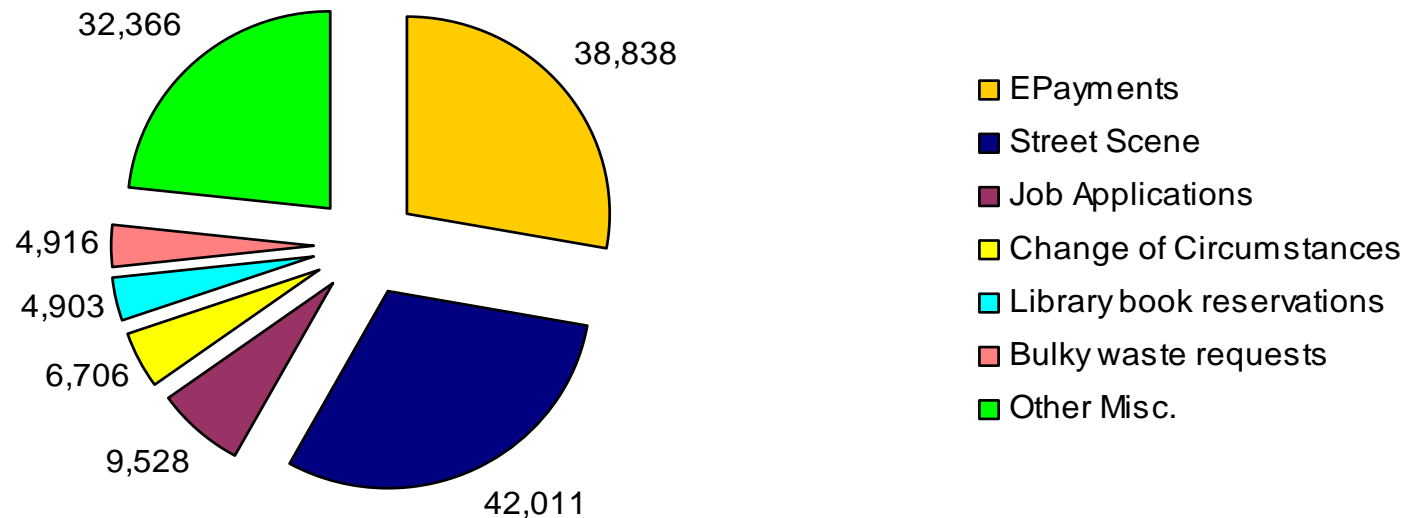
- **Key benefits to the council**

- Better profiling of customers against customer need
- Consistency and transparency in the way customers are handled
- Reduce 'Avoidable contact'
- Proactive use of customer intelligence for policy making and delivery planning
- Improved risk management
- Reduction in service failure
- Appropriate application of resources
- Efficiencies through channel shift and rationalisation of face to face customer access points
- Improvements in customer satisfaction, and
- Improvements in performance ratings.

Status	Query Description	Request Taken By	Contact Date	Referral Date	Referred Officer and Phone No	Resolution Date	Target Date
DPN	VALUATION BANDS	R. HORNBY	27-MAR-2001 16:13				03-APR-2001 16:13
DPN	GENERAL CUSTOMER ADVICE	R. HORNBY	27-MAR-2001 15:51				01-MAY-2001 15:53
DPN	PLANNING APPLICATION QUERY	R. HORNBY	27-MAR-2001 15:42				
DPN	3 HOUR QUERY	R. HORNBY	27-MAR-2001 15:42				27-MAR-2001 16:45
DPN	LEGISLATION QUERY	R. HORNBY	14-MAR-2001 15:21				



Efficiencies - Self-service transactions on Salford Council website during 2006/07



- Recognising those services that work well on the web
- Ensuring that online services are integrated with back-office to maximise potential efficiency gains



Efficiencies - Cost architecture

'Costs to serve' in Salford by channel

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Face-to-face	£15.50	£14.65	£16.20
Telephone	£1.59	£1.39	£1.55
Website	.38p	.25p	.12p

- Migrating larger volumes of transactions to lower cost channels through self-service automation, in particular the web.
- Achieving a 10% saving on initial contact through channel shift to more automated self-service (both automated voice and web)



Striving for Customer Excellence

User satisfaction survey

User satisfaction data enables us to demonstrate our website's effectiveness and reach



2008 data	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Q1 Did you find what you were looking for? (Yes, partly / completely)	78%	82%	79%	79%	79%
Q2 How would you rate the look and feel (site design)? (OK / satisfied / very satisfied)	90%	90%	92%	89%	93%
Q3 Rate the ease of getting around the site (OK / satisfied / very satisfied)	86%	86%	88%	84%	89%
Q4 Rate ease of finding specific information (OK / satisfied / very satisfied)	75%	79%	80%	77%	82%
Q5 Rate usefulness of the site search (OK / satisfied / very satisfied)	68%	69%	57%	68%	72%
Q6 Rate the value of information provided (OK / satisfied / very satisfied)	84%	83%	84%	80%	88%
Q7 How likely are you to return in the future? (likely / very likely)	74%	75%	76%	74%	78%
Q8 Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit today? (OK / satisfied / very satisfied)	84%	87%	88%	86%	89%

Help Drives

- *Web site improvement plan*
- *Marketing campaigns*
- *Redesigns*
- *Navigation*
- *Updated Content*



Striving for Customer Excellence



Website Visitor statistics

General Statistics		
Hits	Entire Site (Successful)	13,524,482
	Average per Day	436,273
	Home Page	186,607
Page Views	Page Views	2,117,114
	Average per Day	68,294
	Average per Unique Visitor	15
	Document Views	1,403,458
Visits	Visits	474,889
	Average per Day	15,319
	Average Visit Length	00:15:11
	Median Visit Length	00:00:02
	International Visits	68.25%
	Visits of Unknown Origin	24.30%
	Visits from United Kingdom	7.44%
	Visits Referred by Search Engines	118,169
	Visits from Spiders	153,540
Visitors	Unique Visitors	132,710
	Visitors Who Visited Once	102,090
	Visitors Who Visited More Than Once	30,620



Striving for Customer Excellence



Website Visitor statistics

Top Pages					
	Pages	Views	% of Total Views	Visits ▼	Avg. Time Viewed
1	Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/	186,973	8.83%	69,294	00:02:59
2	User satisfaction survey - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/socitm-intro.htm	55,938	2.64%	51,886	00:01:52
3	Ordsall Hall Star Chamber GhostCam image - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/ghostcam2-image.htm	89,147	4.21%	38,479	00:01:31
4	Ordsall Hall Great Hall GhostCam image - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/ghostcam-image.htm	74,813	3.53%	32,899	00:01:34
5	Job Vacancies at Salford City Council - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/jobdisplay.htm	101,304	4.78%	27,361	00:01:10
6	Current Vacancies - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/council/jobs/jobselect.htm	47,695	2.25%	25,183	00:00:34
7	Job vacancies at Salford City Council - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/council/jobs.htm	29,254	1.38%	23,064	00:00:19
8	Jobs List - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/jobslis.htm	59,258	2.79%	17,485	00:00:34
9	Simple search - excludes downloads - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/search.htm	55,021	2.59%	14,575	00:00:26
10	Press Release - Salford City Council http://www.salford.gov.uk/council/pressreleases/pressrelease.htm	39,748	1.87%	12,346	00:01:24



The role of marketing & communications



- Use marketing for specific impact such as tourism;
- Avoid mixing channel messages via a single content management control
- Get to know your online audience (customer insight);
- Provides opportunity for consultation and customer participation
- Make website one of primary sources of info for residents
- All Council media now contains the Salford web address





Delivering a Web enabled organisation

Web Team operating model and structures

Operational and Technical Web Team

A virtual operational team is required to put the strategy into practice and carry out day to day activities. These activity areas include:

- General administration of websites
- Administration of CMS
- Author Support
- Content Creation and Coordination
- Accessibility and Usability
- Developing 'style guides' across web portfolio
- Creative Design and Branding
- Communication
- Awareness Raising

Team Structure

- Links in M&C, ICT and Customer Services
- Corporate web development manager
- Two webmasters (one responsible for internal, one for external sites). Each would be responsible for taking forward communication and transactional elements for each area.
- One web author administrator
- One customer services role, responsible for ensuring cross channel, holistic channel development and customer focus for transactional service work.
- One marketing and communication role, responsible for ensuring appropriate promotion and take up campaigns developed for transactional service delivery on a case by case basis.
- Web developer roles including one to become a web creative developer and a second equivalent post to be responsible for CMS site development, interfacing with Creative Design team, maintaining and distributing web style guide, creating and updating templates etc.
- Define and develop role of directorate web champions and a corporate web steering group



Issues and Challenges

- Devolved Governance and Technology budgets.
- Corporate standards not followed by all.
- Systems are not fully integrated
- The use of 3rd party applications.
- Ensuring that the web structure remains appropriate and aligned to business needs
- Coping partnership independence and branding.
- Officer cooperation – “Will the web take away my job?”
- Is the front line service delivery structures able to respond to the increased demand for services from the web?
- Can we exploit the technology to engage with a new generation of social networkers and gamers?



Way Forward – Salford.gov.uk 2.0

- Introducing Enterprise Content Management to provide fully integrated content management
- Introducing a Single Customer Services function
- Encourage dedicated web channels for certain business transactions
- Promote greater engagement with all customers and partners
 - Profiling / Single Customer Accounts
 - Social Networking Integration
 - Petitioning
 - Wikis
- Continue to enhance the overall status of the website and move to ‘Excellent +’
- Make the website the primary access channel for all initial customer access



Any Questions