



Rochdale deploys Me Learning to grow productivity and compliance with new employees



Client: Rochdale Borough Council

Activities: Local authority

Location: Greater Manchester

Courses: Care Act - Introduction and Overview, Manual Handling, Information Security

About Rochdale Borough Council

Situated around ten miles out of Manchester, Rochdale is successful as a largely residential commuter town to the City and also as an industrial hub in its own right. The Borough Council is responsible for services to around 200,000 residents and is currently in the middle of a £250m regeneration plan which – with help from the private sector and organisations like the Heritage Lottery Fund – is upgrading infrastructure and the public realm to bring new money into the local economy.

But Rochdale is also a poster child for the challenges that local authorities face. Like all councils, money

is tight and this not only affects the provision of transactional services, it stretches social resources too. For a decade, councils have simply had to do more with less.

At the same time, Rochdale has a growing population, with all the demand on public services that requires. The Council has to work with sensitivity and care to deliver needs with dwindling budgets – it's an unenviable task.

It's no surprise that staff development is an important part of alleviating the strain – the council recognises that well-trained staff are more productive, they are better equipped to deal with challenges and more capable of juggling the endless priorities of local public life.

For Jennie Crowther, the e-learning Development Lead at Rochdale Borough Council, e-learning had obvious benefits. "Providing timely, face-to-face courses was an issue for us; we have different members staff starting at different times in different parts of the organisation. Arranging face-to-face training for everyone on day one would be impossible. With e-learning, induction training is available as part of the on boarding process to everyone as soon as they start."

The procurement factors that matter

Me Learning has over ten years' experience in delivering public-sector training, particularly in areas of most concern to public sector professionals: safeguarding, social care, Health & Safety and diversity. Me Learning was a natural choice – but that doesn't mean that the company was an instant choice: crucial procurement criteria had to be met.

"The implementation process was seamless: we literally switched off the old system on a Friday evening and switched on Me Learning on the Monday morning."

When every penny matters, price is always going to be a consideration. Me Learning designed a package that would give Rochdale BC the comfort that they could address their staff development needs for a flat, predictable fee.

Says Jennie: "We are recording, on average, just over 1000 hours per month of e-learning, so I think that tells you that the take-up has been phenomenal. Even so, Me Learning represents excellent value for money because we pay a one-off license fee and that covers any training that we do. It's not just affordable – especially when compared against the cost of classroom-based training, it gets more affordable the more we use it".

Online delivery makes transitioning to a new provider easier, but it's still an essential consideration – and Me Learning comes with an industry-wide reputation for customer service. Jennie says, "The implementation process was seamless: we literally switched off the old system on a Friday evening and switched on Me Learning on the Monday morning. We'd done some preparation beforehand with our Communications Team and we had our user data ready, but that's all that was needed; it all went really well and there were no

disruptions to anybody. But I don't feel as if we've just been left to it – now we're up and running, there's still a strong rapport and I know that if I need anything, I just have to pick up the phone and I'll get a response."

Prior to signing up, Jennie could see that the product was easy to use. "It's quick, it's responsive and it has a really nice user interface", she says. But the proof only comes when the product is used at scale. Jennie implemented a feedback regime to see what her many users thought. "Since we launched Me Learning, we've had some really good feedback from users", she says. "We have evaluations after some of our courses and the comments are really positive, for example 'It's just what I needed' or 'It filled a gap in my knowledge'. There is also a star rating applied to some courses and we are seeing courses usually rated four or five stars out of five."

Jennie is clear about the benefits of Me Learning to Rochdale Borough Council: "It allows us to deliver just-in-time learning, it's affordable and it's accessible. I would recommend Me Learning as an eLearning management system to any other local authority based on the experience we've had."

Why Me Learning?

For Rochdale Borough Council, Me Learning was the right choice for:

- Price
- Easy deployment
- Quality of the product

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