



## Staffordshire County Council Employs a Quality HR Document Management System

OpenText and Optical Record Systems improve document storage and retrieval

### Industry

Government

### Customer



### Business Challenges

- Largest employer in the region
- Required a system to reduce storage requirements
- Required easy, secure archiving and access to information

### Business Solutions

- OpenText Archive Server

### Business Benefits

- Created an efficient and reliable ECM system
- Enables approved HR partners to access electronic images of documents instantly
- Helps improve accessibility and speed of response to queries

Staffordshire County Council is the biggest employer in Staffordshire, with more than 30,000 staff—ranging from teachers and engineers to scientists and social workers—who provide Staffordshire's population of approximately 800,000 with vital services, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The authority's aim is to make Staffordshire a great place to live, work, visit, and invest in. The Council is responsible for a large number of public services within the county, including the local education service—with over 400 schools and libraries—social care and health, fostering and adoption, trading standards, highways, planning, and many more.

Politically, there are 62 County Councillors who are elected every four years. They work closely with the council's officers to drive the overall strategy of the authority. The council also works in partnership with a number of disparate organizations—including district and parish councils, police, fire, and health authorities—to help improve the prosperity, health, safety, and environment of the whole county.

As the largest employer in the County, Staffordshire identified that it needed a more efficient document management system in order to provide HR with a better archiving structure and access to employee documents. With over 30,000 employees, all of whom had paper-based personnel records, the County Council decided to evaluate enterprise content management solutions and migrate to an electronic document management system. An integral part of the evaluation process was recognizing that the Council also required an efficient scanning system to enable the conversion of all documents into electronic copies.

### The need to access information easily and securely

Staffordshire County Council's 30,000+ paper-based employee personnel files included documents such as holiday forms, pension details, contracts of employment, and payroll information. This legacy system meant that archive and retrieval was a slow process, and the files took up an incredible amount of space in filing cabinet storage, resulting in direct and other hidden costs.

"We needed a document management system that would help us to archive and access information more easily and securely," says Dave Wisher, Performance and Quality Manager, HR Shared Service Centre, Staffordshire County Council. "Staffordshire's previous system—which relied on paper based files—meant that document retrieval processes were slow and there was a danger that files would be in transit and be harder to locate. The Council's HR community needed a reliable solution that would enable them to archive and access documents conveniently."





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Dave Wisher,  
Performance and Quality Manager, HR Shared Service Centre,  
Staffordshire County Council

In recognising the need to have better access to documents, and to reduce both storage costs and manual time spent on filing and retrieval, Staffordshire County Council began evaluating a number of alternative document management solutions, including BASMI and Elision.

### **OpenText Archive Server: The practical solution**

After fully evaluating OpenText’s Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solutions, Staffordshire County Council selected OpenText Archive Server in conjunction with ORS’ (Optical Record Systems) document scanning service.

“We selected Archive Server as we believed it provided Staffordshire with a robust and practical solution for us to migrate to an electronic document management solution,” says Wisher. “This made it much easier to access and archive documents, whilst also helping us to reduce other costs. The cost and manual time taken to file, store, and access documents held in storage was a major factor determining the introduction of a new system.”

“Due to the high volume of paper-based files being stored, it was clear that we needed a professional scanning service to help convert all of our HR documents into electronic copies,” he adds. “We selected ORS’ scanning service, as they were able to provide a fast and efficient service, collecting and preparing all of our documents for scanning on a weekly basis.”

### **OpenText helps makes daily duties more efficient**

The scanning of the HR documents, facilitated by OpenText Archive Server, in conjunction with ORS’ service, is now largely completed. Initial indications are that it has provided Staffordshire with a more efficient and reliable system, enabling stakeholders in HR to access electronic files instantly, helping them to carry out their duties more effectively. “

Since implementing OpenText Archive Server and ORS’ scanning service, we have started to save both costs and manual time,” says Wisher. “We no longer request documents to be sourced and sent from storage every time we need to view a particular file. It’s much

more simple now, as authorised employees can access and view documents instantly, at no additional cost.”

He adds, “The OpenText solution has helped us to increase control over which employees can access HR documents. This has helped ensure that those employees who need to access particular documents can do so, and, more importantly, when they need to—helping to speed up processes and tasks on the whole. We also used OpenText’s solution to categorise our HR records and files. For example, HR now electronically files historic personnel data and documents under six different categories. These are training, contract of employment, maternity, absence, formal processes, and miscellaneous. Staffordshire’s previous system, along with certain legal requirements, called for us to keep hardcopy personnel records in storage for different lengths of time. ORS has helped scan and convert a backlog of these documents into electronic files, which are now available to view in Archive Server for those with permission. We were impressed with the quality of the scanned documents. ORS have now been asked to provide a solution with regard to scanning historic documents relating to jobs being reviewed under the Council’s Job Evaluation process.”

### **Producing a cost-efficient future**

The indications to date are that Staffordshire County Council will benefit from having a better quality document management system. “HR has archived historic documentation, and this information is now accessed with greater ease,” says Wisher. “We believe that this will create efficiencies and produce cost savings going forward. We are pleased with the way the system is operating to date, and we are looking to extend the project to the management of our job evaluation files.”

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