

Background

The objective of the Liberator product is to create a multi purpose tool for Local Authorities that allows for a platform that helps customers to transact interactions with the council in an easy intuitive manner, while at the same time offer the Authority and efficient back office with work flow management and automated progressions, as well as services for mobile workers and field staff. In this way we hope to provide a seamless, unified system that caters for the needs of all stakeholders.

There is a common theme to all of the products that we build.

There is usually a:

- Public facing self service element that reduces the burden on the back office by using intelligent look ups and where possible vetting and conditionally structuring all supplied information
- An intuitive back office that sorts inputted enquiries and orders through flexible work flow and queue management programs that help deliver optimal processing services for the clerical teams
- Automated finance functions which deal with initial payments, continuous payments and refunds within the base system
- A detailed business intelligence and management information layer that contains finance reporting, workforce optimisation reports and general reporting with many filtering options, data extract options to excel and similar, graphics packs and automation
- Automated case management so there is no housekeeping to move cases from state to state or to run routines to manage data

Often there will be some form of live interrogation of a third party data set to prove eligibility or identity and to, in so doing, prevent wasted time in progressing processes that are not valid.

All new systems are designed in line with and to meet the Government Service Standards requirements, including WCAG compliance and interoperability. And are built with modern APIs.

All modules are provided as cloud based software as a service where we manage hosting, DR, support and maintenance. Clients only need to be granted permissions, a modern browser and internet connectivity to securely access the systems.

Before we get into the detail of the modules as a final point we try and ask customers for relevant information only the one time and then store these "proofs" for future applications processes the customers might make. So for example customers may be asked to upload say public liability insurances as a conditional for the granting of a tables and chairs license. Once this is uploaded to the customers account, as long as it is current, this "proof" will be used when the customer makes other commercial licensing applications.

Table and Chairs and Shop Fronts Licensing

This deals with permissions and conditions around table and chairs being placed on the pavement and highways.

The application is made by the shop owner or their agent online detailing how large a section or how many tables and chairs they are wanting to licence. They can upload any supporting documentation, photos or site plans.

Where the council requires certain minimum standards to be in place the application process can force proofs of these to be uploaded.

Payments can be taken in advance and refunded if subsequent inspections mean that no license can be granted. Inspections can lead to an increase or reduction in the allowed area.

Card payments and refunds for all eventualities are catered for in system through a fully PCI compliant partner organisation or can be managed through a third party invoicing system where this is required.

Once granted a licence shop owners and agents will automatically receive system generated renewal reminder notifications.

The back office can review and pass or reject applications. They can also modify them and suggest these modifications back to the shop owner, with all comms being managed in system.

Additionally there is an inspection/enforcement application that works in accord with the table and chairs licensing system allowing for inspections and enforcement of out of scope usage and unauthorised use through warning notices and fines and ultimately prosecution.

Full system reporting is available.

Commercial Licensing – Premises and Personal, Temporary Event Notices and other Commercial Licensing

This deals with permissions and conditions around premises, owners and workers within certain establishments governed by Commercial Licensing regulations.

The application is made by the premises owner or their agent or individual online, detailing the reason for the application with conditional questions being asked pertaining to the type of applicant they are and the type of licence that they are applying for.

Applicants can upload any supporting documentation, photos or information supporting their application.

Where applicable we can make look ups to third party data sets to verify eligibility and any exclusions.

Where the council requires certain minimum standards to be in place the application process can force proofs of these to be uploaded.

Payments can be taken in advance and refunded if subsequent inspections mean that no license can be granted.

Card payments and refunds for all eventualities are catered for in system or can be managed through a third party invoicing system where this is required.

Once granted premises owners and agents will receive renewal reminder notifications.

The back office can review and pass or reject applications.

Additionally there is an inspection/enforcement application that works in accord with the Commercial Licensing system allowing for inspections and enforcement of out of scope usage and unauthorised use through warning notices and fines and ultimately prosecution.

Full system reporting is available.

Highways Licensing

This deals with permissions and conditions around skips, scaffolds, hoardings and loose material being placed on the pavement and highways.

The application is made by the contractor online detailing when and where and how large a section they are planning to use and they upload any supporting documentation or site plans.

If required the contractor can be forced to be part of a locally run approved contractor scheme before they are allowed to make an application.

Where the council requires certain minimum standards to be in place the application process can force proofs of these to be uploaded.

Payments can be taken in advance and refunded if subsequent inspections mean that no license can be granted.

Contractors can extend the scheme if the council allows for this and terminate it ahead of schedule. Card payments and refunds for all eventualities are catered for in system or can be managed through a third party invoicing system where this is required.

The back office can review and pass or reject requested schemes. They can also modify them and suggest these modifications back to the contractor, with all comms being managed in system.

Additionally there is an inspection/enforcement application that works in accord with highways licensing system allowing for inspections and enforcement of out of scope usage and unauthorised structures through warning notices and fines and ultimately prosecution.

The system interfaces with the existing Suspensions module so contractors who want to use the Highway for agreed reasons can also make a suspensions application in a single sweep.

The system interfaces with Street Manager, the national depository for street works and excavations.

Full system reporting is available.

Markets

This is a self service pitch booking and management tool that helps councils efficiently run their own and regulate third party markets.

It is based on the principle of self service helping to reduce the administrative burden on the back office markets team.

Pitch holders are asked to upload all relevant documentations (public liability insurances etc) to their accounts and they then can select their pitches and the commodities they will be offering.

The system auto regulates which pitches are offered as against the commodities offered and the nature of the pitch holder, regular/casual and then determines fees and charges.

These are automatically taken online and the markets team get a full reporting and back office management view.

A mobile inspection application is available to look up traders on site, check compliance's with agreed terms of trading and where necessary issue warning notices or fines.

Card payments and refunds for all eventualities are catered for in system.

Once granted pitch holders will receive renewal reminder notifications when permissions expire.

The back office can review and pass or reject applications and run reports.

Food Hygiene Licensing and Inspection

This deals with the licensing and inspections of premises that sell food.

The module aims to replace a heavily paper based registration and compliance system with a robust online one. This includes the premises operator uploading of proofs around permissions, certifications, training and hygiene standards.

The inspection teams will have online access to this information and be able to schedule visits and carry out spot checks reporting on these and issuing any non compliance and prohibition notices electronically. This could include fines and improvement notices and shutting premises down that are deemed to be a risk to public health.

Repeat visits are automatically scheduled through the application.

Premises that are not registered can be reported against and the appropriate progression actions followed.

The back office will deal with all case progressions, all local and national reporting requirements, with internally and externally and the preparation of court packs.

Commercial Waste

This module allows customers to contract to the Local Authority for the collection of specialised and commercial waste from associated premises.

Applications are made and paid for online, while there is a full back office service that can review all requests and agree to make bookings, confirm collection dates and fees and charges.

To incentivise businesses to selected the Councils commercial waste collection service as opposed to other organisations a discounts on the other commercial licences that businesses hold can be offered.

A detailed reports pack is included.

Bulky Waste

Bulky Waste allows customers to book a collection of large items that they don't want to keep any longer, sofas, fridges, tables etc.

Rather than them placing these outside and causing obstacles and litter on the kerb side, citizens can go online and describe the item, input sizes, upload pictures and offer dates and times when they will be around to allow for the collection plus any specific instructions or requests for aid in the removal of the objects. The online form will also cater for payments and concessions where these are applicable.

In the back office the waste team can review all requests and agree to make bookings, confirm this with the customer and build and despatch the schedule for the waste operatives to collect the items and confirm that this has been done.

A detailed reports pack is included.

Landlord Registration and Houses of Multiple Occupation

This deals with the regulation of Landlord Registration and the investigation of Houses of Multiple Occupancy.

The concept is to move the registration process on line which can include the premises operator uploading of proofs around permissions and certifications.

The inspection teams will have online access to this information and be able to schedule visits and carry out spot check reporting on these and issuing any non compliance and prohibition notices.

This could include fines and improvement notices and shutting premises down that are deemed to be a risk to public health.

Premises that are not registered can be reported against and the appropriate progression actions followed.

The back office will deal with all case progressions, all reporting requirements, with internally and externally and the preparation of court packs.

We are also have a data driven service that helps in targeting of investigations around unregistered HMOs Through data matching and cleansing we identify properties that are potentially HMOs and offer Local Authorities a probability rating allowing them to design an intelligence led proactive inspection schedule.

Cycle Hangers Management

As the demographics and make up of families in London continues to change and as car ownership continues to decrease and more sustainable transport options like cycling increases, increasingly there is a need to redefine how kerbside space is used.

The introduction of cycle hangers is a great example of this. Taking up only one or two car spaces these semi permanent structures allow people to store their bike securely on road and to declutter communal hall ways.

Customers set up an account, select a cycle hanger close to their home or place of work that has capacity, pay the fee for the period of time they want to use the cycle hanger for and pay a deposit for the key.

All stages of the application, including payment, are done online and there is no need for any manual intervention or back office review, unless councils want to check proof of residence or other eligibility criteria. This can in most cases be done automatically to via cross referencing with third party data sets.

Where the cards are still current any claims for refunds can be calculated by the systems and managed back to these cards, again without the need for human intervention.

Once payment is confirmed a key is sent out to the customer by the council and they get access to the cycle hanger they have selected.

Customers are able to report lost keys and request replacement ones through the system and also report maintenance and other issues.

A full reports pack comes along with the system.

Maintenance

Built really for kerbside maintenance jobs the system is expandable to cover pretty much any maintenance task.

It allows for pre planned preventative maintenance, scheduled services as well as ad hoc inspections.

There is a parts management function and an ability for the public to report issues needing investigation.

Report a Problem

Report a Problem is a public facing reporting depository that it allows members of the public to quickly input information to update councils on issues that they would like to get resolved or they see as noteworthy.

Reports can be made by casual users or customers with accounts and will be accepted through interactive forms with conditional questioning helping customers target exactly what they want to report and where the issue is.

Customers will be able to upload “evidence” in the form of photos, documents or sound files.

Previously reported issues will be displayed and where a member of the public is wanting to report issues that have previously been logged, rather than creating a duplicate report they can add their weight to the issue so the council can see how many people are concerned with it.

The system will take reported issues and automatically triage them sending them to the relevant service teams for investigation and resolution.

Modern APIs will manage this interaction and allow for updates from third party systems at set stages in the process for fixing the issue.

Report a Problem will manage communications with customers who have reported issues by sending them email and text alerts at stages set by the council.

A full reports pack will be available.

Report a Problem will be used initially for Abandon Vehicle and Noise reporting for August this year.

Environmental Enforcement

EE is module that allows Enforcement Officers to issue FPNs against a variety of offences via specialised HHT software. Details are verified on street to identify offenders and are automatically transmit to the back office for onward processing and payment.

The back office has full correspondence management, case progression, payment management and reporting capability. It also allows for the setting up and management of Public Space Protection Orders.

Within the environmental enforcement module there are various management and operational dashboards that display easily accessible management information. All of these dashboards have extensive filtering. To compliment the dashboards there is a reporting warehouse where scheduled reports can be set up to run at set times and to be sent to named individuals in agreed formats. Through the reports warehouse more detailed reports can also be compiled.

Where clients have their own central business intelligence teams Liberator will export all required data, in an agreed format, to whatever BI product is used.

The environmental enforcement service allows staff to either singularly or collectively build a case through an evidence gathering process where each individual observation may not result in any action being taken, but where the cumulative affect of the gathered evidence could lead to a prosecution.

This allows for a multi staged approaches where individuals or business owners may receive a rectification notice or several warning notices prior to prosecution.

As with the base FPN feature all stages are triggered automatically and all case preparation, up to and including court papers, once the relevant details have been entered into the system, are compiled without further manual intervention.

This feature can be used to help manage out various anti social behaviours such as untidy gardens, insanitary conditions and fly tipping.

FOI Self Service

This is a client led project to allow certain data sets to be placed in the public domain so FOI requests can be directed there and requesting customers can generate their own answers.

The data will be anonymised and will offer a range to date views, linear reports, graphics and map based representations.

Members of the public will also be able to download data so they can collate and produce their own reports.

Data is presented from any associated third party system. The service ingests data sets from any service line allowing councils to offer fully transparent open data portals to the public.

Smart Response

Smart Response allows for more conditional information to be shown to customers as they make their initial contact with the council. The aim here is to stop the need for these customers to use the initial contact to ask questions as they will be presented with the relevant information at point of logging in.

At the same time the back office system will compile a likely response to be presented to the back office user along with the customers inputted challenge as the is being compiled.

This will mean that the back office team see the contact and a pre scripted response, based on what the customer has said, the councils policy and other similar responses that have previously been sent out.

The back office team will of course be able to edit what is presented to them and in doing so the base system will learn and offer up a revised draft next time similar circumstances are met.

There is also an AI element to the customer portal so a virtual assistant can help customers compile a more meaningful interaction with the back office team ensuring that they use appropriate terminology and that they upload relevant supporting information etc.

Job Management System

JMS allows clients to deploy staff to manage specific jobs which can be set up on a scheduled or ad hoc nature.

The instructions for the jobs can be very simple or very complex and have multiple conditional phases if required.

Jobs are set up in the back office and deployed to mobile devices once the delivery team log on.

They collect their jobs, which can be scheduled in a specific order and update the back office records as and when they complete elements of each task they have been given. This can include the uploading of photos, signed documents and other media.

Where jobs relate to customer requests the customer can be updated as the job moves through various stages to conclusion.