



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Case study

Hillingdon Borough Council

From chaos to clarity:
Hillingdon impressed
by Zellis capabilities



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white blouse, is smiling broadly and shaking hands with a man whose arm is visible on the right side of the frame. The background is a blurred office setting with large windows and modern lighting.

The Journey of One Borough Council's Mission to Transform Their Recruitment System

In the London Borough of Hillingdon, where the demands of serving over 300,000 residents are the heart of every decision they make, Hayley Seabrook and her HR and Payroll team faced a challenge. The council's existing Applicant Tracking System (ATS) simply wasn't working.

Candidates often dropped out of the disengaging recruitment process, managers were known to go outside the process to bypass the clunky hiring system, and patchy data meant the team also struggled to answer the many Freedom of Information (FOI) requests frequently coming in.

Every inefficiency in hiring, HR and payroll can affect the council's ability to deliver the many essential services they provide - from social care to waste management. This important part of the department was letting the rest of the side down.

With the contract on their old system running out, Hayley knew the time for change had come.



A photograph of two people, a man and a woman, sitting at a desk in an office. The man is in the foreground, wearing a white shirt, looking intently at a laptop screen. The woman is behind him, wearing glasses and a leopard print top, also looking at the screen. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office space with windows and other people working.

Outdated Systems and Endless Manual Work

For a department which otherwise functions well, Hillingdon's previous ATS was limited and outdated. This meant that recruitment was bogged down by cumbersome, manual processes, often causing managers to go rogue and avoid the system entirely. Candidates frequently dropped out due to frustration or simply boredom, leaving critical roles unfilled. Compliance processes for new hires, vital for safeguarding vulnerable residents, were managed through an endless chain of emails, prone to error and delays.

"We were losing candidates during the process because it was just too long and not engaging.

Most people would just give us their CV so they didn't have to use the system at all. This essentially meant that we had to fill out the applications ourselves. It wasn't working, and we knew we had to find a solution."

Hayley Seabrook, HR and Payroll Service Manager,

Hillingdon was coming to the end of their contract with their existing ATS provider and wanted to take the opportunity to make a change.





Partnering for Solutions: Zellis and Eploy Step In

Having already built a good relationship with their Zellis Customer Success Manager, Wendy, and Account Manager, Julie, Hayley knew precisely where to go for help.

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"We had been a customer of Zellis for a long time, but we knew that Zellis HCM Cloud alone wouldn't solve all our problems. Wendy and Julie suggested _____, who they partner with.

We've always valued Zellis for their commitment to development, so we knew we could trust their recommendation.

Julie put us in touch with a local authority who also used Eploy, so we could ask them more about how it worked in practice.

What it could do blew our minds. So much so that we were concerned because it seemed too good to be true. We kept asking can it really do all this? And every time, the answer was yes."

Hayley Seabrook, HR and Payroll Service Manager,





**Implementing a new
system against the clock**

The implementation process usually takes around 16 weeks, but Hillingdon was on a race against time with a 10-week implementation deadline.

"Eploy made it really easy for us, and we quickly realised that the more effort that we put in, the more we got back," Hayley said. "There were a lot of files we had to provide, but Eploy gave us access to a portal with clear instructions and timelines."

Eploy constantly checked in with Hayley and her team to keep the project on track.

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"The way the folders were formatted made it really easy for us to upload information and fill in gaps if we'd forgotten anything, then we had calls to go through the data and make sure it was interpreted correctly."

Hayley Seabrook, HR and Payroll Service Manager,

Precise data mapping and rigorous testing ensured that Hillingdon went live in August with Eploy, embedding the system into their processes within their designated time frame.

"We're now in phase 2, working on the integration between Eploy and [Zellis HCM Cloud](#)," said Hayley. "Zellis interface document can look quite complex if you're not used to it, but Eploy provided us with a spreadsheet and made it very simple to see what we should focus on. We're just ping-ponging back the test stages and making changes as they arise, but so far, so good!"



A photograph of two people, a man and a woman, sitting at a desk in an office. The man, in the foreground, is wearing a white shirt and has a beard. The woman, behind him, is wearing glasses and a leopard print top. They are both looking at a laptop screen. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office space with windows.

**Improved Efficiency and
Serving Residents Better
Than Ever**

The new system has completely transformed the onboarding experience Hillingdon gives candidates, enabling them to onboard crucial team members far more quickly.

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"Everything is now done on the system. We're not constantly going outside of the system to provide updates like we were before, because they can see where they're at and what forms they need to fill out.

We also provide _____ to managers, and we love the compliance dashboard, recruitment driver dashboard and onboarding dashboard. It's so easy to log in and see everything. In the past, I couldn't even tell people how many jobs we had or how many people were in the onboarding process. If someone asks that question now, I can go straight onto the system and answer it.

We're now faster, more efficient, and ultimately able to serve our residents better," Hayley said. "The system has reduced our workload so much that, despite having a smaller team, we're taking on more work—and doing it better."

Hayley Seabrook, HR and Payroll Service Manager,





A Seamless Transformation

Having been initially concerned about the short time frame and whether the system would live up to expectations, Hayley and her team were surprised at how straightforward it all was.

"The system itself is so easy to use, both as a manager and as a core user, and we are constantly impressed by its flexibility," Hayley said.

Managers have nothing but praise for the new system and are impressed with how easy it is to move candidates through the process.

It has been particularly useful for compliance and safeguarding vetting, which in the past involved many emails and touchpoints; this is now done within the system.

"One of the best things is that the system will only allow you to raise a contract if the candidate has provided the information we need. This ensures we're compliant and there are no errors."

As for managers going rogue outside the system, it's a thing of the past. **"We don't allow anyone to bypass the system anymore as there is simply no need for it."**

With less manual work to do, Hillingdon can better utilise the staff they have, and despite having a smaller team than before, they can now take on other work. Not only that, but their reputation as a department within the company couldn't be better.

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"Our error rate on our payroll is now 0.01%. Every payroll manager who has come to us since has praised that, and we're proud of it."

Hayley Seabrook, HR and Payroll Service Manager,

Hayley and her team have built a strong relationship with Zellis. **"I know I can email Wendy or Julie to ask them any question, however silly it may be, and they are always there to answer, and if they can't answer it themselves, they know who can."**





A New Era for HR and Onboarding

"Be honest about your challenges," Hayley advises. "Zellis listens and comes up with solutions tailored to your needs. They always look for the right system for you; their support will always be invaluable to us. And they helped us meet our tight deadline by putting us in touch with Eploy and organising everything for us; we felt really supported."

Regular meetings between Hayley's team and their Zellis consultant enable them to develop solutions on their test system together. One of the things they are working on right now is showing an annual salary on their payslips.

"Wendy always encourages us to raise development and enhancement requests, and she'll explain how other people have got around their issues or send our ideas to the development team. They are just great. We also love Zellis online chat; you actually speak to a human! In fact, this service is so good that we are looking into implementing it into our own system."

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"For me personally and my team, we never want to leave Zellis! We'll always ask, "How can we do this with Zellis?" with every new project we face."

Hayley Seabrook, HR and Payroll Service Manager,





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Thank you for reading

If you're ready to transform your own HR and payroll processes, get in touch today to find out how Zellis and our partners can guide you on your journey.

[Get in touch](#)

