



The **co-operative** bank

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

The Co-operative Bank – achieving cost savings in excess of £1m with Access People

CLIENT: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK

PRODUCT: ACCESS PEOPLE^{EXD} HR AND PAYROLL

SECTOR: FINANCIAL SERVICES



The objectives and project requirements

In 2020, The Co-operative Bank PLC selected Access People for an ambitious integrated HCM solutions project for its 3,200 employees, with a fast turnaround required.

The Bank wanted to:

- Reduce total HR and payroll systems and service costs by a minimum of 40%
- Improve data quality, visibility and reporting
- Reduce payroll queries and ad-hoc data requests
- Have staff self-serving
- Improve the user-experience
- Be able to scale; with the ability to adapt and develop the system

The specific solution featured the PeopleXD HR system and payroll managed services function. The Co-operative Bank was already familiar with Access, having been long-standing customers of Access Learning Solutions – using the Learning Management System, with financial services governance, risk and compliance and mortgage and home finance training.

“From the very first engagement with Access People, the Bank was provided with immediate confidence in our ability to successfully deliver a challenging project which would both make our People function significantly more cost effective but would also provide a better colleague and leader experience,” says Maria Cearns, Managing Director of Customer & People, The Co-operative Bank.

“We needed a much more cost-effective, reliable and intuitive payroll and HCM set of services and solutions that would require less time to operate and provide a better user experience.”

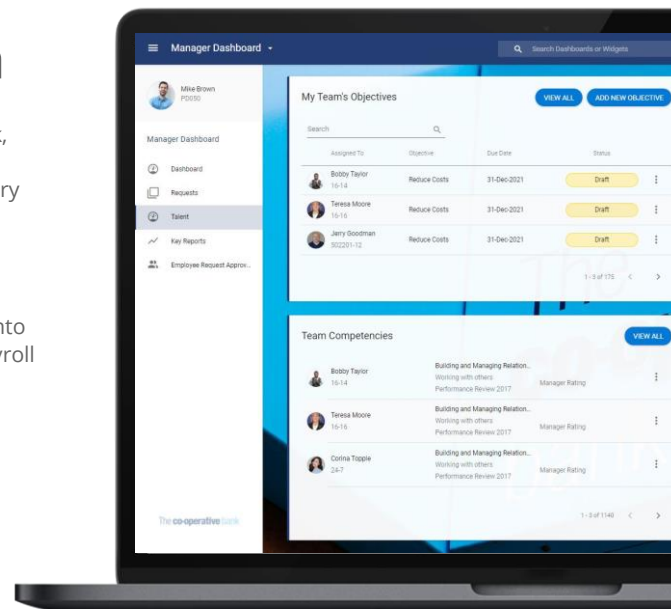
Ruth Clark
Head of People Delivery
The Co-operative Bank

Implementing the new HR and Payroll solution

The same afternoon the selection had been made by the Bank, the project teams met for a formal kick-off to align project milestones, governance, methodology and scope. From the very next day, the teams prioritised defining and capturing the individual requirements for the HR and Payroll solutions in addition to finalising data migration planning.

Once the ‘**Launch**’ stage was signed off, both teams moved onto the ‘**Deploy**’ stage. This encompassed building the HR and Payroll PeopleXD system based on the business and functional requirements, along with scheduling training workshops.

The ‘**Review & Run**’ stage encompassed user acceptance test (UAT) data readiness; a UAT cycle of 3-weeks consisting of functional, end-to-end, integration and performance related testing.



Following sign-off, both teams moved onto the **'Parallel Run'** stage. This consisted of 4 weeks where the objective was to fully match the payroll results produced by the PeopleXD solution with the legacy system of the Bank.

Finally, following the go-live date in November, Access and the Bank worked together to ensure smooth hand-over from project mode to 'Business as Usual Live Support.'

All objectives and targets were achieved to schedule, and ahead of the standard project plan for this type of deployment.

"To undertake a critical project, with short timescales, in the middle of a pandemic and delivered entirely through homeworking was viewed by some with scepticism. However, what we have experienced so far has set the benchmark of what a successful project looks like! In fact, the Access team has performed a magnificent effort, in adverse times and also when we know some of our information has been complex," says Maria Cearns, Managing Director of Customer & People, The Co-operative Bank.

The Bank communicated the changes in how their new payroll would work and explained the new HR systems and capabilities to managers through 'lunch and learn' sessions. These garnered two-thirds of that population, even though sessions were not mandated. Project leads also held daily stand-up calls, to maintain momentum and handle issues immediately as they arose.

Overcoming challenges

The Co-operative Bank faced some real challenges with their existing data quality. The Access team ran a 'deep dive' approach on all data that was presented and found a number of inaccuracies.

In addition, the Bank also had an unscheduled reorganisation mid-project, requiring existing job posts in the solution to be reconfigured.

Another challenge was the pension salary sacrifice scheme, which had been calculated incorrectly in the Bank's previous HR and payroll solution.

The Access People project team delivered solutions to the challenges in the PeopleXD system, along with a stringent approach to user acceptance testing.

"Engagement throughout project delivery and on a BAU basis has been consistently strong and is a genuine partnership approach to delivery and overcoming any challenges. It has allowed us to uncover historical issues, which we have jointly resolved but also to fundamentally improve our payroll processing – with better visibility and flexibility each month than we have ever had. Our payroll accuracy has been sustained above SLAs and the ongoing payroll service feels supportive and responsive to the Bank's needs and changes." Maria Cearns, Managing Director of Customer & People, The Co-operative Bank.

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Maria Cearns
Managing Director of
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The Co-operative Bank



The results

All Co-operative Bank employees are now using the new PeopleXD HR system with payroll managed service which is delivering efficiencies in terms of reducing operating costs, usability for staff, ease of reporting and improved data quality.

The new HR & Payroll system has well exceeded the original objective of a **40% reduction in system/service costs**, with **savings of £1m+ per annum**.

“Although our principle driver for a move of HR and payroll software and services was a financial one, the results of this change have far surpassed simply a monetary value. We have been able to insource significant activity back into the Bank – this has been completed without the requirement to increase headcount within our People function via the increased and improved use of self service by both our colleagues and leaders.”
Nick Slape, CEO, The Co-operative Bank.

More results include:

- Improvements to the user experience for the whole workforce
- More accurate data and reporting functionality
- Payroll query calls reduced from 750-800 per month down to typically zero
- A recent survey across the Bank confirmed increased satisfaction with payroll, including the new aspect of self-service access
- Email responses from the Managed Service Team that are received are helpful and in line with published SLAs.

The project transition and ongoing service has been recently audited, and auditors confirmed that this has delivered a demonstrably better position for the Bank's data.

“The project was a huge success” said Ruth Clarke. “Despite the complexities of our payroll, the project delivered a quick and accurate transfer of our data part way through a tax year and the subsequent payroll service and support we received felt like a strong partnership from day one and just goes from strength to strength.”

Ongoing measurement of project success will be in the form of year-on-year tracking on reduction in call and email queries thanks to employee self-service.

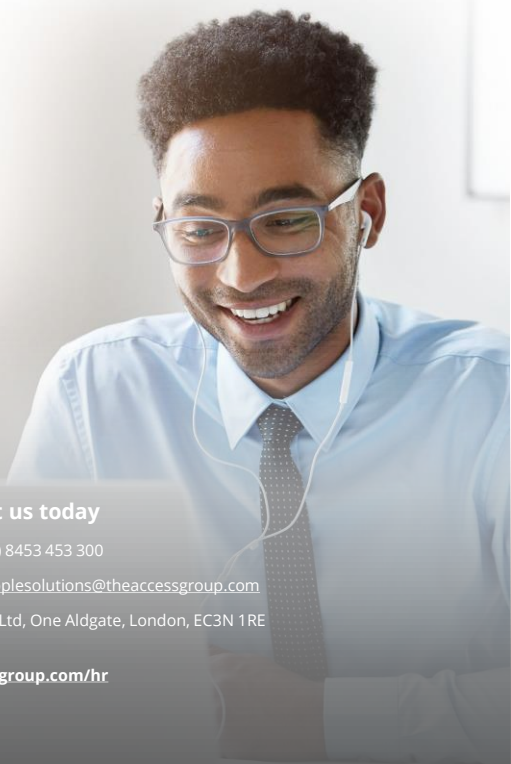
Access People and The Co-operative Bank plc are pleased to announce that the Payroll Managed Services project won Project of the Year at the 2021 CIPP Annual Excellence Awards.

About Access People

Access helps more than 35,000 customers transform the way their business software is used, giving every employee the freedom to do more of what's important. Founded in 1989, The Access Group has an enterprise valuation of over £1 billion and employs more than 2,900 staff. For more information about The Access Group, visit: theaccessgroup.com/hr

“Following the delivery of the system and service, I can honestly say that this was one of the most positive decisions I have taken for both the People function and the Bank since my move into the MD of People role. The whole Access team has consistently displayed a ‘can do’ attitude and are really positive whoever we have spoken to. To create such a culture across the team is a credit to your business.”

Maria Cearns
Managing Director of
Customer & People
The Co-operative Bank



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