



Case Study: Nottinghamshire Police Authority

Embracing Change to Deliver Better Public Services

Nottinghamshire Police Service, formed out of the old county and city forces, is headquartered in Nottingham. Today, the Service employs some 4,000 men and women as regular officers, special constables and support staff who are responsible for the effective policing of a diverse geographic area that represents more than 1,000,000 residents.

Nottinghamshire Police has a 500-strong vehicle fleet that includes: police cars, covert operation and specialist vans, traffic scooters, horseboxes and a mobile police station. Repairing and maintaining this fleet to ensure optimum safety and vehicle availability has always been key to Nottinghamshire's public service remit ... but at the same time an onerous and administration-heavy activity.

So, when the UK government launched its 1992 Private Finance Initiative (PFI), which offered private sector capital and technologies to public sector organisations, Nottinghamshire Police Service decided to use the funding opportunity to outsource its fleet management. By entering into an innovative 25-year partnership with specialist fleet services provider Venson, Nottinghamshire Police has been able to achieve an impressive 98 percent vehicle availability target that has delivered significant cost-benefits.

Focusing On Safety And Best Value

Nottinghamshire has long been recognised as one of the most innovative Police Services in the country. The organisation has always been keen to consider and, where appropriate, embrace new ways of working that will support its focus on providing round-the-clock, best value services that maintain law and order and deliver comprehensive advice and support to the general public and business community.

When PFI was launched, Nottinghamshire Police Service was reviewing the use of its Nottingham City premises and considering whether the building should be renovated to provide in-house vehicle workshop facilities.

Lucas Ortega, Head of Procurement at Nottinghamshire Police takes up the story:

"Being able to respond quickly and safely to an incident is critical for any Emergency Services provider. In Nottinghamshire Police Service, efficient fleet management is vital to the delivery of our public commitment. Our vehicles need to meet exacting health and safety standards and be back on the road as quickly as possible after repair or maintenance - we can't afford to take chances or run a fleet at less than full capacity.

Our Nottingham City review helped us realise that effective fleet management requires expert knowledge and skills that we do not have in-house. We quickly became aware that we would be much more likely to achieve best value by

outsourcing our fleet management to a specialist provider like Venson and reallocating our in-house resource to more crucial police activities.”

Bringing In Emergency Services Fleet Expertise

Venson’s specialist knowledge about the needs, pressures and performance criteria of the Emergency Services sector, gave Nottinghamshire Police the confidence to ask for a fully outsourced, whole-of-life vehicle procurement, service and maintenance contract. The PFI provided an initial capital investment of £4.5 million for vehicle procurement and operational infrastructure, with a further £3.5 million for procuring new vehicles on an ongoing basis.

The partnership has transferred much of the vehicle risk to Venson and sets challenging targets for vehicle availability. Venson’s fleet management service has consistently delivered high results against Nottinghamshire Police’s 98 percent availability target and currently provides:

- A Nottinghamshire-based dedicated customer support team
- State-of-the-art management and operational systems
- Vehicle procurement, equip-for-service and disposal
- Mechanical and accident repair and maintenance services
- A pool of spare vehicles in key categories
- Comprehensive fleet availability management
- A purpose-built, high-tech secure vehicle workshop
- 24/7/365 vehicle response services
- Accident repairs
- Mobile / emergency repair units
- Inspections, servicing, MOTs and a specialist collection & delivery facility.

Commenting on the success of the partnership, Lucas Ortega says:

“We wanted an innovative, value-for-money service that would deliver against our extremely demanding performance requirements, provide a high level of Emergency Services expertise and ensure we maintain our reputation for first class public service. The decision to outsource our fleet to Venson was definitely the right move – we are now able to offer our police drivers good service, much better availability and the assurance that their vehicles should always be fit for purpose. Working with a specialist fleet management provider has moved us much closer to our best value targets.”