

Incremental Improvement workstream		AMBER
More proactive use of Covalent (our performance management system)		GREEN
<p>During quarter 2 Maidstone hosted the annual South East user group for Covalent. This provided an opportunity for performance officers from the MKIP partnership authorities to identify differences and similarities in how the system is run and managed. The user group also enabled the officers to hear about how other authorities have designed and built middleware with the help of covalent to cut down on manual entry. A list of systems that have been successfully integrated with covalent is being prepared by the software provider to identify if there are any that Maidstone could implement.</p> <p>The user group also provided the opportunity to hear from Covalent about how they are developing the system. By the end of the financial year Covalent will be browser based rather than java based. This will impact on how people access and update their data but will also provide more personalised views that will enable real-time information (if middleware is implemented) to be viewed on the system. This will require further training for officers but will improve their Covalent experience.</p> <p>A meeting to discuss how best service planning can be aligned across MKIP has been arranged for November. We will use any best practice from the other authorities to improve our own service planning process.</p> <p>The first report for Economic Development's KICC project has been produced and feedback has been positive. The Performance and Information Officer has been approached by Parkwood Leisure about holding their performance data on covalent.</p>		
Economic Development		AMBER
The new structure has been approved and posts have been advertised. The strategy is reliant on work on employment land allocation as part of the Local Plan.		
Other work		N/A
<p>Bright Sparks – A focus group has been held and a new scheme designed this will be going to CLT on 5 November. Work is also being carried out between Policy and Information and Business Improvement to look at a simple staff suggestion scheme that can be introduced.</p> <p>Local Government Futures – As part of the Council's approach to Strategic Planning and Prioritisation it would be useful to purchase a bi-annual "state of Maidstone" place profile report from local futures.</p>		

Asset Management workstream		AMBER
Future use of Town Hall		AMBER
<p>A 3-year lease has been agreed with VAM for the entrance foyer.</p> <p>Management of meetings has been retained by Democratic Services while its staff continue to be located there. VEBU is looking into the business case for promoting the</p>		

<p>use of the Town hall as a venue.</p> <p>The property team will lead on options for making the best use of the Town Hall going forwards</p>	
Community asset transfer	AMBER
<p>The lease of Fant Hall is being finalised by Legal Services. Community Partnerships held an open day at Heather House during the summer to generate interest in community asset transfer, generally and specifically for Heather House.</p>	
Major assets review – King Street	GREEN
<p>Cabinet agreed last September to the closure and demolition of the car park and the construction of a short stay car park, whilst also requiring officers to seek suitable development opportunities.</p> <p>Advice from GL Hearn and Page & Wells concluded that there was no merit in exploring a joint venture with the owners of AMF next door for redevelopment of the site and that the best option in the short term was demolition and construction of a surface level car park.</p> <p>Demolition of the old structure is nearly complete and work will shortly commence on the construction of a surface car park with completion expected in early December.</p> <p>A project team is being assembled to explore various options for longer term use of the site with the view of bringing the site to market accordingly.</p>	
Major assets review – Medway Street	N/A
<p>It has been agreed not to pursue at present.</p>	
Major assets review – Park Wood	GREEN
<p>Following initial consultations with key tenants, it has been agreed to improve the main access and signage from Sutton Road, and environmental improvements along Bircholt Road. A budget of £50k has been provided for the first phase. Scheme designs have been worked up by a Landscape Architect for further consultation. Work is expected to start on site in the New Year.</p> <p>A specification is being prepared to appoint a specialist advisor to provide strategic advice on the management of the estate and to carry out rent reviews. Acquisition of additional small business units is being considered.</p>	
Integrated Transport strategy	AMBER
<p>There have been ongoing discussions with officers and Members at both local and county level to continue the development of the strategy. Because of opposition to some of the specific schemes in the previous iterations of the document, the revised strategy is more general in its approach to measures and actions.</p> <p>The previous list of actions has been reviewed and refined, reducing the number to make the document more manageable and more 'strategic' in its approach.</p> <p>There is a move back to a strategy with more focus on Park and Ride, with a proposed allocation to support this to be included in the Local Plan. Detailed discussions are</p>	

ongoing in this regard with the landowner and agent as to what will be required.

Much time has been spent in the writing of the revised strategy, with this now 95% complete. As soon as the housing target and distribution patterns are agreed the work can be completed and the draft strategy shared with officers and Members.

Other work

N/A

Energy consumption

This continues to be an area where we are looking for reductions in consumption. Environmental performance will play a larger part in the evaluation of tenders and the management of contractors, as described in the commissioning and procurement strategy for 2013-16.

Environmental performance of property will be examined with particular emphasis on Maidstone House, the Museum, the Depot and the Crematorium. Closer control of environmental conditions and voltage optimisation in Maidstone House and LED lighting at the Museum will be completed this year.

External Challenge workstream

GREEN

Revenues & Benefits

GREEN

Partnership has delivered, we are now looking at the issue of fraud – In light of the wider changes on welfare reform and a single fraud investigation service the council has decided to look at benefit fraud as a shared service to address resilience. A business case has been developed for a joint fraud service with Swale, the proposed structure and costs have been developed and a decision is expected on this by Christmas.

In terms of support for residents a Kent wide website has been developed.

Planning

GREEN

There was a tri-Cabinet decision reached on 12 June 2013 to implement the shared service for Planning Support. Supporting this project is the procurement and delivery of a joint environmental health and planning system, the procurement element of which was completed in September with contracts due to be signed in October. The shared service and ICT procurement are on course to deliver their savings targets.

Hazlitt Arts Centre

GREEN

The contract terms have been agreed, the TUPE details finalised and confirmed and the formal transfer completed at the end of September. The implementation of the transfer includes a 3 month period to complete the formal handover in relation to assets, the condition survey and undertaking capital works. This work is progressing as planned.

Building Control

AMBER

A decision has been made to explore alternative delivery models and currently both partnership and outsourcing options are being investigated and assessed. This includes partnership with Tunbridge Wells our MKIP partner with the key objectives of resilience and quality of service. A decision on the preferred model will be made in the New Year with a view to presentation of the business case at the MKIP panel in March. A partnership agreement would keep open the option for further partners to join and for

the diversification of services for additional revenue streams.

Corporate peer review

GREEN

The peer review has been completed. An action plan will be developed once the final report is published. Actions will be focused on achieving the council's priorities and future strategic planning.

Transformation workstream

GREEN

Customer services delivery

AMBER

The work programme is progressing well, but in Q2 2013/14 we have seen a large drop in visits to the website (34,289 fewer than in Q2 2012/13) that we cannot currently explain. We have also seen telephone and face to face contacts also decrease, but the proportional drop in website visits is much larger. Many more online self serve forms are being completed, which is positive and suggests things are easier to find on the new website, but we will monitor website visits monthly over the next quarter to try to understand if the drop in website visits is positive (people are finding what they want easily and not having to visit the website multiple times) or negative (they do not like the design of the new website).

Numbers of outgoing post items have increased by 4454 from last year. However, the main reason for this due to Council Tax, who have had to send out 8,500 extra reminders, final reminders and summonses to the more than 6,000 benefits recipients who have had to pay something towards their Council Tax for the first time this year.

Service efficiency/channel shift reviews **Green**

- **Parking** – Following consultation with a sample of residents and lots of work with the Parking, Customer Services and Corporate Support team, some quick win recommendations have been agreed and work has started to implement them:
 - Reducing post and increasing security of payments: Renewal letters will now ask residents to call the Contact Centre or visit the Gateway to renew their permits rather than send back a paper renewal so that payments can be taken more securely and the renewal process is quicker. Renewal letters will also warn residents that as of next year renewal letters will not be sent to them and they will be asked for an email address when they renew their permit(s) this so they can receive an email reminder next year. The response to this from residents will be monitored over the next few months to make sure the take up of email reminders is good enough before we definitely stop paper reminders next year.
 - Permits to run for a full 12 months instead of being linked to set dates for each zone. This will stop some new applicants having to pay full price for a permit that lasts less than 12 months before they have to apply again.
 - Quicker and easier validation of proofs by asking residents for their car insurance policy schedule as the preferred proof, which tends to be easy and quick to get and shows proof of residence and car ownership. Proofs will now be validated in the Gateway rather than scanned and validated in the back office.

These changes are expected to produce cashable savings of approx. £2.3K from reducing outgoing post, although this saving will not be made until 2014/15 and 2015/16, and efficiencies in staff time of 0.1-0.2 FTE. Other improvements will be made to save staff time and money: cost/benefits analysis is being undertaken for delivery options for residents permits in the future to see if it is worth buying a new

systems and moving to virtual permits or simply introducing an online application form.

- **Housing** –Due to the breadth of the review of housing it was identified that the review phase may take longer as implementation of changes to certain processes may need to occur earlier in the process. Of greatest priority is the need to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation. The Project Launch has been held with Housing staff and exercises have been distributed to gain an understanding of where staff spend their time and to gather ideas and frustrations. The Temporary accommodation process has been mapped and immediate changes have been identified and are being implemented in conjunction with Housing, the Gateway and Benefits, to achieve quick wins. Consultation with residents is being undertaken and the first survey has been distributed.

Customer centricity recommendations **Green**

- The out of hours service is being delivered by Medway Control Centre rather than KCC from 1 October – 31 March whilst we investigate how we should deal with out of hours homelessness enquiries.
- Emails coming into Customer Services have continued to rise. The Gateway as well as the Contact Centre now deal with emails, but work has started to begin to understand what sort of emails we are getting and how long these are taking to answer.

Future of front facing operation **Green**

- The Gateway building is currently being explored as an option for housing the Enterprise Hub
- Work is progressing to understand our medium and longer term need for face to face transactions
- Conversations ongoing with Capital & Regional (the landlord for Maidstone House and the Gateway), Kent County Council and other organisations about options for the future
- A KCC workshop with Gateway partners to discuss their plans and needs for the future is planned for November

Digital inclusion **Green**

- First meeting of the Digital Inclusion Working Group has been held – this includes, Age UK, VAM, Mind and Golding Homes.
- A set of vision and objectives have been drafted for the group and agreed a draft plan for progress
- Expanded the group to include Hyde Housing and JCP representative and an invitation to Moat has been issued.
- Collated much more substantial information on training provision and accessible computers in the borough – this information is being mapped
- Started a survey in the Gateway and with Benefit visiting officers looking at the level of digital skills and understanding of Benefits claimants.
- Collated a range of information on offers around broadband, smart phones, PC/laptop deals that could help those who are digitally excluded through lack of money

Information management (Anna Collier) **Green**

- Objective have now completed their investigation work: they held interviews with key service managers and heads of services and circulated a staff survey
- The workshop has been held with SLT to present findings to date and to consider the future strategy for information management

<p><u>Website (Paul O'Grady)</u> Green/ Amber</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotes are being requested for development of a more mobile device friendly website • An online forms package has been procured. Training has begun involving ICT and the Customer Services Web Team and good progress has been made on the Bulky waste online reporting form 	
Waste & Recycling – new contract	GREEN
<p>The new contract started on Monday 5 August 2013 and has now been operating for two months. The significant changes to collection days had a greater impact than initially expected although the performance of this contract start has been comparable with previous changes. The services are now working well and delivering improved recycling services. Improved technology has also been implemented with real-time reporting from the collection vehicles back to the contact centre and client team, enabling higher visibility of the service. Customer contact is also now returning to normal levels with a high level of missed collections now being reported through the on-line form.</p>	
Commercial waste	GREEN
<p>The commercial waste service was launched in March 2013, offering local businesses a waste collection in bags or bins alongside a free paper and cardboard recycling collection. There are currently 104 customers signed up to the service which will generate an annual turnover of approximately £72,000. These businesses are located in the town centre as well as some of the villages including Headcorn and Staplehurst. The service has attracted a range of businesses including small retail outlets, offices and small commercial units as well as national companies including Costa Coffee and Subway. The service is also now benefitting a range of internal departments, including bereavement services, grounds maintenance, the museum and property services, through offering recycling and an affordable waste collection. The service is also looking to improve the recycling of paper and cardboard from Maidstone House.</p> <p>The service is on target to achieve the objective of 150 customers in the first 12 months. The service is projected to breakeven in the second year of operation and to achieve a market share of 10% (350 customers) by April 2015.</p>	
ICT	AMBER
<p>Work to implement the shared service is shown below and is proceeding to plan. However, the financial position is still not entirely clear and work is still ongoing corporately to understand the required funding that might be required from the ICT capital pot for MBC projects.</p> <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MKIP ICT coffee morning at TWBC planned for Thursday 18th Oct • MKIP ICT staff away day planned for 9th October at Oakwood • New Service desk pages live on intranet enabling view of personal incidents logged and status of call • MKIP ICT presenting to Local Government Strategy Forum on 15-16th October in Manchester. <p>Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of projects across MKIP now complete and being presented to MKIP ICT board on 19th October • Mid Kent ICT and EKS ICT disaster recovery and Business continuity concept paper agreed by Kent Connects Strategic Project Board. PID completed and 	

<p>expected to be approved on 10th October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Multi Function devices contract complete and roll out of new equipment to start during October November • NetConsent policy management software installed – roll out expected October / November • Planning Support and EH – procurement awaiting sign off by finance. Expected to be complete and contract in place by end October • Mailbox migration – less than 10% of staff and Members now left to migrate. Awaiting clarification of legal service requirements. • The draft “Technology Strategy” will be presented to ICT board on 19th October • Cautionary contacts database cloned from TWBC and installed on MBC systems. Now in test with Alastair Barker <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance meeting to discuss ongoing finance processes set for 10th November. 	
Finance	AMBER
Due to a lack of suitable candidates for the Chief Accountant proceeding to the interview stage, the restructure has been delayed again. Options are being explored, including a secondment from another organisation and re-advertising the role.	
Housing – strategies and policies	GREEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Housing Assistance Policy agreed by the Cabinet Member • Homelessness continues to increase; Housing commercialisation project is in progress to help us deal with some of the issues we are experiencing with high use of temporary accommodation. The Housing Review facilitated by the Business Improvement Team has prioritised homelessness and temporary accommodation to be reviewed first and will assist in identifying ways of reducing the use length of stay in temporary accommodation, making processes more efficient and reducing spend on temporary accommodation. Several exercises have been carried out with staff and some improvements identified. • Performance within the Private Sector Housing has improved with more grant approvals and visits undertaken. The action plan will superseded by the Business Improvement efficiency review. Private Sector Housing is not as urgent a priority for improvement as temporary accommodation and will be reviewed after other higher priorities in the Housing service. Implementation is expected to complete in March 2014. • The Housing Strategy refresh is delayed awaiting Local Plan progress. • Work has commenced on the Homelessness Strategy with the assistance of the Policy Team. The review and consultation phase has commenced with the aim of the draft document being available in December 2013. 	
Housing – commercialisation project	AMBER
It currently seems unlikely that the Council will be able to proceed with the purchase of the property originally identified as suitable for temporary accommodation because of other interested parties. However, the project is being well run and managed and will be closed prematurely if the purchase does not continue. Other options are being explored.	
Corporate Support	AMBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print room has recently taken on printing and managing all mail outs for the joint parking services group, which is proving valuable internally in terms of efficiency savings and effectiveness and has created knowledge within Corporate Support on 	

<p>how to manage the service in future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our requirements for the post print solution may be changing, still with the intention of reducing costs. However, discussions with the recommended tenderer are still ongoing but their response has been poor. Until this is resolved we cannot usefully explore whether there is a market to sell our service. • Print room has also recently taken on in house printing of two large service areas - Sports & Play and Electoral Registration. This includes some promotional material and mail outs to customers, which again improves the efficiencies in the print/post room, thus reducing costs for internal departments from gaining maximum postage discounts. • An overall Post/Print solution remains a priority. As referred to above, there has been slow progress with the preferred tenderer, which has prevented us moving forward. However, with or without the new kit we intend to reduce the amount of colour printing. • We are in discussion with MKIP partners about undertaking some of their scanning for certain services and printing their mail. 	
Environmental Health	GREEN
<p>The business case for Environmental Health was agreed on 12 June 2013 at a tri-cabinet meeting and is being implemented. Supporting this project is the procurement and delivery of a joint environmental health and planning system, the procurement element of which was completed in September with contracts due to be signed in October.</p>	
MKIP structure options	GREEN
<p>The MKIP Employment model project, now renamed Operational model to better reflect the scope of the project, is running to plan with a business case due to the MKIP Board in December 2013 and then decisions, with full scrutiny, planned to take place at each authority before May 2014. The options have been significantly narrowed down under direction from the MKIP Board and the business case is being finalised. Communications on the project and its content will expanded out to a wider group of stakeholders from now to May to ensure all Members and staff are engaged by the time a decision is taken next year.</p>	
Cross organisational collaboration	GREEN
<p>Employment related support initiatives progressing, work experience initiative continuing with positive outcomes, eight staff members trained up to act as mentors and continue positives outcomes for young people who have been offered mentoring so far. Business visits have been positive with businesses willing to offer work experience and apprenticeships and officers now need to follow this through. Launched Inspiring the Future campaign to get business people into schools to talk about their job and career. Quality mark designed to celebrate and thank businesses getting involved with youth employment initiatives and now being developed as to promotion. Jobs fair held in September with over 1000 people attending and 24 employers. Training provider website project progressing and launch expected mid-November.</p> <p>Troubled Families project progressing, Local Operational Group meeting monthly and reviewing cases. Project Board meetings held and programmed for the year. 125 Year 1 and 2 families have been identified and validates and partners are being encouraged to make rolling nominations. FIP workers in place and caseload identified and allocated, lead worker training provided and lead worker allocations being identified. Schools engagement progressing, voluntary sector involvement secured, business case approved. Projects have been identified that will complement the programme and pilots will be run once the right families for these projects have been identified.</p>	

Good information and knowledge management	AMBER
<p>Information Management - The Information Management Review has been completed, a discussion workshop held with SLT and the draft final report has just been received. Work to establish what our vision and objectives are in terms of information management is required quickly and the report identifies improvements to structure, governance, policies and systems that will need to be undertaken. The work required as a result of the information management audit will need additional resource within the policy and information team in terms of getting the basics right.</p> <p>Performance management information was discussed at the SLT workshop in terms of how useful is our system to managers and how can we get more real time information for key services such as Planning and Housing so managers can use it to develop, improve and manage their services. The Policy and Information team will take this work forward in the next year, this could lead to additional resource in terms of middleware to extract data into covalent or a new system.</p> <p>Customer Contact Camp – A customer contact camp was held in September to look at the information we hold on customers and how this could be improved. A number of actions were identified resulting from the review and will be considered alongside the recommendations from the Information Management Review.</p> <p>Data Quality Policy Review- The review was postponed until November and will be concluded by December. The aim is to review the policy and instead of getting managers to sign statements it is hoped that we will be able to get managers to sign up to the policy using Net Consent. The review will include a learning needs assessment and policy review looking at best practice. Data Quality Audits of performance information are now scheduled throughout the year and include recommendations for improvements that will be added to service plans. This year so far three indicators have been DQ checked.</p> <p>Residents Survey – The resident's survey is now underway and will be reported in January with interim results in December. This will inform our new Strategic Plan</p> <p>Mosaic – Business Improvement are trying to arrange a session with Experian and willing Kent authorities to talk through the new Mosaic national classification being launched next year and what Experian can offer us included with our licence and/or at additional cost in terms of important customer insight to fit with our corporate priorities.</p> <p>The service delivery framework table showing Mosaic analysis of a number of different services' customers has been received from KCC and uploaded onto the Mosaic intranet page.</p> <p>We are exploring with KCC how Mosaic can be used effectively to highlight those likely to be digitally excluded, where they live, how they could be engaged with and their possible needs to become digitally included. Use of Mosaic has been explored to target specific groups to maximise sign up to e-billing, saving the Council money by reducing outgoing post. However, it seems probable that for this project a more all-encompassing approach using people that contact us is more appropriate</p> <p>Intranet – The information management review has highlighted that many of the pages on the intranet are out of date and that information is hard to find and access. This is an area of concern.</p>	

Organisational culture	GREEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competency framework launched• Competency DVD delivered on time• Greats DVD almost complete• One Council briefings running currently• Sounding board set up at manager and staff level• Facilitation skills programme run• Coaching conversations programme commenced• IiP assessment being booked for December	