

**Corporate Improvement Plan update October – March 2013/14**

The Corporate Improvement Plan explains the key workstreams for the Council's improvement journey, the drivers for improvement as well as priority services and projects for improvement. It allows work to be planned, sufficiently supported and monitored to ensure savings needs and the improvements required for the Council to meet its priority outcomes are delivered.

Progress on the improvement workstreams and the projects that sit in these workstreams is reported to Cabinet as part of the performance report every six months. The most recent progress report for 2013/14 is shown below.

<b>Incremental Improvement workstream</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
<b>More proactive use of Covalent (our performance management system)</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<p>We are now using covalent to track scrutiny recommendations.</p> <p>Covalent has been upgraded to include new performance dashboards to make it more user friendly for managers and encourage managers to use performance information more regularly. We are also reviewing reach the summit to identify a more suitable 'one council' approach for services.</p> <p>The Policy and Information team have been looking at how they can engage services more in the work they do to encourage use as a corporate resource, this will be joined up with communications.</p>	
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
<p>A consultant has been appointed to develop the new Economic Development Strategy and a survey of businesses as well as a series of conversations have been completed on what good growth means. The results will feed into the new strategy and the emerging Strategic Plan.</p>	
<b>Other work</b>	For info
<p><b>Innovate</b> - The first round of the Innovate scheme went to Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) in early April. In total, 38 suggestions were received from staff that were considered by CLT. Eleven of these were selected to go forward, further work was requested for 11 of them before re-submission in the next round and the rest were rejected. The next round of suggestions will go to CLT in June, along with further information on suggestions from the previous round.</p>	

<b>Asset Management workstream</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
<b>Future use of Town Hall</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
<p>A 3-year lease with VAM for the entrance foyer has been signed. Specifications for the refurbishment of the foyer have been agreed and consulted with Members. Work is due to start at the end of May.</p>	

Management of meetings has been retained by Democratic Services while their staff continue to be located there. The Visitor Economy Business Unit is looking into the business case for promoting the use of the Town hall as a venue.	
<b>Community asset transfer</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
The lease of Fant Hall is awaiting signature by the community group. Community Partnerships have, for the time being, opted to bring Heather House back under direct Council management pending a suitable long term sustainable solution.	
<b>Major assets review – King Street</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
The former multi storey car park and supermarket has been redeveloped into a surface level car park, which is now operating successfully and profitably. Opportunities for longer term redevelopment and site assembly with the former tenpin bowling site are being explored.	
<b>Major assets review – Medway Street</b>	N/A
It has been agreed not to pursue at present.	
<b>Major assets review – Park Wood</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
Scheme designs for improved signage and landscape improvements are being finalised, with the latter to be coordinated with the implementation of broadband later this year.  Acquisition of additional small business units is nearing agreement and other investment opportunities are being pursued as part of the Council's property investment strategy.	
<b>Integrated Transport strategy</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
The need for further traffic modelling has been agreed, since previous modelling was based in a much lower housing target (10,080) and a plan period for the local plan to 2026. Using the new objectively assessed housing need of 19,600 and a plan period to 2031, a brief for modelling has been prepared and the work has commenced. There is more positive dialogue underway with Kent County Council and agreement to the modelling being carried out. There will need to be continuing dialogue and negotiation.  Following the completion of the modelling and analysis of results, revisions to the strategy and actions will be made as appropriate before a further round of public consultation.	
<b>Other work</b>	N/A
<b>Energy consumption</b>  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.  Improved energy performance of property will be sought with particular emphasis on Maidstone House, the Museum, the Depot and the Crematorium. Installation of LED lighting at the Museum is complete, work to enable closer control of environmental conditions in Maidstone House has begun and installation of LED lighting in Maidstone House and in other suitable buildings throughout the estate will be considered later this year.	

<b>External Challenge workstream</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>Revenues &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<p><u>Universal Credit</u></p> <p>The expectation is that the pathfinder projects will be continued during 2014/15 financial year with additional authorities and customer groups added. The national roll out unlikely to begin in earnest until 2016.</p> <p>As part of the planning process, a sub group of the welfare reform group was been set up to map local support services with contributions through Gateway, Housing, Financial Inclusion, Community Services and Business Development. Initial data has been shared with Job Centre Plus and will be fed into wider gateway project to deliver a county wide directory of services.</p> <p>Payment direct pilot with Golding Homes went live in April, with support from Tomorrows People. Aim of the pilot being to gain a local understanding of issues and barriers to help inform planning of wider migration for Universal Credit. Pilot is initially limited to 100 tenants from the Shepway area but may be extended if successful. Following initial contact with 100 tenants, 66 tenants have actively engaged with 46 tenants commencing payment direct in April 2014.</p> <p>Overall response from tenants has been positive and of the tenants receiving payment direct 1 case failed to make the agreed payment.</p> <p><u>Local Council Tax Discount Scheme</u></p> <p>Introduction of the Local Council Tax Discount Scheme for 2013/14 which reduced the level of Council Tax support for non-pensioner households by 8.5% meant that around 6000 households had to pay some Council Tax for the first time or had to pay more than in the previous year. In-year collection rate for the additional Council Tax payable because of the introduction of the scheme was 74.5%. The move from a reduction of 8.5% in 2013/14 to 13% in 2014/15 was made with limited complaints and no formal appeals or challenges. Current county wide scheme agreed for 3 years (ending March 2016) with fundamental review to be completed beforehand. Approach to review to be initially raised via Kent Finance Officers. Timetable being finalised for Interim scheme for 2015/16, including consultation requirement.</p> <p><u>Fraud</u></p> <p>Following the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) announcement that transfer of fraud function from local authorities to DWP was to be phased between July 2014 and October 2016 the expansion of the fraud shared service to include Swale was put on hold. The council has in the last week received formal notification of where we sit on the migration schedule, with our migration date being 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016. On that basis the shared service arrangements will now be progressed with formal staff consultation June.</p> <p>A separate paper will be produced for CLT to recommend any change to the fraud structure from March 2016, once the future funding arrangements have been confirmed.</p>	
<b>Planning</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<p>Work is progressing and the project is on-track for June 2014 completion. The new staffing structure for the Planning Support Shared Service project started at the beginning of May, and the Collaboration Agreement and Service Level Agreements are in the final stages of preparation. Staff are being TUPE transferred to Maidstone and the logistical move of staff and equipment is being planned in conjunction with the</p>	

<p>Environmental Health Shared Service project. There has been a small delay in part of the implementation of the paperless office work stream for this project, but this will not delay the go live date which will be mid June.</p> <p>§ <b>Risk:</b> a medium level risk has been identified relating to implementation of a paperless office</p>	
<b>Hazlitt Arts Centre</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<p>The Cultural Services Manager has been appointed and is the client manager of the contract with Parkwood Leisure. The Hazlitt Theatre capital works are now finished. The auditorium has a new seating system installed and carpets fitted and the front of house has benefited from some new decoration and furnishings. The Box Office has also been relocated to the front of the building as part of the capital works. The theatre has also re-launched to the public and stakeholders under the management of Parkwood Theatres. This included an invited launch where they presented the vision for the Hazlitt. Performance meetings are now in place and the new draft business plan is expected at the end of May.</p>	
<b>Building Control</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
<p>A meeting was held with Tunbridge Wells in March. Although Tunbridge Wells are keen to consider a building control partnership amongst their options, the number of partnerships currently in progress means that there are no resources available to start this work at present. It was considered unlikely that a decision would be made on such a partnership before the MKIP board meeting in March 2015.</p>	
<b>Corporate peer review</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<p>Following the peer review the performance indicators for the strategic plan have been reviewed and reduced. The follow up workshop with the Council's top management team and Cabinet has led to a crystallising of the Council's priorities going forward.</p> <p>An action plan is yet to be developed to ensure areas identified for improvement are followed up. In spite of this action is being taken in a number of key areas including strategic planning and consultation on good growth.</p>	

<b>Transformation workstream</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>Customer services delivery</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<p><u>Contacts to the Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Website</b> – The number of web visits is lower in 2013/14 than 2012/13 and this has been the case since we introduced the new website in May 2013. We believe this reduction is positive as fewer people are coming to our website accidentally and when people do come to our website they do more. Therefore, we will need to re-base our targets for %age of total contact made on the website, on the telephone and face to face for 2014/15 on the current situation. Positively, the number of online self-serve forms completed has increased by 25% from 6,383 in 2012/13 to 7,949 in 2013/14.</li> <li>• <b>Face to face</b> - In 2013/14 visits have fallen by 10% compared to 2012/13, from 82,962 to 74,635, mainly due to reductions in casual callers and Housing enquiries. Therefore, the number of people coming into the Gateway has gone down and the number of people who go into queues to be seen at MBC service desks has also decreased slightly, by about 900 visits (or 1.3%) over the year, which equates to</li> </ul>	

around 17 fewer visits per week.

- **Telephone** – For the full year the number of calls answered has decreased slightly from 177,684 in 2012/13 to 175,720 in 2013/14. This seems positive, but the review carried in Q3 showed that fewer of the calls being made to the Contact Centre had been answered.
- **Outgoing post** – The overall number of post items sent through Corporate Support in 2013/14 has reduced by a net 18,922 items, so post has reduced, but not at the rate we had hoped. Also, the figures for 2012/13 included the post sent for the Police Commissioner's election which we have been unable to remove, so actually the real reduction will be less than this figure. The most significant reduction in a service was seen in Housing Options (14,930 reduction), whereas the services with the largest increases were Development Control (9,011 increase due to a higher volume of larger planning applications that require more consultation) and Council Tax (8,824 increase due to the more than 6,000 benefit recipients who had to pay something towards their Council Tax for the first time this year).

#### Efficiencies and cashable savings

The nominal target of 4 FTE efficiencies will not be delivered. This is because service reviews have not been completed and changes have not been made that we thought would be when appraisals were completed last year. 1.5 FTE in staff time efficiencies have been delivered this year and at least an additional 5.5 FTE staff time efficiency, identified from work in Parking, Housing and Environmental Services, is predicted in 2014/15, or 2015/16 in the case of parking permits. £3,000 savings are also predicted from stopping to send letter reminders for parking permits in 2014/15 into 2015/16, with a further £3,300 predicted if a virtual permit solution is implemented.

#### Service efficiency/channel shift reviews

Service reviews and implementation of changes are generally taking longer than originally envisaged, both to complete the work and for the benefits to be realised. This could lead to full programme taking longer than the 3 year approx. period originally predicted.

- **Parking** – The quick wins whereby proofs for new Parking applications are presented at the Gateway or submitted via an online form to ensure that all new applications received by the Parking team are already validated by front office, and stopping renewal of parking permits by post appears to have been a real success, with Parking staff reporting that the processes are much easier. This has led to efficiencies in staff time in Parking Services equivalent to 0.3 FTE. However, the move to make permits run for a full 12 months has still not been implemented as it requires work from Imperial. They have submitted a quote which seems high, so clarification of what is included is being sought, but if this is implemented the service agree that far fewer complaints would be received. The stopping of letter reminders for parking permits is predicted to save around £3000 from 2015. An options appraisal has shown clearly that a virtual permits solution is the option with the best chance of making savings and staff time efficiencies (potentially making further staff time efficiencies of around 1.9 FTE across the front and back offices and further cashable savings of £3,300). The Business Improvement team are working with the service to identify issues and anomalies and potential providers will be contacted in August, looking to pilot the new system in one enforcement zone early in 2015 before addressing any issues, consulting with residents and rolling out in across the borough.

- **Housing** - The housing review has been looking at the following areas over the past six months.
  - Temporary Accommodation – the process has been improved to ensure Housing Benefit for households in temporary accommodation is always claimed and paid when it should be. A charging policy, arrears policy and a better procedure for collection of charges to increase the rate of collection against cost for Bed and Breakfast is also being implemented
  - Homefinder bond process – The Homefinder bond allows residents to access a bond for a deposit in the private rented sector, which allows households on the Housing Register who would be unlikely to get social housing to move more easily into the private rented sector. Changes to date have seen an increase in the number of applications received and new process has been developed which is significantly quicker for officers and estimated to make efficiencies in Housing staff time of about 0.23 FTE. This will allow staff to spend more time in increasing landlords interest in the scheme and expanding the pool of properties available to residents.
  - Homeless investigation and Prevention – Changes have been made to the way that cases are managed within the team that have significantly reduced the time to make a homelessness decision. The introduction of an appointment only service currently in development that will deliver a minimum of 0.29 FTE of Housing staff time efficiencies
  - Housing Allocation scheme – The allocations procedure has been changed to allow the direct allocation of hard to let properties to households in temporary accommodation. This has helped to reduce the average time households are spending in temporary accommodation and decrease the time some social housing properties are empty. Implementation of online housing register form is underway which has delivered around 0.02 FTE Housing staff time efficiencies and will deliver a further 0.1 FTE when fully implemented
  - Out of Hours - The Out of Hours calls handling contract was awarded to Medway to March 2014 when Kent County Council gave notice of a price rise in 2013. The contract has been extended with Medway until 31 March 2015. This will enable the council to review service requirements together with other MKIP authorities plus others in Kent, to plan and undertake a tender exercise with partners for the creation of a longer term, value for money, out of hours supply agreement to commence 1 April 2015.
  - Service vision and mission – Sessions have been held with the Housing management team and staff to set a clear direction for the service in the short, medium and long term. This will help to increase staff engagement and morale and effectiveness of the service.
- **Environmental Services mobile working solution** – System requirements were finalised and given to our supplier (Abavus) so that customisation work could be completed. Hardware (phones and tablets) were identified and procured. The online forms that the customers and eventually customer services will use to report street cleansing issues have been developed. It is predicted this change will deliver around 2.9 FTE in staff time efficiencies in the Environmental Services team, with further efficiencies being made in the Customer Services teams
- **Bereavement Services** – Four priorities have been identified and agreed:
  - Exploration of high level business cases for Café and florist options, pet cremations and green funerals – to see if there is any point in doing more work to develop these services. The Business Improvement team are undertaking this work but any further development work will be outside the

scope of the Bereavement Services review

- Back office system improvements
- Move transactions online – likely to require a micro site for funeral directors and customers
- Make Vinters Park Kent’s premier crematorium

#### Customer centricity recommendations

- A visit to Aylesbury Vale was undertaken in January to learn from their improvement approach, channel shift/customer service work and their move to commercially-focussed smarter accommodation
- A review of time taken on emails, telephone calls and f2f visits by Customer Services was undertaken and the Head of Policy and Communications reported to CLT on this, including some recommendations for quick wins. CLT requested that an external review be undertaken of Customer Services and discussions are currently ongoing with a number of potential consultants
- People can now get their Council Tax balance online or via the automated payments line and people paying a penalty charge notice are only able to pay the correct fine.

#### Future of front facing operation (Georgia Hawkes)

- An external consultant has been appointed as Project Manager for the Gateway project.
- Whilst no final decision has been confirmed, it still seems likely that Kent County Council (KCC) will exercise the break clause and withdraw funding for the Gateway from 2016.
- The estimates of our face to face need 2016-18 have now been completed and agreed by the main Council services that operate out of the Gateway. This will help us plan potential joint working opportunities with KCC in the future, but any further work with KCC on this will have to wait until they have completed a comprehensive review of what future customer contact for KCC will look like.

#### Digital inclusion (Anna Collier)

Using a range of information (previous consultation, Mosaic analysis etc) five key areas were identified to hold events were held over national spring online week. The events were organised with Golding Homes and Hyde Housing, and advertised to give local residents an introduction or more confidence with the internet as well as introducing them to the council’s online services. The events were a mixed success in terms of numbers (shown below), but were useful to helping to gather information on how people access the web (or not), what people are interested in doing on the web and in what locations they would be most likely to attend training sessions.

- Parkwood - 15 people
- Marden -20 people
- Shepway - 3 people
- Town centre - 12 people
- Barming -12 people

#### Information management (Anna Collier)

Following the information audit and the review of our information management arrangements carried out by Objective, it has been agreed that a new post will be appointed into the Policy and Communications service to take forward the work required to improve information management.

Website (Paul O'Grady)

The mobile version of the site has been developed in house by ICT and should be live by the end of May. Online forms like parking proofs, moving in and out of the borough and inviting the Mayor to events have been launched in the last quarter and work has been done on progressing a form for booking Heather House for events and ordering new bins.

**Waste & Recycling – new contract****GREEN**

The new contract has now been implemented across all three partnership areas and is now working well delivering improved recycling services. The enhanced recycling collections have led to an increase in recycling performance to nearly 50%. Services are now being operated across borough boundaries, with a single clinical and bulky waste service being operated over the three authorities.

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. The number of online processes has also increased enabling residents to subscribe to the garden waste service and book a bulky collection via the website.

The new contract was awarded the iESE Improvement and Efficiency Award for Transformation in Waste and Environment.

Now all three partners have implemented the new services, an innovation forum is in the process of being set up to deliver further improvements to the services. This will include developing opportunities to recycle street cleansing waste and the reuse of bulky items.

**Commercial waste****GREEN**

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. Since March, 170 customers have signed up to the service, which exceeded the target of 150 by April 2014. This is generating an annual turnover of approximately £80,000.

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.

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.

The Commercial Waste Collection Crew is also continuing to receive praise for outstanding customer service from many businesses and this has been recognised by the Letsrecycle.com Awards for Excellence, for which they have been shortlisted for "Collection Crew of the Year".

**ICT****GREEN**

In general the year has been very successful. Strategically it has been a year of



reviewing both contracts and potential longer term partnership solutions. Operationally, technical implementation of the MKIP data centre has taken priority. The service plan has largely been achieved and some significant improvements in network performance have been evident.

The team have demonstrated on many occasions how working in a bigger team with shared skill sets and knowledge can make a difference, reducing system downtime and increasing overall capacity and resilience.

Technically we have achieved much. Not least the successful Code of Connection to the new Public Service Network. We were one of the first to achieve this in Kent. A real success which shows that our teams are able to understand the requirements of national security standards and are able to implement solutions that meet that standard. The development of the MKIP data centre has been a key priority this year and the work achieved will facilitate further application consolidation in the future. Building on the successful implementation of Planning Support and Environmental Health, the IDOX system will enable further shared working opportunities in the future.

There have also been some major challenges. It has taken the best part of this year to achieve common understanding of the Collaboration Agreement which had an impact on financial procedures and processes. It would be an understatement to say that getting to grips with 3 finance systems has been difficult. It has been extremely time consuming for all and has caused significant angst among all the teams involved. Looking forward, we now have an accountancy cost code structure that meets our requirements and enables better reporting and spend information. There seems to be agreement surrounding invoicing and inter – partner recharges so we are expecting that financially at least we will be better placed to meet and accurately report on our savings targets.

The Mid Kent ICT service developed its 2013/14 service plan in liaison with partnership Heads of Service. The targets were designed to put in place technology solutions that would facilitate opportunities for service improvement at both a local and regional levels.

The Service Plan identified three core strategic priorities which then linked to key objectives and projects. Thirty Five projects were identified to meet the objectives.

Twenty six projects are currently recognised as either complete or on target to complete (green), seven projects are at an amber status and two at red.

The team have a strong drive for partnership wide improvements and the ICT management team in particular are embarking on a programme of work that will create corporate and partnership efficiencies (Telephony, Data Centre consolidation etc.)

The direction for all authorities in the next 12-36 months will be driven by a shared 'Digital Vision'. As a partnership we need to understand what 'digital' means, how it will be addressed in terms of reinventing service delivery. This in turn will help shape MKIP's customer engagement strategies and business improvement frameworks. The proposed wider ICT Commissioning Group will play an important part in delivering effective technological service change. The support of a proactive board and effective governance arrangements will be essential to ensure all change programmes have the commitment of the partnership.

#### **Finance**

**AMBER**

A permanent Chief Accountant has been appointed and is due to start in June 2014. An interim Chief Accountant has been appointed. The Finance restructure will not be undertaken until the permanent Chief Accountant is in post.

#### **Housing – strategies and policies**

**GREEN**

<p>The draft Homelessness Strategy has been to Overview &amp; Scrutiny who recommended some changes and it will now proceed for Cabinet member decision in June.</p> <p>The Allocations Scheme has been in place for a year and is currently being refreshed. The consultation on this refresh has been carried out.</p> <p>It was hoped that the Housing Strategy would be updated this year following adoption of the Local Plan, but this will not be done until the new Local Plan consultation has closed. The Housing Strategy runs until 2015 so the risk to service delivery is low.</p>	
<p><b>Housing – commercialisation project</b></p>	<p><b>AMBER</b></p>
<p>A Project Manager has been appointed for the Aylesbury House and Magnolia House projects. Once renovated, these properties will be used to help the council meet its responsibilities under homelessness legislation.</p> <p>Aylesbury House Project has achieved planning approval for its change of use and the refurbishment works have been issued for tender with a return date of 2<sup>nd</sup> May. The site management proposals need to be resolved for Aylesbury House. This work is currently urgent and research has been undertaken to set out a clear brief of requirements in terms of the job role and service definition.</p> <p>Harrisons have been appointed to progress Magnolia House and the first design meeting has been held with the project team. Harrisons need to progress the design and specifications to enable the project to be tendered.</p>	
<p><b>Corporate Support</b></p>	<p><b>GREEN</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The old MFD's and print room printers have now been replaced via a new contract with Sharp. There is one fewer printer in the Print Room and the number of MFDs on the floors have been reduced to two – one colour and one mono.</li> <li>• New print rules have been introduced which restricts the allowable number of monochrome and colour copies that can be copied or printed on the MFDs. The remaining printing and copying has been redirected to the Print Room. Reports from the MFDs will be monitored by the Facilities and Corporate Support Manager and discussed with relevant managers at all sites.</li> <li>• All outgoing correspondence, with some limited exceptions, has been re-directed to the Print Room for printing, folding and inserting into envelopes.</li> <li>• With the improved capability of the print room machines, less glossy and specialised printing will need to be outsourced.</li> <li>• Corporate Support is continuing to work with planning, revs and bens, parking and other shared services to bring more of their print requirement to the Print Room.</li> <li>• Standard templates have been created to ensure correct addressing of envelopes and reduced postage costs.</li> <li>• Quotes are being sought for new post room equipment to maximise Post Office discounts.</li> <li>• Excluding further, expected Post Office discounts, the current savings are expected to reach around £43,000 in 2014/15.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Environmental Health</b></p>	<p><b>GREEN</b></p>

<p>The Environmental Health Shared Service project has concluded the staff consultation phase and officers are planning the logistical movement of staff and equipment to Tunbridge Wells and Swale. Over 250 comments and questions were received. Managers from MBC, TWBC and SBC have responded to the consultation process and taken into account the views of staff, but no significant amendments have been made to the operational structure. Plans to implement the new structure are now underway. Work has started on the Collaboration Agreement, and a Service Level Agreement will be prepared over the coming months in consultation with each authority. The new software project IDOX, is also progressing well, with a key milestone met last month thanks to the hard work of staff in Environmental Health and ICT. The software and new staff structure are due to go live in mid June.</p>	
<p><b>MKIP structure options</b></p>	<p><b>GREEN</b></p>
<p>The MKIP Board agreed a Shared Service Director operational model for a trial period of a year in March. Paul Taylor, Director of Change and Communities, has been hired into the temporary position on a secondment basis. A project team led by Zena Cooke, Director of Regeneration and Communities, will assess the viability of the model against key objectives, and present their conclusions to their board at the end of the trial year. During the year Paul Taylor will be the Director responsible for a range of services under a Mid Kent Services directorate: Mid Kent Audit, Mid Kent HR, Mid Kent Legal, Mid Kent ICT and Mid Kent Revenues and Benefits.</p>	
<p><b>Cross organisational collaboration</b></p>	<p><b>GREEN</b></p>
<p>The new Economic Development Officer, tasked with the Skills and Employability agenda, is progressing the work experience initiative with a number of local businesses, undertaking business visits and highlighting the Inspiring the Future campaign. The local Jobs Fair has taken place with over 35 employers and training providers involved and over 1000 attendees. A summit to look at health and care employment opportunities has been planned with Job Centre Plus, Skills for Care and Mid Kent College and other joint working initiatives are being developed.</p> <p>Maidstone Families Matter continues to make good progress. The year two cohort has been identified and the high number of referrals we are receiving makes us confident that we will have the year three cohort in place by the end of June. We had a good number of families meet payment by results criteria in the last return that KCC put in to government. We have two projects for parents due to run over the summer, and are investigating options for young people with Challenger Troop and are working with North Kent Women's Aid to create a course for young men suffering or at risk of domestic abuse. The feedback from County has been that they are very happy with the approach Maidstone is taking, which is to try and embed the programme within community activities rather than as a separate programme, and we have been asked to provide some detail of the activities we are running as evidence of innovation to be presented to Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council.</p>	
<p><b>Good information and knowledge management</b></p>	<p><b>AMBER</b></p>
<p><b>Information Management</b> - the structure to support information management action and embedding is yet to be put in place. The proposal is to restructure the policy and information team to change the permanent senior role into a Policy and Information Manager so information management will have a permanent 'home' within the organisation, this will be supported by a temporary information management officer role.</p>	

The Head of Policy and Communications has been appointed as the SIRO and an Information Management Governance Group has been created to agree the vision and being progressing the actions.

**Residents Survey** – The resident’s survey has been completed, results have been reported to Scrutiny, an action planning meeting has been arranged with Scrutiny for next week, the results of which will be sent to Cabinet for agreement.

**Mosaic** – Experian have released a new Mosaic segmentation. Training is currently being organised for the Business Improvement team, plus other key officers who would benefit from more knowledge of Mosaic Public Sector.

**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. ICT have upgraded share point and asked Policy and Communications to look at the structure of pages and team sites. Communications are reviewing the use of Yammer and whether this could replace the “live” parts of the intranet to compliment the new team sites. Communications will be taking forward a project looking at the intranet with staff over the summer. This may or may not involve sharepoint.

## Organisational culture

**GREEN**

Progress made includes the following:

- Awarded Silver Investors in People
- Pulse staff survey demonstrated positive progress
- Award Ceremony has taken place
- Coaching conversations programmes are continuing but coming to a close
- Action Learning sets underway but with some mixed feedback at the moment
- Service Planning team brief activity has been circulated
- Unit managers exercise to reinforce the integration of the competencies into appraisals and work practices
- One Council briefings part way through and to date the feedback has been quite positive – this included the beginning of the dialogue on the ‘employee voice’
- Director of Shared Services appointed which should help to focus that part of the business
- Engagement in new Strategic Planning process has commenced
- Draft management development programme circulated for comment
- Appraisal process including the competency discussions
- Innovation scheme re-launched

Two visits have been made to Investors in People workshops which have highlighted two key areas we need to think about in our engagement plan:

- The strategic narrative – what’s our story about why we are here and why we do what we do – strengthen the greats
- Develop the approach to recruitment to incorporate key competencies and values so that we bring in people that fit with what we want in the culture.