

KCC Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 2 2011/12

Extracts from the Customer & Communities Directorate,
presented to Customer & Communities POSC
20 January 2012

Foreword

Welcome to Kent County Council's Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter two of financial year 2011/12.

Within this report you will find information on our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and a range of other essential management information. This report should be read in conjunction with our financial monitoring report which includes information on service demand levels and related key activity indicators.

The council is committed to delivering its strategic objectives as outlined in our medium term plan **Bold Steps for Kent** and the suite of underlying strategies underpinning our Framework for Regeneration, 'Unlocking Kent's Potential'.

At the heart of Bold Steps for Kent are our three ambitions:

- To Help the Economy Grow
- To Tackle Disadvantage
- To Put the Citizen In Control

We are working in very challenging times, with significantly less funding from central government and increased demand for services. The need for a new approach to public services has never been more urgent given the pressures on public finance and the changes in the way that people want their services to be delivered. KCC must radically rethink its approach to the design and delivery of services whilst ensuring Kent remains one of the most attractive places to live and work. Our Bold Step priorities will help us achieve this.

We hope you find this report useful and we welcome any feedback on how we can improve it.

Paul Carter
Leader of the Council
Kent County Council

Katherine Kerswell
Managing Director
Kent County Council

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Executive Summary

Our key performance highlight to report at this time is the good progress that has been made in the Improvement Plan for Children's Social Services. Following the Ofsted inspection last year we received a judgement of our services being considered inadequate. However, a recent unannounced inspection from Ofsted carried out during October 2011 found that "All areas for development identified at the previous inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements in August 2010 have been tackled and most have improved to a satisfactory standard." The Ofsted report went on to say that "the area for priority action identified at the inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements in August 2010 has been addressed".

There is of course still much to do to improve our services for vulnerable children, and the contact, referral and assessment arrangements are only part of the overall service provided. We will continue to place the needs of vulnerable children as our highest priority and we will work to deliver a service which will be regarded not just as adequate but as excellent.

Highlights of results against our KPIs included in this report are as follows:

Children's Social Services:

- Key improvement targets have been achieved, including significant reductions in assessment backlogs and the number of cases which are left unallocated for too long.
- More needs to be done to invest in preventative services to reduce the number of children with child protection plans or who come into care.

Education:

- Pupils in Kent have done well this year at Key Stage 2, with the county average closing the gap to the national average. GCSE results remain ahead of the national average but our improvement this year has been less than the national improvement.
- Pupil attainment for too many schools in Kent however performs below the national floor targets and as a consequence too many schools in Kent become subject to special measures. We have introduced the Kent Challenge which aims to significantly turn this situation around over the next few years.

Skills:

- Our KCC apprenticeship scheme continues to outperform the targets we have set and we are actively promoting apprenticeships across the whole Kent economy.

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Young people:

- Too many young people find it hard to obtain work or become disengaged from schools and education. Youth unemployment is too high. We continue to work hard to engage young people and help them achieve the skills they need to be ready for work.
- The number of disengaged young people in Kent who turn to crime continues to reduce.

Economic support:

- Due to the global economic downturn the level of inward investment by businesses into Kent has reduced in recent years but performance this year, after an initial slow start, is currently close to the target we set.

Adult Social Care

- We continue to deliver improved personalisation of services and more choice and control for service users. We are achieving our current targets for allocating personal budgets and providing clients with assistive technology (telecare).
- We have more to do to ensure that the number of clients accessing enablement services is as high as it can be – we are reviewing our progress and targets to ensure we deliver this.

Highway maintenance

- Our performance in delivering timely repairs to roads and pavements continues to be on target and complaints have reduced.

Waste management

- We continue to maintain good performance in relation to waste management and are achieving our current year targets.

Customer Services

- Use of our website has been below our target level this year and our contact centre has been overwhelmed with high call volumes, resulting in reduced performance in our call answering response rates. We are developing a new customer strategy and action plan to improve our on-line offer and have allocated additional resource in the short term to cope with the additional calls we are receiving in the contact centre. At the time of writing this report, service response times in our contact centre had returned to above target.

Overall Summary of KPIs

	RED	AMBER	GREEN	TOTAL
Current ratings	6	9	14	29
Previous ratings	8	6	15	29

Key to RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings applied to KPIs

GREEN	Target has been achieved or exceeded
AMBER	Performance is behind target but within acceptable limits
RED	Performance is significantly behind target and is below an acceptable pre-defined minimum *
↑	Performance has improved relative to targets set
↓	Performance has worsened relative to targets set

* In future, when annual business plan targets are set, we will also publish the minimum acceptable level of performance for each indicator which will cause the KPI to be assessed as Red when performance falls below this threshold.

Performance Assurance Team (PAT)

PAT's role is to consider and challenge the action plans for improving performance, including addressing constraints and barriers and to provide additional reassurances to elected members that the action plans and the information included within this report are robust.

PAT meets monthly and is chaired by the Deputy Managing Director. Membership includes a nominated director from each directorate. It also includes two non-executive directors (NEDs) who are staff from the grass roots of the organisation. This ensures PAT has cross-organisation membership from all levels to provide a 'whole organisation' approach to improvement.

Data quality note

All data included in this report for current financial year are provisional unaudited data and are categorised as management information. All results may be subject to later change.

Bold Steps for Kent

Many of the KPIs included in this report have references to Bold Steps Priorities.

The Kent County Council medium term plan for 2011 to 2014, **Bold Steps for Kent** was published in December 2010. A follow on document, providing clearer focus on the top priorities and the measures of success and key milestones, **Delivering Bold Steps**, was published in July 2011.

Our key priorities within Bold Steps are as follows:

1. Improving how we procure and commission services
2. Supporting the transformation of health and social care in Kent
3. Ensuring all pupils meet their full potential
4. Shaping education and skills provision around the needs of the Kent economy
5. Delivering the Kent Environment Strategy
6. Promoting Kent and enhancing its cultural and sporting offer for residents
7. Building a strong relationship with key business sectors across Kent
8. Working with our partners to respond to the key regeneration challenges in Kent
9. Supporting new housing growth that is sustainable and with the appropriate infrastructure
10. Delivering 'Growth with Gridlock'
11. Improving access to public services and moving towards a single initial assessment process
12. Empowering social service users through increased use of personal budgets
13. Establishing a Big Society Fund to support new social enterprise in Kent
14. Ensuring we provide the most robust and effective public protection arrangements (safeguarding vulnerable children and adults)
15. Improving services for the most vulnerable people in Kent
16. Supporting families with complex needs and increasing the use of community budgets.

Many of these priorities will be delivered in partnership with other public agencies in Kent and all of these priorities build on and support our Framework for Regeneration, Unlocking Kent's Potential.

Summary of Performance for our KPIs

Indicator Description	Service Area	Current Status	Previous Status	Direction of Travel
Number of children's social care cases not allocated to a social worker for over 28 days	Children's Social Care	Green	Green	↑
Number of initial assessments in progress and out of timescale	Children's Social Care	Green	Green	↓
Number of children looked after per 10,000 children aged under 18	Children's Social Care	Red	Red	↓
Percentage of children leaving care who are adopted	Children's Social Care	Red	Green	↓
Number of children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 children aged under 18	Children's Social Care	Red	Red	↑
Percentage of establishment caseholding posts filled by qualified social workers	Children's Social Care	Amber	Amber	↑
Percentage of children subject to a child protection plan for two or more years	Children's Social Care	Red	Red	↑
Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 and above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2	Education	Amber	Red	↑
Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at Key Stage 4 including GCSE English and Maths	Education	Amber	Amber	↓
Number of schools in category (special measures or with notice to improve)	Education	Red	Red	↑
Number of starts on Kent Success Apprenticeship scheme	Skills	Green	Green	↓
Number of starts in Kent on the National Apprenticeship Scheme	Skills	Green	Green	↑
Percentage of pupils permanently excluded from school	Young People	Amber	Amber	↑
Percentage 16 to 18 year-olds not in education, employment or training	Young People	Amber	Green	↓
Number of first time entrants to youth justice system	Young People	Green	Green	↑

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Indicator Description	Service Area	Current Status	Previous Status	Direction of Travel
Number of gross jobs created in Kent and Medway through inward investment	Economic Support	Amber	Red	↑
Percentage of adult social care clients who receive a personal budget and/or a direct payment	Adult Social Care	Green	Green	↑
Number of adult social care clients receiving a telecare service	Adult Social Care	Green	Green	↑
Number of adult social care clients provided with an enablement service	Adult Social Care	Amber	Amber	↑
Percentage of adult social care assessments completed within six weeks	Adult Social Care	Green	Green	↓
Percentage of clients satisfied that desired outcomes have been achieved at their first review	Adult Social Care	Green	Green	↑
Percentage of routine highway repairs completed within 28 days	Highways	Green	Amber	↑
Average number of days to repair potholes	Highways	Green	Green	↑
Percentage of satisfied callers for Kent Highways 100 call back survey	Highways	Green	Green	↓
Percentage of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill	Waste Management	Amber	Amber	↑
Kg of residual household waste collected per household	Waste Management	Green	Green	↑
Percentage of waste recycled and composted at Household Waste Recycling Centres	Waste Management	Green	Green	↑
Percentage of phone calls to KCC Contact Centre answered within 20 seconds	Customer Services	Red	Red	↑
Number of visits to KCC web site	Customer Services	Amber	Red	↑

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Number of first time entrants to youth justice system				Green ↑			
Bold Steps Priority/Core Service Area	Support families with complex needs		Bold Steps Ambition	To tackle disadvantage			
Cabinet Member	Mike Hill		Director	Angela Slaven			
Portfolio	Customer and Communities		Division	Service Improvement			
				<p>Data Notes.</p> <p>Tolerance: Lower values are better Unit of measure: Number Data Source: Careworks case management system</p> <p>Data is reported as rolling 12 month total.</p> <p>Data rounded to nearest count of 10</p>			
Trend Data – rolling 12 month totals	Previous Year			Current Year			
	Sept 10	Dec 10	Mar 11	Jun 11	Sep 11	Dec 11	Mar 12
KCC Result	1,680	1,540	1,430	1,420	1,330		
Target	2,325	2,325	2,325	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Rag Rating	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green		
Commentary							
<p>During 2010/11 the number of first time entrants fell each quarter and this trend has been sustained into 2011/12.</p> <p>Between 2009/10 and 2010/11 there was a reduction in the total number of first time entrants of 25%. Although this is a very positive result, national data drawn from Police National Computer (PNC) shows that Kent has a higher rate of first time young offenders (14.2 per 1,000 young people aged 10-17) than the average of statistical neighbours (12.3 per 1,000 young people).</p> <p>The incidence of new young offenders is highest amongst districts in the east of the county where higher deprivation levels exist, with numbers being highest in Thanet followed by Dover.</p>							

Number of first time entrants to youth justice system	Green ↑
What actions are we taking to improve performance (and drivers of performance)	
<p>The actions being taken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the integration of the Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP) staff into the three locality based teams of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) – this step will assist the targeting of siblings of known offenders whose risk of offending will be raised.• joint working with Kent Police and offering support via the YISPs for their Restorative Solutions initiative, which is designed to divert children and young people from the youth justice system through the use of restorative justice and enabling access to services where the child / young person is seen to be at risk. Restorative justice processes bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.	
Risks and mitigating actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A key factor in reducing the number of young people entering the youth justice system is the level of police commitment to diversionary measures. Therefore any change in policing strategy could present a risk to achieving the target. No change in strategy is currently expected.• Young people's engagement in education, training and employment is a significant factor in reducing the risk of offending. The current economic climate and higher levels of youth unemployment in the county brings a risk that some of the 16-17 age group could become demoralised and more vulnerable to offending if other risk factors are also in place (e.g. poor family support).• The education system nationally and in Kent is changing. It is important that the YOS establishes new relationships with academies to emphasise the importance of education in reducing risk of young people offending.	

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Percentage of calls to Contact Kent answered within 20 seconds				Red ↑																					
Bold Steps Priority/Core Service Area	Improve access to public services	Bold Steps Ambition	Put the Citizen in Control																						
Cabinet Member	Mike Hill	Director	Des Crilley																						
Portfolio	Customer and Communities	Division	Customer Services																						
<table border="1"> <caption>Chart Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>KCC Actual (%)</th> <th>Target (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>to Sep 10</td> <td>85.3</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>to Dec 10</td> <td>80.1</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>to Mar 11</td> <td>75.9</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>to Jun 11</td> <td>37.4</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>to Sep 11</td> <td>66.3</td> <td>80</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Period	KCC Actual (%)	Target (%)	to Sep 10	85.3	80	to Dec 10	80.1	80	to Mar 11	75.9	80	to Jun 11	37.4	80	to Sep 11	66.3	80	<p>Data Notes.</p> <p>Tolerance: Higher values are better Unit of measure: Percentage Data Source: Siemens Hipath telephone system</p> <p>Data is reported as percentage achieved for each individual quarter.</p> <p>No comparator data for other local authorities is currently available for this indicator.</p>			
Period	KCC Actual (%)	Target (%)																							
to Sep 10	85.3	80																							
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to Jun 11	37.4	80																							
to Sep 11	66.3	80																							
Trend Data – results by quarter	Previous Year			Current Year																					
	Sept 10	Dec 10	Mar 11	Jun 11	Sep 11	Dec 11	Mar 12																		
KCC Result	85.3%	80.1%	75.9%	37.4%	66.3%																				
Target = previous year	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%																		
Rag Rating	Green	Green	Amber	Red	Red																				
Calla received	270,000	269,000	287,000	314,000	301,000																				
Commentary																									
<p>During the quarter to September Contact Kent response times have improved compared to the quarter to June but remained behind target with performance this year having been adversely impacted by increased call volumes, budget pressures and increased call complexity. To assist with the situation additional resource has been allocated to the Contact Kent with nine new permanent staff posts added in September and recruitment for a further nine posts in progress.</p> <p>The situation is now improving with average response times each week having been around the 80% target since the beginning of August (sometimes above and sometimes below). Performance for quarter three expected to move closer to the 80% target level.</p> <p>Despite slower call answering times, the percentage of calls which are answered has been over 90% each week since July.</p>																									

Percentage of calls to Contact Kent answered within 20 seconds	Red ↑
What actions are we taking to improve performance (and drivers of performance)	
<p>In addition to resources recruited so far, Contact Kent will be focusing on two or three service areas of high call volumes, such as those related to libraries and highways, during the coming year, with the aim of moving more customer contact to the kent.gov.uk website.</p> <p>This feeds into a longer term strategy of “channel shift” - the migration of customer contact towards more efficient and cost effective channels, which is a component of the emerging customer services strategy.</p> <p>A more comprehensive review of Contact Kent operations is underway, which will ensure that the business model is fit-for-purpose for the future. This is due to report by the end of the calendar year.</p>	
Risks and mitigating actions	
<p>There is a risk that call volumes, patterns and types are higher or lower than forecast levels, so close monitoring is being employed to evaluate whether resources deployed are adequate to achieve service delivery targets.</p> <p>Early forecasts suggest that the UK could face another harsh winter. Staff shortages arising from snowfall can lead to reduced ability to handle calls speedily, in addition to higher call volumes usually experienced at that time. The service has a business continuity plan in place to mitigate against these risks, and has been working closely with the KCC web team and emergency planning team to ensure that more information is available online.</p>	

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Number of visits to KCC web site						Amber ↑																			
Bold Steps Priority/Core Service Area	Improve access to public services			Bold Steps Ambition	Put the Citizen in Control																				
Cabinet Member	Mike Hill			Director	Matt Burrows																				
Portfolio	Customer and Communities			Division	Communication and Engagement																				
<table border="1"> <caption>Chart Data: KCC Actual vs Target</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>KCC Actual</th> <th>Target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sep 10</td> <td>993,000</td> <td>945,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec 10</td> <td>1,048,000</td> <td>945,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar 11</td> <td>939,000</td> <td>945,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jun 11</td> <td>816,000</td> <td>945,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sep 11</td> <td>909,000</td> <td>945,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Quarter	KCC Actual	Target	Sep 10	993,000	945,000	Dec 10	1,048,000	945,000	Mar 11	939,000	945,000	Jun 11	816,000	945,000	Sep 11	909,000	945,000	<p>Data Notes. Tolerance: Higher values are better Unit of measure: Number Data Source: Google Analytics</p> <p>Data is reported as number of visits made in each quarter.</p> <p>No comparator data for other local authorities is currently available for this indicator.</p>			
Quarter	KCC Actual	Target																							
Sep 10	993,000	945,000																							
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Trend Data – visits by quarter	Previous Year			Current Year																					
	Sept 10	Dec 10	Mar 11	Jun 11	Sep 11	Dec 11	Mar 12																		
KCC Result	993,000	1,048,000	939,000	816,000	909,000																				
Target = previous year	945,000	945,000	945,000	960,000	960,000	960,000	960,000																		
Rag Rating	Green	Green	Amber	Red	Amber																				
Commentary																									
<p>There was an increase in visits to the KCC website during the last quarter that reflects the seasonal demand for schools information, such as term and exam dates and applying for a school place. Web site visits this year are lower than last year due to the Kent library computers no longer using the KCC web-site as a home page which created an inflated picture in last year's figures.</p> <p>However, page views are higher in this quarter compared to the same quarter last year, which could suggest we are engaging our visitors and offering them other content which they are also interested in.</p>																									

Number of visits to KCC web site	Amber ↑
What actions are we taking to improve performance (and drivers of performance)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are using YouTube to host videos and drive people to the website, as well as engaging with our followers on Twitter providing them with useful content and encouraging them to click through to the website.• Press releases include links back to Kent.gov. Readers are asked to visit the website for more information or are recommended useful content. The winter service page (www.kent.gov.uk/winter) has been publicised on YouTube, Twitter and in press releases. We will monitor page views over the winter period to determine if visits show an increase compared to last winter.• We are using analytics to track user journeys in the highways section, and will begin to monitor other top tasks. This will help us improve content and encourage online transactions.• In the longer term, the migration of customer contact towards more efficient and cost effective channels will lead to more visits to the kent.gov.uk site.	
Risks and mitigating actions	
<p>There are more than 90 websites with KCC involvement that sit outside www.kent.gov.uk and which direct traffic away from the website (e.g. Kent Choices 4 U, Kent-Teach, Kent Adult Education). The Corporate Management Team has been asked to recommend which external sites move into kent.gov.uk.</p> <p>A decline in visits may be causing additional calls to the contact centre, which is generally more expensive to serve than a web visit. Analysis on contact centre call volumes and web stats for our most-used services is underway as part of the Customer Services Strategy, which will provide recommendations for how to improve web content to encourage more people to use the website as their first point of contact.</p>	

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Incoming calls received by KCC Contact Centre (Contact Kent) : top ten contact lines			
Cabinet Member	Mike Hill	Director	Des Crilley
Portfolio	Customer and Communities	Division	Customer Services

All figures rounded to nearest thousand and shown as thousands.

Contact Phone Line	Apr to Jun 2010	Jul to Sep 2010	Oct to Dec 2010	Jan to Mar 2011	Apr to Jun 2011	Jul to Sep 2011	Change to last year
247 main phone line	31	41	30	32	40	48	+20%
Office switchboards	37	32	45	52	40	31	+4%
Libraries and Archives	42	43	47	41	37	35	-14%
Highways and Transport	34	34	35	39	36	41	+14%
Registration Services	34	30	25	35	40	22	-2%
Education Line	11	13	15	18	26	31	+135%
Adult Social Services	20	19	19	22	27	25	+35%
Blue Badges	11	11	9	10	17	16	+51%
Adult Education	13	20	13	13	11	17	-13%
Children Social Services (out of hours)	10	9	9	8	10	9	+3%
Other lines	19	18	21	18	29	25	+47%
Total Calls (in thousands)	261	270	269	287	314	301	+16%

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Commentary

The number of phone line contacts to the Contact Centre was 16% higher for the first half of this year compared to last year.

Some of the increase was due to new phone lines moving into the Contact Centre such as Concessionary Fares which was previously run by district councils. However nearly all services and all phone line channels have seen increased caller volumes so far this year with only Libraries and Archives, Adult Education and Registration Services showing reduced caller volumes.

The increase in demand at the contact centre has had an adverse impact on the call answering response times achieved and call answering response rates are reported elsewhere in this report.

Detailed analysis of the call data shows the following changes to caller volumes so far this year compared to last year:

- The 247 main line is now receiving more calls than any other line, showing that this phone number is currently being accepted as the best main contact line for any KCC service.
- Library and Archives was previously the service with the highest caller volume but currently Highways and Transport are receiving more calls with the increase in calls to Highways and Transport being a result of changes to the speed awareness course qualification criteria process.
- The Education line is receiving a significantly higher call volume this year due to the change for the 'In year school admissions' process. This increase means this line is currently receiving more calls than the Adult Social Care and the Adult Education lines, which previously had higher volumes.
- Call volumes for the Blue Badge service have increased due to the service being delivered differently, as instructed by the Department for Transport. This increase in calls now places this service higher than the Adult Education phone line for call volumes.
- Calls to the Registration Services line have reduced as certain calls are going directly to Registration offices.

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Number of complaints received by Kent County Council – top ten service areas							
Cabinet Member	Mike Hill			Director		Matt Burrows	
Portfolio	Customer and Communities			Division		Communication and Engagement	
Complaints by Service area	Apr to Jun 2010	Jul to Sep 2010	Oct to Dec 2010	Jan to Mar 2011	Apr to Jun 2011	Jul to Sep 2011	12 month Totals
Highways and Transportation	534	532	646	247	261	288	1,442
Children's services *	131	104	125	128	(132)	(144)	529
-- Education services					14	15	
-- Children's social care					118	129	
Adult Social Services	139	126	123	135	126	82	466
Libraries & Archives	45	25	23	23	47	255	348
Insurance claims	96	49	51	220	56	15	342
Environment *	103	102	44	71	(93)	(113)	321
-- Waste management					68	58	
-- Countryside access					25	55	
Adult Education	32	49	38	32	33	36	139
Commercial Services	13	27	18	17	59	31	125
Gateways and Contact centre	0	48	10	3	10	25	48
Youth services	5	12	18	8	3	9	38
Other services	37	49	62	49	50	52	202
Total	1,135	1,123	1,158	933	870	1,039	4,000

* Breakdown of last year's data for children's services and environment into new organisational structures is not available.

Commentary

The number of complaints for the quarter were up 19% compared to last quarter but down 7% compared to the same time last year, thus continuing the trend of last quarter for less complaints being recorded this year – for the half year position complaints recorded are 15% less than last year. The rise in complaints this quarter can be accounted for by the increase in complaints recorded by Libraries and Archives (see below). All complaints are monitored to determine whether there are any emerging trends that can be addressed by the service areas.

Highways and Transportation: The majority of complaints received by KCC relate to highways and transportation. Complaints in this area are down 48% compared to the same time last year and much of this is down to the work undertaken to reduce the backlog of pothole repairs and other maintenance work which had resulted from previous harsh winter weather. Related to this has been a reduction in complaints relating to insurance claims by 51% compared to the same time last year. This accounts for much of the reduction in complaints this year compared to last year.

Children's Social Services: There was a slight increase in complaints this quarter although no specific trends have been identified.

Adult Social Services: There was a noticeable reduction in complaints received this quarter. The top reasons for complaints are disagreements with decisions made and poor communications. Recently there have been a number of complainants disputing service fees, mostly resulting from poor communication. KCC has now adopted a standard letter which provides clear information on what amounts clients will have to pay.

Libraries & Archives: Complaints are recorded on comment cards and due to a noticeable reduction in the number of comment cards received last year in comparison with previous years, managers were reminded to ensure that comment cards are clearly visible within libraries. As a result there has now been an increase in comment cards received in the last quarter and the issues being raised from newly received comments cards are being examined to identify potential improvements which can be made to the service.

Insurance Claims: The number of insurance claim complaints for the quarter were significantly down due to the reduction of pothole complaints.

Environment: The number of complaints received regarding Country Parks has increased this quarter from 25 to 51 (100%). The largest number of complaints were about the lack of outside shelter at Trosley and dogs not allowed on patio area. Dogs are now allowed on patio area and the management team are looking into ideas to provide shelter.

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Result of key public consultation exercises			
Cabinet Member	Mike Hill	Director	Matt Burrows
Portfolio	Customer and Communities	Division	Communication and Engagement

Vision for Kent - the community strategy for the county, owned by the Kent Forum.

The draft strategy, the Vision for Kent 2011-2021 was subject to a formal consultation between June and August 2011. The target audience for the consultation included members of the public, elected members and public bodies including parish councils, private sector businesses and voluntary and community organisations including the faith sector.

Just under 800 consultation responses were received with 75% of the responses being from members of the public. In addition, over 900 individual comments and suggestions were received about specific elements of the draft strategy. The three most highly rated actions for each ambition were as follows:

Ambition 1 - To grow the economy	Ambition 2 - To tackle disadvantage	Ambition 3 - To put citizens in control
Deliver critical infrastructure Promote apprenticeships Provide lifelong learning opportunities	Reduce dependency on benefits Prevent young people from becoming disengaged Provide a choice of high quality, integrated health and social care	Support communities to have more control over their local area Tackle anti-social behaviour and crime Provide the information that residents need to get involved in decision making and hold services to account

The results of the consultation have been carefully analysed and used to make recommendations on redrafting the final version of the new Vision for Kent. The final draft will be presented to Kent County Council on 15 December for approval and to the Kent Forum on 8 February.

Charging Policy for non-residential adult social care services.

The council decided to review its Charging Policy for non-residential adult social care services as budget pressures had led to a need for residents to contribute more for the services they receive. A consultation was undertaken between May and July 2011 to both inform people about the proposals and to seek their views. As well as existing and prospective service users, KCC members and staff, voluntary sector organisations, district councils, NHS partners and other stakeholders were invited to respond to the consultation. As well as writing to stakeholders, sixteen public consultation meetings were also held.

The consultation produced 6,766 separate responses. There were four proposals in the consultation and the responses were as follows:

APPENDIX 1

Proposal	Consultation response
Charge people who use mental health services in the same way as all other people in receipt of services	The number of respondents who agreed with this proposal was nearly the same as the number who disagreed
Include day care and transport as part of the services that can be charged for	45% of respondents disagreed with this proposal
Increase the amount of available income that is taken into account when working out a person's charge from 85% to 100%	59% were against and 21% agreed with the proposed change
Reduce the standard amount allowed for the Disability Related Expenditure Assessment (DREA) from £21 to £17 per week for all	20% of respondents agreed but 59% disagreed

The consultation evaluation report was published on www.kent.gov.uk/fsccharging. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Public Health decided that all four proposals will go ahead with proposals 1-3 taking effect from April 2012, and proposal 4 coming into effect from January 2012.

Home to school transport provision

A consultation was conducted between March and May 2011 on proposals to change the discretionary elements of home to school transport provision, including the proposal to stop providing free transport above the statutory requirements to children assessed to be of selective ability, and children attending the nearest (voluntary aided) church school if it is of the same denomination as the child. Various stakeholders were invited to respond to the consultation including young people (Kent Youth County Council), parents, schools, Diocesan Boards, KCC members, district councils, and neighbouring local authorities. The top three comments on the proposals were as follows:

- 33% were concerned that the proposals added to financial hardship for families
- 25% considered the proposals unfair in a local authority that operates a selective system
- 17% made reference to the Kent Freedom Pass and about half of these comments were concerned about the increase of the pass to £100 and the possibility of future increases

In June 2011 KCC Cabinet agreed to implement the proposals from September 2012 onwards. The council will in future only provide home to school transport on denominational or selective grounds for low income families or where there is a statutory requirement to do so. Any pupil in receipt of transport assistance on denominational or selective grounds prior to September 2012 will continue to receive this support. For more details please see full Cabinet report. The impact of this decision on parental preferences for schools will be monitored and if required a further review of school transport policy will be completed in the future.