

# MID-KENT IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP

## Redesigning Customer Contact

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Local government has been experiencing the effects of central government austerity measures for the past five years.

Three Kent authorities: Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils, which have had their individual budgets cut by around 35%, formed the Mid-Kent Improvement Partnership to make savings and improve service delivery.

Each council has achieved savings through a variety of means, including ambitious asset disposal programmes, increasing income from key services, and investigating opportunities to become more commercial.

They are regenerating their high streets and communities, and have plans to share more services together.

With central government likely to ask for further efficiencies into the next parliament, MKIP knew it could not stand still, despite the councils' individual and collective successes. It recognised that further change and innovation would be needed to meet the future funding challenge.

As a result MKIP submitted a bid to the Transformation Challenge Award fund and won £569,200 to redesign customer contact across the councils.

By:

- implementing digital technologies
- reviewing processes to make as many transactions as possible online
- sharing data to improve decision making
- and applying techniques such as Mindspace to positively influence behaviour and manage demand

MKIP plans to significantly reduce costs and improve outcomes for residents.



The three authorities will share the transformation funding to deliver the following targets:

- increase the number of digital services available to reduce email and face-to-face contact by 70 percent, and telephone contact by 50 percent over ten years.

This will enable the authorities to incrementally redirect resources over this time period to those with the highest needs, who require face-to-face or telephone contact.

In addition, the aim is to increase website satisfaction to 80 percent "good".

Satisfaction levels will be monitored and new online services will be as good as before;

- reduce the cost to serve by streamlining processes and procedures, and using techniques such as Mindspace to positively influence behaviour and manage and shape demand;
- develop customer insight and business intelligence capability to monitor, manage and shape service trends and demand.

*This will enable the authorities to incrementally redirect resources over this time period to those with the highest needs, who require face-to-face or telephone contact.*

*The approach will be to engage service suppliers and clients in the change process, with the aim of revolutionising both communications and service delivery to customers.*

- As capability in this area matures, MKIP will work with other public service partners in the region to help shape and manage services at a regional level and improve inter-linked outcomes for residents; and
- provide a blueprint for partnership working within the region, and nationally, to cascade the learning and benefits to other organisations.

Starting in 2015, the way the MKIP councils interact with customers will be transformed.

Residents will be encouraged along the journey with an assurance of security and the ability to control their own data.

The councils will work with local charities and organisations to improve digital access and

make sure that people without digital access are not excluded. MKIP will apply a range of behaviour change techniques, including MINDSPACE which is endorsed by the Institute for Government and the Cabinet Office, to encourage uptake of the new digital channels.

By implementing the MINDSPACE process, the MKIP partners aim to influence behaviour through public policy.

The approach will be to engage service suppliers and clients in the change process, with the aim of revolutionising both communications and service delivery to customers.

Engaging with service users in a radical and collaborative way will help manage and shape service demand and expectations in the future.

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