



CLIENT CASE STUDY

Building User Engagement with Covalent at Chichester District Council

Chichester District Council chose Covalent as its corporate performance management solution in August 2006. After a fast, effective implementation process and short training programme, Covalent was rolled out across the Council.

The Council had a strong performance management culture before implementing Covalent and had received an 'excellent' rating from CPA and 4/4 in Use of Resources three years running. This performance management culture helped to build user engagement when they began using Covalent.

'Performance at Chichester is strongly driven by our Improvement Planning Group (IPG). The Group includes our Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, Directors, and key members. From the outset Covalent had **senior support** from both officers and members, which gave the software a high visibility. It was rolled out as the way forward for **performance reporting, monitoring and improvement** at Chichester.

'We undertook a series of training sessions, beginning with lead users – known as **Performance Information Champions** – encompassing managers and support staff. Initially, we trained them on the basics – measuring PIs and projects – and also showed them the potential of Covalent and how it could **minimise duplication** and **make the performance management process easier**.'

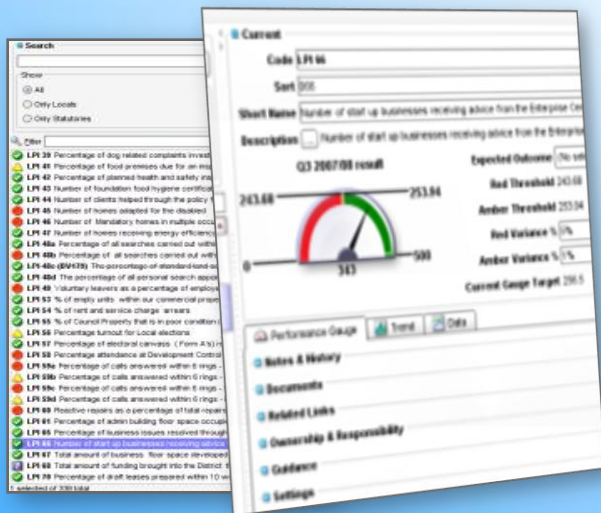
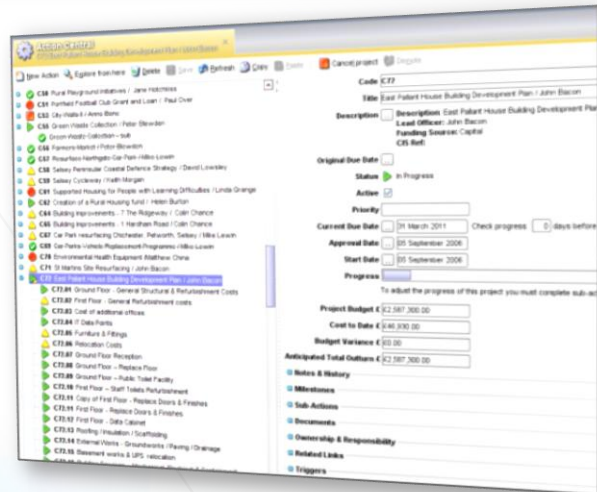
Emma Austin-Diment, Corporate Policy Officer, Chichester DC

Managing action plans more effectively

Chichester DC now manages its actions, from plans across the organisation, in Covalent's Action Central. They have uploaded and are actively monitoring their **Data Quality Action Plan**, **Procurement Action Plan**, and **Corporate Improvement Plan**, amongst others.

The traffic-lighted status of each action allows managers to **quickly identify** areas of concern and tasks that are approaching their due date. Users can then **drill down** to supporting information, such as status commentaries, attached documents and percentage progress complete against key milestones. Users can quickly add **status updates** and query on plans to see actions from a wide range of perspectives.

The Council sets triggers to send **e-mail reminders** to assignees when an action is approaching its due date.



Tracking PIs proactively against target

Chichester DC has established a wide range of performance indicators that it uses to measure organisation-wide performance. The **traffic-lighted status** of each PI – based on percentage variance away from target – allows managers to track performance at a glance.

Each is **assigned to an individual owner**, who is alerted by an e-mail trigger when the PI is due for update or performance moves adversely.

Chichester are using the **formula function** within PI Central to aid data quality. Numerators and denominators are input on Covalent, which makes the calculations automatically and **accurately aggregates data** for multiple date ranges.

