> **Objective Connect has given us a 360-degree view of the child**, which has had a massive impact.

Robert Hamer, Registered Manager of a Middlesbrough Council Children's Home

Middlesbrough
moving forward

ORGANISATION
Middlesbrough Council

INDUSTRY
Local Government Authority

USERS
2,000

SOLUTION

Objective CONNECT

Objective ECM

BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

Rapid, secure communications between child resource workers, police, and other stakeholders of sensitive personal data

Better security, version control, and auditing than conventional email-based solutions

Faster, smoother communication with police enables a faster more effective response

Pre-populated forms minimise manual processing and delays

Third parties are quickly brought into the workspace as and when they're needed

Child-welfare authorities improve collaboration with Police using Objective Connect

Despite the best efforts of child-protection authorities, a number of children go missing every year in the Middlesbrough area. Their absence triggers a local search that may take hours and involve dozens of people across council, police, and other organisations. Yet with existing phone and email-based processes proving too inefficient or insecure for their needs, adoption of Objective Connect has provided a much more efficient and secure alternative.

Managing children's welfare is a critical local-government service, but its day-to-day administration can be a complex and inefficient process requiring the coordination of a broad range of stakeholders.

A lack of integrated processes has generally forced those stakeholders to coordinate search efforts over the phone. Yet for Middlesbrough Children Social Care Residential Services (Middlesburough Council), this approach was slowing down the organisation's ability to respond in cases where supervised youths went missing or failed to present for their curfew.

When a youth goes missing, child welfare officers must lodge a missing persons report. This was a cumbersome process because of the phone wait times.

"The process for reporting people missing has always been verbal over the phone," explained Leanne Hamer, the council's principal lead for compliance. "It's quite a lengthy process, particularly if there are a lot of other jobs coming through to the police at the same time."

By the time the police could attend the scene, gather facts of the situation and details about the missing youth, and begin coordinating a response, hours would often have passed. Liaising with other relevant bodies, such as child-welfare charity Barnardo's, added even more complexity and delays.

GREAT GOVERNANCE ›››
BETTER BUSINESS

Objective

KEY BENEFITS

PREPOPULATED FORMS
SAVE TIME
IN CONVEYING DETAILS TO POLICE

WORK ANYWHERE, ANYTIME
IN OFFICE OR
IN THE FIELD

OFFERING BETTER POLICE COMMUNICATION

When the local police force requested Council staff to help manage the police workload by emailing through details of missing children, staff began reviewing their processes. This included finding an alternative to secure-email add-on's that had been shunned by staff after proving to be crash-prone and difficult to use.

"When it works great you've got the hearts and minds of people, "said Robert Hamer, registered manager of a Middlesbrough Council children's home. "But when there are the smallest glitches, you start to lose them and it becomes a big battle. And with email add-on's being clunky and difficult to use, we would potentially be sending personal data and information openly through email attachments to the police."

That approach raised data-security issues and risked stalling time-sensitive missing-children investigations if communications languished unread in the police inbox. It became clear that it was time for a better alternative.

Enquiries led the team to Objective Connect, which they quickly realised would allow them to offer Cleveland Police a more efficient, resource-effective way to collaborate on missing-children cases.

Working with Objective Corporation specialists, the Middlesburough Council team set up a centralised Objective Connect workspace where documents related to each missing youth could be stored and accessed by Cleveland Police or any relevant person who was invited.

Pre-populated forms save time in conveying family contact details to police, and templates allow rapid creation of formal missing plans to guide the location process. Versioning controls ensure that all relevant project staff have access to the latest updated information throughout the course of the missing-youth investigation.

"Now, several different staff don't have to make calls to different people in multiple agencies," says Rob Hamer. "You just drop the information into Objective Connect and everybody knows about it immediately, thanks to the live notifications. Live information is shared so much more quickly, and people can respond quickly as well. There's more time looking for children rather than just trying to put reports through."

BUILDING AN ONLINE COMMUNITY OF ACTION

Moving the process online was a major improvement for both Middlesburough Council and Cleveland Police, who now receive notifications as soon as new documents are added to the shared workspace.

This enables them to quickly react to new reports of missing children, with the details of a missing youth provided without someone having to transcribe information over the phone. This allows police, Middlesburough Council and other parties to mobilise available resources much more quickly than was possible in the past.

Throughout the whole process, the application of document controls and tight access restrictions ensures confidentiality and data security.

"Because the security is there," said Kate Broom, Data and Systems Support Officer, "we know we can safely transfer and receive data – and be confident that the information is safe and secure the minute we get it. We just don't need to worry about it."

There are around 32 people currently working together using Objective Connect, whose online and scalable architecture enables them to monitor the workspace for updated details from their desks – or from mobile devices as they work in the field, looking for the child in question.

Middlesburough Council staff have complete visibility over the activities of invited project team members, ensuring that they can coordinate the various involved bodies until the youth is located.

KEY METRICS

360°
VIEW OF THE CHILD

32 PARTICIPANTS
FROM MULTIPLE AGENCIES
WORKING TOGETHER
THROUGH OBJECTIVE CONNECT

All access to online documents is logged and project co-ordinators can be involved in every stage of the process.

Cleveland Police quickly warmed to the Objective Connect solution, and began contributing information as well as using the data provided by Middlesburough Council staff. Middlesburough Council was also able to delegate administrator rights to allow certain Cleveland Police supervisors to invite additional people into a workspace where appropriate.

"With more comprehensive information in the workspace than over the phone, Objective Connect has given us a 360-degree view of the child," said Rob Hamer, "which has had a massive impact on our care planning for that child. We can continue working together online, collaborating efficiently until we get the email about that young person's return."

CONNECTING FOR THE FUTURE

The successful adoption of Objective Connect by Middlesburough Council has paved the way for new applications of the technology in other Council departments and public-interest programs.

For example, the Middlesbrough Stop Smoking Service, a public-health initiative of the UK National Health Service, involves coordination between general practitioners, medical clinics, local councils, and other agencies. Referrals used to be processed manually by fax, but the introduction of Objective Connect is starting to speed and simplify the process whilst maintaining the security and confidentiality crucial to any healthcare initiative.

Staff across the council are seeing the possibilities of Objective Connect, and other projects are underway as project teams consider the benefits of real-time, secure information sharing and access control.

"Objective Connect's success is based on the relationships we already have with external partners," said Leanne Hamer, "and the success of this project has made it easier for them to trust us. We can talk strongly and passionately about Objective Connect, and about our trust in the system. It's all about relationships – and if you have those relationships, you've already won half the battle."

> Because the security is there, we know we can safely transfer and receive data – and be confident that the information is safe and secure the minute we get it. **We just don't need to worry about it.**
>
> **Kate Broom**
> Data and Systems Support Officer,
> Middlesbrough Council

ABOUT OBJECTIVE CORPORATION

Objective Corporation (ASX:OCL) creates information and process governance solutions that are effortless to use and enable organisations to confidently advance their own digital transformation.

Designed for regulated industries, these solutions turn the imperative of compliance, accountability and governance into an opportunity to streamline business processes and deliver the innovative services that customers expect.

With a heritage in Enterprise Content Management (ECM), Objective's expanded solutions extend governance across the spectrum of the modern workplace; underpinning information, processes and collaborative work-spaces.

Through a brilliant user experience, people access the information they need to progress processes from wherever they choose to work.

Objective