



SUMMONS
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SUMMONS

Council Summons



For the meeting to be held on
Tuesday, 21 September 2021

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CITY OF LINCOLN COUNCIL

Sir/Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the COUNCIL of the City of Lincoln to be held at The Alive Church, Newland, Lincoln, LN1 1XG on Tuesday, 21 September 2021 at 6.30 pm.



Chief Executive and Town Clerk

Angela Andrews

AGENDA

SECTION A	Page(s)
1. Confirmation of Minutes - 27 July 2021	5 - 12
2. Declarations of Interest	
Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or personal and/or pecuniary.	
3. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11 from Members of the Public and Provide Answers thereon	
4. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12 from Members and Provide Answers thereon	
5. Receive Reports under Council Procedure Rule 2 (vi) from Members	
(a) Report by Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Portfolio Holder for Our People and Resources 2021/22	13 - 34
(b) Report by Councillor Chris Burke, Portfolio Holder for Customer Experience and Review 2020/21	35 - 44
(c) Report by Councillor Bob Bushell, Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place 2020/21	45 - 68
(d) Report by Councillor Jane Loffhagen, Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee 2020/21	69 - 72
6. Business and Planning Act 2020	73 - 78

Present: Councillor Jackie Kirk (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Biff Bean, Councillor Bill Bilton,
Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor Chris Burke,
Councillor Sue Burke, Councillor Bob Bushell,
Councillor Liz Bushell, Councillor David Clarkson,
Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor Gary Hewson,
Councillor Rosanne Kirk, Councillor Jane Loffhagen,
Councillor Rebecca Longbottom, Councillor Helena Mair,
Councillor Bill Mara, Councillor Adrianna McNulty,
Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Councillor Neil Murray,
Councillor Donald Nannestad,
Councillor Lucinda Preston, Councillor Clare Smalley,
Councillor Hilton Spratt, Councillor Mark Storer,
Councillor Edmund Strengiel, Councillor Pat Vaughan,
Councillor Calum Watt and Councillor Loraine Woolley

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Matthew Fido, Councillor Andy Kerry,
Councillor Laura McWilliams, Councillor Christopher Reid
and Councillor Naomi Twedde

8. Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Deferral of Agenda Items

The Mayor announced that in the light of increasing Covid-19 infection rates, it had been agreed with the respective group leaders, that the following items be deferred to later meetings of the Council:

- 6(a) Report by Councillor Chris Burke, Portfolio Holder for Customer Experience and Review;
- 6(b) Report by Councillor Bob Bushell (Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place); and
- 6(d) Report by Councillor Jane Loffhagen (Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee).

Mayor's Engagements

The Mayor referred to her engagements since taking up office, which had included:

- the Theatre Royal in Lincoln;
- the raising of the flag on Armed Forces Day;
- the opening of the St John's Ambulance Service Training Centre, by HRH the Princess Royal;
- the opening of the Lincoln Crematorium; and
- RAF Coningsby.

9. Confirmation of Minutes - 18 May 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2021 be confirmed.

10. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

11. Petition: Public Conveniences at Westgate, Lincoln

A petition had been received in the following terms:

"We demand that the Public Toilets on Westgate are re-opened with immediate effect, local residents and visitors to the City of Lincoln need them back and their extended closure is unacceptable. Using covid to close them temporarily and now making that closure permanent is unacceptable."

As the number of signatures in support of the petition had exceeded 900, the lead petitioner, Fiona Purkiss, had been invited to present the petition in accordance with the Council's petition scheme. The Mayor welcomed Fiona Purkiss to the meeting and invited her to present her petition to the Council.

Presentation by the Lead Petitioner

The lead petitioner called on the Council to ignore party politics and to consider this item as a free vote. Other points in the presentation included:

- Local businesses had not been consulted on the proposal and had not been approached regarding sponsorship.
- The facilities were in good, award winning, condition and their state of repair could not be used as an argument for closure.
- Individuals should not be told by the City Council to use the facilities of local cafeterias and restaurants as an alternative.
- Whilst the provision for people with disabilities would remain open via the use of a radar key, this was of no use to the elderly, tourists and children.
- The annual costs of retaining the facilities would be £9,000, which was not a significant sum in the overall context of the City of Lincoln's budget, and there had been unnecessary examples of Council expenditure in excess of this sum.
- The facilities at Westgate were of benefit to all members of the community, whereas at the facilities at Castle Square tended to be used only by tourists.

It was also stated that the petition had remained open and to date 1,460 signatures had been received.

Debate

It was moved, seconded and resolved that Council Procedure Rule 17.4 [the content and length of speeches] be suspended to allow the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition unlimited time to speak on this item.

Councillor Bob Bushell stated that the Westgate facilities had been closed from March 2020, the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, at that time on a temporary basis. However, all council services had to be reviewed in the light of the Council's overall financial position and at times difficult decisions had to be made. The facilities at Westgate would continue to be open to people with disabilities by means of a radar key; and all facilities would continue to be open when significant

events were taking place. Members of the public had not been encouraged to use facilities in cafeterias and restaurants. Facilities would continue to remain open in Castle Square, at a short distance. It was highlighted that a request to call in the decision by the Executive on the Public Conveniences Services Review would be considered by the Select Scrutiny Committee on 28 July 2021.

Councillor Tom Dyer, the Leader of the Opposition, recorded his thanks to the petition organiser for her efforts in seeking significant support for the petition, which was focused on the Westgate facilities, whereas the Select Scrutiny Committee would be considering overall provision across the City. Councillor Dyer stated that a decision on the petition should be made at this meeting.

Councillor Dyer recorded his support for the petition and argued that the consultation on the proposal had not been adequate and that the annual costs of retaining the facilities at Westgate at an approximate cost of £10,000 per annum could be accommodated within the Council's overall finances. He acknowledged the challenges to the Council's overall budgetary position, but stated that no information had been put forward by the Council on how it intended to meet its savings target. Councillor Dyer referred to a report to the Audit Committee on 22 July 2021, which had suggested that the Council's financial position was less challenging than expected.

Councillor Dyer also referred to the importance of the City's tourist offer, through its heritage, history and independent shops, and stressed the role of the Council in supporting that offer and local businesses, which in turn would influence business rate tax base.

It was moved by Councillor Dyer and seconded by Councillor Mark Storer that the Council take the action requested by the petition.

The Mayor ruled that the motion set out above was in order. The Mayor also advised that it was open to each member of the Select Scrutiny Committee to decide how they would participate in this item, provided that they would be able to consider the matter at the meeting on 28 July 2021 with an open mind. Further to this, Councillors Bill Bilton, Jane Loffhagen, Hilton Spratt, Eddie Strengiel and Calum Watt all stated that they would neither participate in the discussion of this item nor vote.

Councillor Lucinda Preston referred to the reductions in central government funding to local government since 2010, including the funding to the City of Lincoln Council, and the impact this was having on the ability to provide services.

On being put to the meeting, a recorded vote was held on the motion set out above, with members of the Council voting as follows:

For the Motion (6) – Councillors Alan Briggs, David Clarkson, Tom Dyer, Bill Mara, Clare Smalley and Mark Storer.

Against the Motion (17) – The Mayor, Councillor Jackie Kirk, and Councillors Biff Bean, Chris Burke, Sue Burke, Bob Bushell, Liz Bushell, Gary Hewson, Rosanne Kirk, Rebecca Longbottom, Helena Mair, Adrianna McNulty, Ric Metcalfe, Neil Murray, Donald Nannestad, Lucinda Preston, Pat Vaughan and Lorraine Woolley.

Abstaining from Voting (5) – Councillors Bill Bilton, Jane Loffhagen, Hilton Spratt, Eddie Strengiel and Calum Watt.

The motion was declared lost.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, recorded his sympathy for the terms of the petition and supported good quality public conveniences, and most of these facilities provided by the City of Lincoln Council would remain open, including those at Castle Square, the City bus station, and at Tentercroft Street.

Councillor Metcalfe referred to the legal duty on the Council to balance its budget and committed to keeping the level of public conveniences provided under review. If the Council's financial position were to improve, the Council would consider the re-opening of the full facilities at Westgate. There was a gap in the current provision in the City centre between the facilities at Castle Square and the bus station and ideally facilities could be located between these two, if premises were to become available and there was adequate financial provision for the revenue costs.

Councillor Metcalfe stated that the Council's financial position was a result of the policies of central government since 2010, with reductions on public spending. Since 2010, the budget for the City of Lincoln Council had been reduced by £8 million, which represented a significant sum for a district council. Furthermore, the Council was required to identify further budget reductions of £1.75 million over the next two years. The Covid-19 pandemic had led to a significant loss of income, which had put the Council in serious financial circumstances. Councillor Metcalfe referred to argument that the facilities at Westgate could be funded by savings from elsewhere, and stated that following eleven years of budget reductions every area of council expenditure had been scrutinised. Painful decisions had been made, for example the closure of the Drill Hall and the Council's reductions in staffing, and further painful decisions would need to be made again.

It was moved by Councillor Ric Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor Donald Nannestad that the petition be considered by the Select Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 July 2021. Councillor Metcalfe added that the Committee was due to consider a request for call in of a decision by the Executive on 24 June 2021 on overall public convenience provision. Councillor Metcalfe referred to the report considered by the Executive, which included details on consultation and alternative options.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Donald Nannestad referred to members of the public understanding the financial position of the Council and reiterated that if the Council's financial situation were to improve, consideration would be given to the full reopening of the Westgate facilities.

Councillor Mark Storer referred to the need to encourage people to come into to the City of which access to public conveniences was an important consideration for tourists.

On being put to the meeting, the motion set out above was declared carried.

RESOLVED that the petition be considered by the Select Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 July 2021, as part of the agenda item on request to Call-In the Public Conveniences Services Review.

12. **Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11 from Members of the Public and Provide Answers thereon**

No questions had been received.

13. **Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12 from Members and Provide Answers thereon**

Councillor Eddie Strenziel to Councillor Neil Murray, the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Question

Does the portfolio holder agree with me that all future developments should adhere to the ambitious environmental standards, as set out in the draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan?

Reply

All planning applications were assessed against the national planning policy framework and the current development plan requirements, which for Lincoln was the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, which had been adopted in 2016. The plan was in the process of being renewed, and as it progressed further through the system, the draft policies within it could be used as a reference point by applicants. However, the key document remained the adopted plan until such time as a new local plan was formally adopted. Once the next iteration of the plan had been adopted, which would follow further public consultation and examination by the Planning Inspector; and formal adoption by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Committee, this would become the benchmark for any future applications.

Supplementary

What was the expected date for the adoption of the new local plan? If approved, the Western Growth Corridor would not be required to adhere to the ambitious standards in the draft Local Plan. Therefore, what additional steps would the City Council take to ensure that this development, if approved, was as environmentally friendly as possible; and that the development as a whole would achieve net zero, as the Council had previously claimed to be targeting?

Reply

Councillor Neil Murray stated that the new local plan would be adopted in September 2022. As regards the Western Growth Corridor, it was not appropriate to discuss it, given the advice within the report not to enter into a discussion, as it was a live planning application, and any discussion could adversely affect the planning committee process.

Councillor David Clarkson to Councillor Ric Metcalfe, the Leader of the Council

Question

Following the Prime Minister's recent speech regarding devolution, ahead of the government white paper, can you outline your vision of devolution in Lincoln and in Lincolnshire?

Reply

Councillor Ric Metcalfe stated that it was encouraging to read the Prime Minister's and the Secretary of State's re-affirmation of their commitment to supporting strong local leadership and in turn the devolution of responsibilities to a local level.

Some members would recall that the City Council had voted in favour of a set of devolutionary powers from central government for Greater Lincolnshire in 2016/17. This would have included an annual dowry of £15 million over thirty years, along with other benefits. Unfortunately that devolution deal was not supported by the county council and one of the district councils, so after much grief and all work put into it, it came to nothing. However, the government appeared now to be in agreement that districts had a key role to play in devolution, so that it was not just about county councils and unitaries. This was welcomed.

The Council had always agreed with the notion of increasing local accountability, as there had been too much top-down form of government for many years across governments of various political control.

If there was an opportunity to have more influence to raise the aspirations of local communities, then the Council would certainly support moves on devolution.

Supplementary

Would the Leader of the Council ensure members were kept updated on progress with this matter, including any details of conversations with fellow council leaders across Lincolnshire?

Reply

Councillor Ric Metcalfe confirmed he would be happy to do so.

Councillor Tom Dyer to Councillor Ric Metcalfe, the Leader of the Council

Question

As part of Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee next year, there will be the creation of new lord mayoralties. As one of the three oldest mayoralties in the country, I believe we have a very strong case to advance and continue our proud tradition. Does the Leader believe that Lincoln has a strong case to become a lord mayoralty?

Reply

Councillor Ric Metcalfe confirmed this was something all could agree on. Lord mayor status was an exceptional status and was conferred on the mayoralty of cities, which were usually long established and had a long history. There were some specific guidelines that strongly advised against paying for lobbyists in order to make the case to government for lord mayor status.

Any application would require information in particular categories: distinct identity; civic pride; cultural infrastructure; interesting heritage; history and tradition;

vibrant and welcoming communities; a record of innovation; sound administration; some association with royalty; and any other distinctive features.

The initial assessment was that actually Lincoln excelled in every one of those categories. Based on what the government was seeking, this would form the basis of the case. Councillor Ric Metcalfe stated that there was an exceptional chance of success and he was given to understand that more than one award could be made on this occasion.

The Council would be liaising with partners across the city, various service areas, and various other stakeholders, to obtain widespread support. There had been discussions with the Lord Lieutenant and the Member of Parliament on this application.

Councillor Tom Dyer put on record the full support of the Conservative group to the making of an application.

14. Receive Reports under Council Procedure Rule 2 (vi) from Members

(a) Report by Councillor Chris Burke, Portfolio Holder for Customer Experience and Review

This item had been deferred to a later meeting of the Council.

(b) Report by Councillor Bob Bushell, Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place

This item had been deferred to a later meeting of the Council.

(c) Report by Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth

Councillor Neil Murray, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, presented his report to the Council which summarised the work of his portfolio. Councillor Neil Murray thanked all employees of the City of Lincoln Council for their work during what had been a difficult year.

The Council was provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted:

- The Welcome Back Fund – It was confirmed the Council had bid for £180,000 to help the High Street and uphill area recover from the effects of Covid-19. As soon as it was clear what level of funding would be received by the Council, details would be shared on how this would be used.
- The Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund – It was confirmed that the Planning Committee had granted permission for the transformation of the Lincoln Central Market and the adjacent city square area. The business case for the Lincoln Central Market was awaiting approval by the Investment Sub-Committee of the Lincoln Town Deal Board, which was expected in August 2021. It was anticipated that subject to this approval being granted, work could commence in early 2022.
- Western Growth Corridor and the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan – It was reiterated that this was a live planning application and the Council should avoid any discussions on the matter. However, it was commented that the City Council remained committed to implementing net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

- Lincoln Christmas Market 2021 – The plans for the Lincoln Christmas Market were in hand and it was hoped it would take place in 2021. Plans for the Lincoln Christmas Market would be continually reviewed in light of the changing Covid-19 pandemic; national guidance; local infection rates and in consultation with local emergency services.
- Total Business Grants during Covid-19 – It was confirmed that in total £64,000 had been paid to 64 wet led pubs at £1,000 per pub, under the Christmas support scheme. It was agreed that details of all of the grants paid between November 2020 and June 2021 and the total of the Government Business Support Grants paid so far would be emailed to Councillor David Clarkson, as this information was not clear in the report.
- Economic Growth – It was anticipated that the town deal funding would stimulate the local economy.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(d) Report by Councillor Jane Loffhagen, Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

This item had been deferred to a later meeting of the Council.

15. Amendment to Representatives on Outside Bodies

It was moved by Councillor Ric Metcalfe and seconded by Councillor Donald Nannestad that Simon Walters (Strategic Director, Communities and Environment) be appointed as the Council's representative on the Lincoln Cathedral Fabric Advisory Council for the current municipal year.

Councillor Eddie Strenziel highlighted that the opposition group had not been appointed to any of the outside bodies to which the Council made appointments, whereas other councils offered some of these appointments to opposition groups.

On being put to the meeting, the motion set out above was declared carried.

RESOLVED

That Simon Walters (Strategic Director, Communities and Environment) be appointed as the Council's representative on the Lincoln Cathedral Fabric Advisory Council for the current municipal year.

REPORT UNDER RULE 2(vi) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor R Metcalfe, Portfolio Holder for ‘Our People and Resources’

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION2

2. THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES2

 Our people.....2

 Our services.....2

 Vision 2025.....4

3. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020/21 – Our people & Resources5

 3.1 Financial Sustainability5

 3.2 Revenues Shared Service7

 3.3 Procurement8

 3.4 Property Services.....9

 3.5 Emergency Planning.....9

 3.6 Business Continuity10

 3.7 Risk Management11

 3.8 Brexit.....11

 3.9 Corporate Health & Safety12

 3.10 Human Resources (HR).....12

 3.11 Work Based learning (WBL) - Apprenticeships.....13

 3.12 Craft apprenticeship scheme14

 3.13 Corporate Communications and media relations15

 3.14 Civic and International Partnerships.....16

 3.15 Legal Services17

4. KEY PERFORMANCE SUMMARY17

5. FUTURE CHALLENGES20

 Following the completion of the recovery stage, we will move to commencement of work on Vision 2025, with attention now focusing on a number of key projects.20

 These include:20

1. INTRODUCTION

In my 2020 report, which was done in the very middle of the two major lockdowns in 2020, I put forward a very different report, concentrating on the key recovery activities that the council was undertaking to make sure that we still delivered our priority services, especially to our most vulnerable customers – many of whom have been adversely affected during the pandemic.

For this year's report I want to go a bit further by both updating on our solid steps to recovery, but also by reminding us all of what our Vision 2025 is all about, where we are with it right now and what the next steps are.

2. THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

The steps we have taken over the year to recover services

Our People

Officers and Members alike have risen to the challenges presented over the last year. We have all taken on new roles, either instead of, or alongside our main role.

We have made a lot of changes in the way we work :

- Many staff still work a significant proportion of their time from home with limited working from our sites and controlled and safe working on the front line. All this change has been accommodated whilst maintaining service delivery in very challenging circumstances
- HR has developed lots of additional support to help both our physical and mental health – support open to both Members and officers
- We are midway through an excellent roll out of new IT kit and the technology under the One Council Technology pillar to allow all staff who need it to work on Office 365 from September 2021
- We maintained our 'decision making' governance throughout 2020/21 by using Teams and Zoom meetings, only needing to cancel a minimal number of formal meetings
- The Member Bulletin has proved to be a popular way of sharing important information and keeping everyone up to date
- Staff pulled out all the stops to manage a well-planned and executed election service with not one but three different elections on a single day

Our services

We have seen our key services continue with minimal negative effect on residents and businesses. Some key points to note include:

- All defined critical services remained functional throughout lockdowns
- Excellent communication delivered on our website and social media, helped the community understand what they could and couldn't do and where to get help. Along side social media messaging we have expanded our use of video messaging to keep the messages fresh and interesting

- Significant level of support for the most vulnerable – including those rough sleeping and those suffering from social isolation
- Customer Services have introduced a safe way of working with those in most need of face to face help – whilst managing even more telephone calls than usual
- Revenues and Benefits have supported more customers as people have dealt with the changes caused by fluctuating work and changing Universal Credit amounts
- We are now able to open up a wider (though still restricted) service level at our crematorium, and have started work on the new facility there
- Despite facing some issues with more cars parked in narrow spaces than in the past, our waste collection teams have fulfilled all collections including green waste
- We have introduced footfall counters into the city centre as part of the recovery plans, these monitor how many and where we are seeing increasing visitors and sits alongside our CCTV service which monitors for an ASB
- Our FH&S team has been working under DEFRA guidance to ensure they still cover ‘at risk’ businesses whilst also helping all businesses deal with the rules for covid safety
- Housing has continued to work through the year, collecting rent, repairing void properties and dealing with maintenance issues
- Housing maintenance has commenced a pilot of a new scheduled repairs service
- All public parks and commons, including Hartsholme Country Park, remained open for use throughout lock down period, providing vital opportunities for health and recreation and were extremely busy as a result.
- Street cleaning teams remained working and modified their work to take advantage of reduced footfall, tackling other troublesome issues such as graffiti.
- The allotments service never stopped, and we now have 98% take up of our usable plots
- The bus station, and its public toilets, has remained open and our parking was available across the city, although as expected at a lower level than before the pandemic started
- Since the second lockdown at the beginning of October the DMD team have been leading a corporate team in the administration of the Government’s Covid Business support grant schemes. Over 750 local businesses have been supported to date with grants valuing a total of £18.6 m.
- We have developed strong relationships with partners to enable a swift High Street Recovery and are accessing up to £170k worth of funding to make this easier for businesses and customers alike
- We have appointed a Climate Change Manager to take forward projects identified within the new Let’s address the challenge of Climate Change priority

Vision 2025

Following the successful completion of the three-year strategic plan 'Vision 2020' in late 2019, a new five-year strategic plan 'Vision 2025' was developed and adopted by Executive on 24th February 2020, including the new priority of addressing the challenge of climate change.

The Vision provided the priorities and aspirations for the next five years – and the detail of what needed to be done each year was to be delivered through a specific Annual Delivery Plan, in which individual projects would be agreed by management and Portfolio Holders for each priority.

Clearly 2020 workload was focused on recovery and remobilisation of services and as a result, the roll out of new projects was to a large degree stopped whilst this took place (but see below)

As we moved towards the end of 2020/21, and it became clear that we could start to plan ahead again, focus turned towards restarting the process of delivering our strategic aims. Due to the financial and resource effects of the Covid-19 impact, we are not in a place to completely pick up where we were, so a new plan is in progress with the following key assumptions in order of priority:

1. Remobilisation of critical and then other services – almost completed
2. Agreed savings projects being delivered to maintain our financial sustainability
3. Key legacy projects (those already underway) to be completed
4. Key 'One Council' projects that will kick start new ways of efficient working
5. Vision 2025 and service projects that do not affect the ability of achieving the first four criteria and contribute towards key goals
6. All other projects to be reviewed shortly to assess the delivery timescales within the Annual Delivery Plan

Since this point, we have also started to reflect on the potential impact on our residents' and our city's health as a result of the pandemic. Before members are asked to agree a refreshed Annual Delivery Plan for 2021/22 – I have officers looking at where we currently support the health agenda and whether there are any other areas that we should prioritise for consideration.

However, whilst I say that we have had to dramatically downscale the start of new projects this last year – that doesn't mean to say that we have not made any progression at all. In fact there are a number of areas where we have made great strides forwards:

- The Boultham park restoration (phase1) is almost complete with an expected formal end date and evaluation by the end of June 2021
- We have maintained progress with the Boultham Park lake restoration project, recognising the increasing importance of good quality open spaces not just under covid, but on public health longer term



- Work has now commenced on site to develop the first phase of the Crematorium improvements – starting with the second chapel site, and moving on later to the installation of new cremators and new parking spaces
- We have continued to press ahead with plans for new housing on the Western Growth Corridor and hope to gain first planning permission this summer
- As part of the City Centre Vibrancy programme - working with partners we have made excellent progress in the Sincil bank/Cornhill area with much improved public realm, and further improvements to the market centre itself to come
- The site of a former housing neighbourhood office at Markham House was demolished and redeveloped to provide five new council homes - this was completed in December 2020
- We have continued with the development of the new De Wint Court extra care facility and this is on schedule to complete this year
- We opened a new play area in St Giles to replace the lost facilities from the fire in the local centre
- We have continued to push the Lincoln Lottery and have raised over £100k for local charities through this popular facility
- We have now got 91 businesses signed up to our Corporate Social Responsibility Charter
- We have developed a new Allotment site on Melbourne Road
- Our Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) is a new scheme that offers 15 units of non-secure accommodation. This offers vulnerable people up to two years of accommodation, with support from our assistants to help people turn their lives around
- Planning consent has been secured for a residential scheme on land off Rookery Lane, which will deliver a mix of two, three, and four-bedroom houses, two-bedroom bungalows and 1-bedroom flats which will all be for affordable rent to meet housing needs and has funding from Homes England. A start on site is anticipated shortly

In a major development for the future of the city - the Town Investment Plan was completed at the end of October 2020, which sets out a vision and priorities for the City over the next five years. Developed with local partners including the Member of Parliament for Lincoln, it formed the context for the Town Fund bid submitted to Government at the end of October 2020.

We were pleased to receive a £19m successful award in January this year - this funding will support most of the projects outlined in the Town Investment Plan. Work to develop the successful projects will now commence with full business cases required by next year.

3. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020/21 – Our people & Resources

3.1 Financial Sustainability

The financial landscape for local government presents an unprecedented challenge to the Council. The Covid19 pandemic had an immediate effect in 2020/21 on the Council's budgets as a result of increases in spending to ensure services continued to be provided throughout the difficult period and to respond to consequences of the pandemic, and with plummeting income from sales, fees and charges and commercial activities.

In response to the financial risks it was exposed to, and in advance of any financial support from Government, the Council took early action in 2020/21 to implement a range of measures to reduce some areas of expenditure. These measures were aimed at ensuring the Council was able to continue to deliver its critical services and to ensure its balances remained at an adequate level to provide resilience for future years.

Subsequently, and in response to calls from the sector the Government allocated a total of £4.6bn of general purpose grant funding to support local authorities to cover expenditure related pressures and announced an income compensation scheme to recompense councils for approx. 75p in every £1 of lost sales, fees and charges income. In addition a local tax income guarantee scheme was announced which will see the Government compensate local authorities for 75% of irrecoverable losses in Council Tax and Business Rates. There has been no additional financial support provided to the Housing Revenue Account.

Despite this financial support package announced by the Government, the General Fund would still have been unable to maintain a balanced budget position without having taken the measures implemented early in 2020/21.

Despite immediate impact of the crisis in 2020/21 and the level of Government support provided, the impact of Covid19 will cast a longer-term shadow on the Council's finances.

The measures introduced nationally to combat the virus have had direct and indirect negative impacts on the Council's finances which will need to be managed over future years. The Government has pumped billions of pounds into the economy to support the response phase of the pandemic and to protect jobs and services. In the medium-term the levels of additional borrowing and the budget deficit will need to be managed down at the same time as meeting ongoing needs to invest in recovery to achieve the growth required to repay the deficit. The Government's national strategy to address this challenge is not yet known, nor what it will mean for local government funding more generally. Furthermore, there remains potential longstanding impacts on the Council's local income sources if behaviour, working practices and spending patterns in the city continue to change.

The financial implications are challenging to estimate with certainty, there continues to be a number of unknowns; from how long, and to what extent restrictions will continue; to what measures will remain to combat the spread of the virus; and to what recovery will look like, such as how customers/residents/businesses will behave over time.

The financial challenges created by the impact of Covid19, coming on top of a decade of austerity in local government, cannot be underestimated.

Although there is a significant level of uncertainty about future funding, based on what is currently known, or can be reasonably assumed, the Council will need to make further reductions in the net cost base of the General Fund of £1.75m by 2023/24.

This is a significant target for the Council to achieve, particularly in light of the annual revenue reductions of £9m that have been delivered over the past decade. This level of savings has been achieved by re-investing in more efficient ways of working; adopting a more commercial approach; and prioritising resources for economic development measures, whilst making careful use of reserves to meet funding gaps.

However; it is becoming much more difficult to find additional efficiency savings and some being considered need to be delivered as part of longer-term transformational changes to the organisation, the Council is taking a more prudent approach to commercial ventures; and it cannot deliver the benefits from economic development measures in the short term. The Council is left with little option but to revert to a more traditional cost cutting measures approach in order to deliver the scale of reductions required within the short lead in time, as well as using reserves in the short term. The Council will ultimately have to make some difficult decisions over the next 12

months as it prioritises which services it can afford to continue to deliver. It will also require the use of the Council's earmarked reserves as a short-term response.

Although closing a gap of this size is a huge challenge it is not unprecedented, and the Council should have the confidence that it has a track record of delivering strong financial discipline and that it can rise to the challenge once again.

In this current exceptionally uncertain period and funding position the Council's overriding financial strategy therefore continues to be, to drive down its net cost base to ensure it maintains a sound and sustainable financial position. The key mechanism for carrying out this strategy is through the Towards Financial Sustainability Programme which seeks to bring service costs in line with available funding and, alongside this over the medium term, using the Council's influence and direct investment through its capital programmes to create the right conditions for the City's economy to recover and once again grow.

The Council's successful financial planning to date has enabled the protection of core services for the people of Lincoln, whilst at the same time allowing for significant investment in the City, and its economy, and delivery of the Council's Vision. The Council will continue to adopt this approach, carefully balancing the allocation of resources to Vision 2025, whilst ensuring it maintains a sustainable financial position and delivers the required reductions in its net cost base.

3.2 Revenues Shared Service

Our Revenues and Benefits shared service with North Kesteven District Council continues to perform successfully, - particularly in consideration of the unprecedented nature of the last 15 months since the first Covid-19 lockdown.

As with many other Council services, the impacts of Covid-19 have been significant – in terms of collection and recovery of monies due to the Council, levels of benefit and Council Tax Support claims, requests for data extracts from the Revenues and Benefits ICT system, delivery of Test and Trace Support Payments, Winter Grants Scheme payments, as well as being central to the assessment and delivery of grants and reliefs to qualifying businesses.

Performance:

For the financial year 2020/21, in-year Council Tax collection was 94.78% - which was 1.99% lower than in 2019/20. Due to the financial impacts of Covid-19 on residents' incomes, officers have been allowing deferrals of payments in relevant circumstances, although this means that these deferred monies will still need to be collected – however over an extended period. Therefore, in the current climate, this reduced level of collection is not unexpected. Whilst every effort is being made to collect monies due, in the current climate this is a real challenge – and, with the latest Covid-19 lockdown 'lifting' being part of a longer-term roadmap, as well as removal of certain national 'protections' being lifted – such as the furlough scheme ending after September 2021 – is unlikely to improve to any significant degree in the immediate future.

For the financial year 2020/21 in-year Business Rates collection for Lincoln is up by 0.08%. This collection performance has been somewhat 'skewed' by the new reliefs [available this year](#) in light of the new measures announced as part of the government's Covid-19 response, predominantly the Expanded Retail Discount.

As at the end of the financial year 2020/21, outstanding Revenues customers stood at a total of 1,650. Although this figure had risen in recent months, this is as a direct result of the first and

second Covid-19 national lockdowns ending and house moves increasing resulting in increased enquiries to the Revenues Team. The usual annual billing period during February and March also created significant levels of Council Tax enquiries – largely by telephone and e-mail – limiting resources available to work on outstanding items in the Document Management System. The BID Levy year does not end until 30th June 2021 – an update can be provided after this date.

Fraud:

Our Team continues to deliver initiatives aimed at reducing fraud and error in the system – through new and existing cross-departmental and national data-match exercises, and initiatives through the Lincolnshire Counter Fraud Partnership. A Council Tax Single Person Discount ‘bulk review’ is currently taking place. The team is also part of the national Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Scheme, also the Verify Earnings and Pension Scheme, both of which result in correcting amendments to incomes used in assessment of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. Identifying and remedying Business Rates potential ‘avoidance’ also continues to be a key aim for our shared service. The team is also activity involved in the national ‘Friends Against Scams’ scheme.

Welfare:

Both the Welfare Reform Support Team and Welfare Teams within the shared service had extremely high levels of demand in 2020/21, with residents understandably needing support and advice more than ever. 5,806 Lincoln residents were given welfare/benefits advice and 102 money advice referrals were dealt with. Advice provided enabled £19,522 additional benefits entitlement per week, and lump sum awards totalling £311,249. Discretionary Housing Payments of £226,635 were awarded, Council Tax Hardship monies of £678,946 were allocated to 3,893 individual Council Tax accounts, also £244,000 was paid in Test and Trace Support Payments and through the Winter Grant Scheme.

The shared service continues to deliver significant savings across the partnership.

3.3 Procurement

As in previous years the current financial situation has meant that procurement continues to be one of the areas where there is potential to generate savings. However this is with the acknowledgement that this is subject to market forces and therefore is something which we cannot control.

Significant procurement support has been provided within the last year to a number of the key strategic priorities including the Regeneration of De Wint Court Extra Care facility, the Western Growth Corridor scheme, the Grey Friars Regeneration project, as well as a number of the priorities of Vision 2020. In addition to this specific procurement support was given during the first few months of the pandemic as new guidance was issued by the Government in order to help support our contractors.

The Procurement Manager as part of her duties continually reviews whether there are any potential spend areas and/or contracts which could be renegotiated or procured in order to generate savings. At present there are no significant areas to report but when they do arise, these will be reviewed in more detail with the Operational lead.

3.4 Property Services

As a result of the Covid19 pandemic the Facilities Management team, which includes the maintenance of City Hall, have had to make several changes to how we manage the building to ensure COVID-19 secure status. This has included the installation of temporary structures at the reception and customer services desks, to increasing cleaning regimes and ensuring social distancing measures are in place as well as enhanced hygiene arrangements. Moving forward, our use of City Hall and how we better manage that with our changing work patterns will need to be considered as we move closer to a post COVID-19 world. The Facilities Management team also cover the maintenance of the council's corporate assets and this has continued during the lockdowns to ensure we meet our legal responsibilities to ensure our buildings are safe and operational, e.g. replacement of the lift at Lucy Tower Street multi-storey carpark, In addition, through the social value element of the Council's repairs and maintenance contract, support from the Council's contractor through materials and labour was provided to a community project with the Hartsholme Community Trust and Hartsholme Cricket Club.

The Small Business Support Team, based at the Terrace and Greetwell Place, worked from home during the first lockdown, but have remained in the workplace during subsequent lockdowns to support businesses based at the premises. The role of the team has been vital in providing support and advice to small businesses in the city at a time of need. The team has also played a key role in supporting the business grant payments.

The Estates and Surveying team's work has been impacted in relation to the council's diverse range of tenants, with some leases not renewed, rent reductions sought and lease terms being re-negotiated due to the economic impact of Covid19. In addition to team to continue to provide professional and technical advice/support to many of the Council's key projects/developments including, western growth corridor, Greyfriars, housing sites (Rookery Lane, QER), Towns Fund schemes etc.

3.5 Emergency Planning

The Emergency Plan provides a framework for the control and co-ordination of a response to an emergency affecting the council and is usually refreshed annually but wasn't done last year due to the pandemic. It is currently being refreshed.

We have a full out of hours rota for strategic (gold) commanders for emergency planning purposes. This is staffed by the Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors and also over the last 18 months we have established a tactical (silver) commanders rota predominantly made up of Service Managers.

We have been in 'emergency response' mode for much of the last year due to the covid 19 pandemic and officers have been part of the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (the county coordinating group for emergencies) throughout the pandemic, initially on a daily basis, providing representatives to the strategic command group (SCG) and tactical command groups (TCG). These groups coordinated the activity of a variety of 'cells' that delivered operational elements and included

- Community and voluntary coordinating;
- PPE;
- Testing;
- Vaccination rollout;

- Information management;
- Health and social care;
- Enforcement, engagement and Compliance;
- Warning and informing (communications).

The city council has and continues to provide staff to those cells.

SCG and TCG have now slowed down to fortnightly and weekly respectively and we have now moved to the 'recovery' phase of the emergency – ensuring that all of the partners involved in the LRF continue to work together for the purposes of recovering the county from the effects of the pandemic.

Training is currently being arranged for all new members of both gold and silver commands

Staff have continued to be trained on ACT – Action Counters Terrorism as required over the last year, including colleagues from the DWP. ACT is the new name and format for what was previously known as Project Griffin which is a national police initiative to protect our cities and communities from the threat of terrorism by familiarising staff of organisations such as ours on security, counter-terrorism and crime prevention issues. A review of all safeguarding training is underway which will ensure auto-reminders are sent to staff at appropriate intervals, when refresher training is due.

3.6 Business Continuity

Business Continuity Management (BCM) is a framework that assists in the management of risks which might impact the smooth running of our organisation or the delivery of key services. These risks could be from the external environment (e.g. power outages, severe weather etc.) or from within an organisation (e.g. systems failure, loss of key staff etc.) Well organised Business Continuity plans will facilitate the recovery of key business systems within agreed timescales whilst maintaining the council's critical activities and the delivery of vital services to the public.

Business Continuity Management complements and interrelates with other corporate activities, notably risk management and emergency planning.

The council's overarching business continuity plan is reviewed each year, although due to the Covid19 pandemic this was not undertaken during 2020/21 but has been refreshed early in 2021/22. We also have 21 critical service area plans all of which undertake an annual review, led by the service area and supported by the council's Emergency Planning Officer who is from the Joint Emergency Management Service at Lincolnshire County Council. Again, due to the impact of the pandemic these annual reviews have not been undertaken during 2020/21. A full, comprehensive review of the overarching and all service plans will be undertaken later in 2021/22 to fully reflect any changes in how Council services operate e.g. the additional resilience provided by the ability for staff to now work from home more easily.

The linkages between the Council's IT Disaster Recovery Plan and critical service area plans has resulted in this area being raised as an area of significant concern in the Annual Governance Statement. An action plan is however in place to address this with investment in the secondary ICT location at Hamilton House nearing completion, following which a new ITDR plan will be developed and reflected in the critical service area plans.

The council's Business Continuity Co-ordinator is the Chief Finance Officer and regularly meets with the council's Emergency Planning Officer, who sits on relevant internal meetings such as Safety Advisory Group and the Christmas Market Safety Advisory Group to provide necessary support and guidance.

3.7 Risk Management

The Council continues to develop and monitor key risks, those which could affect the Council's ability to achieve its priorities during the year. Elements of Risk Management are outsourced to Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) Assurance Lincolnshire service in order to provide the level of expertise that we require. The development and monitoring of the Council's strategic, operational and project risk registers however remains a role that is undertaken by the Council through the Corporate Management Team and Directorate Management Teams.

The Strategic Risk Register for 2020/21 was initially formulated by the Corporate Leadership Team in July 2020 and as part of the reporting protocol within the current Risk Management Strategy both the Executive Committee and Performance Scrutiny Committee receive reports on the Strategic Risk Register to consider the status and movement of all strategic risks at that particular point in time. The initial Strategic Risk Register for 2020/21 contained 10 strategic risks, however due to the impact of the pandemic a further 3 risks were escalated. Since then a further three risks have also been included, resulting in 16 current strategic risks.

Each Directorate identifies key risks within their service areas creating a Directorate Risk Register. These registers contain risks that are mainly of an operational nature.

An Internal Audit was undertaken during 2020/21, of the Council's risk management arrangements. The purpose of the audit was to determine how all aspects of the risk management framework were operating. It was concluded that there was substantial assurance that the Council had effective risk management arrangements in place.

3.8 Brexit

During 2020/21 the Council continued to prepare for the potential impacts of the UK's exit from Europe. The internal working group consisting of the City Solicitor, Chief Finance Officer, Procurement Manager, HR & WBL Manager, Communications Manager, Business Manager – Corporate Policy and Internal Audit Manager continued to meet during the year and actively manage the identified risks. The group focussed on assessing the key impacts of Brexit and identifying and actioning the specific mitigations, along with ongoing monitoring of these, these key areas cover:

- Legal and Regulatory considerations
- Workforce implications
- Finance and Funding
- Procurement/Supply Chains
- Civil Contingencies/Business Continuity
- Community Leadership

Work has progressed well and the group will be stood down from early 2021/22 with ongoing monitoring/management be handed over to service areas.

Officers also continue to liaise with Countywide colleagues to look at the wider impacts on the County and provide support and expertise as required.

3.9 Corporate Health & Safety

A comprehensive two year rolling Health & Safety Development Plan is in place and is prioritised according to risk. It is fully resourced and is approved and monitored by Health & Safety Champions Group.

The main focus last year has been to assist and support services during the pandemic, producing risk assessments, safe working practices and the determination of suitable PPE.

In addition, last year a review of the health and safety risk assessment register was commenced with assistance from Business Development which when completed during 2021 will further improve our health and safety management system.

Safety Assurance Team

Steps have been taken to align process in the Repair Service and Investment regarding fire safety infrastructure and asbestos management. The cleansing of all asbestos data is complete and work continues to improve awareness of the risks and resident engagement.

Fire risk assessing of communal areas of low rise blocks is being carried out by in house assessor's. The management of asbestos in these areas is now being assessed annually.

The future Building Safety Bill requirements are being planned for high rise blocks and emergency plans have been created in collaboration with the LRF.

The team have organised and supplied PPE for the whole council, supported planning and implementation of mass testing sites, and helped support teams unable to venture out; to carry out their roles during the pandemic.

3.10 Human Resources (HR)

During 2020 a priority has been to support the health, safety, and wellbeing of our staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

HR's direct response to COVID-19, has been a reactive process of continuously updating and amending our guidance as it is released from central government.

The team have focussed heavily on supporting both the mental and physical health and wellbeing of employees.

In addition to promoting our normal support mechanisms e.g. employee assistance programme, a specific 'COVID-19 ways to support your wellbeing' section has been developed on City People.

This offers tips, video links and signposting for managers and staff. It offers support on key aspects which are fundamental to wellbeing. For example, maintaining physical activity,

sustaining good mental health, staying socially connected when socially distanced and tips for working from home.

The staff charter “The Lincoln Way” has been developed and launched to help us set out behaviours and expectations of the way we all work together to realise our strategic priorities. All employees have been asked to reinforce this at every opportunity through recruitment, training, appraisals and one to ones.

A key achievement over the last year is in relation to sickness absence where this has reduced to 8.97 days per FTE (based upon all employees including apprentices) which has been the lowest reported figure for several years. Whilst the pandemic has had a direct impact on the reduction and is indicative of the national picture, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and action plan have also contributed to the reduction.

The team have supported the roll out of new technology to support our new ways of working and cultural shift to new approaches to management and teamwork.

We have been successful in being awarded the ‘Lincolnshire Carers Quality Award – You Care, We Care’ which is a good news story for the Council as we have achieved recognition for the valuable way we support carers as employees, service users and customers.

The HR team continue to review the HR policies to ensure clarity, harmonisation and compliance with legislation. The reviews are incorporated within a timetable to ensure that all policies are checked at least every three years. The Trade Unions have been actively involved in these reviews. As part of each review, training continues to be provided for all staff who have supervisory duties.

The positive relationship with the Unions continues, largely because of the monthly joint HR and Union meeting, where Unions are updated on staffing issues and are given the opportunity to give their opinions and input.

The HR team continue to review and monitor all workforce data in accordance with the equality and diversity action plan.

Mandatory refresher training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace training has been developed for all employees to complete.

3.11 Work Based learning (WBL) - Apprenticeships

WBL has continued to deliver apprenticeships as a supporting provider in partnership alongside main providers First College and LAGAT College over the past 12-18 months. Although the challenges of COVID have made some aspects of this difficult the team have embraced new methods of communication and lesson delivery to support apprentices who were furloughed or working from home primarily. We have been proactive in our support of the learners and are continually developing new ways of working to align with the post-COVID working landscape.

In April 2020 new apprenticeship standards were introduced providing a new approach to the assessment and development of apprentices. These have now been implemented by the WBL team and are being delivered to all learners on programme across Business Administration, Customer Service and Management apprenticeships.

An award ceremony during national apprenticeship week 2020 was held in the prestigious Guildhall for Business Administration, Customer Service, Team Leading and Management apprenticeship achievers in 2019. The Andrew Taylor 'Recognition of Achievement Award' was also presented. The ceremony has been a long standing tradition for the WBL department and is an excellent way to celebrate learner achievements. Due to restrictions on public events a 2021 ceremony was unable to take place, though this is something we will reintroduce once it is appropriate to do so.

We were heavily acknowledged and celebrated in the 2020 School Leavers Award ceremony. The awards celebrate the top employers and training providers for school leavers on apprenticeship programmes. These awards create a ranking of the Top 150 Employers for apprenticeships, the largest ranking of employers that offer the best apprenticeship and school leaver opportunities in the UK. Crucially, these rankings help young people and their influencers make key decisions about their career.

City of Lincoln Council were proudly nominated as finalists in the following six categories:-

- Top Employer – Public Sector
- Top Employer - Medium-sized School Leaver Intake
- Best for Personal Support
- Best Level of Support
- Best Intermediate Apprenticeship
- Best Specialist Training Provider

We were acknowledged as the "Top Employer – Public Sector" and of the 150 Top Employers across all sectors supporting school leavers the City of Lincoln Council were ranked 22nd. It is indeed a huge honour to be recognised for what we all do and how well we support our apprentices. Following this achievement, we celebrated 25 years apprenticeship delivery; a fantastic accolade to mark 25 years of success.

Our ethos remains to 'grow our own' and despite a decline in numbers on programme for the past academic year 100% of apprentices have achieved on time and 95% have moved into education, employment, or training.

3.12 Craft apprenticeship scheme

We currently have three apprenticeships in position at Hamilton House (one electrician, one plumber and one Joiner, a joiner). Recruitment for the academic year 20-21 was unable to take place due to the pandemic. However, HRS will be looking at fully recruiting to full apprentice establishment of seven for the forthcoming academic year, starting in September and currently reviewing the department's craft requirements.

We continue to ensure every effort is made so that the vacancies are seen as widely as possible, with information available on our website, Lincoln College website, social media, and HOME, the tenant's magazine. As a result, we hope to encourage people of all backgrounds to apply for these apprenticeships.

HRS are still committed to taking at least two apprentices annually. The trades are to be determined in consultation with the Housing Repairs Services workforce, who provide the day-to-day supervision.

Housing Repairs continue to work closely with our partners and contractors to provide as much technical and work experience as possible. The apprentices are also going to be getting knowledge of new build on the latest housing schemes.

As well as the long-term apprenticeships, we will also be looking at providing opportunities for short term placements and working with our contacts at Lincoln College who provide students who require work experience.

3.13 Corporate Communications and media relations

Our communications team continues working hard to ensure our reputation is maintained and enhanced wherever possible. The past year's pandemic has presented many challenges to the team but they have risen to these, adapting the way they work and adopting new ways of communicating with our stakeholders.

With its main focus on social media, the team's posts have had a reach of more than 1.5 million since lockdown began, ensuring residents, businesses, students, visitors and everyone else have been kept informed and up-to-date.

Some of the major successes this year include:

- On Facebook, the number of people following the city council has risen by 28 per cent from the beginning of 2020 with more than 7,700 people now following our corporate account.
- Our twitter, we are just about to reach 16,000 followers to our corporate account. A figure which keeps us in the top ten of UK councils with the most number of twitter followers per head of population.
- The organic reach of all posts on our corporate Facebook page since the beginning of 2020 is more than 1.71 million.
- The organic reach of all posts on our corporate Facebook page in the first six months of 2020 was more than triple the reach achieved in the latter six months of 2019.
- The communications team was instrumental in promoting the council's new services created to provide direct support to vulnerable and isolated residents during the pandemic. This included our befriending service and community support helpline, ensuring those most in need were aware of the help available to them.
- The team continued its support for 'business as usual' initiatives such as promoting the Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter widely. The Charter now has almost 100 members from across the city who are supported and encouraged to go above and beyond in helping staff and the local community, especially during this difficult time.
- The team was also heavily involved in promoting the help available to support business during the year, with more than £27m awarded in Expanded Retail Discount, which provided 100% discount on rates for certain businesses.

- The team has continued to develop new skills in different areas of media. They have modernised the way council communicates with its residents and stakeholders and have increased the use of video for use in many areas.
- Our videos issued since the start of the pandemic have been watched more than 60,000 times, with a focus on getting tested, encouraging people to stay at home and the reopening of the high street.
- The team's campaign around the 2021 county, city and PCC elections has been picked up by the Electoral Commission as an example of best practise using, as it did, a variety of mediums from radio to print to social media.
- The team has launched a Councillor Bulletin which is issued fortnightly to all city councillors to keep them up-to-date with city council matters

3.14 Civic and International Partnerships

Guildhall:

In March 2020, the Guildhall was featured on Channel 4's 'Britain's Most Historic Towns' series.

The television company spent some considerable time at the Guildhall with the Mayor's Officer, who also featured on the programme.

We are now working closely with Heritage Lincolnshire to develop tourism in the lower part of the City. This will involve forming links between Greyfriars and the Guildhall.

In March 2020 we carried out a Dendrochronology report on a series of timbers in the Guildhall. This provided up to date information about the building and has prompted more work as soon we are able. Timbers were discovered dating back to the 10th century.

We are also involved with the HAZ and Heritage Lincolnshire; working on walking tours for the lower High Street. These tours will be made available to communities within the area.

The project, with the University, regarding the Charters, is still on-going and, only last week, the first set of treated parchments were returned to the Guildhall and put into a display.

Mayoralty:

The Mayor and Civic party successfully attended many events throughout their Mayoral Year, prior to March 2020. Councillor Sue Burke chose 'LEAP' as her charity during her Year of Office. Fundraising events, in the limited time, organised by Civic Office, raised just under £3,000.

Civic Events:

Many events were planned and partly organised for this year, including VE Day celebrations, 50th Anniversary of the twinning with Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, Christmas Lights, RAF Freedom Parades, etc. All were cancelled due to Covid regulations.

International Partnerships:

2020 saw the 50th Anniversary of the twinning between Lincoln and Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, Germany. Plans were already being made to celebrate with reciprocal visits; plus concerts and other celebrations with communities in both Lincoln and Neustadt.

Our twin town in Nanchang, China sent over 22,000 face masks; which were distributed accordingly.

2020:

The Civic Party attended as many events as they could, via zoom; but unfortunately owing to the Covid regulations many engagements/events were cancelled.

3.15 Legal Services

The team has provided extensive, and often urgent, advice to officers interpreting and implementing the new legislation and guidance during the pandemic. Ongoing work includes the planning, governance and contractual side of major development projects such as the Western Growth Corridor and the re-development of the Cornhill area, along with the vital input in commercial property transactions. The conveyancing for the Next Steps Accommodation Programme and buy back project (using right to buy monies) has been essential to bring properties back into council ownership to help to alleviate the housing and homelessness problems in the City. The opportunities which have arisen from government funding, some to assist the recovery of the city from the pandemic, have required governance and contractual support, which includes the Town Deal and the re-generation of the High Street. Funding relating to initiatives to address the challenge of climate change have also been worked on.

The team continues to undertake litigation to carry out the council's enforcement duties in the private housing, housing, public protection and anti-social behaviour services, and has recently been involved in defending two substantial claims against the Council. Strategic support is provided to internal working groups such as for temporary accommodation and housing development as well as county-wide for unauthorised encampments and various committees.

4. KEY PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Sickness has improved greatly throughout the 20/21 year – to put this in context, the figures over the last eight years show that we have reduced back down to under the 2012/13 outturn. This has been achieved through a mixture of improvements in staff welfare management and may also be related to the fact that many staff have had to work from home a great deal in 2020/21. HR are currently looking at any links in this direction.

Note that of this summary figure of 9.1 days lost per FTE (based upon all employees minus apprentices) – 6.45 days are related to longer term sickness

Cumulative sickness trends – CoLC

Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2012/13	1.71	3.63	6.46	9.7
2013/14	2.68	5.18	7.69	10.78
2014/15	2.99	6.68	9.93	13.43
2015/16	3.01	5.7	8.6	11.63
]2016/17	2.43	5.1	8.27	11.52
2017/18	3.11	6.34	9.84	13.62
2018/19	2.9	4.83	7.28	10.35
2019/20	2.42	5.07	7.75	10.49
2020/21	1.13	2.83	5.82	9.1

The tables below are taken from the Performance Information Management System (PIMS) and show performance up to the end of Q4 2020/21 for my Portfolio.

Whilst you will see some 'red' statuses on here, it must be said that the pandemic has had a strong knock on effect on our ability to maintain performance in some areas.

In Work Based Learning – it has proved very hard to maintain the same number of apprentices whilst many services were working from home, hence the number of active apprentices dropped to 11 over the year – many of those who are progressing with on the job apprenticeships. It also unfortunately meant that 2 of our apprentices who completed their initial year were unable to find a position or further training.

In terms of our revenues team – that was covered in the main body of the report and the outturn has clearly been affected by the pandemic situation. The team will of course work together to clear any backlog, but the effect is expected to continue for the first part of the next year.

However, we have also shown what we can do in times of adversity, and indeed our Communications team has excelled itself in the number and quality of support comms they have put out on our web site and on social media. In addition our accountancy teams are returning slightly better than expected returns, although interest rates are very low at the moment.

I would also like to take a moment to reflect on some feedback on target setting from the Performance Scrutiny Committee which sat on 22nd June. Whilst my colleagues will address the wider comments on targets in their Portfolio's, I would like to take this opportunity to address those in my own portfolio.

From Q1 we will be including more detail in the commentary of the Communications measures, and I have also asked that the Business rates measure is restored to the way it used to be reported (i.e. as a %) and we will continue to include commentary on the effects of business rates relief.

Whilst I have temporarily agreed to a change to volumetric data for two WBL measures, these are going to be subject to a review later this year. And finally, as requested, where we have reduced targets to meet current circumstances, I will provide an update on why this was considered appropriate.

Our People and resources – quarterly measures as of Q4 2020/21

Service Area	Measure ID	Measure	High Or Low	Low Target	High Target	Previous Data Period	Previous Value	Current Quarter	Current Value	Unit	Status
Communications	COM 1	Percentage of media enquiries responded to within four working hours	High is good	70%	85%	Q3 – 20/21	84%	Q4 – 20/21	87%	%	G
Communications	COM 2	Number of proactive communications issued that help maintain or enhance our reputation	High is good	25	40	Q3 – 20/21	41	Q4 – 20/21	47	Number	G
Work Based Learning	WBL 1	Percentage of apprentices completing their qualification on time	High is good	92%	95%	Q3 – 20/21	75.00	Q4 – 20/21	100.00	%	G
Work Based Learning	WBL 2	Number of new starters on the apprenticeship scheme	High is good	18	20	Q3 – 20/21	9	Q4 – 20/21	11	Number	R
Work Based Learning	WBL 3	Percentage of apprentices moving into Education, Employment or Training	High is good	92%	95%	Q3 – 20/21	100.00	Q4 – 20/21	75.00	%	R
Accountancy	ACC 1	Average return on investment portfolio	High is good	0.12%	0.18%	Q3 – 20/21	0.09	Q4 – 20/21	0.20	%	G
Accountancy	ACC 2	Average interest rate on external borrowing	Low is good	4.75%	3.75%	Q3 – 20/21	3.64	Q4 – 20/21	3.25	%	G
Revenues Administration	REV 1	Council Tax - in year collection rate for Lincoln	High is good	96.75%	97%	Q3 – 20/21	76.20	Q4 – 20/21	94.78	%	R
Revenues Administration	REV 2	Business Rates - in year collection rate for Lincoln	High is good	98.6%	99%	Q3 – 20/21	90.42	Q4 – 20/21	98.97	%	A
Revenues Administration	REV 3	Number of outstanding customer changes in the Revenues team	Low is good	450	300	Q3 – 20/21	963	Q4 – 20/21	1,650	Number	R

31

Our people and resources – annual measures

Service Area	Measure ID	Measure	High Or Low	Low Target	High Target	Previous Data Period	Previous Value	Current Year	Current Value	Unit	Status
CX	DCT 1	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days	High is good	95%	97%	Q4 19/20	96.22	Q4 20/21	98.92	%	G
	DCT 2	Percentage of invoices that have a Purchase Order completed	High is good	40%	50%	Q4 19/20	45.6	Q4 20/21	45.4	%	A

For all measures the key is: Green = At or above target; Blue = Acceptable performance – results are within target boundaries; Red = Below target

5. FUTURE CHALLENGES

Following the completion of the recovery stage, we will move to commencement of work on Vision 2025, with attention now focusing on a number of key projects.

These include:

- Continuing to lead on the Western Growth Corridor site to unlock 3,200 homes and 20ha of commercial employment land.
- Completing the site works to De Wint Court which will see it transformed into an Extra Care Facility.
- Building on the successes of the first phase of the Sincil Bank Regeneration Scheme, to achieve long-term, physical transformation in this part of the city
- We will progress work on the Boultham Lake restoration, building in additional elements from extra funding received
- We will complete the work on enhancing our crematorium, bringing the internal workings up to date and providing a second chapel – followed by new parking spaces
- Work will commence on developing business cases for those projects we will undertake under the Towns Deal umbrella – these may include some of the following which were proposed in the initial Town Deal funding bid:
 - Restoration and repurposing the Grade II listed Central Market Building to create a modern market offer, combining retail, food, leisure, and technology.
 - Feasibility work for the redevelopment of Tentercroft Street, to create new workspace and city living.
 - The development of a centrally located food supermarket, providing low cost locally supplied surplus food alongside a programme of advice, training, volunteering, and work placements opportunities.
 - Restoration of the Greyfriars building for use by the public as a heritage attraction with a mix of a digital interpretation offer, temporary exhibitions, events, conferencing, and educational activities
 - Traffic improvements at Sincil Bank including a resident only parking scheme, a 20mph vehicle zone, improved place-setting, creation of a green corridor and environmental improvements.

Finally, I am sure you will be as pleased as I am to hear that we now have a conclusion of the negotiations with the County Council regarding the Usher Art Gallery. A satisfactory compromise has been reached that ensures:

- The Usher Gallery remains as an art gallery on all floors and will be open to the public on average 5 days a week throughout the year to mirror The Collection museum opening times and hence build the links between the two adjacent sites
- Some flexibility has been included to enable the county council to privately hire out the venue on the remaining two days -for events and functions in keeping with the building being used as an art gallery, such as private tours, weddings, evening functions, school trips etc. This will provide a small income stream to the county council and mirrors what galleries across the country are diversifying into.

- LCC and COLC will jointly explore external funding bids to invest in transforming The Collection Museum and Usher gallery and in doing so create a sense of one location across two sites

The Collection Management Agreement:

- A new Collections management agreement will be signed with the county council to keep our material (both art and archaeology) in the city. This will be a long-term agreement of 39 years duration to mirror the lease for the Usher Gallery
- A % of the Usher collection to remain on display in the Usher Gallery and will be rotated more frequently with material in storage to create dynamic displays

Management going forward:

- Quarterly management meetings between LCC and COLC will take place to maintain close working arrangements and oversee the agreements. These to be at an operational officer level

The final legal agreements underpinning the above principles are currently being worked on and will be signed in due course

I would like to express my appreciation to the really excellent range of officers who support me with the work of the Portfolio and to specifically say thank you to the following officers for their assistance in the preparation of this report:

Sara Boothright, Claire Burroughs, Heather Carmichael, Simon Colburn, Kate Fenn, Jaclyn Gibson, Gareth Griffiths, Frances Jelly, Pat Jukes, Martin Walmsley, Steve Welsby, Simon Walters

Councillor Ric Metcalfe (Leader of the Council)
Portfolio Holder for People and Resources

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REPORT UNDER RULE 2(vi) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES REPORT BY COUNCILLOR CHRIS BURKE, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND REVIEW

Introduction

This has clearly been the most challenging year any community in the United Kingdom has faced since the Second World War and Lincoln has been no exception with all the sectors of our society suffering personal loss, anxiety, disruption, and substantial dislocation. Clearly this challenging period has caused immense change in our working routines with many staff members engaging in roles they never expected to be called upon to perform. All staff at every level have performed superbly and I do thank them. Our guiding principle remains as a progressive local authority one that seeks to serve all the communities of our City of Lincoln providing effective but caring delivery. This report demonstrates that our teamwork has delivered the work needed to achieve a constantly improving City as it enters the third decade of the 21st Century and recovers to face our new challenges. Every single member of staff can take personal credit for this work.

High Performing Services

The council is doing all it can to minimise the effects of the financial and Covid-19 Pandemic related challenges it faces on our residents. We prioritise services that are needed the most and ensure that we deliver effective and efficient services to all.

We already have many services that perform extremely well and as part of our continuing Vision has built up a programme to maintain these high standards so we can continue to improve as an organisation.

The council is on a transformational journey and we will only be successful with this change through our people. Engaging our people fully, equipping them with the right tools and developing the skills, attitudes and behaviours we will need in the future is an ongoing priority.

During 2019/21 the council has been working on plans for the “One Council” approach, which will replace the current High Performing Services theme in the next phase of the Vision – Vision 2025. The four pillars developed will place the council in the best position to tackle challenges and maintain key services in the future.

General Performance

My portfolio has the responsibility for ensuring that there is a process for producing good quality key operational data that is available to those who need or want to see it, on a regular basis. In addition, there are several measures directly linked to the services in my portfolio, which are found at the end of this report.

Local Performance Management Framework (LPMF)

The council works within the LPMF recommendations ensuring appropriate measures are in place to monitor performance. This is fundamental to the council meeting its aspiration to maintain high performing service delivery. The framework is due to be reviewed in 2021/22 and this review will incorporate a move towards a more performance driven culture and will include appropriate performance aspects arising from work within the One Council pillars.

The Performance & Information Management System (PIMS)

PIMS (phase 1) was successfully launched at the end of 2018/19 and as part of this, a new set of key operational measures was identified, given targets agreed by Portfolio Holder's and implemented from 2019/20.

Performance targets are reviewed annually to reflect changes in the marketplace as well as current outturn achievements. During 2020/21 performance of a number of measures were significantly impacted by changes arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Data collection and performance reporting were also adversely affected by Covid-19 and uncertainty is likely to continue into 2021/22. We have therefore taken a slightly different approach to reviewing targets this year, maintaining the status quo unless there is evidence to suggest a change is needed. We have also introduced the need for commentary on all measures (not just those with a red status) when quarterly data is input, to enable a greater understanding of performance whilst uncertainty continues

This did result in a number of changes, some of which have been challenged through Performance Scrutiny as is their right. At Select Scrutiny Committee on 28th July 2021 it was agreed that the proposed targets would stand, but that an additional report would be taken back to Performance Scrutiny Committee which would show in far greater detail the rationales behind each and every proposed target change. This was duly completed (August 10th 2021) and Committee were happy with the responses.

I have already requested that any future proposed target changes will be accompanied by a full rationale to be supplied for each proposal as part of the formal report.

Quarterly Performance Reporting

The council reports to members and the public through a quarterly performance report which covers around 70 strategic measures, some quarterly, and some annual. This dashboard allows a view of performance across the key services so that stakeholders such as Corporate Management Team, Performance Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee can review and challenge any under performance and recognise high achievement. The latest figures for my own portfolio services are found in two charts at the back of this report

During the early stages of the pandemic in 2020 it was difficult for some services to provide numerical performance information as they were initially invoking emergency plans and then gradually completing recovery plans. However, the key point here is to note that all essential services were delivered, as well as a number of additional services necessary to support our vulnerable residents and our businesses.

In terms of reporting on this - instead of using PIMS to report performance to expected targets, during the first half of 2020/21 we covered the activity that was underway within service areas to ensure that all our critical services were functioning, details of all the additional work that officers and members undertook and the communication of plans that were being implemented

towards recovery. These information reports were very well received and provided a way of informing members of what and how things were progressing in key service areas.

In the latter half of the year we have been able to return to near normality in terms of performance data collection and as of June this year we have produced a Q3/Q4 performance report for 2020/21 in the original numerical way using PIMS data. This went to Performance Scrutiny on 22nd June and then on to Executive the same week.

I am aware that Performance Scrutiny asked a few questions relating to my services, so I will endeavour to respond to these here:

- I have asked Customer Services to provide an additional commentary breakdown on numbers received of Channel Shift calls by type – starting from Q1 report.
- It is possible to provide data on the average length of calls going forward, and I have reviewed whether to introduce this into the defined data set or report as commentary on the existing measures. I have decided on the latter route as putting a target on a call length could lead to customer service (CS) operators trying to cut calls short to meet targets – when it is actually better for our customers to allow them the time they need to explain or ask questions.
- It is not feasible for the CS team to determine whether a contact has been completely resolved first time as they are often forwarded on to the relevant service, so the CS does not see the end result, but the customer would probably define the whole process as the end result.

Lincoln City Profile (LCP)

The Lincoln City Profile's purpose is to provide a breadth of information based on the key demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the city. It is a valuable source of summary information contained in one document, which I recommend to all councillors. It draws and collates information from across a full range of measures and sources available publicly, presented in chapters to aid usage.

The profile paints a unique picture of what it is like to live and work in Lincoln. It has eight chapters containing key statistical data on the following subjects:

Population	Education
Economy	Housing
Welfare	Crime
Health	Environment (including climate change)

The LCP is reviewed annually having been last produced internally during Q4 2020/21. Due to unexpected staff shortages in the Policy team, they have as yet not been able to fully quality check the revised chapters, but this work has now started and is due to complete shortly,

Project Management – The Lincoln Project Management Model (LPMM)

Projects need to be planned and managed in a way that is appropriate to the size of the project (based on cost and anticipated duration), the complexity of the project and the level of risk it brings.

An LPMM guide exists which has been designed to provide the practical advice, tools and techniques to those staff involved in managing projects at three levels:

- **Significant capital build ('Mega') projects**
- **Strategic Projects**
- **Service area projects**

Following the changes to the LPMM process introduced in 2019, a Project Implementation Review was conducted in 2020 by a team of officers from across a range of services – which highlighted additional changes that could be made to make the process more streamlined. As a result we have now combined the two older "Checklist" style documents into a single Project Information Document (PID), which indicates clearly which documentation is required for each size of project and pulls it together into a format that can be used as the formal Project Brief.

The LPMM training has been adapted to ensure that the new PID has become the centre of the training, which is available for all new staff or as a reminder course for those about to embark on a project.

Audit Arrangements

Internal Audit continues to operate effectively, working as part of the Assurance Lincolnshire Partnership. The team continues to work with, and provide Audit services to other councils which generates income.

Internal Audit have provided assurance in some key areas during 2020/21 including financial systems, projects and other service areas. The team has continued to use its 'Combined Assurance' model to provide a broader level of assurance to management and members.

I am very pleased to report that the latest annual Internal Audit report (2020/21) established that overall, the Council was performing well across areas of governance, risk and internal financial control and performing adequately on internal control. There are some improvement areas in relation to IT security policies.

External Audit is undertaken by Mazars. Their most recent annual governance report/Annual audit letter provided an unqualified opinion on the statement of accounts 2019/20 including a positive Value for Money conclusion.

A full audit update is provided to my Portfolio holder meeting which links to the Audit Committee progress reports. This includes updates on all areas of activity including internal audit, counter fraud, finance and treasury, risk management and corporate governance.

I am pleased that the Audit Committee continues to take a positive and pro-active role.

Democratic and Electoral Services

The Electoral Services Team successfully delivered a complex set of elections on 6 May 2021, whilst adhering to Covid-19 restrictions. The elections applied to a third of the City Council's

membership; to the County Council; and to the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The City of Lincoln Council also acted as the Police Area Returning Officer. The Electoral Services Team is now currently working its way through the canvass.

The temporary legislation which allowed formal meetings of the Council to be held virtually came to an end in early May 2021. The Democratic Services Team have made arrangements for a number of in-person committee meetings since the lifting of this temporary legislation. These have included the Annual Meeting of the Council and meetings of the Executive; scrutiny committees; and regulatory committees, and the Team have ensured these meetings have adhered to Covid-19 control measures. These measures have included the use of alternative venues for the Council's larger meetings such as our wonderful Cathedral and the iconic Alive Church.

Business Development and IT

Throughout the pandemic, the focus of the Business Development and IT Team has been in sustaining business as usual, but with extra support provided to the Authority's by the Covid-19 pandemic response. Within days of the first lockdown being announced, nearly all staff were able to work remotely and continue to deliver services. Extra services were put in place quickly to allow for:

- Increased capacity on Citrix for remote services with all users enabled allowing almost all staff to work from home within days
- Procurement and deployment of laptops and connectivity to 40 staff
- Phone calls to be taken from home by Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits staff allowing for business to continue
- Remote Council meetings through Zoom
- Phone conferencing facilities
- Freephone number for customers with housing emergencies

The Covid-19 pandemic response has been supported by:

- New forms for grants and support payments enabling the claim and payment of £m in grant aid
- New cloud services to aid collaboration within grants and senior management teams
- Bookings for customer appointments
- Support for remote correspondence production
- Website improvements for Covid-19 updates, parking services, customer notices etc.
- Online mapping resources for community support including foodbanks, Covid support etc

- Emergency governance arrangements to facilitate information sharing e.g. befriending service, clinically vulnerable, business grants and isolation payments

However, this has not prevented the service moving forward other key projects, including:

- Teams conferencing deployed to all staff and Councillors
- Rollout of new devices to all staff to enable better joint and location-independent working
- Enhanced Disaster Recovery facilities to enable quicker recovery from major events
- New mobile phone (250+) fleet rolled out
- Development of new web microsite for Visitor Information Centre
- Improvements to the website for accessibility
- Upgrades to systems including document management
- Support for ongoing activities e.g. Garden waste and Council Tax billing

Creating Value Processes

In addition, the service is key in driving the One Council Pillars of Technology and Creating Value Processes, all of which will help the Council in post-pandemic service delivery.

Objectives of CVP:

- Maximise the opportunities for agile working amongst staff – so they can truly work flexibly.
- Build services that are simple, intuitive and comprehensible, where digital services will be so easy and efficient, they will become the default choice for our customers.
- Our customers will be at the centre of our service design. We will develop a deep understanding of our customers and their needs to create value processes.
- Utilising technology to automate repeat and mundane processes, we will release capacity to allow our staff to focus time on customers who most need us.
- Our new processes will ensure every customer contact will add value.

Tactical Approach:

Stream A: Outward looking: a focus on redesigning services that enable customer interaction 24/7, starting with a review of the high-volume services

Stream B: Inward looking: Redesigning processes that enable the organisation to flex very quickly to meet emerging challenges and opportunities, in particular the organisational shift to home working.

Underpinning Database:

Customer survey key messages:

- **95%** responded 'No' when asked if they had any outstanding council service requests waiting to be fulfilled.
- 95% satisfied with service they get from customer services
- 82% could access the internet. Therefore, of this sample only 18% telephoned us because they had no alternative, i.e. no access to the internet
- 51% had been using video calls to contact friends and family (graphs say 61% but numbers calculate to 51%)
- 83% still prefer to telephone the council -so a lot of work still to do to move them to digital methods of communication

Key programmes we are currently developing:

- Simplifying complex high-volume letters to residents/ customers to reduce the level of queries they generate
- Automating some of the very simple requests therefore providing 24/7 coverage. For example, balance enquires on rent accounts/ county tax accounts
- Enable online reporting of a wider range of customer issues -starting with Environmental services and housing repairs
- Developing further sub web sites (micro websites) for some of our trading services that give them a different look and feel to the corporate website and hence tailor them to the markets the services operate in (e.g. Christmas market, Tourist information, Building control)

The current situation, despite its many awful impacts on society, does offer an opportunity to build future processes that match residents/customers changed behaviour. Things will not go back to where they were, so we:

- Must build on changes created by Covid-19 in how people engage with us and not let processes slip back into old ways of working
- Gently push people to engage with us digitally where they can
- Leave no-one behind - dedicate contact centre and wide service-based staff to helping those who most need our help.

Customer Services

The Customer Service team have maintained an accessible service for customers throughout the restrictions that have been in place. The team have ensured that residents have been able

to access vital services such as tenancy repairs, benefit payments and advice and guidance on a range of council and external services. We have supported many vulnerable people over the last 12 months with referrals for welfare or money advice, foodbank support and applications for grants and discounts.

Phone calls have mainly been answered by staff working from home with support and performance monitoring being provided remotely from management, utilising the software which directs calls to the most appropriate adviser. In cases where vulnerability or circumstances dictated that customers need a face to face appointment to resolve their issues, these have been undertaken in City Hall. Looking forward we are hoping to build on the increase in self-service and on-line communication, where it is suitable for the customer. This means that advisers can concentrate on helping more vulnerable customers and we can provide the best possible value. We are working through the Creating Value Processes theme, in conjunction with Improving Technology to drive forward our improvements to the way customers interact with us.

I conclude by again praising our staff for their brilliant response to the national emergency at a time when they faced the same anxieties and loss of loved ones our local community faced. I would also like to express my sympathies to all, staff and councillors who have suffered as a result of the pandemic and consequent restrictions.

Of course, the emergency is not yet over and will still impact on our work, but the vaccination programme gives us all the hope of a better future. Needless to say, Government cuts also continue to challenge us as we seek to continue the development of our brilliant City.

Customer Experience and Review measures – Q1 2021/22

QUARTERLY MEASURES

To add data, click [here](#)



At or above target



Acceptable performance - results are within target boundaries



Below target



Volumetric/contextual measures that support targeted measures



Performance has improved since last quarter



Performance has stayed the same since last quarter



Performance has deteriorated since last quarter

Strategic Measures

43

Service Area	Measure ID	Measure	High Or Low	Low Target	High Target	Previous Data Period	Previous Value	Current Quarter	Current Value	Unit	Status	Commentary	
CX	Customer Services	CS 1	Number of face to face enquiries in customer services	N/A	Volumetric	Volumetric	Q3 - 20/21	32	Q4 - 20/21	15	Number	V	City hall is still only offering limited face to face appointments mainly of for communal door keys
	Customer Services	CS 2	Number of telephone enquiries answered in Channel Shift Areas (Rev & Bens, Housing & Env. Services)	N/A	Volumetric	Volumetric	Q3 - 20/21	25,396	Q4 - 20/21	27,453	Number	V	Lower than quarter 4 last year, we have seen an increase in email enquiries, especially for refuse and environment.
	Customer Services	CS 3	Average time taken to answer a call to customer services	Low is good	300	180	Q3 - 20/21	81	Q4 - 20/21	156	Seconds	G	▼ The waiting time has gone up, we answered 32529 calls in quarter 4, the highest number of quarterly calls answered this year. The number of calls in March was 12613, the highest month this year. The average length of call has gone up to 6 minutes 30 seconds, the reasons for this are not yet confirmed, it could show more complicated calls or delays with technology.
DHI	Business Development	BD 1	Number of users logged into the on-line self service system this quarter	High is good	Volumetric	Volumetric	Q3 - 20/21	10,232	Q4 - 20/21	15,276	Number	G	▲ Significant increase due to online services requirement
	IT	ICT 1	Number of calls logged to IT helpdesk	N/A	Volumetric	Volumetric	Q3 - 20/21	701	Q4 - 20/21	614	Number	V	Less incidents recorded in February - general activity variation
	IT	ICT 2	Percentage of first time fixes	N/A	Volumetric	Volumetric	Q3 - 20/21	52.80	Q4 - 20/21	56.50	%	V	General Activity variation - lower overall activity in this quarter

ANNUAL MEASURES - Q3

To add data, click [here](#)



At or above target



Acceptable performance - results are within target boundaries



Below target



Volumetric/contextual measures that support targeted measures

Strategic Measures

Service Area	Measure ID	Measure	High Or Low	Low Target	High Target	Previous Data Period	Previous Value	Current Year	Current Value	Unit	Status	Commentary	
CX	Democratic Services	DEM 1	The number of individuals registered on the electoral register (local elections)	N/A	Volumetric	Volumetric	2019/20	67,919	2020/21	68,203	Number	V	

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COUNCIL

21 SEPTEMBER 2021

**REPORT UNDER RULE 2(vi) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES REPORT
BY COUNCILLOR BOB BUSHELL, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REMARKABLE
PLACE**

Introduction

This has been a most testing year for public services, not least those covered by this Portfolio. Despite this, I am pleased to say that the vast majority of these services have continued working throughout.

For context I would also remind members that the combined waste, recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts of the council have now been extended until Sept 2026. The decision to consider this route was taken just as covid hit us. As a result, we have been fortunate that we have not been faced with any significant changes in service provisions during the covid/lock down periods, as this would undoubtedly have impacted people's quality of service.

It is also worth noting in this introduction that as a key part of the Council's drive around developing Lincoln as a 'remarkable place' I have been keen to push forward realistic improvements. The contracts are thus now reviewed quarterly for overall output performance, as they always have been, but there are also now focused partnership meetings that specifically consider short and longer terms goals for each service area. As resources get ever tighter, it is vital that there remains a constant and clear focus of resources on the issues that are most important to make the biggest difference to our communities. Whilst each work area has some specific issues to work on, there are also three guiding principles established for all three strands. These are: 1. As a client/contractor partnership we should always strive to be proactive in seeking to address what the future holds. 2. That whatever is changed to meet emerging demands the contracts must always be able to show value for money. 3. The background specification/the 'base' as it were, must always reflect the actual work being undertaken.

More of this approach later in the report but suffice to say that there are three focus meetings: waste/recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance.

Below I set out a description of service delivery for the last year or so, based on key service areas, where there has been impacts of note. Mindful of the remit of this committee, where possible and appropriate I include data for reference.

Open Spaces

Allotments

Members will recall that last year I reported on the successful implementation of a bold investment strategy for Lincoln's allotments, and how significant sums had been spent on improving access, security and water supplies.

Members may also recall that key within this investment was the desire to open a

new allotment site in the south of the city. For historic reasons the south of the city has not been well catered for in terms of allotments, and so a key element of the investment was to establish a new site central to the Birchwood estate. I am pleased to be able to inform members that this work was completed in April 2020, and that take-up has been popular, and the site warmly welcomed. The site has 38 plots and all the plots are tenanted.

In the wider picture, across all our sites occupancy has remained high, with the occupancy level of lettable allotment plots hovering consistently around 97% (out of a possible 1081 plots, 1051 are classed as tenanted). Those not tenanted are simply due to the plots not being lettable because of their location- the main cause being seasonal flooding. Due to the prevailing high demand the majority of allotment sites across the city now have waiting lists.

As plot availability is very limited at the moment, and in a bid to try and get people off the waiting lists, when a large full-sized plot becomes available the Council now gives consideration to the viability of splitting plots into 2 (sometimes 3) smaller plots to let people get a start.

Whilst the allotments have been under demand, due to the demographics of our tenants there have also been a number who have been 'shielding'. The effect of this is that there are a number of plots that currently look unkempt. We are being lenient on this issue, giving tenants time to address this, mindful of individuals circumstances. We are hopeful that once the vaccination programme is complete this might make more people feel at ease with using their plots again.

Although not strictly a performance issue, members will be aware that the Council has found it necessary to increase rents. All tenants have been notified and a year's notice has been given. Based on the feedback received, it is **not** anticipated that there will be a drop in demand.

Equipped Play Areas

The Council continues to maintain 28 equipped play areas across the city, ensuring that British Standards are maintained at all times for installation, inspections and maintenance.

High levels of responsibility and care unfortunately means relatively high costs, and this does impact on the council's ability to expand the service and expedite repairs at times. Working closely with the Property Services section, which orders the repairs, safety is always the number one concern for this service. Although it is necessary to close play areas off at times, officers are under clear instruction not to bow to public pressure to re-open sites unless the necessary safety requirements are in place.

This year has been an especially difficult year for play areas under covid restrictions. Guidance from government has changed at times throughout the various lockdown periods, with all sites initially closing, but later being allowed to open.

Each play area has had signs giving advice on hygiene and indicating maximum numbers of users at any one time. It has been difficult to maintain the signs, but

staff have persevered.

A major refurbishment is being planned for Whitton's Park this year, making good use of some S106 monies. The scheme will be the single biggest investment in play for the city for some time and see a full and total overhaul of the site. The result will be an exciting new site of a size suitable to address the needs of a wider area.

A citizen panel survey in summer 2020 showed that 90.5% of respondents who gave an opinion were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the standard of outdoor play provision.

The Council's budgets for play remain under significant pressure and so a review of all equipped play provision in the city will be needed in due course. This has not been scheduled with officers yet due to ongoing resource pressures, but I expect to be able to report a clear plan on this to members by this time next year.

Parks and Open Spaces- General

This year has been yet another good year for Lincoln's parks, with three Green Flag Awards achieved in 2020.

The Arboretum continues to be known for its high-quality historic setting, and regularly receives positive public comment for the quality of its maintenance; Boutham Park continues to develop on the back of successive capital investment programmes, not least due to this year's lake restoration project, and Hartsholme Country Park, the city's premier site for nature-lovers, has received another year of excellent feedback from visitors, despite seeing unprecedented demand. In fact, all of our parks and open spaces have seen massive demand during the successive lockdowns, leading to increased wear and tear at all sites.

Although always well-loved and much cherished, there has also been a renewed appreciation of all our parks and open spaces, of which the council should be justly proud in my view. We sometimes forget that public parks were a British invention, intended to provide recreational space for the workforce, to allow them access to fresh air and exercise, recognising the benefits to wider health. This year has seen an unexpected localised need for just those self-same needs, and as a result the council has received numerous positive comments, showing how much the public really value the parks and open spaces of the city.

I think members should be aware of some other wider improvements that are being fostered currently. In the opening paragraphs of this report, I described how partnership meetings were being used to develop paths to improvement. For the ground's maintenance elements of the contract this has been manifest in three priorities.

Firstly, it was to make sure that this year's annual tree planting work took place in a timely way. In recent years there have been concerns over late plantings and losses in the subsequent summers.

Secondly a work stream has been set up to look at what we could do to deter

unauthorised and illegal traveller encampments.

Finally, work is taking place to look at how wildflowers might be encouraged.

In brief these work streams are in early stages, but I can advise members that:

All trees were planted in good time this year, and that watering regimes are in place. 115 were planted in total. Work is also ongoing to recover all tree guards from trees that no longer need them, to see if they can be refurbished and reused.

A list of potentially vulnerable open spaces has been developed, and these are being put into priority order. Officers are now looking at the most cost-effective options to deter unlawful encampments, accepting that it will never be possible to prevent break-ins, and that no additional funding is available for this work.

A list of locations has been developed to encourage wildflowers this year. These comprise two types of areas. Firstly, those that have traditionally had summer bedding- where trials were successful last year these have been switched to an annual wildflower mix. Secondly some areas of grass have been identified as having potential for targeted maintenance as wildflower meadow, with perennial wildflowers. This will take time to develop but includes around 9Ha this year embracing some common land and some roadside verges, with plans for at least another 11ha progressing in the pipeline for next year. The grass will not be cut regularly on those areas, as has been the case in past years, but instead they will be cut just one a year.

Sites with areas specifically having maintenance regimes adjusted to encourage perennial wildflowers include:

Cowpaddle Common
West Common racecourse
o/s Grandstand West Common
Doddington Road open space
Woodfield Avenue
King George Field

Boultham Park

The main restoration of Boultham Park was completed in 2019 but there are one or two outstanding tasks to finish before the project can be officially declared as closed. These were planned for 2020 and have been delayed by Covid-19 and the specialist nature of the works meaning there are fewer contractors able to do the work. I hope that these works will be completed during 2021. However, whilst this does mark the end of that first phase, as members will know, the Council has been heavily engaged in the delivery of the second phase, the restoration of the lake.

Although originally part of the original restoration project, it became necessary to remove the restoration of the lake so as to ensure the work came in within budget. At that time the council committed to finding a way to restore the lake if at all possible, and I am delighted to be able to record here that thanks to another

generous grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, it has been possible to undertake this work this year. The £1.17 million pound scheme has a three-year duration (ending 31st March 2023), with all capital works being completed this spring. The full three years of the project have an engagement focus, to demonstrate the value of the restored park and its impact on the community. As a requirement of the lottery funding for the project significant work is undertaken to evaluate the outcomes. The outcomes will be available to members when published, but for now I am pleased to report that the consultants undertaking this work advise that this project is currently expected to show clear delivery of some excellent outcomes.

This project has been made possible not just because of the grant, but also because of the support we have had from the Park Advisory Group, who have remained staunchly supportive throughout, and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, who are increasingly a key partner for the council on an exciting range of wildlife enhancing projects. I am immensely grateful to both groups for their sustained input.

Members should note that the lake restoration project has a very different focus to the wider restoration, with the focus being about enhancing wildlife and natural heritage. As a less invasive alternative to dredging, new technologies are now being deployed to aerate the water and reduce silt in a more sustainable way. The lake edges have a variety of different treatments, with parts having had their old stone edges reinstated, whilst others are benefiting from wildlife friendly naturally planted fascines.

A new boating platform has been built, to permit boating to return very shortly (for events). A further 'viewing platform' has also been built at the other end of the lake, to let people get out over the water and engage with the surroundings better. It will also permit organised 'pond dipping' and other related activities.

One very new element has been the provision of interpretative art installations. Art in parks is popular, and via a trail of installations around the lake, the story of the lake, the natural habitat, and its modern importance is being told in a simple yet thought provoking style. The interpretation strategy and design of the art panels and interpretation boards were led by a volunteer, which shows how volunteers can make a huge difference in our parks and open spaces.

Planned project related activities had to be significantly reviewed due to Covid. Despite this, there have been many activities – often 'self-led' and social media based, but also some in the park itself. Volunteering has continued, sometimes just one on one with the Volunteer Coordinator. The Community Engagement Officer started a Social Prescribing programme in December, and this is proving very successful. The project really focuses on health and wellbeing, as well as wildlife and nature.

Hartsholme Country Park and Camp Site

Covid impacts have taken a toll on Hartsholme in a way that has not been seen at other parks. Not only have visitor number risen so high that significant additional damage has been seen to pathways and general infrastructure, but of course it has been necessary to close the visitor centre and caravan/camp site in line with

government guidance.

I am pleased to report that visitors have generally been understanding of these restrictions and although administratively burdensome, having to keep changing details depending on guidance changes, it has been possible to navigate a path to reopening this spring. 12th April saw the camp site reopen for self-contained units, such as motor homes. Further ongoing lifting of restrictions is planned, in line with government guidance, as I write this.

Last year I was able to report increasing use of the camp site, but I have refrained from including detailed data this year, as clearly it would be meaningless for comparison year-on-year in the current climate. Suffice to say that, due to closures, bookings were well down, and when it was possible to open, those booking were cautious, despite our full refund policy. In the end, despite refunds running at about 3 times that of previous years, it was possible to achieve some income and I can advise that due to the hard work of camp site staff and management 2020 did mean that the camp site still received 63% of the previous year's income (£32,559). More than might have been expected.

I would also like to report that the new on-line booking system, developed for last year, has worked well when required, and the council's decision last year to set camp site prices more than one year in advance, will doubtless be beneficial now as staff endeavour to maximise bookings.

I remain mindful of the impact on the camp site and park from past visits by members of the traveller community. Staff are looking at additional elements to enhance security at the site, which I hope to be able to report positively on in the near future.

In terms of the park overall, the Senior Ranger has again submitted the annual full and detailed Management Plan for the site, copies of which are available to members on request. This has shown that despite covid restrictions most work that was required by the management plan has been delivered, with just a few tasks carried over (mainly due to the limitations placed on volunteer works and finances).

As a part of that report the Senior Ranger has also submitted an annual events report. As members will be aware, due to covid events/organised activities were curtailed in March 2020, meaning that it was not possible to match the number of park staff led events of previous years. Data on events has however been fully recorded, and is tabled as a part of the historic record going back to 2009, which shows how park staff have, over time increased the number of events/activities year on year, with just last year being an exception. Again, full details are available on request to those members who would like a copy.

The need to do something with the buildings that are falling derelict is not forgotten, but initial estimates for refurbishment have proven to be prohibitive in the current challenging economic climate. This will receive further attention as a part of Master Planning work, which although currently un-resourced, does remain as an objective of the council within its strategic plan.

Commons

This year has seen significant work take place on the commons; all of this being reported to the Commons Advisory Panel, as is normal practice. The commons have not been able to benefit in the same way as previous years, from additional income derived from an agreement with LCFC for car parking on match days, but some of the income received from previous years has and is being used on some key projects. These include:

- Pond clearance work commenced West Common
- Installation of benches, West Common and South Common
- New horse feeding areas
- Opening views on to the Viking Way

And this year we hope to start work to the frequently flooded West Common entrance off Roseberry Avenue.

This year I hope to see further and ongoing work to refresh the Commons Management Plan, and associated work programme, but this will be subject to progress on other work streams and the availability of suitable staff

One area that has come to the attention of the Commons Advisory Committee Chair has been the work of the Carholme Golf Club, operating as they do on West Common land. He has been concerned that their operations may not be wholly compatible with the council's environmental aspirations for the commons and so we have sought closer engagement with the golf club. It is hoped that they will develop an Environmental Management Plan that will enhance biodiversity on the area occupied by the golf club, making the area better for the public, and affording the golf club a new/unique environmentally focused marketing opportunity.

Volunteering

In more recent years all volunteering for open spaces has been co-ordinated through a single post, ensuring consistency of approach in line with Council policies, and co-ordination of resources.

The Volunteer coordinator submits an annual update on progress (copy available to members on request) and I have been pleased to note that in the calendar year 2020 there have been some 2,068 hours of volunteer work take place, despite the covid restrictions. This is, as would be expected, well down on the previous year's 6,784hours for the obvious reasons.

As lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted this year, I anticipate increasing demand for this service, not least as people have come to attach greater value to the open spaces in the city, where most volunteering takes place.

Two volunteer related projects are of special note here. Hobbler's Hole is now subject to a formal Management Agreement with Long Leys Road Resident's Association, and work is taking place with Liquorice Park Trust to set up a new John Dawber Garden Trust to enhance the care for the Council's John Dawber Garden at

the Lawns.

Arboriculture

Tree care is always a priority for the Council as it strives to protect trees against the ever-present demands of the urban environment.

In 2020 the council dealt with 1094 tree 'cases', some of which were small, but many were larger complex cases in relation to planning issues.

We planted 115 trees in early 2021, to replace any that had to be removed, underpinning the Council's 'one for one' replanting policy. This is well down on last year (324 trees removed and planted 337 trees) due to covid restrictions on interactions, but we are anticipating a back-log of work now that will place additional pressures, on an already pressured service. The impact of this workload has been noted, alongside pressures from insurers for greater proactive surveying, and so this resourcing issue is being considered now by senior managers.

Park Advisory Groups

Despite some joint meetings of Chairs taking place pre-covid, it has not been possible to resume these yet. It is hoped that these will be possible again later this year so that I can report positive liaison in my next annual report.

Travellers

Last year saw four unauthorised encampments on parks (2 South common. 1 Lawn. 1 Skellingthorpe field). Whilst the number was half that of the previous year, the time stayed was much longer in some cases due to lockdown.

As usual these caused disruption to services, diversion of resources and unwanted extra costs for the council taxpayers in the city. In response steps are being taken to try and deter future encampments, and work continues with legal services and the Police to ensure clear processes and prompt robust responses are ready to meet any future incursions. Some new government legislation is being enacted currently which should hopefully enhance powers, and these are being discussed with the Police, via legal services, currently.

It will never be possible to stop all incursions, but I know members will always be supportive of any actions we can take to deter this disruptive behaviour.

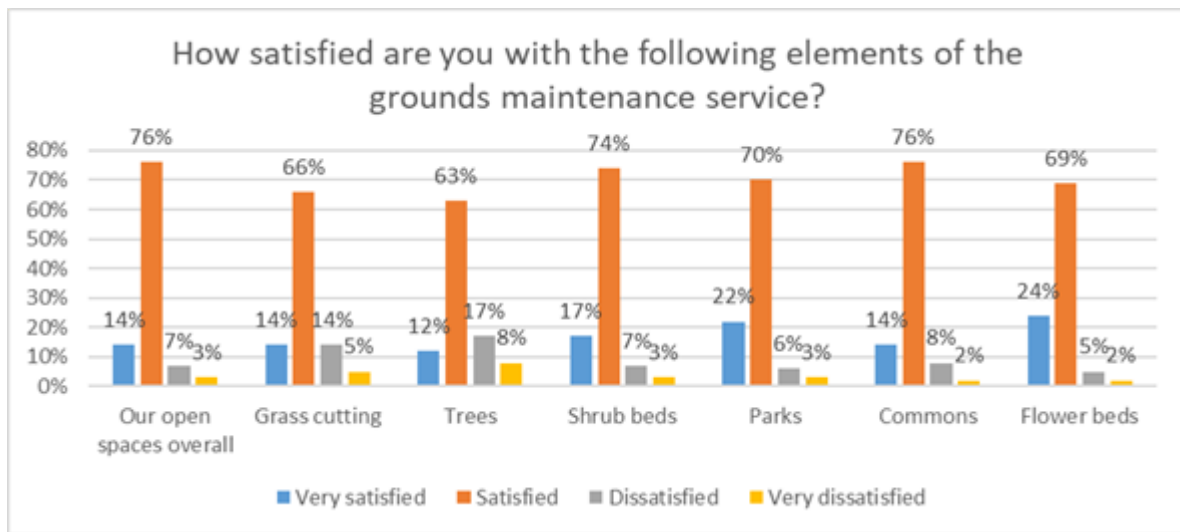
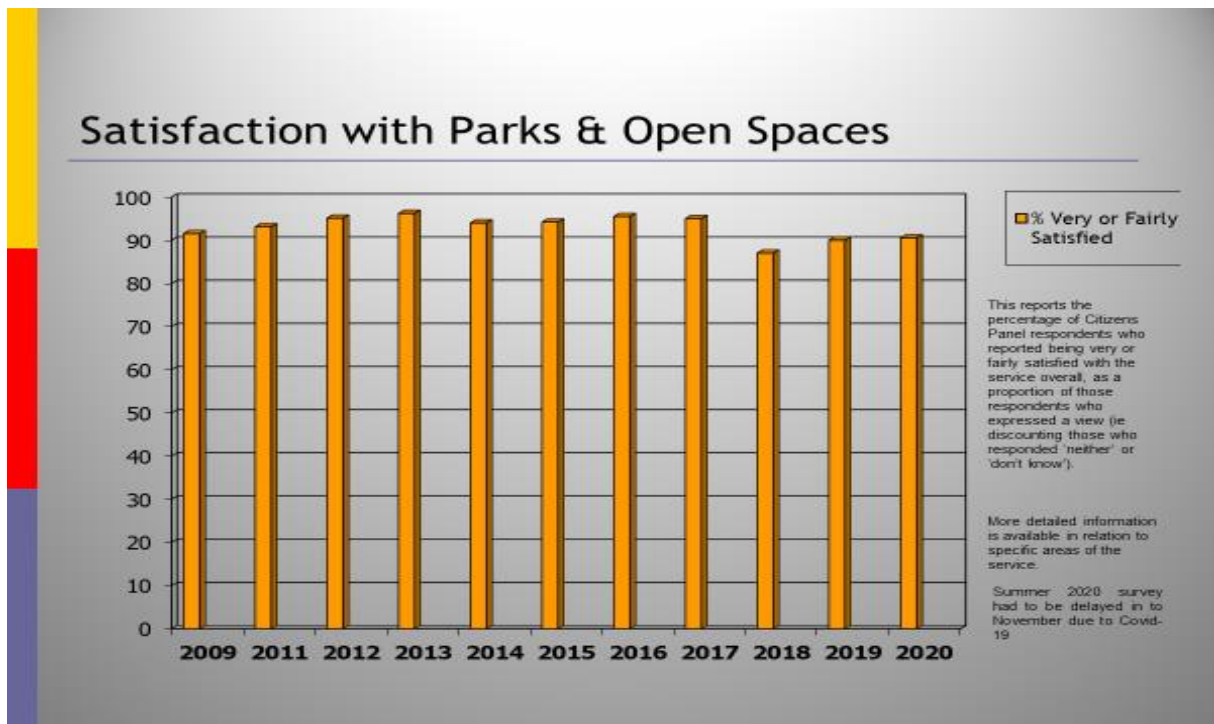
Contractor H&S

All aspects of the contracts are scrupulously checked for high health and safety standards, and reports on key issues brought before the contract Performance Management Board.

Continental Landscapes have notified us that they have achieved the RoSPA Gold Medal Award, which is given to companies that have achieved gold standard for more than 5 years running.

In addition, they have attained RoSPA Gold Fleet Award standard and FORS Gold

Accreditation for vehicle fleet management.



For clarity, whilst numerous indicators are collected and reviewed for the service, the departmental KPIs are:

Indicator	20/21 target	Average of latest recorded outturns (may not be full year)
Contractor performance points score	15 to 501 points	30 (to end December)
Satisfaction parks and open spaces	85% to 90%	90.52%
Allotment occupancy	84% to 92%	93.5%

Street Scene

This includes the provision and maintenance of street name plates, bus shelters and art installations. The city currently has 111 bus shelters (66 Adshell/ 45 city council), and 16 art installations of varying sizes (and five soon to come online in Boultham Park).

The number of art installations has grown by one this year following work by Lindum Rotary, who have worked to provide a celebration of the water supply for Lincoln at the Water Tower. It is hoped we will see the installation of the sculpture to commemorate the work of George Boole at the railway station, later this year.

Historically there are two tiers of provision. A contract for free provision of those where the advertising pays for the shelter, and those which the council has to pay for. The budget for council-provided bus shelters was removed a number of years ago, when members took a decision that it could no longer afford to maintain bus shelters. Of course, we have no option but to continue to maintain and keep safe those which remain in the street scene. We continue to seek imaginative way to maintain and protect what we can, but ultimately the second tier of bus shelters will be removed over time unless other funding sources can be found.

Waste/Recycling

The Lincolnshire Waste Partnership has been active this last year in the delivery of the action plan underpinning the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Lincolnshire (JMWMS). This document prioritises the work which drives change for our waste services across the county, and ensures a joined-up approach is taken, so reducing any risks of confusion.

Members may be aware that we had expected a clear steer from government this year on a few key areas of waste/recycling policy. Covid has delayed this, but the initial national consultation has concluded, leading to further follow-up work on related consultations taking place now (costs to the packaging industry and deposit return schemes). I am anticipating the clear guidance/legislation will emerge shortly. As an aide memoir for members the headline issues for the council are the possibilities of mandating i) free green waste collections ii) food waste collections iii) separate recycling collection waste streams.

The partnership has also led on trial areas for collecting food wastes, and paper and card separately. These trials have been important to gauge likely tonnages that might be collected if scaled up at some time, operational transitional difficulties, operational and disposal costs, and public opinion.

Whilst the food waste collections have not been scaled up due to costs, the information obtained has been fed back to government to inform its decision making.

With regards to separate paper and card collections, these have proven successful and so there is now a provisional programme of roll out for the entire county. Lincoln, as perhaps the most complex area, is not scheduled until 2024. With the support of

officers, I am preparing a report for member consideration currently, as whilst it is written into the County programme this has not been signed off by Lincoln's members yet. For this reason, 2024 remains provisional.

Councils across Lincolnshire continue to have a 'contamination' issue in the recycling stream, reflecting a national problem. It will be interesting to see what impact the roll-out of separate paper and card collections have on these figures in other districts as the changes come in and services settle down.

In terms of statistical performance please note that data is always lagged, so at this stage it reflects information from April to December 2020. I have also included the same period for the previous year for comparison. The full results for 2020/21 will be available shortly and will be reported in the usual way.

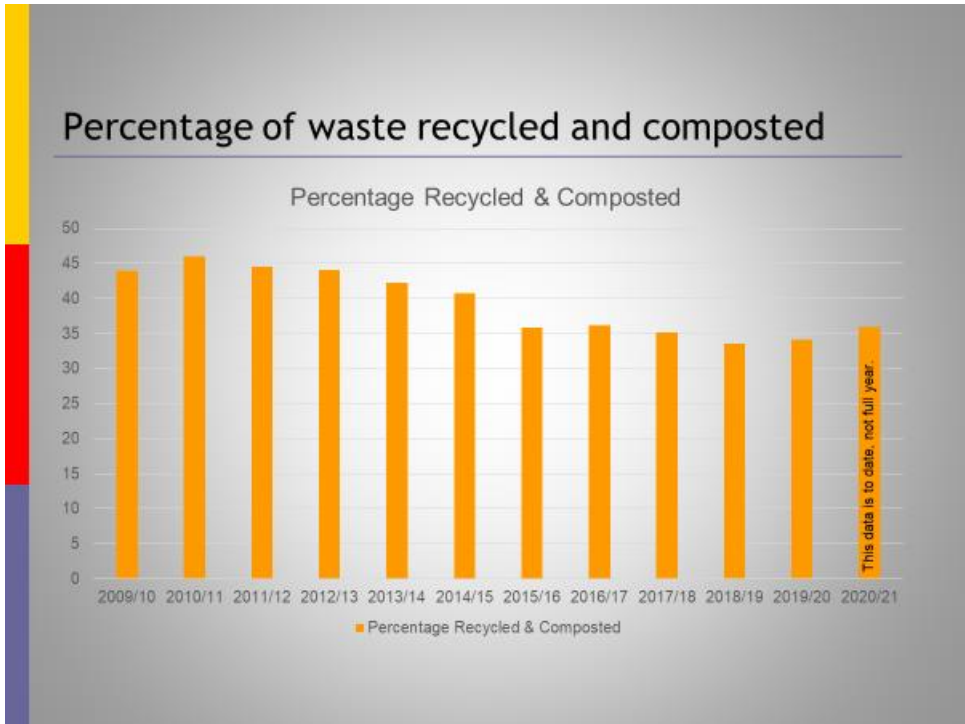
Domestic general (residual) waste disposed of has increased by around 9.9% (this increase includes new properties), with the average household disposing of an average 137kg per quarter, compared with 125kg in the previous year.

The number of residents using the garden waste service was 15,415 at the end of March 2020, compared with 15,841 the previous year, suggesting the resistance to charging has now just about stabilised (16,355 at 15th January 2018).

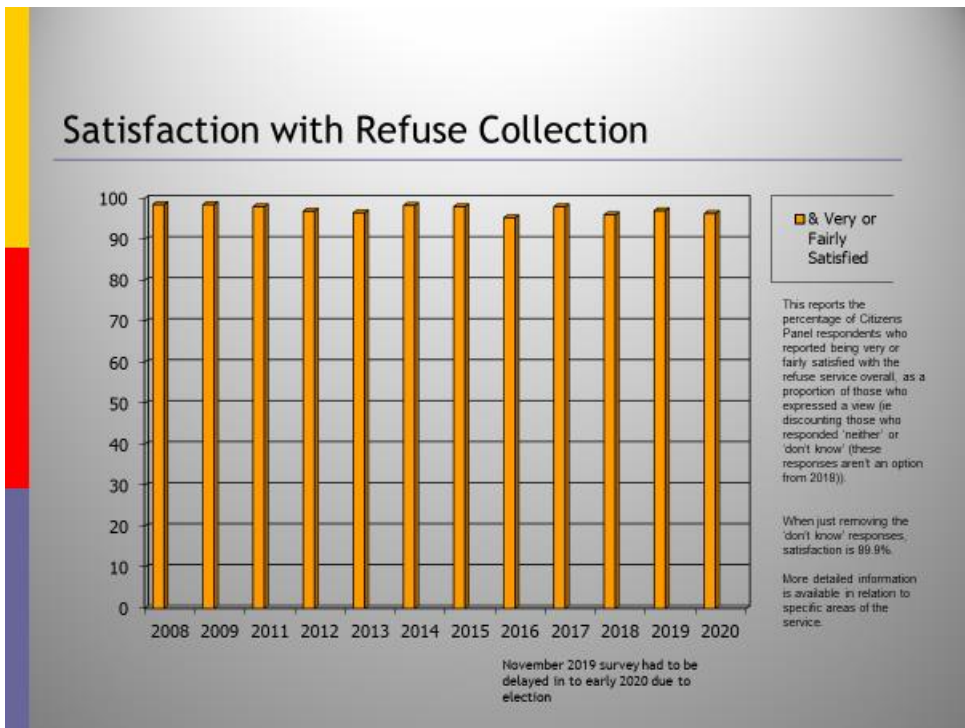
Composting tonnages for the first three quarters were 7.3% up on the previous same period (5,354 Tonnes compared with 4,988 Tonnes).

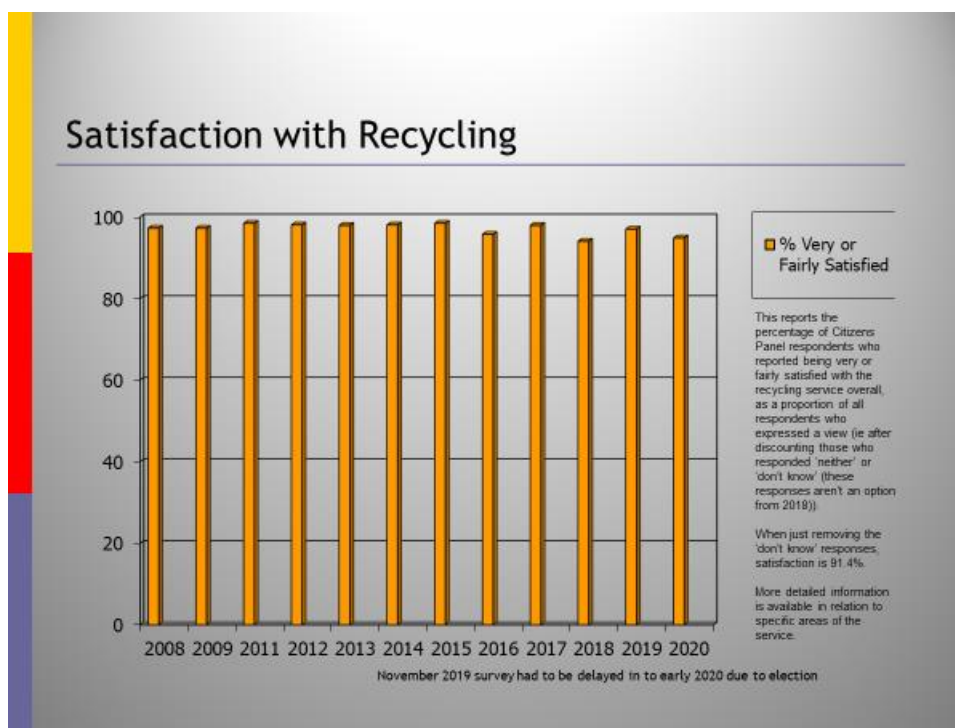
Recycling tonnages were 14% up (5,327 Tonnes compared with 4,672 Tonnes).

The graph below shows combined performance and suggests that there was a marginal upward trend showing by the end of December 2020 with recycling and composting making up 36% of the waste stream. The final bar representing 2020/21 is not indicative of actual outturn as it does not include quarter 4.



The following graphs show the updated satisfaction scores for waste /recycling services, as taken from the Council’s annual Citizen Panel survey. Allowing for small margins within the calculations these show that satisfaction overall remains consistently extremely high.





For clarity, whilst numerous indicators are collected and reviewed for the service as a part of day-to-day operations, the departmental KPIs are:

Indicator	20/21 target	Latest recorded outturns (may not be full year)
Percentage of Waste Recycled	33.5% to 41%	36%
Contractor performance points score	50 to 501 points	320 (to end December)
Satisfaction with waste services	90% to 96%	96.3%
Satisfaction with recycling services	90% to 96%	94.8%

Street Cleansing

This section covers all areas of street cleansing, including street sweeping, litter picking, litter bin emptying, fly tipping, and the removal of graffiti and abandoned vehicles.

Fly tipping continued to be an issue for us this year in certain areas of the city. The Sincil Bank area has been the area of highest demand yet again, although fly tipping has become an increasingly significant problem nationally under lockdown.

Although a range of initiatives have been tried in the Sincil Bank area in the past without achieving the improvement desired, staff have not given up. Biffa have produced a 'heat map' of locations to confirm the hot spots for dumping, these having changed in recent years influenced by other initiatives such as the installation

of CCTV. Cross referencing this with an assessment of the types of materials dumped, the staff working on this have now developed some specific anti-fly tipping signage for the area, which is in seven different languages, and this is being displayed now. Options for more CCTV is also being explored. Only a review of the heat map data in a few months' time will indicate if there is any improvement.

Graffiti

Under lockdown we have seen a drop in graffiti, and at the same time, as a part of a purge to clean up the city, staff have focused on clearing as much graffiti away as possible. Getting graffiti cleared is not easy, as much of it is on private property, and as such it is the landowner's responsibility to clear it or at least to give permission for us to do so. Some chose not to, and others won't respond to offers of help from the council.

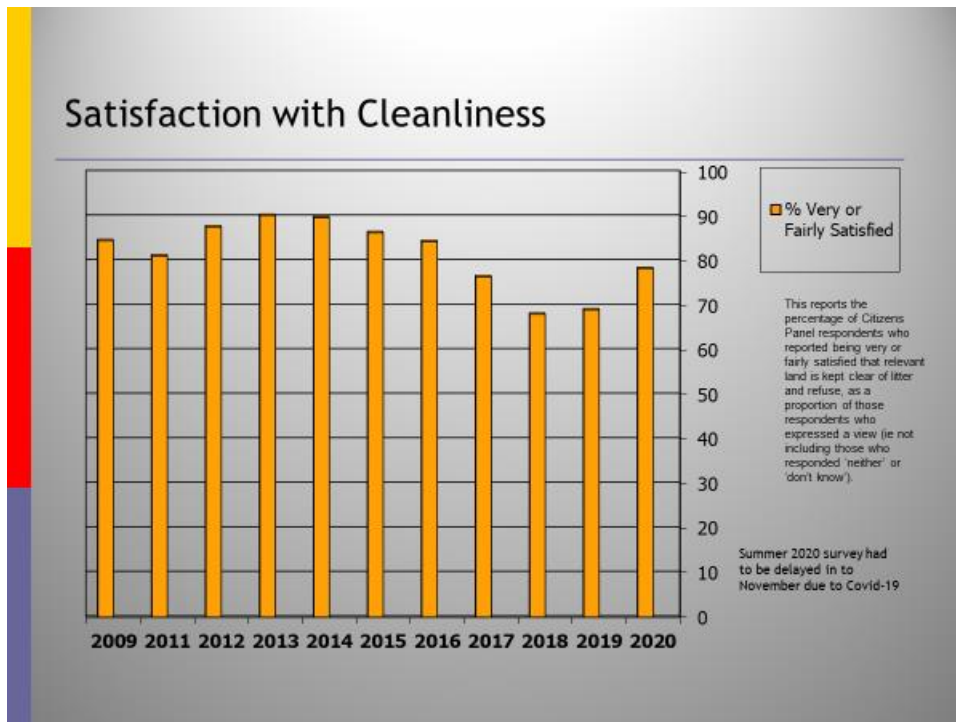
That said, this year the city is as clean of graffiti as it has been for many years, predominantly as a result of constant chasing and proactive work by staff. In 2020 the council removed 28 instances of graffiti.

Litter Policy

This year, presumably due to people having had more time, but also perhaps because they have become more appreciative of the open spaces in the city, we have seen a rise in the numbers of people wanting to volunteer to litter pick.

These requests come in many forms, from those who want to engage with the Council's Volunteer Co-ordinator and work in an organised group, through to individuals or groups that do not want to be 'governed' in any way. The Council's continued enthusiasm for volunteer action has to be tempered a little by its responsibilities to make sure that such voluntary activities only work on authorised areas and of course that they do this safely.

To ensure that these aims are met unambiguously I have asked officers to draft a brief policy statement setting out the council's position, which is now under consideration for adoption across all districts county-wide



In the summer Citizens Panel survey, 78.2% of respondents who expressed a view reported being very or fairly satisfied with the cleanliness of the city. A higher performance than has been seen in the last few years. This is always a challenging issue to achieve a good satisfaction score on, and this is a welcome improvement. I will be working closely with the staff and contractor to seek out further incremental improvements this next year. The focus will be on fly tipping and graffiti.

For clarity, whilst numerous indicators are collected and reviewed for the service the departmental KPIs are:

Indicator	20/21 target	Latest recorded outturns (may not be full year)
Contractor performance points score	25 to 501 points	180(to end December)
Satisfaction with cleansing services	68% to 80%	78.2%

Public Toilets

This service has again achieved high standards for those facilities entered into the Loo of the Year awards, with both the Bus Station and Castle Square facilities being awarded Gold standard.

Members will be aware that a review of the service is concluding currently. This review is an assessment of provision, seeking opportunities to deliver savings as required by the corporate Medium Term Financial plan. As this committee is a

performance review, it would not be appropriate to go into the details of the review itself here. However, please note that relevant data on utilisation at charged facilities is recorded, and this will be monitored for changes ongoing, regardless of what changes, if any, are finally agreed.

Charges of 20p per use have been in operation at the Bus station, Castle Square and Tentercroft street since January 2017, and remain unchanged for 2021. However, due to covid income has clearly been severely disrupted this year, as can be seen below.

	Castle	Lucy Tower	Tentercroft Street	Bus Station	TOTAL
2016/17	£1,731.93	£988.20			£2720.13
2017/18	£10,029.31	£4,588.02	£917.65	£3,115.35	£18,650.33
2018/19	£8,354.97	£2,278.05	£9,176.03	£17,843.46	£37,652.51
2019/20	£8,380.77	£172*	£9,207.88	£18,179.43	£35,940.08
2020/21	£6,134.30	£0	£77	£12,806.74	£19,018.04

Satisfaction is usually the subject of a summertime Citizen Panel survey. There was no survey for toilets in 2020 due to the impact of covid on the service. A Citizen Panel survey of July 2018 showed that 56% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with public toilet provision, and in 2019 this dropped to 48%. Although we do not have any new data, this consistently low score is probably due to a number of factors, not least the charges imposed. Given adverse publicity about potential service changes this year, and the long periods of closure necessitated by covid, it is not expected that a survey now, or in the near future, would reveal a positive result, or be a far reflection of the work of the staff involved.

However, it remains a serious concern for the portfolio, and means that the provision of accessible, strategically located, good quality public toilets remain a key issue for the Council.

The Wider Environment

As a footnote to my report, I think it is worth stressing that as Portfolio Holder for Remarkable Place I recognise my wider role. Many of the place enhancing projects of the Council are of course reported to me from the Council's Remarkable Place theme group, but alongside this however I recognise the portfolio role in relation to wider environmental issues. This is not just by way of such as the wildflower initiative related earlier, but also through things like the measurement of carbon footprint through our operations. Whilst the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership is now looking at this countywide, we also consider it internally. I hope Biffa will have an electric waste collection vehicle on trial in the city later in the year and expect further expansion of contractor's electric vehicles/tools in the near future. This year alone Continental Landscapes have transferred more than 34 items of equipment from petrol to electric rechargeable, at a cost to them of over £10k.

Licensing

The licensing team have:

- 338 vehicle licences issued
- 496 test certificates issued
- 5 private hire operator licences issued
- 2 vehicle licences determined at committee
- 237 PH driver licences issued
- 20 PH driver licence ready to issue.
- 20 HC driver licences issued
- 4 drivers referred to PH/HC Sub Committee

we've issued 107 Premises Licences and 44 Personal Licences

Licensing have continued to provide services to our customers throughout the pandemic, adapting to how we respond to enquiries and how we deliver our service, this has involved remote working, where some checks would normally be done in person, we have moved to posting out applications and forms which adds in time but has allowed the service to continue.

Unfortunately, some areas of the service, namely new driver applications have been affected more than others due to the level of checks requiring close contact with us or partners. The changing circumstances have required careful navigation to ensure that we keep businesses operating as best we can but without compromising on public safety. New applications are now being processed and knowledge test have resumed under careful management of Covid-19 secure measures.

The team have also had to respond to new and changing legislation and have been on the front line working with a range of partners to support licence holders and the city centre with the reopening of retail and hospitality.

The team have also designed and implemented a new application process for pavement licence applications. This was a completely new area of work for the team and has been implemented quickly and efficiently to ensure businesses can benefit from pavement licences.

We will be looking to implement the best bits of how we deliver our service going forwards.

The year ahead will see the licencing team adapting to the 'new normal' as well as undertaking policy reviews such as the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Policy which is already underway.

Food, Health and Safety Team Report Jan – Dec 2020

The team consists of the Food, Health & Safety Team Leader, 2 Environmental Health Officers and 1 Food Safety Officer, since Autumn 2019 there has been 1 Food Safety Officer vacancy. This has necessitated the need to employ agency workers to help with the volume of work.

We also worked closely with other departments within the Council that we hadn't

work with previously, which will improve the way we work going forward.

This report covers the work that the team have undertaken during 2020.

As well as continuing to protect public health by dealing with food and health and safety related matters, the Food, Health and Safety Team have been responsible for Covid-19 related matters in the following areas:

- giving advice and guidance to businesses to make sure that they are Covid secure
- enforcing non compliance
- management and deployment, including training, of Covid ambassadors
- working with Public Health England (PHE) and Public Health Lincolnshire (PHL) on outbreak management
- supporting community testing
- supporting and advising colleagues in other departments within the Council

Volume of Work During 2020

2356 service requests – this is double the number of service requests dealt with in 2019. Approximately half of the service requests were Covid-19 related request for advice or complaints. The other service requests included complaints, food hazard warnings, dangerous equipment notifications and requests for advice.

255 food hygiene inspections – although this is approximately half the number of inspections carried out in 2019, many businesses were closed during lockdown periods. In addition, the Food Standards Agency suspended the normal inspection programme and LAs were advised to prioritise inspecting those businesses which were trading and were of most risk to public health.

- 33 food and environmental samples taken.
- 23 food related infectious disease notifications.
- 74 RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) reports received – the majority of notifications did not require a mandatory investigation, however 5 accidents were investigated.
- 39 Skin piercing applications processed.

Examples of Complex Cases

During 2020, the team dealt with a number of complex cases. Examples include the following:

Accumulations of waste and associated rodents at convenience store

Multi agency work, initially a report of an accumulation of waste at rear of premises attracting vermin, resulted in service of prevention of damage by pests act 1949

notice to clear the land. In addition, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue and Trading Standards became involved due to allegations of other issues made to the Officer, this resulted in the Landlord taking possession of the property to arrange clearance of the land and to stop the other illegal activities from occurring.

Restaurant/takeaway with unfit food

A request by the Police to visit an unhygienic premises that they had attended. Unfit food was found and removed from the premises. Whilst at the premises the officer could smell gas, Cadent was called out and found pipework and equipment to be dangerous and disconnected the gas supply. Officer then served a Prohibition Notice on the premises requiring works, a gas check and certificate before the notice could be lifted allowing the business to reopen.

Food retailer selling unfit food

Routine unannounced food hygiene inspection resulted in the voluntary surrender of illegal food imports – duck blood, unfit food and food not produced in accordance with the food hygiene regulations. The food business required major improvements in food hygiene practices and procedures.

Takeaway with poor structural and hygiene standards

A routine unannounced food hygiene inspection found the premises to be generally dirty, with poor hygiene practices and structural disrepair. Unsafe food was voluntarily disposed of. The business was rated as 1 and a schedule of works issued. At the time of the revisit, no significant improvement had been made and so Hygiene Improvement Notices were issued and were subsequently complied with.

Covid-19 Related Cases

Enforcement

In all aspects of our work, we operate a stepped approach, working with businesses to help them comply with legal requirements. This has also been the case during the pandemic and generally that has been successful, with only one Prohibition Notice being served on a business where there was a flagrant breach of the law. A barber shop, that was required to be closed had created a false wall in the premises so that it did not appear, when looking through the window, that they were operating. Customers were entering through a rear door to have their hair cut.

Outbreaks

The team were involved in investigations into numerous outbreaks of Covid-19, that were linked to businesses or the workplace. An example of an outbreak that we investigated along with Public Health Lincolnshire (PHL) was when numerous members of a football team, who had tested positive, had been out as a group at several public houses in the City, causing an outbreak to occur. The case was complex due to the numbers of cases and that several venues were involved. Our close working partnership with PHL meant that when we received local intelligence

from our businesses, we were able to ensure early interventions to contain and reduce the community spread of Covid-19.

We also worked closely with PHE, PHL and neighbouring LAs to assist them where Lincoln residents were working in large food factories in other parts of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. This partnership working helped to ensure that those required to self-isolate were doing so, whilst also offering support to them to do so.

Challenge by businesses that were required to close

During the pandemic, there were numerous challenges by businesses who believed that they were permitted to open. In these cases, the Council's Legal Services team provided vital support to our decision making and actions.

Businesses adapting to new ways of working

There was an increase in on-line food business activity, with many of the businesses operating whilst being unregistered. There were challenges with investigating these types of businesses.

Bereavement Services

The crematorium has had a very busy year carrying out over 2000 cremation services, the staff have worked very hard to cover the extra demand on the service while working in bubbles to reduce the possibility of all staff needing to isolate and leaving us unable to carry out services.

During the pandemic we have been offering webcasts free of charge to help with the reduced numbers that have been allowed to attend services at the crematorium, visual tributes have continued to be popular.

Memorial sales have slowed since the introduction of GDPR as we no longer send information to all cremation applicants and only send this to applicants that have requested the information. We are working with a design company looking at the branding of the crematorium and production of leaflets to help make people aware of the services that we offer.

Burial numbers are slightly higher than last year and following a grave audit a number of graves were identified as not being used and these have now been made available to the public. With this said we no longer have new full burial grave spaces in Canwick Road Old, Canwick Road New, St Swithin's and Newport Cemetery, but we are still doing reopen graves in all the cemeteries. Long Leys Road burials are increasing, and we are hoping to offer memorial options within this site in the near future.

Following the delay of the works at the crematorium due to the pandemic we have now started this work and it is running on target with the new chapel being available for use from Monday 5th July. The improvement works at the crematorium will improve the service that is offered to the public and also replace the aging cremators with ones that have all the latest energy efficient systems to reduce the amount of

gas and electricity used and also with the DeNox filtration reduce the amount of nitrous oxide that is emitted from the cremation process.

Recreation Services

Central Market

The Central Market has operated every day throughout the pandemic and adapted to the various operational challenges. As you will be aware, we are now looking towards an exciting reinvention of the market to enhance the retail and visitor experience. The Market Superintendent, as well as recently celebrating 30 years' service with the council has kindly agreed to put off his planned retirement until the market closes for the required works. Our thanks go to Andy Bradley for his commitment in this regard.

Community Centres

The pandemic and the associated legal and guidance have made it unviable to open the centres. The Recreation Officers have busied themselves during the downtime to redecorate public areas and enhance the centres. Contact has been maintained with hirers and we look forward to welcoming them back once social distancing protocols makes this viable.

The centres have been utilised for blood doning and other priority use including Sudbrooke Drive being used at a Test Centre and Moorland Community Centre being used by the NHS Test and Trace Mobile Testing Unit.

Pitches

I'm pleased to say that we have managed to navigate various challenges to allow league play on football, bowls and cricket pitches this year.

Fixed Play Strategy

Work continues to produce a revised fixed play strategy which will prioritise fixed play sites within the city.

Leisure Services

The Councils two Leisure Centres, Birchwood LC and Yarborough LC have continued to provide the most comprehensive service they have been able to provide in the current everchanging Covid-19 environment. We are hopeful that this situation will be greatly improved after the (potential) relaxation of Covid-19 related regulations from July 19th.

Over recent months the City Council in partnership with our Leisure provider Active Nation have agreed the development of an exciting new physical Activity Action Plan. This plan has been developed to supplement the Physical Activity Strategy adopted by Executive last year. Its prime focus will be to help drive and support our Health agenda aspirations by encouraging and enabling residents to become more

active through a varied package of new initiatives.

We are hopeful that this Action Plan will be further supplemented in the near future by wider strategic work to promote a more comprehensive joined up approach to our Cities growing health and activity problems, problems that have been more recently amplified by issues related to lock down. This future work will only be achieved with the support and participation of various potential partners from the City and the County, and will include key involvement from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Climate Change:

Since the Council agreed a motion declaring a Climate and Environmental Emergency in 2019, we have been working with the Lincoln Climate Commission and have published the Lincoln Roadmap to net zero carbon. The roadmap sets out Lincoln's current Green House Gas emissions and projections for 2030 and is available on the Council and Commission websites, along with a quarterly newsletter and sustainability toolkit. The Sustainability Toolkit provides a one stop guide to help people adopt a sustainable lifestyle. The Council are currently working with the commission to provide a Lincoln 2030: A Climate Action Plan and a Local Climate Impacts profile so we can understand and adapt to the challenges of climate change now and in the future.

In addition to working with our partners on the Commission the City Council has prepared a draft Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan, setting out how the Council intends to achieve net zero carbon for its own operations and services. An important part of this work has been to set up an Environmental Management System, which provides a structured framework for managing and reducing the Council's environmental impacts. Since our baseline year of 2018/19 the Council have reduced its own carbon footprint by 24%, making considerable reductions in emissions from energy and transport. In September 2020 Investors in the Environment carried out an audit of the council's environmental performance and in October we were presented with the Silver award. We are now working towards our 2021 submission and are aiming for a Green award.

Since the Council approved the motion to be a single use, plastic free council we have carried out an audit and published an action plan which is available on the Council's website. The action plan includes replacing plastic for biodegradable materials in council buildings and at council events such as the Lincoln 10k and Christmas Market. The Council continue to work with the Plastic Free Lincoln steering group to submit out application for plastic free community status for Lincoln in Autumn 2021.

In January this year the Council received a grant and match funding from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles to increase the provision of electric vehicle charge points (EVCP) at Chaplin St and Orchard St car parks, through the On Street Electric Vehicle Charge Point Scheme. Four EVCPs have now been installed at Chaplin St and an additional four EVCPs will be commissioned at Orchard St car park in August 2021. This will take the total number of publicly available EVCPs in Lincoln to 57, the UK average per 100 00 population is 34.2 and 26 for Lincolnshire.

In April 2021 the Council were awarded £479,600 from the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme (LAD) and are working with E.ON to roll out the scheme, due to be launched in July 2021 to support up to 40 households improve the energy efficiency of their homes. The Council are working with the Greater Lincolnshire Energy Efficiency Network to prepare an application for the next phase of the LAD scheme in 2022.

Councillor Bob Bushell

Executive Portfolio Holder, Remarkable Place

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COUNCIL

21 SEPTEMBER 2021

REPORT UNDER RULE 2 (vi) OF THE CITY COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Report by Councillor Jane Loffhagen, Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

Members of Committee: Jane Loffhagen [Chair], Naomi Tweddle [Vice Chair], Bill Bilton, Sue Burke, Liz Bushell Jackie Kirk, Helena Mair, Bill Mara, Lucinda Preston, Hilton Spratt, and Eddie Strengiel.

Officers: Graham Watts, Democratic and Elections Manager and Jess Cullen, Democratic Services Officer.

Since the spring of 2020, the Committee has met on seven occasions. A decision was taken at the scoping meeting in September 2020 that we should focus on two issues relating to the Covid-19 pandemic:

- the effects on local businesses, and what has been / could be done to assist; and
- the effect on individuals and what has been happening, or could happen to assist.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Committee members for their dedicated attendance and participation in these difficult times, and also thanks to Jess Cullen, who is currently on maternity leave, and Graham Watts, who has recently left the council, from Democratic Services.

It was further decided that, because the pandemic was an ongoing and developing problem, that we would change the normal practice of the Committee. Rather than us looking in depth into an issue and then presenting a report at the end of the year with recommendations to the Executive, we would invite senior council staff from relevant departments to the meetings so the information we were gathering could be fed immediately and directly back into practice, and into the council's response to the pandemic report. This means that a great deal of the information gathered can be found to have already been responded to, and a substantial amount is within the council's response to the pandemic report.

Of course, as the issue is a pandemic, we could not control what was happening next or know the likelihood of ongoing outbreaks, restrictions or lockdowns and so had to respond at each meeting to what we did know rather than try to predict events.

Committee meetings were held with contributors as follows:

29 September 2020 – Our scoping meeting was attended by Paul Carrick, Neighbourhood Manager, who outlined the current council community response including the Befriending scheme and the process for signposting residents to other agencies including Age UK,

YMCA, Assist, Network, food banks and many more. It was decided that recommendations and information would be made to the City Council's Response to Covid-19 Plan, and the Recovery Plan.

20 October 2020 – We received contributions from Jo Walker (Assistant Director for Growth), Ric Metcalfe (Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder) and Martin Walmsley (Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service). This meeting covered the services provided to local businesses such as distributing both mandatory and discretionary grants, and investment the Council had made and could make with regard to food banks. Links with business agencies such as Lincoln BIG, the Chamber of Commerce and various small business groups were also discussed. Recommendations were made directly to these departments, including those concerning business rate relief, rent deferral for tenants and charity sector/ voluntary agencies, support for Test and Trace, and the Kick Start programme.

16 November 2020 – We received a further contribution from Jo Walker, and contributions from Simon Walters (Strategic Director of Communities and Environment, City of Lincoln Council), Steve Welsby (Communications Manager, City of Lincoln Council), Sarah Loftus (Chief Executive of Lincoln Business Improvement Group (BIG), which is the local business support agency), Barry Hepton (Local business owner and Chairman of Bailgate Guild, which is an association for small businesses in the Bail area), and Nicola Lockwood (Local business owner and Vice Chair of Bailgate Guild). Recommendations and acknowledgments of support concerned the inclusion of the recommendations from the Lincoln BIG coronavirus business survey report and further publicity for support available and encouragements for people to shop locally where possible.

16 December 2020 – This meeting focused on a presentation from Derek Ward (Director of Public Health, Lincolnshire County Council). Recommendations were frequently made by the County Council and these were discussed.

26 January 2021 – We received a contribution from Justin Brown (Assistant Director for Growth, Lincolnshire County Council). The meeting drew together information on the impact on businesses from earlier meetings with input from the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum's Business working group, comprising Lincolnshire councils, University, the Department for Work and Pensions, and the Federation of Small Businesses, amongst others. Our recommendations covered a wealth of issues, including signposting for the council support and the Furlough scheme; advice on rapid digitalisation for businesses; advice for those in the tourism and hospitality industry; and the Lincolnshire Enterprise Partnership. This included business recovery support, and further support for the wellbeing of those affected and advice for people wishing to start up businesses.

16 February 2021 – We moved on to look at impact on individuals with contributions from Graham Metcalfe (Department for Work and Pensions) and Kate Edgar (Development Plus, which is a local charity running projects locally working with individuals about mental health,

access to employment, helping homeless / rough sleepers and people leaving prison). The issue of charity organisations losing a great deal of support was highlighted. Kate Ellis (Director of Major Developments, City of Lincoln Council) was also present to take forward issues that arose from this and recorded everything for her report.

9 March 2021 – We received a further detailed presentation from Kate Edgar (Development Plus) about the Bridging the Gap project run by Development Plus, also lengthy session with Kate Ellis (Director of Major Developments, City of Lincoln Council) to ensure our work and recommendations were included in the Council report on our response to the pandemic.

I would personally like to thank all our contributors and council staff who stayed for long and sometimes late meetings during this year, and whose contributions were so helpful and enlightening.

We learned a great deal during this process about how the pandemic was affecting local businesses and individuals and about what we could do to help the council focus our efforts on where the need was most found. Charities reported a distressing lack of funding rendering them unable to function as they normally would to help those in need , and some of these gaps were filled by council staff and partners.

One of the main things we learned was that our Council's response to this pandemic has been nothing short of amazing -the approach was constructive, practical, flexible and effective and the achievements marvellous. This covered everything from distribution of government grants to businesses, to housing every single rough sleeper.

This is a horrible and totally new situation, but staff of all grades and members alike showed generosity, flexibility and preparedness to step out of their comfort zones to help our residents at such a difficult time. This is ongoing of course. It is a testament to our sometimes much-maligned public services about what can be achieved and how fast by a public sector determined to be effective.

Councillor Jane Loffhagen

Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

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SUBJECT: BUSINESS AND PLANNING ACT 2020

DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

REPORT AUTHOR: FRANCESCA BELL

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Council on the implications of the Business and Planning Act 2020 and to seek necessary delegations to delegate these powers to Lincolnshire County Council's Highways department.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 In order to assist businesses with economic recovery and protect hospitality jobs, the Government introduced in 2020 the above legislation which sees a streamlined and cheaper route for businesses such as cafés, restaurants and bars to secure a licence to place furniture on the highway. This was a new function given to District Councils in 2020 on a temporary basis up until September 30th 2021. In July 2021 central government announced this provision is to be extended until 30th September 2022.
- 2.2 Although City of Lincoln Council has administered these licences for the past year on a temporary basis, now this has been extended operationally this function would naturally align better with Lincolnshire County Councils Highways department who already issue Pavement licences under the Highways Act 1980.
- 2.3 Over the past year City of Lincoln Council have issued 21 licences. The rest of the district councils delegated this function to Lincolnshire County Council upon the introduction of the Act in 2020.
- 2.4 Lincolnshire County Council have proposed to accept the delegation of this legislation for the purpose of administering pavement licences on behalf of City of Lincoln Council.

3. Background

- 3.1 A business which uses (or proposes to use) premises for the sale of food or drink for consumption (on or off the premises) can apply for a pavement licence. Businesses which are eligible include, public house cafes, bars, restaurants, snack bars, coffee shops and ice- cream parlours.
- 3.2 A licence permits the business to use furniture placed on the highway to sell or serve food and/or drink or allow it to be used by people for the consumption of food or drink supplied from, or in connection with the use of the premises.

- 3.3 The furniture which may be used can cover: counters or stalls, table, chairs, benches or other forms of seating and umbrellas, barriers, heaters and other articles used in connection with the outdoor consumption of food or drink. The furniture is required to be removable, it cannot be a permanent fixed structure, and should be able to be removed easily and stored away.
- 3.4 Fees can be set locally for a pavement licence, but are capped at a maximum of £100. This has been provided free of charge by City of Lincoln Council and will remain free if administered by Lincolnshire County Council.
- 3.5 Licences can only be granted in respect of highways which are generally footpaths restricted to pedestrians or are roads and places to which vehicle access is restricted or prohibited. The grant of the pavement licence only permits the placing of furniture on the highway, other regulatory frameworks such as the need for alcohol licences and the need to comply with registration requirements for food businesses still apply.

If the applicant has a licence to serve alcohol on-premises, there will be a temporary amendment to the Licensing Act 2003 which will allow them to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises without needing to apply for a variation of their licence.

- 3.6 Once the application is granted, or deemed to be granted, the applicant will also benefit from deemed planning permission to use the land for anything done pursuant to the licence whilst the licence is valid.

4. Duration and Process

- 4.1 If the application is determined before the end of the determination period (which is 5 working days, beginning with the first day after the public consultation period) the Council can specify the duration of the licence subject to the minimum duration of three months. There is an expectation however, that the licence will be granted for the maximum of twelve months or more, unless there are good reasons for granting for a lesser period.
- 4.2 If a licence is deemed to be granted as the Council has not determined the application in the required timescale then the licence will be valid for a year. No licence whether granted, or deemed to be granted, will be valid beyond 30 September 2022.
- 4.3 Once all the required information is provided, the Council has 10 working days from the day after the application is made (excluding public holidays) to consult on and determine the application. This is 5 working days for public consultation and then 5 working days for consideration and determination of the application. If the Council does not determine the application within this 10 day period then the application will be deemed to have been granted.

The Applicant is required to fix a notice to the premises the day they submit the application to the Council. They must ensure the notice remains in place for the public consultation period which is 5 working days. The Council must consult with the Highway Authority. The Council must take into account representations from

the public and the Highway Authority during the consultation period. The application and any representations received must be published.

- 4.4 The Council may impose conditions on the licence. Any conditions must include the national condition which states that clear routes of access along the highway must be maintained, taking into account the needs of disabled people and the recommended minimum footway widths and distances required for access by mobility impaired and visually impaired people.
- 4.5 Such local conditions will consider; public health and safety, public amenity and accessibility.
- 4.6 The Council can grant the licence in respect of any or all of the purposes specified in the application; grant the licence and impose conditions or refuse the application.

There is no statutory appeal process for the decision, however it is suggested that there can be an internal review process, which could be through Licensing Committee.

- 4.7 If a condition imposed on a licence is breached the Council can issue a notice requiring the breach to be remedied and can take action to recover any costs. The Council can also revoke the licence if there are risks to public safety; the highway is being obstructed; there is anti-social behaviour or nuisance; false or misleading information was provided in the application; or the relevant notices were not affixed to the area.

5. Proposal from Lincolnshire County Council

- 5.1 On 1st July 2020, the Traffic Manager from Lincolnshire County Council wrote to all district councils stating that :

'... Lincolnshire County Council is proposing that, if a Council so wishes, it could delegate the pavement licensing function under the Business and Planning Bill to the County Council, who would be able to adapt the current licencing scheme to ensure compliance with the new regulations'.

Following further conversation in August of this year we have ascertained that this offer remains.

- 5.2 It is understood from a discussion between the Licensing Manager, the Legal Services Manager and the Traffic Manager that this service would be provided free of charge to the District Councils, and also they were suggesting that they would not charge the businesses either.
- 5.3 The option of an agency approach with the County Council is favoured due to the extension of pavement licences as issued under the provision of the Business and Planning Act 2020.

6. Strategic Priorities

6.1 Let's drive economic growth

As identified in the report, the Government has introduced this legislation to assist economic recovery and to protect jobs in the hospitality industry

7. Organisational Impacts

7.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

The Council can charge a fee for an application for a pavement licence, this is capped at £100. However, this function has been provided free of charge to date and it is proposed the Lincolnshire County Council continue to provide the service for free.

7.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules As outlined in the report.

7.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

All licences will include the national condition as required by the Secretary of State in relation to clear routes of access and taking into account the needs of disabled people.

8. Risk Implications

8.1 (i) Options Explored For City of Lincoln Council to continue to administer the licences.

To delegate the authority to process and administer the licences to Lincolnshire County Council.

9. Recommendation

9.1 That the Council enters into agreement with Lincolnshire County Council following their proposal to take on the function of pavement licences under the Business and Planning Act 2020.

- 9.2 That Council authorise the Strategic Director of Communities and Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to finalise the terms of the delegation within the parameters set out in the report.
- 9.3 That Council accordingly delegates this function to the Highways Department of Lincolnshire County Council.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? None

List of Background Papers: None

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