



CITY OF
Lincoln
COUNCIL

Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2020/2021 Operational Performance Report

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Introduction

Performance measures are reported by directorate and include comment on how the service is contributing to helping the council in its response to COVID-19. The report details all measures by individual directorate grouping, with annual and quarterly measures split separately. The values are for quarter 2 performance.

Measures are included for:




- ▶ Directorate for Communities and Environment
- ▶ Measures belonging to Directorate for Housing and Investment
- ▶ Measures belonging to Chief Executives Directorate
- ▶ Corporate measures across the authority

Directorate for Major Developments does not monitor its performance through strategic measures, and instead its performance is managed by the progress of the various projects DMD owns under "Driving Economic Growth". However, a section is included in this report for the directorate providing information on their role in helping the council and local businesses during the pandemic.

The report also includes data on our corporate measures under the following categories:

- ▶ Sickness
- ▶ Corporate complaints including Ombudsman rulings
- ▶ Resource information

Key: How to read this report

R	Below Target
A	Acceptable performance – results are within target boundaries
G	At or above target
V	Volumetric/contextual measures that support targeted measures
	Performance has improved since Q1 2020/21
	Performance has deteriorated since Q1 2020/21
	Performance has stayed the same since Q1 2020/21



Chief Executive's Directorate Performance

A message from Angela Andrews, Chief Executive:

"CX Directorate has a mix of frontline and support services, and I am hugely proud of the dedication and support provided by staff in all of these teams. Customer Services, including the Welfare Team, together with both the Revenues and Benefits teams have done a fantastic job in supporting some of our most vulnerable residents, with Communications getting messages out to staff and residents about what the council is doing to provide help and support during the pandemic. At the start of lockdown we quickly established new services and I am massively impressed by how back office staff from Democratic and Electoral Services, Policy, Central Support Services, Procurement, Civic and Twinning and Audit came forward to work with other teams to provide immediate help. Financial Services worked under difficult circumstances to successfully deliver our year end accounts as well as assisting in a time of severe financial strain. Working from home has been a big challenge for some, both physically and mentally, and our HR team have worked tirelessly to provide guidance to managers and support to staff to ensure their wellbeing, with additional remote support for apprentices from WBL. Throughout the whole of Q1/2 our Property Services, including the Facilities Management team have ensured City Hall and Hamilton House are safe and 'Covid clean' environments to work in and Legal Services have continued their vital behind the scenes work to provide legal support, advice and guidance as required."



Considering we are amid a pandemic, quarter two sees a long list of positive results in Chief Executives, with 8 out of 20 measures above their target. Just 4 of 20 measures were below target in CX, and whilst 5 measures negatively changed direction, most of these measures remain above or within target and have positively changed direction. Two of the measures had no data collected, with an additional 5 annual measures also having no data available.

Service Area	Measure	Current Value	Status	
Communications	Percentage of media enquiries responded to within four working hours	86%	G	▲
Communications	Number of proactive communications issued that help maintain or enhance our reputation	38	A	▲
Work Based Learning	Percentage of apprentices completing their qualification on time	100.00	G	▬
Work Based Learning	Number of new starters on the apprenticeship scheme	2	V	▼
Work Based Learning	Percentage of apprentices moving into Education, Employment or Training	100.00	G	▬
Customer Services	Number of face to face enquiries in customer services	67	V	▬
Customer Services	Number of telephone enquiries answered in Channel Shift Areas (Rev & Bens, Housing & Env. Services)	25,690	V	▬
Customer Services	Average time taken to answer a call to customer services	109	A	▲
Customer Services	Average customer feedback score (face to face enquiries - score out of 10)	Not being collected due to impact on customer services due to COVID-19		
Customer Services	Customer satisfaction with their phone call to Customer Services	Not being collected due to impact on customer services due to COVID-19		
Accountancy	Average return on investment portfolio	0.18	R	▼
Accountancy	Average interest rate on external borrowing	3.69	G	▬
Revenues Administration	Council Tax - in year collection rate for Lincoln	50.53	R	▲
Revenues Administration	Business Rates - in year collection rate for Lincoln	65.15	G	▲
Revenues Administration	Number of outstanding customer changes in the Revenues team	685	R	▼
Housing Benefit Administration	Average (YTD) days to process new housing benefit claims from date received	16.69	G	▲
Housing Benefit Administration	Average (YTD) days to process housing benefit claim changes of circumstances from date received	4.63	G	▲
Housing Benefit Administration	Number of Housing Benefits / Council Tax support customers awaiting assessment	1,338	R	▼
Housing Benefit Administration	Percentage of risk-based quality checks made where Benefit entitlement is correct	91.52	G	▼
Housing Benefit Administration	The number of new benefit claims year to date (Housing Benefits/Council Tax Support)	3,073	V	▬
Procurement Services (Annual)	Percentage spend on contracts that have been awarded to "local" contractors (as the primary contractor)	No data has been supplied		
Procurement Services (Annual)	Percentage value of the top 10 spend contracts that have been sub-contracted (wholly or partly) to "local" suppliers to deliver			
Procurement Services (Annual)	Percentage of total contract spend that is with an SME			
Procurement Services (Annual)	Percentage of total contract spend that is with an SME who meets the "local" definition			
Procurement Services (Annual)	Return on new commercial investments - (Annual rental yield = Net Income/Purchase Price plus initial purchase costs)			



Communications

The Communications team continues to work from home, as do many other officers in the organisation. This has meant that all but the most difficult of enquiries can be responded to within the upper target of 85%. In both quarter one and two, the percentage of media enquiries responded to within four working hours was above its target of 85% with figures of 89% and 86% respectively. The number of proactive communications issued that help maintain or enhance our reputation was above target in quarter one with a figure of 46, decreasing slightly to 38 in quarter two, the slight drop on quarter one being due to the normal quietening of activities over the summer period. We continue to highlight all we are doing at this unprecedented time, both relating to COVID-19 and other work across the council. We have also had a focus on social media to get messages relating to COVID-19 out to as many people as possible.

Customer Services

During quarters one and two, Customer Services have seen some dramatic decreases in the number of faces to face enquiries held at City Hall. Through the national lockdown, face to face enquiries were limited to only essential appointments only. As a result, in quarter four, 2,403 people held a face to face appointment, this dropped to just 13 face to face enquires during quarter one, increasing only to 67 during quarter two as restrictions were lifted across the country.

Please note that as there has been such a large decrease in the number of faces to face enquiries, there is no reliable data to report for the average customer feedback score for face to face enquiries.

With this decrease of face to face enquiries in mind, it is therefore likely that those appointments will now be made over the phone. However, in both quarters one and two, the number of phones enquires answered is still lower than this point last year, and previous quarters. At 18,086 in quarter one, this is substantially lower than the 29,739 calls answered in quarter four. In quarter two, calls have returned to a more “normal” level of 25,690, but as stated is still below those figures from all of 2019/20.

Of those calls answered in quarter one, they were answered on average, in 124 seconds. This is another pleasing decrease from the 142 seconds reported in quarter four, and is the third consecutive decrease, from its high of 197 this time last year. In quarter two, this has further decreased to 109 seconds, despite the number of calls increasing as stated above from quarter one to quarter two.

Customer satisfaction with housing repairs calls was also suspended at the beginning of lockdown, when non urgent repairs were deferred until restrictions were eased. Now that restrictions have been eased, the logging of customer satisfaction with phone calls will resume in early November. Because of the above, there is no reliable data to provide for customer satisfaction with phone calls.

Obviously taking a high volume of calls in a home environment is very different from being in a contact centre with the support of colleagues and management on hand. Staff have had to handle very difficult and challenging calls – which seem much worse for being in their own home, because they then don't have anyone to turn to for instant support. I'm proud to say that we have managed to provide customers with a seamless service. There has not been a single minute when the council have not offered phone access to a real person for our customers, even at the height/start of the lockdown. The team have had to deal with things differently including supporting additional teams who have seen their own demands change.



Revenues Administration

One of the three targeted measures within Revenues Administration has reported as below target. The collection rate for Council Tax reported at 50.53%, below its cumulative quarter two lower target of 52.50%. Collection is therefore 2.34% below the same point in 19/20, equating to £1,079,296. As a result of COVID-19, the team has undertaken deferrals (on request) of April and May instalments, totalling 636 customers with a value of £135,247. These instalments will now be due in February and March 2021. Council Tax Support Hardship funding has also been awarded to 6,331 customers to a value of £331k. Throughout the rest of this financial year, the team still has £891k of funding to award which should help to reduce the gap in collection by 1.93%. Reminders began to be issued from the 7 September (for the first time this year) for all instalments due for April to June. Those who were due a reminder in July to September were issued as part of a new batch of reminders sent in October.

The collection rate for Lincoln Business Rates is reporting above its quarter two target of 59.50% with a figure of 65.15%, which is also an increase on quarter one's above target figure of 34.50% with a figure of 41.31%. Business rates collection is 5.57% above the same point in 2019/20, however because of COVID-19 a significant amount of this increase in collection is due to the award of the Expanded Retail Discount - reducing the net liability and making it more difficult to enable a true comparison to previous quarters and the same point last year. The collection rate of 65.15% means that we have collected £12,502,176 of the £19.2m liability (roughly £2.08m a month) - which leaves £6,687,657 to collect between now and the 31st March, approximately £1.128m per month.

The number of outstanding changes in the revenues team reported at 249 in quarter one, which was above its target of 600. Although reporting at an increased 685 in quarter two, this is still a reduction of 492 compared to September 2019 and is classed as acceptable performance. As a result of national COVID-19 lockdown restrictions being eased, workload has increased due to the increased number of house moves and changes to households that can now take place under the new guidelines. In quarter one, we also launched our new digital e-form. The e-forms are interactive and will ask the customer questions based on previous answers, which reduces the need for interaction between staff and residents to make changes. The e-form is integrated into the Revenues system, resulting in quick and efficient changes taking place and amended bills being issued.

All team members are currently working from home and although face to face contact was limited prior to COVID-19, there has been no physical contact with the Benefits team since March, other than through appointments with the Welfare Team. This has meant customers have been asked to provide documents in other ways, causing email correspondence to increase. In the first 2 months of this financial year the number of new claims for Council Tax Reduction (CTR) processed was 1,311 compared to 613 in the first 2 months of last year, changes in circumstances for CTR customers for the same period this year were 7292, and last year 4956, which shows the increase in workload experienced. Despite this processing times have not shown a significant increase. From the end of September 2020, the Benefits Team has also been responsible for processing Test and Trace Support Payments. There have also been legislation changes and the introduction of the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and Furlough schemes resulting in customers having changes in circumstances, which in turn increases workload and interactions with customers. There has been six times the number of new claims received, a 79% increase in emails received relating to benefit support, and a 163% increase in Universal Credit related documents.



Housing Benefit Administration

In quarters one and two, the average time to process new housing benefit claims was above its respective cumulative target of 26 days in quarter one, and 25 days in quarter two, with a figure of 15.89 in quarter one and 16.69 in quarter two. Officers continue to undertake ongoing weekly monitoring to ensure prompt decision making, and although there has been a slight slip in days to process, the team are still well above their respective quarter one and two targets. In respect of processing changes of circumstance, whilst there has been a small increase since Q4 of 2019/20, quarters one and two are both above their respective cumulative targets for 7.50 in quarter one and 7 in quarter two with figures of 4.22 and 4.63 respectively. In quarters one and two, the number of Housing Benefits/Council Tax support customers awaiting assessment has decreased, from 1,510 in quarter four, to 1,365 in quarter 1 and finally 1,338 in quarter two. Both respective figures are below their lower targets of 1,250, however this can for the most part be explained by the increased numbers of people seeking financial support as COVID-19 continues to place pressure on families facing unemployment and reduced income.

Procurement

COVID-19 impacted on the Procurement Service in a variety of ways. Initially it was anticipated that there would be a downturn in the requirement for procurement support, hence the Procurement Manager being trained to support the Lincare function, but the opposite happened. Government issued various Procurement Policy Notes in respect of ensuring that support would be provided to current suppliers through the Supplier Relief Scheme. In addition to this there was also the impact of suppliers within the marketplace furloughing staff which meant that it was not feasible to undertake procurement exercises during the lockdown period. This meant that we had to review legislation to ensure that we acted compliantly whilst ensuring contract provisions continued to be delivered.

HR and Work Based Learning

This service is another area which has seen a huge change in the way it delivers its service. HR have produced a whole range of new procedures and guidance, particularly to support health and wellbeing of employees, as well as updated recruitment procedures to include Teams interviews, annual leave procedures, flexi time procedures and working from home. The team has undertaken several surveys including on staff health and wellbeing, training required by managers, and a working from home survey. Other work specifically relating to the pandemic has been extra administration required for furloughing of employees keeping records of employees who are self-isolating, those who have had tests and whether they were positive/negative and other related information. The team has also had to ensure full understanding of national guidance for employers. There have been some positive outcomes from the new ways of working in that we are learning how staff can work more flexibly for the benefit of both personal and business needs. The council once again participated in the Virgin Pulse Go Challenge with 152 registered participants spread over 24 teams. Work Based Learning have had to develop remote support for apprentices including training, reviews, planning and feedback, resulting in reduced progress and achievement of targets. Keeping in touch has been a challenge, especially when on furlough.



Support Services

This includes all other service areas within CX which are not normally reported on but have undertaken essential work during the pandemic to support, enable, and in some cases deliver, critical services.

As a support service, **Legal Services** do not have any operational measures. However, legal support from both the team and City Solicitor for other service areas is vital to the work of the council in providing advice and guidance on legal matters and in taking legal action where required. For example, during the pandemic legal advice was provided on the regulations in relation to member meetings and suspension of elections and the AGM, and new procedures and member training for virtual committees were provided. Advice was given to housing and homelessness in respect of the stay of evictions and more recently the lifting of this stay, assistance was also provided to the Council Tax Team in administering Small Business Grant Relief including considering appeals and the team helped Licensing to set up and decide pavement licence applications. Legal staff have continued to attend court cases virtually or over the phone, as well as continuing with normal day to day work.

Financial Services assisted with the emergency budget, with the issuing of the Business Rates grants and Discretionary grants, carried out additional financial assessments, assisted with COVID-19 schemes in terms of financing and reconciliations for things such as Homelessness and Rough Sleepers. This was in addition to the usual day job, including preparation of year end accounts.

With the 20-21 **Internal Audit** planned work mainly postponed until September 2021, planned audit days have been reduced. The team has therefore been able to support other service areas including undertaking some core benefits work and supporting the Business Support Service linked to COVID-19 business grants led by Major Developments.

The work of the **Property Services** team includes both the property management side and the caretakers. From the property management and valuation side, restrictions on travel, guidance on undertaking internal inspections and viewings, etc have meant changes in approach to get details for right to buys etc. In terms of the commercial portfolio, COVID-19 and the impact on businesses and the economy has increased work with increased interactions with business tenants forced to close or otherwise struggling at this time, with requests for e.g. rent holidays or deferments. The work of the caretakers has been vital in keeping our buildings safe, compliant, and providing a safe environment for customers visiting the council and DWP. Additional cleaning has been undertaken on a daily basis, furniture and equipment delivered to staff at home, as well as increased operational hours at City Hall for DWP including weekends and bank holidays. The team was supported by staff from other areas to cover for those shielding

The **Democratic Services** Team have had to come to terms with a completely new way of working and support committees to operate virtually. Alongside this the whole service area was involved in delivering the Community Helpline at the start of the pandemic. Business Administration have continued to provide support for CMT, as well as making befriending calls. The Policy Team also had significant involvement with the Befriending Service, not only making calls, but also in maintaining the databases, allocating calls to befrienders, and regular reporting of statistics for CMT.



Directorate for Communities and Environment Performance



A message from Simon Walters, Strategic Director for Communities and Environment:

"I am immensely proud as director of how all of the staff within the directorate have adapted to operate in new and flexible ways during this pandemic. Through that willingness to work in different ways, to go "the extra mile" for customers and to help deliver services in different ways, we have maintained standards of service beyond what we could have envisaged in March 2020.

This on top of being at the forefront of the COVID-19 response, be that our Environmental Health Officers offering advice and assistance to businesses, our licensing team similarly out on the streets advising a range of businesses, our Health and Safety team making sure our services remain COVID-19 compliant, our Public Sector Housing team making sure landlords know their responsibilities, our Leisure team working so hard with our leisure centre provider to get them open as soon as we could to benefit people's mental and physical health, our Bereavement Services team who have prepared so well for such difficult operating conditions earlier in the year (and have had to prepare once again during this second wave), and to all the other staff within the directorate that have embraced mobile/home working to keep delivering be it Planning, Building Control, Waste and Cleansing, CCTV, Public Protection and Anti-social Behaviour, indeed all of the services we offer in the directorate and beyond.

The statistics don't measure this response, but the stories from the staff on just how they have kept services functioning over the summer or have readily got involved in areas of work they have not experienced before do capture the central role played (and we continue to play) in tackling this pandemic."



Out of 31 measures (of which two are annual measures), five reported above target, six were volumetric and therefore have no status, three were below target, six reported as Acceptable, with the remaining 11 measures reporting no data as a result of COVID-19. Eleven targeted measures positively changed direction, whilst just two changed in a negative direction.

Food and Health & Safety Enforcement	Percentage of premises fully or broadly compliant with Food Health & Safety inspection			Unlikely to have data supplied for quarter two	
Food and Health & Safety Enforcement	Average time from actual date of inspection to achieving compliance				
Food and Health & Safety Enforcement	Percentage of food inspections that should have been completed and have been in that time period				
Development (Planning)	Management	Number of applications in the quarter	233	V	
Development (Planning)	Management	End to end time to determine a planning application (Days)	74.91	A	
Development (Planning)	Management	Number of live planning applications open	105	A	
Development (Planning)	Management	Percentage of applications approved	93.06	A	
Development (Planning)	Management	Percentage of decisions on planning applications that are subsequently overturned on appeal	0.96	G	
Development (Planning)	Management	Percentage of Non-Major Planning Applications determined within the government target (70% in 8 weeks) measured on a 2 year rolling basis	96	G	
Development (Planning)	Management	Percentage of Major Planning Applications determined within the government target (60% in 13 weeks) measured on a 2 year rolling basis	88.37	A	
Private Housing		Average time in weeks from occupational therapy notification to completion of works on site for a DFG grant (all DFG's exc. extensions)			
Private Housing		Average time from date of inspection of accommodation to removing a severe hazard to an acceptable level			
Private Housing		Number of empty homes brought back into use			
Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team		Number of cases received in the quarter (ASB)	93	V	
Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team		Number of cases closed in the quarter	730	V	
Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team		Number of live cases open at the end of the quarter	201	G	
Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team		Satisfaction of complainants relating to how the complaint was handled			
					Not being collected due to impact on customer services due to COVID-19-
Sport & Leisure		Quarterly visitor numbers to Birchwood and Yarborough Leisure Centres	37,412	R	
Sport & Leisure		Artificial Grass Pitch usage at Yarborough Leisure Centre (exp. to open July 19) & Birchwood Leisure Centre (exp. to open June 19)	315.00	R	
CCTV		Total number of incidents handled by CCTV operators	3,082	V	
Waste & Recycling		Percentage of waste recycled or composted	38.07	G	
Waste & Recycling		Contractor points achieved against target standards specified in contract - Waste Management	100	A	
Street Cleansing		Contractor points achieved against target standards specified in contract - Street Cleansing	90	A	
Grounds Maintenance		Contractor points achieved against target standards specified in contract - Grounds Maintenance			
					No points have been recorded throughout Q2
Allotments		Percentage occupancy of allotment plots	95.00	G	
Parking Services		Overall percentage utilisation of all car parks	37.00	R	
Parking Services		Number of off street charged parking spaces	3,750	V	
Licensing		Total number of committee referrals (for all licensing functions)	3	V	
Licensing		Total number of enforcement actions (revocations, suspensions and prosecutions)			
					No data to provide for Q2
Grounds Maintenance (Annual)		Satisfaction with play areas, parks and open spaces (collected via Citizens' Panel)			
					No results available
Street Cleansing (Annual)		Satisfaction that public land and public highways are kept clear of litter and refuse (Street Cleansing) (collected via Citizens' Panel)			



Development Management (Planning)

Quarter two saw 233 planning applications submitted. Work levels have increased significantly in this area, as smaller scale domestic applications are being submitted as more people are staying at home. Overall, the time taken to determine these applications has taken 74.91 days in quarter two. Whilst this figure is an increase on quarter one, this is largely due to the reduced staffing capacity during quarter one, combined with a natural progressive increase in workload. This figure is still within a manageable tolerance and will reduce now the team is back to full strength. As well as that, we have 105 planning applications still open. This increase reflects the increase in work over the quarter but is being managed now all staff have returned from furlough. The key measures now required centrally are the percentage of non-major and major planning applications determined within the government target (70% in eight weeks and 60% in 13 weeks respectively measured on a two-year rolling basis). These have maintained well since last quarter, with non-major applications above the high target of 90% at 96% and major applications reporting at 88.37%. The Development Management team continues to prioritise major developments and manages the timescales effectively with the applicant to ensure that this level of performance is maintained. This workload was completed against a background where 93.06% of planning applications were approved, with a 96% success rate at appeals.

Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team

The number of cases received in the quarter has increased from quarter one's figure of 76, to 93 in quarter two. This is up slightly on the equivalent quarter two 2019/20 figure and up considerably from quarter one which can be explained by the initial lockdown period of quarter four and one. This quarter there have been 705 requests for service (not cases) received, with 730 service requests being completed and closed. This is significantly higher than the service requests made in the same quarter last year. This is on top of the team managing an increase in workload, with some staff being furloughed during one, as well as working remotely. The number of live cases open at the end of quarter two is above target at 201 and is lower than the 226 reported in quarter one. In quarter two, this is broken down into:

- July - 242
- August - 248
- September – 201

Satisfaction of complainants relating to how the complaint was handled is not currently being collected due to the impact on our Customer Services because of COVID-19. COVID-19 has of course had the usual impact of the team working from home including taking all calls from home. For PPASB COVID-19 has brought a number of challenges, due to the nature of the work the support and camaraderie of being part of a physical team is critical and working from home has been a strain on the team, they've had to adapt processes, temporarily halt some investigations and reduced staffing capacity means that we have had to reduce services, increase wait times and stop doing some functions.

Sport and Leisure

Leisure Centres opened part way through July, with a phased re-opening of the usual activities due to pandemic social distancing and compliant facility UK rules. The amount of spaces available for activities has been reduced by the protective measures and all activities are bookable in advanced. The return of members is increasing as members are reporting good experiences with the activities on offer and the protective measures put in place at the



centres. Leisure Centres could re-open the all-weather pitches on 25 July with limited return of teams, initially for training purposes for professional and amateur teams approved by the Football Association, followed later by local grass roots training. Football games recommenced in September under controlled conditions. Other sports returning when governing bodies allow, with some still waiting to return. This means that uptake is still reduced from pre COVID-19 times.

We have been keeping all enquirers up to date and informed on the most recent guidance, including why the centres are not able to open, as well as informing about progress on when we might have the potential to reopen. In terms of football bookings, our pitches are now open (although with reduced capacity). We are supporting all bookings in finding pitches to accommodate all our local teams, including keeping everyone updated on government guidance on pitches. We have also been adhering to not only central government guidance, but also Football Association regulations to ensure we are fully compliant. We have also been assisting the Football Association in accommodating teams from outside Lincoln with pitch problems, to ensure physical exercise can be supported to people outside Lincoln. We have worked hard over the last couple of months to convert all our physical paper files to electronic files in order to better facilitate working from home. (note this is up to end September, thus before Lockdown 2)

Waste and Recycling

Note that the data presented here is as usual lagged and thus refers to quarter one 2020/21. The percentage of waste recycled or composted is slightly higher in quarter one this year with a figure of 38.07%, compared to 37.13% for the same quarter last year. This is however within target boundaries and is classed as acceptable performance. Acceptable performance is not usually reported on in this report, however, it has been almost a year (previous three quarters) since this measure has been above its lower target of 35%. 19.92% of waste was composted, and 18.15% of waste was recycled.

These services have continued throughout the period from restrictions first being put in place in March, with minimal impact on our customers. Officers worked with contractors on early business continuity planning and there are plans in place should operational staff be affected by COVID-19 to the extent that services are impacted. We continue to work closely with contractors so that we will be as prepared as possible should this be the case. COVID-19 risk assessments in relation to our own staff were implemented at the start so that site visits and customer complaints could continue to be dealt with without interruption

Grounds Maintenance

These services have continued throughout the COVID-19 period. COVID-19 risk assessments in relation to our own staff were implemented at the start so that site visits and customer complaints could continue to be dealt with without interruption.

Parking Services

The overall percentage utilisation of all car parks has for obvious reasons seen large decreases. In quarter one, surveys were not completed as resources were focused on immediate COVID-19 recovery, however in quarter two our utilisation surveys have resumed and has reported at 37%. Whilst this is below its target of 45%, some lenience should be given to this area of performance, as the guidance during quarter one and even early quarter two, was to avoid unnecessary travel, which will of course affect utilisation as more people stay at home. During quarter two, pay and display



income has continued to grow since the end of lockdown but is of course still significantly under budget. There has been a significant decline in season ticket income as many previous commuters are now working from home. Following the end of the reduced prices offer on PayByPhone and at the Central car park demand has remained reasonably solid. The shortfall on income is now £2,101,760, with the year-end shortfall being mitigated by central government support up to a maximum of 75% of lost income, after allowing for a 5% deductible and net of reduced operating expenditure.

Civil Enforcement team have maintained the sites throughout the pandemic and have assisted for a short while on the government COVID-19 testing at Yarborough Leisure Centre. A comprehensive COVID-19 risk assessment is in place to protect the public and staff.

CCTV

CCTV has continued to work 24/7 throughout the pandemic and has been the 'eyes and ears' for other services including Environmental Health, Licensing, PPASB, Homelessness and Parks as well as Lincolnshire Police. The nature of the work changed in early lockdown, when the types of incidents, and the focus of monitoring, changed to meet the new legislation and restrictions. As the city centre has returned to something like normal, so has the focus of much of the CCTV monitoring and incidents, but alongside this there is now the ongoing importance of ensuring compliance with COVID-19 restrictions. In the first quarter, there was an increase in the number of incidents (compared with the previous quarter and the same quarter last year).

Despite most shops and night-time establishments being closed, there were many occasions when CCTV operators picked up COVID-19 restriction infringements, which were forwarded to Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF) etc. CCTV was used to help locate people sleeping on the street as well as gatherings of people, people not social distancing and businesses not complying with the rules. The 'usual' offences / incidents continued, if at a lower level in many cases. For example, there was generally less shop lifting whilst most shops were closed, but shoplifting activity still took place. Many businesses have relied on CCTV more than ever as their premises were closed and therefore at higher risk of break-ins or vandalism. Critical strategic information was provided daily by CCTV to the LRF, helping to support the decisions being made.

In quarter 2, The total number of incidents dropped, largely due to there being fewer COVID-19 restriction violations as some restrictions were lifted. Other crimes / public order incidents began to rise again. Based on total incidents, the first half of 2020/21 had 2.7% fewer than 2019/20. This is a remarkably small difference given that city centre businesses were largely closed for all of quarter 1. The rota, which was previously mostly single staffed with some double staffed periods (linked to the typical high-demand periods), has moved to single staffed only. This reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission within the team and provides additional flexibility and resilience to ensure 24/7 coverage.

Parks and Open Spaces

Our parks and open spaces have been very well used throughout COVID-19, with many people relying on them for their exercise, fresh air and to feel part of their community, especially when they weren't seeing people otherwise. We have received compliments in respect of the good maintenance of our parks, and that the main operations have all continued throughout. People are aware more than ever of the importance of public open spaces, and the benefit that well-managed green space has on mental and physical well-being. The campsite at Hartsholme Country Park was forced to close



for a period in response to COVID-19 requirements and re-opened in July. The Visitor Centre at Hartsholme Country Park has been closed since the start of lockdown, and events / activities in the park have stopped for now.

At Boutham Park, it has been a key year for the Lake Restoration project as the delivery phase started. COVID-19 affected the timetable for project staff recruitment, activities, volunteer works and main contractor procurement. The hard work and determination of the project team of city council officers and external consultants has allowed the project to keep moving throughout, and we are very close to programme schedule. Activities and volunteering have been, and will continue to be, impacted by COVID-19 restrictions but we have a plan in place to deal with that so that the main project outcomes are still met. The Board has continued to be involved, thanks to the internal team and external board members from the Park Advisory Group Chair and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. We have been complimented by the National Lottery Heritage Fund on keeping the project progressing despite the very many hurdles that COVID-19 has created

Street Cleansing

These services have continued throughout the COVID-19 period. COVID-19 risk assessments in relation to our own staff were implemented at the start so that site visits and customer complaints could continue to be dealt with without interruption.

Public Toilets

Except for the bus station, public toilets were closed at the outbreak of COVID-19. The bus station facilities have remained open throughout. Castle Square toilets were reopened in July in response to public demand. One public toilet attendant worked as a City Hall caretaker for a period, to help with covering that service, whilst public toilets were largely closed.

Allotments

At the end of September 2020, 1,033 of the 1,090 currently lettable allotment plots were let. This equates to the 95% occupancy rate. There has been a significant increase in demand for allotment tenancies since the COVID-19 pandemic began. This occupancy level is the highest it has been for several years. It is hoped that the high levels of occupancy remain when “normality” resumes, as we have always communicated both the mental and physical benefits of owning an allotment plot, and whilst these benefits are especially important during a pandemic (when many people’s social and active lifestyles can be limited), the benefits are equally important outside of a pandemic. For the first time in several years, there is now a waiting list on most sites, totalling 99 people at the end of quarter two. We are often asked why we have less than 100% occupancy when there is a waiting list, and that is because prospective allotment tenants usually request a plot on a specific site or sites which are local to them, and so would rather be on the waiting list than take the first plot available.

Licensing

Licensing have been at the forefront of much of the response work to COVID-19 through the recovery phases. This has included implementing new processes on pavement licences, undertaking city patrols to monitor compliance, providing additional guidance and assistance to businesses, undertaking enforcement and working in partnership. This is in addition to delivering the normal licensing services.



Bereavement Services

Although there are no regularly reported measures, Bereavement Services has been classed as a critical service over quarters one and two and therefore data has been requested from the service. This shows that the number of burials and cremations has been slightly less than in previous years with a total of 147 burials and 946 cremations during the period compared to 161 and 964 respectively in the same period last year.

Although the number of burials and cremations has not increased, this does not reflect the impact of the pandemic on the work of the team with new rules and regulations being implemented. This has meant keeping up with new announcements and changes such as the number of people able to attend services which at one point was six but has now risen to 30 people in attendance. Additional tasks, for example sanitising the chapel, has also needed to be worked into preparations for each service, which has been achieved whilst still offering the same number of services each week. The service was also initially offered for extended periods at weekends and Bank Holidays. There has also been a big increase in the number of enquiries received by phone. Generally, people have been very understanding and the service has a good working relationship with funeral directors and ministers.

To ensure staff sickness through COVID-19 does not impact on the service staff have now been split into two teams working alternate weeks, with one team working and the other on standby. As reported in quarter 4, two additional staff have been trained as cremator technicians but so far have not been required.

The reception room and Book of Remembrance at the Crematorium remain closed. However, a software upgrade, put on hold at the start of the year, is now progressing and should go live before the end of the year.

Events, including Visitor Information Centre

There have been no physical events in the reporting year for City of Lincoln Council and therefore we have been concentrating on alternatives and working with partners as well as supporting other service areas within the organisation. Our focus now is delivering a virtual Lincoln Christmas Market. Over the last six months, our overall responsiveness to queries from businesses and our partners has been much quicker, as we have naturally had a lot less interaction with the public. A member of the team helped with the implementation in the first round of Business Rates Grants until June, with another member of staff supporting our Lincare service with calls when they needed support, and more recently has been supporting our Environmental Health team.



Directorate for Housing and Investment Performance

A message from Daren Turner, Director for Housing and Investment

“Quarter 2, being September, brings to the end of one of the most testing periods in my Local Government career to date and no doubt that can be echoed across the council and our housing directorate. We have performed incredibly well under the most challenging of circumstances and we continue to do so. Whether this has been the incredible work of tenancy services and elderly services keeping tenants safe and a roof over their heads, or the fantastic work of the Housing Repairs team and caretakers keeping our homes secure, clean, and in good working order! We have brought properties back into use quickly with our voids team pulling out all the stops to meet unprecedented demand. Despite all the COVID-19 challenges we have improved our stock thanks to our brilliant partnership arrangements and investment team. We continue to help people find a home through the superb solutions team and have continued to help the most vulnerable find a safe place to stay as result of the tireless interventions and hard work of the homelessness and rough sleeping team. None of this, what we could call customer facing activity, would be possible without the hard work of our admin teams, resident involvement team, IT support and Safety assurance team; also the troops who work with our lease holders ensuring direct debits are set up and paid and that the Right to Buy process is smooth for those who want to buy their council home. We still aim to grow our stock and the housing strategy team, working alongside colleagues in Major Developments, continue to build new homes and buy back the properties we need today and in the future as well as planning for the next chapter of Housing in the City. It is difficult to express my gratitude to everyone who has played their part in teams across the directorate. You all amaze me every day”.



There are 19 measures in total, with five out of those 19 measures have reported as below target for quarter 2, and two have reported above target. Three of these measures are volumetric and therefore do not return a status. Three measures reported as acceptable, with the remaining 6 having no data supplied for the reporting period.

Service Area	Measure	Current Value	Status	
Housing Investment	Percentage of council properties that are not at the 'Decent Homes' standard (excluding refusals)	0.81	R	▲
Housing Investment	Number of properties 'not decent' as a result of tenants refusal to allow work (excluding referrals)	207	V	▬
Housing Investment	Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	93.58	R	▲
Control Centre	Percentage of Lincare Housing Assistance calls answered within 60 seconds	97.67	A	▼
Rent Collection	Rent collected as a proportion of rent owed	100.75	G	▼
Rent Collection	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit	3.47	A	▼
Housing Solutions	The number of people currently on the housing list	1,418	V	▬
Housing Solutions	The number of people approaching the council as homeless	290	V	▬
Housing Solutions	Successful preventions against total number of homelessness approaches	259	A	
Housing Voids	Percentage of rent lost through dwelling being vacant	0.99	R	▼
Housing Voids	Average re-let time calendar days for all dwellings - standard re-lets	46.16	R	▲
Housing Voids	Average re-let time calendar days for all dwellings (including major works)	46.16	R	▲
Housing Maintenance	Percentage of reactive repairs completed within target time	No data available - no surveys completed in quarter two		
Housing Maintenance	Percentage of repairs fixed first time	90.11	A	▲
Housing Maintenance	Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance	No data available - no surveys completed with quarter		
Housing Maintenance	Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	99.95	G	▲
Business Development	Number of users logged into the on-line self-service system this quarter	No data has been supplied for quarter two		
IT	Number of calls logged to IT helpdesk			
IT	Percentage of first-time fixes			



Housing Investment

The percentage of council properties that are not at the 'Decent Homes' standard (excluding refusals) has increased from the 0.23% reported in quarter four, to 0.88% in quarter, but decreased slightly to 0.81% in quarter two. Failures can now be broken down into the following categories:

- Doors x41,
- Electrical Testing x23,
- Roofs x2
- Thermal Comfort x1 (x4 properties failing on two of the above criteria)

The number of properties 'not decent' as a result of tenant's refusal to allow work (excluding referrals), has also decreased from quarter one's figure of 216 to 207 this quarter.

The percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate has increased from 85.84% in quarter one to 93.58% in quarter two. The number of gas services not completed by the deadline date has seen a steep rise this year due to COVID-19. Additional COVID-19 guidance has increased the number of failed gas service attempts as older people were asked to be shielded. The Health and Safety Executive instructed landlords that the annual gas service must still be undertaken during the pandemic. This left the Investment Team and our gas contractor Aaron Services with a tough challenge over the last few months to continue to deliver the annual gas servicing programme.

Collectively we have worked very hard with our tenants to provide reassurance that our contractor had the appropriate Risk Assessments and Method Statements in place, in accordance with the latest government guidance to protect everyone during the annual gas service visit. In May we reached a peak of 135 households without a current gas safety inspection due to refused access. We have seen the numbers fall in subsequent months and now have only a small number of failed accesses. We have also recently taken legal action in a couple of instances to address failed access that was not linked to COVID-19. The response and performance of the council's gas servicing team and our contractor Aaron Services has been exceptional during the last few months in managing the gas servicing programme.

Rent Collection

Despite the substantial impact of COVID-19 on tenants, Tenancy Services continues to successfully mitigate against the impact on rent arrears and collection. Rent arrears are currently £64,617 less than the same point last year with 100.75% collection rate which is an increase of 2.71% from last year. This month has seen £820,000 collected which is the highest collection rate since April 2020. The number of Universal Credit claims continues to increase with 1,899 claimants which is also 632 more than September last year. The number of tenants that are under occupying their property continues to decrease as officers work with tenants to ensure accommodation is adequate for the number in the household. Moving the rent-free weeks has made it difficult to directly compare rent arrears with the previous financial year, and it is likely that we will not see the true impact on rent arrears until the end of March 2021. The forecast for rent arrears provided to Ministry for Housing and Local Government for this year end is between £1.2-£1.5 million and the team continues to work hard to support tenants and reduce arrears. The success of the Discretionary Rental Hardship Fund has assisted 179 tenants at a time of financial hardship and is an example of one of the positive actions we have taken.



Housing Voids

As of 30 September 2020, there were 65 properties in the void process. Of the 65 properties:

- ▶ 37 were in the repairs process
- ▶ 28 were in the early void stages (lock change, asbestos check, cleansing or works ordering)
- ▶ 16 were ready to let

Of the 16 that were ready to let:

- ▶ 4 supported living properties had no one placing bids on these properties
- ▶ All the other properties that were ready to let had offers on and we were in the process of signing everyone up

The percentage of rent lost through dwelling being vacant, has increased from quarter one's figure of 0.90 to 0.99 in quarter two, which is below target. The average re-let time for standard re-lets and major work re-lets has also increased, 47.81 and 40.40 in quarter one respectively, to a joint 46.16 in quarter two.

Housing Maintenance

Of the four housing maintenance measures two have not been collected over the past two quarters. As a result, data for the percentage of reactive repairs completed within target time is not available but is expected to be available again from quarter three.

The percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance is the other measure which due to COVID-19 prioritising resources to other areas, has not been able to be collected. It is expected for this to be available in quarter three.

The percentage of repairs fixed first time has increased from quarter one's figure of 89.57%, to 90.11% in quarter two. Whilst this is an increase and is between its lower and upper target (making it acceptable performance), it is still a decrease compared to the previous year due to COVID-19 and the subsequent changes enforced to the responsive repairs service, to ensure compliance with government safety guidelines.

Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made is again above target, rising from 99.57% in quarter one, to an almost unbeatable 99.95% in quarter two. This is a significant upturn in performance on the previous year. Due to COVID-19, and our move towards scheduled repairs (see below), we now have less responsive repairs (1-and 3-day tickets) coming through with associated appointments.

In quarter one of 2020, we introduced a new way of managing housing repairs. These are called 'Scheduled Repairs' and will be carried out at set times of the year across set areas of the city. We will continue to carry out our priority repairs within 24 hours and urgent repairs within 3 days. Moving to this way of managing repairs allows us to plan all the work in each area and ensure that we have all the right resources and materials in the right place so we can complete any repairs reported in one visit. This gives everyone more certainty that the repair will be carried out on the expected date.



Housing Solutions - Rough Sleeping

The Rough Sleeping Team have continued to work from City Hall throughout the pandemic. In order to do this, they have created 'team bubbles' and worked to strict COVID-19 guidelines. There has been significant pressure on the team as other service providers stopped doing any face to face work at the beginning of lockdown, providing at best a telephone service. The team have therefore helped with arranging food packages, furniture, clothing, medication and other support, which would normally have been provided through signposting to other services. The successful action taken to ensure all street sleepers were provided with safe internal accommodation through the central government 'Everyone In' scheme was reported in the quarter four report. Initially this reduced the number of street sleepers to just four people, but as the pandemic has progressed the numbers have risen again during August and into September. The team have been continuing to work with providers and putting people into temporary accommodation and the numbers are now coming down again. They have had help from caretakers in Tenancy Services in preparing temporary accommodation.

Housing Solutions – Homelessness

Whilst initially there was no increase in homelessness, the number of enquiries has gone up. The team have all been working remotely and therefore have had to cope with dealing with people over the phone who are often very vulnerable and may be frightened or confused with very shocking stories to tell. There has been an increase too in the number of email enquiries, and more complex cases including domestic abuse. During lockdown sourcing temporary accommodation was a challenge as although hotels could stay open to support people in specific categories, which included those who were homeless, not all these premises remained open. As a result it took longer to find accommodation.



Supported Housing

Supporting some of our most vulnerable tenants the service has needed to adapt to provide the assistance needed by residents in our Supported Housing schemes. The service went from making six monthly contact with residents to making weekly phone calls. This meant the team were making an average of 207 welfare calls a day in June. In addition, at the beginning of July the team took on 183 council residents to make befriending calls to, with a total of 548 befriending calls made in the month. As people came out of shielding and families became more involved the average number of welfare calls fell to 167 in August and September, with the team able to revert to less than weekly calls. All community halls were closed at the beginning of lockdown. Additional work to deep clean the halls prior to planned re-opening took place during August, but in the event halls remained closed. Staff were mostly working from home but went into City Hall to make calls and undertake routine maintenance such as Legionella checks. Both Derek Miller Court and Broomhill have resident Independent Living Co-ordinators who were able to provide some limited help with shopping and ensured those who needed it were referred to the helpline.



Control Centre

As a critical service, Lincare has continued to operate its 24/7 telecare services for clients throughout the pandemic. In order to protect staff, the team is now split with 50% working at home and 50% in the office. The data shows that response times have fallen slightly, although there is no obvious reason for this. Calls are still being answered in the acceptable range and the flexibility of working from home also has benefits for some staff.

Neighbourhood Working

The Neighbourhood Team usually work out of Sincil Bank Community Hub in Portland Street, but during the initial lockdown period this office was closed. During this time the team took a leading role in running the Befriending Service which operated for four months from the end of March to 31 July 2020. The scale and speed at which the project was developed was impressive with over 18,000 people being contacted to see if they wanted calls. During May over 500 people were benefitting from the service, with almost 65 befrienders across the council making calls. At the start of August, as shielding ended and people were able to meet up more, many felt they no longer needed the service and those who wished to continue to receive calls were transferred to external agencies. On winding down the service, we asked those receiving calls if they would like us to retain their details for a period of six months in case of a second wave of Coronavirus or further lockdown and most agreed to this. Therefore, we can consider re-introducing the service if the need arises. A Community Signposting Helpline was also supported by the team, providing an independent source to verify the service, as well as signposting where to go to get support in acquiring food and medication deliveries for those who needed it. They also supported Befriending Service staff, and other voluntary sector organisations reach the people who needed the services they were providing. The Neighbourhood team was able to reopen the Community Hub for a week in mid-September on a part time basis to offer support to residents in Sincil Bank on a range of issues including school admissions and applying for the EU settlement scheme.

Business Development and IT

With staff and members being required to work from home for the majority of the past few months Business Development and IT has been busy throughout the reporting period. As part of enabling home working this has included enabling remote committee meetings, facilitating remote phone calls, provision of Microsoft Teams to all staff on personal devices, developing new ways of working and technologies, support for COVID-19 related initiatives such as Test and Trace payments and Business Support, enabling online services, consideration of IT Security measures and developing an appointments system for 'in person' issues. The team have been continuing to work on other projects and Business Development have been working on ensuring our website is fully accessible to meet new regulations brought in on 23 September 2020. Whilst the usual strategic performance measures are unavailable this quarter, quarterly call volumes to the helpdesk are provided as an indication of activity these are not like-for-like with previous years, as processes for monitoring and collection have changed.

- ▶ Q1 2020/2021 – 1,127
- ▶ Q2 2020/2021 – 863



Directorate for Major Developments



A message from Kate Ellis, Director for Major Developments

“Proud To Be Lincoln” has never been more true for me than when reviewing our response to the COVID pandemic. The work of the Major Development Team does not normally feature in the performance report, as so much of it is project based over long time periods and in support of other areas in a way that does not lend itself to statistics reporting. True performance by every single member of the team has been absolutely outstanding - whether as individuals, as a part of the Major Developments team, as part of corporate working teams or as part of a team delivering with external partner organisations. In a crisis, you all stepped up, continued to go above and beyond and are delivering to the very highest standards. The speedy and early delivery of business grants to our City’s small businesses was exemplary – getting key building and project schemes back up and running within the restrictions was fantastic – supporting the community helpline was selfless -supporting the Greater Lincolnshire economic recovery plans was amazing - and then added to that the team submitted the Town Investment Plan in a bid to secure up to £24.5M in grant funding to kickstart the city’s economic recovery with a high quality and professional approach which was brilliant. Working in the Lincoln Way, collaboratively, flexibly and dynamically both within and outside of the organisation – definitely Proud to be Lincoln!”

Directorate for Major Developments Performance

This directorate does not have any performance key operational performance measures but has nevertheless made a significant contribution to the council’s response to COVID-19.

At the beginning of lockdown, the government made available various options to help support businesses. As reported in the quarter 4 report, Major Developments led a cross directorate team of around 20 staff to ensure local businesses were able to access the support they needed, and this included administration of two business support grant schemes.

The team drew staff from a wide range of service areas across the council with staff from Events, Finance, Audit, Revenues, Democratic Services and Business Development as well as legal support from the Legal Team. This enabled the council to provide support to local businesses in a timely manner and shows the value of the One Council approach.



Authority Wide Corporate Measures

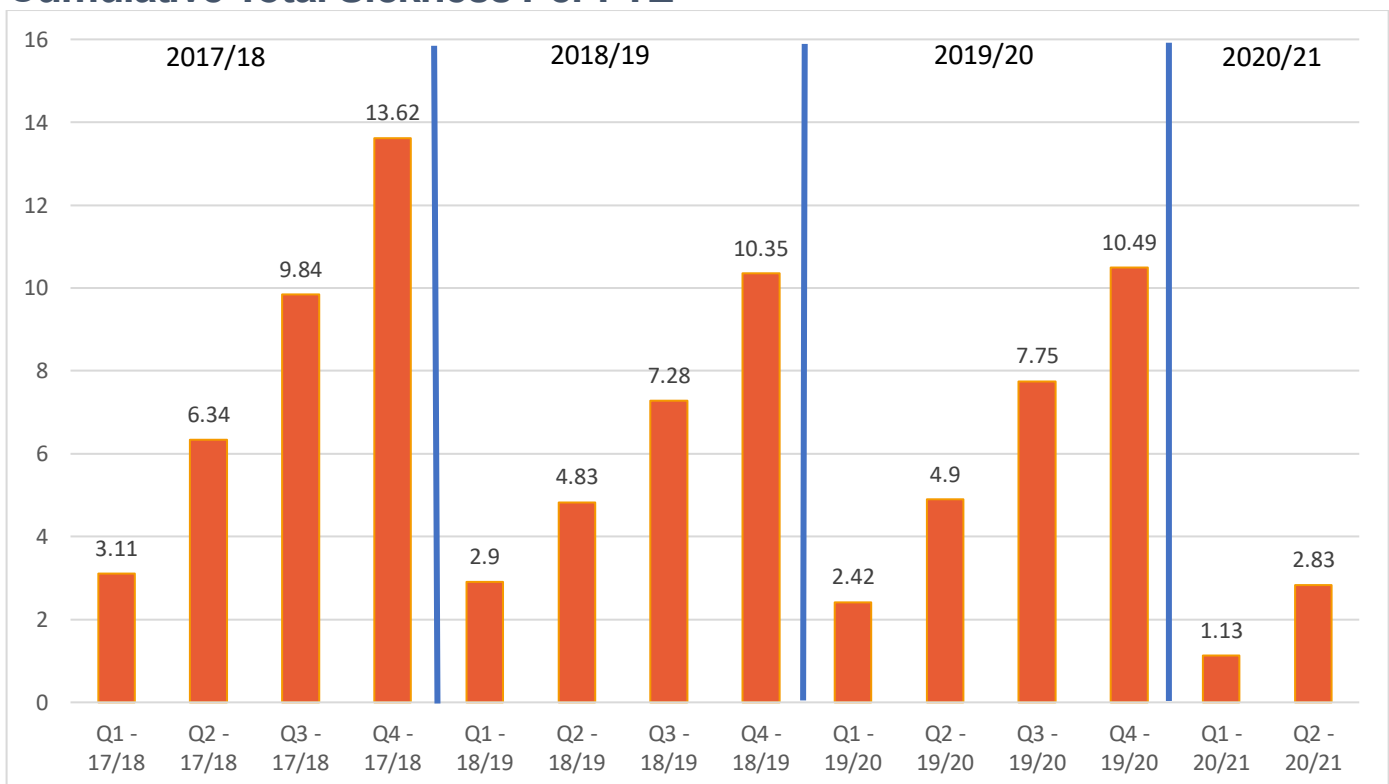
Sickness performance

Whilst overall sickness absence rates have reduced since the COVID-19 pandemic and staff began working from home, health and wellbeing remains a priority. The HR team regularly provides a range of advice and guidance to support all staff with their physical and mental wellbeing

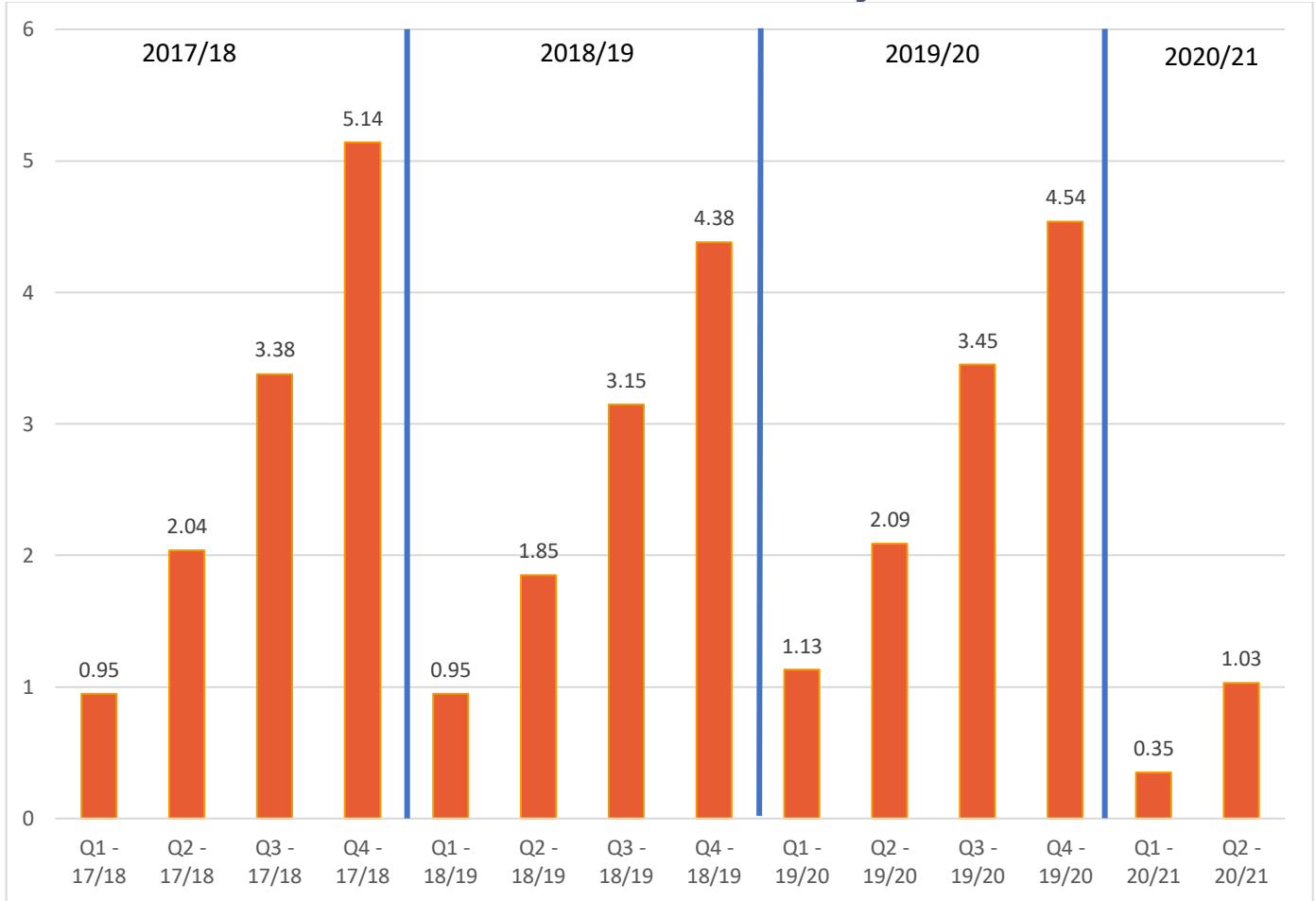
Q2 2020/21 ONLY

Directorate	Short Term Days Lost	Long Term Days Lost	Total days lost	Number of FTE	Average Short-Term Days lost per FTE	Average Long-Term Days lost per FTE	Average Total Days lost per FTE
CX (Excluding Apprentices)	121	109	230	184.61	0.66	0.59	1.25
DCE	27	25	52	141.5	0.19	0.18	0.37
DMD	0	0	0	8.4	0	0	0
DHI	232.5	441	673.5	226.43	1.03	1.95	2.97
Total (Excluding Apprentices)	380.5	575	955.5	560.94	0.68	1.03	1.70
Apprentice Sickness	0	0	0	12.8	0	0	0

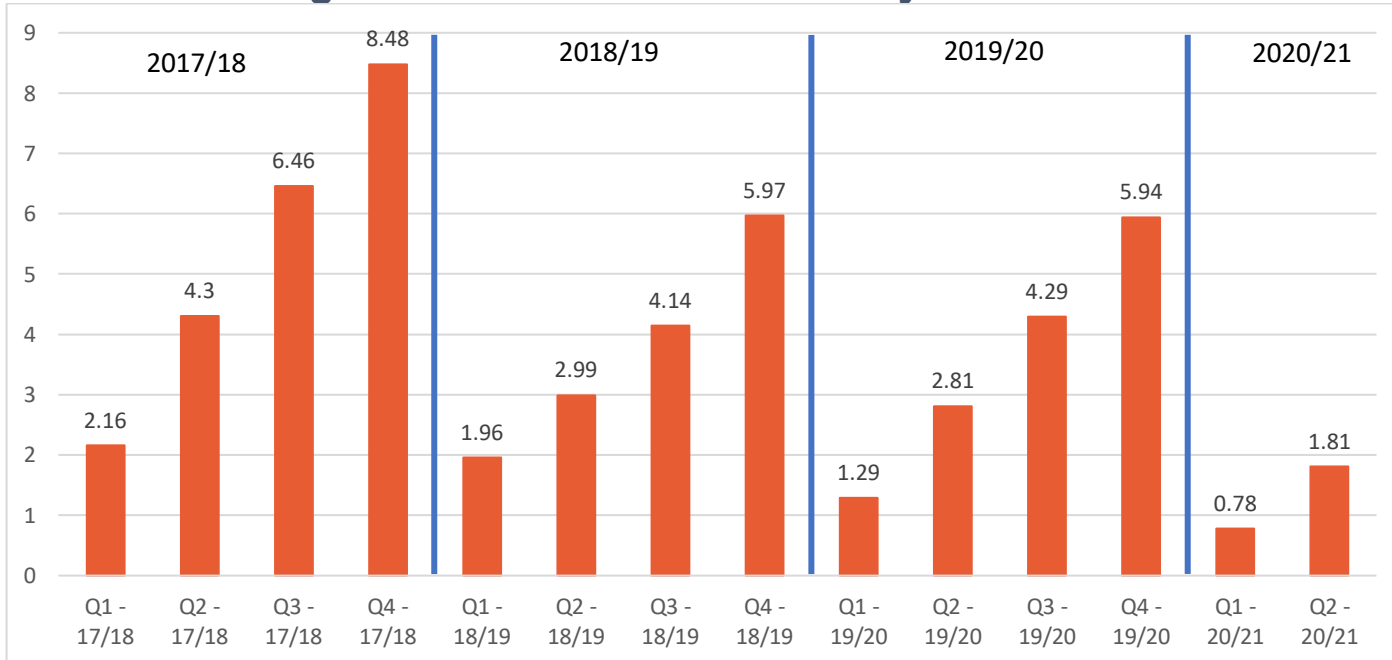
Cumulative Total Sickness Per FTE



Cumulative Short-Term Sickness Per FTE in Days



Cumulative Long-Term Sickness Per FTE in Days

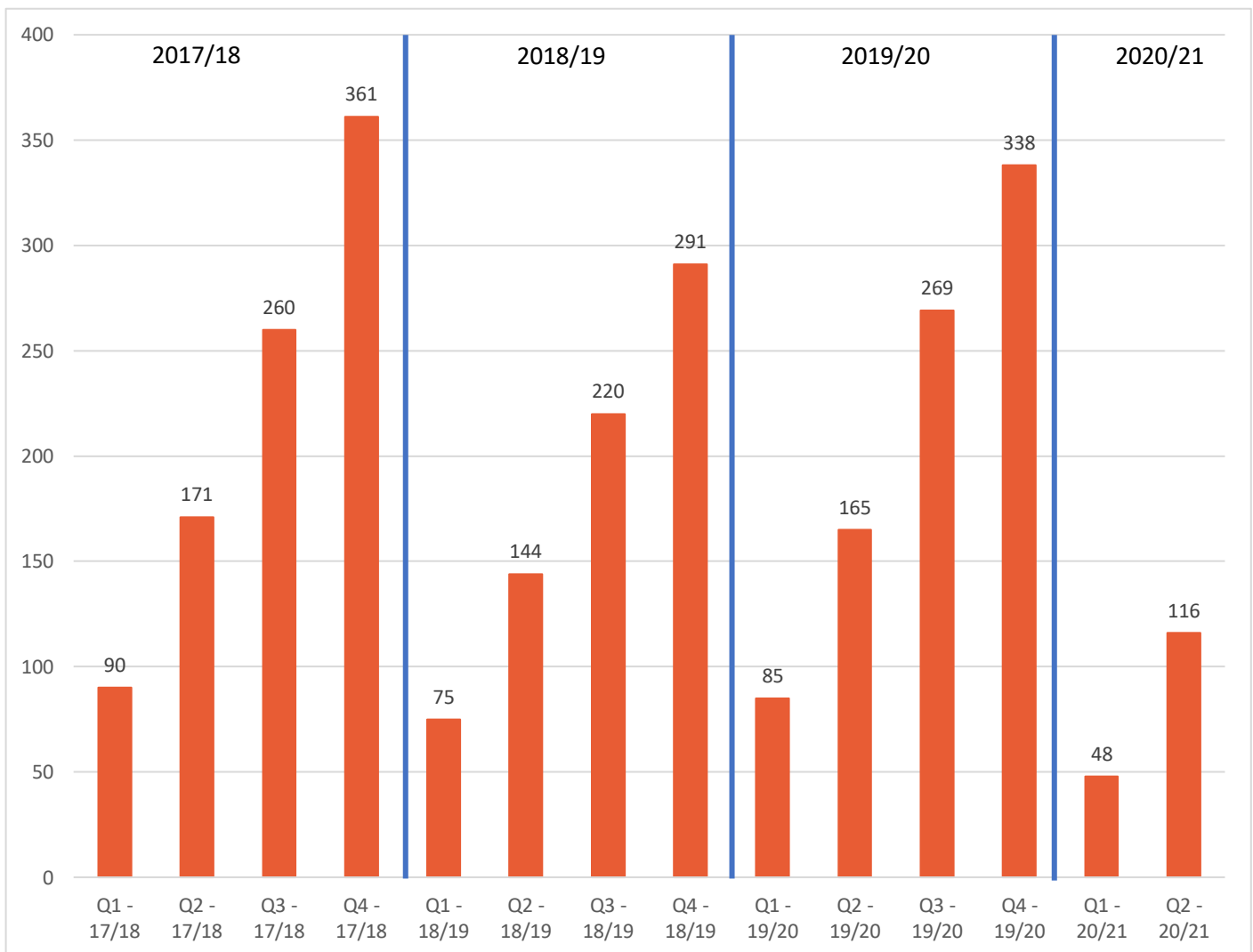


Complaints Performance

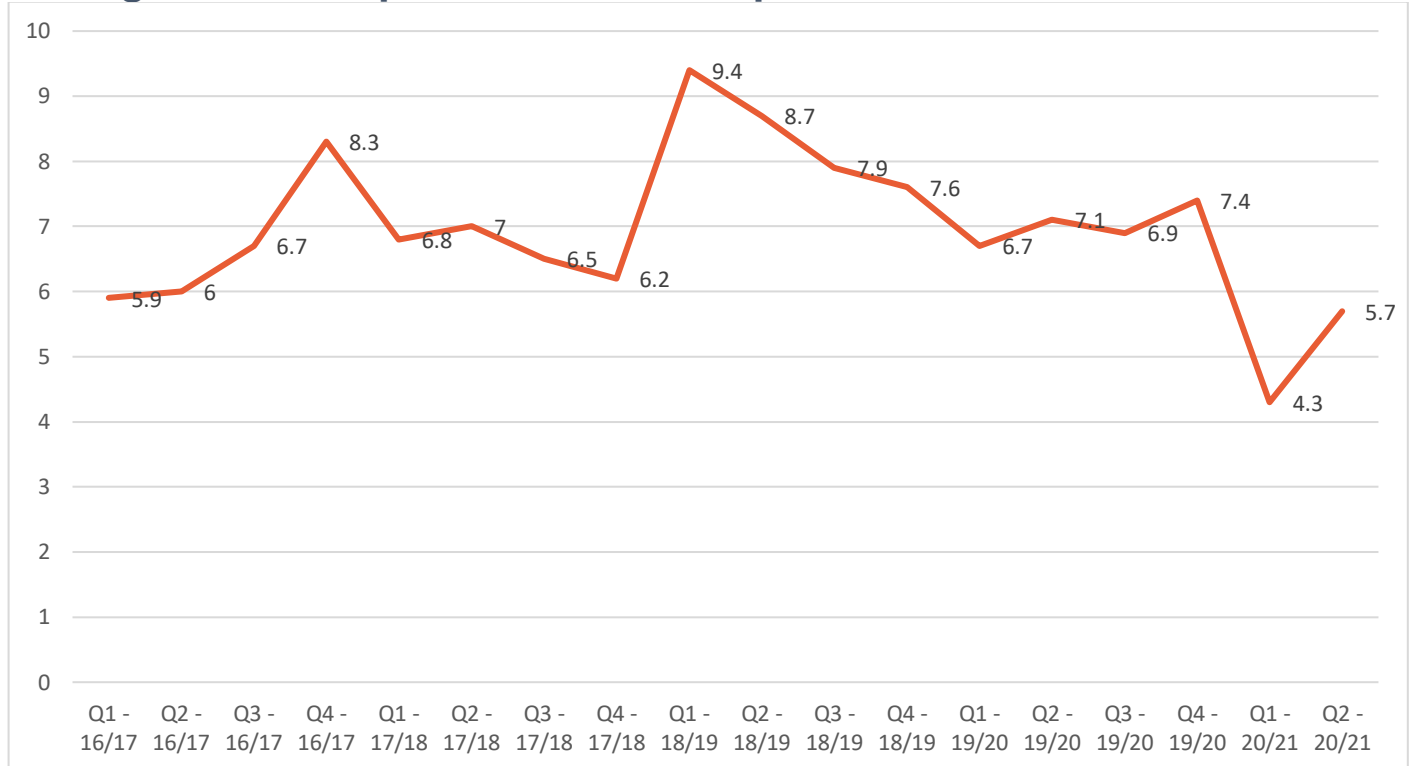
In quarter two there were 68 complaints. The cumulative average time year to date across all directorates to respond to formal complaints was 5.1 days. In quarter two, we had one LGO complaint decided - which was upheld.

	Number of Formal complaints dealt with this quarter	Number of Formal complaints Upheld this quarter	YTD total number of complaints investigated Cumulative (Q1)	Average response time in days this quarter	LGO complaints decided	Number of ombudsmen decisions upheld	YTD Number of Formal complaints Upheld	YTD average response time
CX	7	4	11	7	0	0	7	5.3
DCE	20	4	31	2.8	1	1	7	2.6
DMD	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	6.2
DHI	41	11	73	6.9	0	0	22	4
TOTAL	68	19	116	5.7	1	1	37	5.1

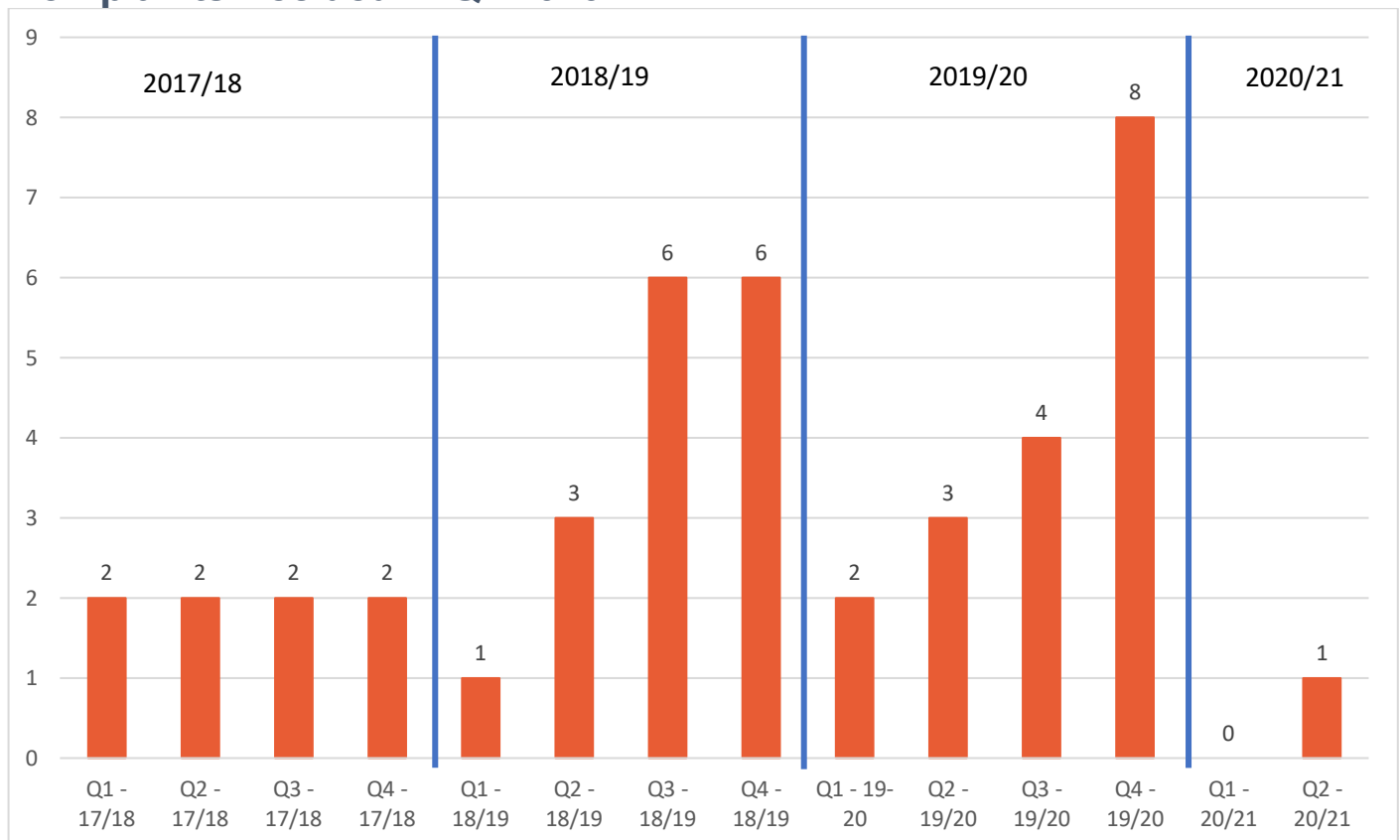
Number of formal complaints (YTD)



Average time to respond to formal complaints in Q2 2020/21



Local Government Ombudsman and Local Housing Ombudsman Complaints Decided in Q2 2020/21



Resource Information

The total number of FTE employees (excluding apprentices) at the end of quarter two was 560.94 with an average of 13 apprentices over the period. In terms of the level of vacancies at quarter two - budgeted establishment unfilled positions (FTE) stood at 82.7. This figure has increased from that reported at quarter two. It should be noted that the Council are actively recruiting 15.6 FTE. The percentage of staff turnover at the end of quarter two was 2.44% (excluding apprentices). Appraisals are currently on hold whilst COVID-19 takes priority and therefore there is nothing to report this period.

Q2 2020/21

Directorate	Number of FTE employees	Average number of apprentices across the board	Percentage of staff turnover	I-Trent budgeted establishment positions (FTE)	Active vacancies which are being recruited (FTE)
CX (Excluding Apprentices)	184.61	Authority Wide	Authority Wide	Authority Wide	Authority Wide
DCE	141.50				
DMD	8.4				
DHI	226.43				
Total (Excluding Apprentices)	560.94	13	2.44%	82.7	15.6

Directorate	Active vacancies per directorate per FTE
CX (Excluding Apprentices)	2
DCE	3
DMD	0
DHI	10.6
TOTAL (Excluding Apprentices)	15.6



Above and beyond

During the first two quarters of 2020/21 staff and members had to get used to doing things differently, with new working arrangements, changes in the way services were delivered and for some doing different work altogether. As well as highlighting awards, this time we are also providing some comments offered by the Leader, Cllr Ric Metcalfe and extracts from Chief Executive, Angela Andrews' updates to staff throughout the reporting period recognising the work of staff. Although only a small selection of comments made in the updates, they illustrate where staff have gone above and beyond to keep the council operating and achieve an enviable level of performance.

Comments from the Leader, Councillor Metcalfe at the Council meeting on 28 May 2020.

"Councillor Ric Metcalfe as leader and took the opportunity to place on record his thanks and pay tribute on behalf of all members to the Council's staff who had ensured that essential services continued to run during the coronavirus outbreak, whilst supporting communities, in particular the most vulnerable in the city, and protecting future jobs and employment in the city by supporting local businesses. Many staff had continued to provide these services in difficult circumstances whilst working from home, working overtime or being re-trained to undertake duties completely different to their usual role at the Council. Councillor Metcalfe said that the response from staff had been magnificent and that this was an extraordinary example of 'One Council'."

Councillor Hilton Spratt, Leader of the Opposition, associated himself and his group with the Leader's sentiments and said that: *"the Council's response to the crisis had been magnificent – fabulous praise to you all from our members – their thanks for your hard work and incredible efforts is now on record for ever in our Council Minutes – it will become history."*

From Angela's updates:

7 April 2020. *"... we are so very thankful that many of you have offered your skills to undertake some completely different critical roles that are so desperately needed – we have also needed to adapt shifts and redeploy some staff to different roles ... so I am so very grateful to you all who are wearing the incredible 'one council' virtual badge."*

14 April 2020. *"... thank you tonight to Keeley and Gareth in housing ... really impressive analysis of rent arrears ... Great work!"*

15 April 2020. *"... a big thank you to a member of the finance team, Ian Davison, who has been essential in ensuring that our Lincoln businesses received very promptly the grants that they're entitled to, now over £14million ... to make sure we are making payments to suppliers every day to keep their cashflow going in these very tricky times - Many thanks Ian"*

16 April 2020. *"...thank you tonight to members of the Rough Sleeping team who worked tirelessly to get all rough sleepers in accommodation for the bank holiday weekend."*

17 April 2020. *"Our IT team continue to do a fabulous job – using Citrix to get most of you working from home, utilising M365 for some of us with a roll out planned and also now looking at solutions for virtual member/public meetings."*

22 April 2020. *"... thank you to Claire Moses and her team who have, behind the scenes, been manually checking over 1,000 business rates accounts ..."*



22 April 2020. "... a big thank you to all of our Refuse Collection Team – we contract with Biffa to provide our Refuse Collection service and they are doing an amazing job in incredibly difficult circumstances – The team receive such fabulous feedback please see the wonder wall attached."



14 May 2020. "... excellent feedback from DWP Contact Centre and Job Centre for the work our cleaners are doing for them. The cleaners are at reduced staffing now due to the Coronavirus, they are working very hard ensuring City Hall is clean and tidy and all high contact surfaces are wiped down for the buildings occupants – thank you so much for all your hard work it is much appreciated. ... Also, our fabulous volunteer caretakers are getting amazing feedback from the DWP ... we couldn't operate without you all stepping in."

26 May 2020. "... a big thank you tonight to all our staff who were working over the Bank Holiday weekend ensuring that we continued to operate so many services that touch so many lives, help keep the City safe and clean, and keep the vulnerable protected – well done team."

12 June 2020. "COVID-19 has had such an impact on everything we do ... but we have still been able to continue with some amazing projects ... work that is currently being undertaken on Queen Elizabeth Road as planned - fabulous work by all involved in this from both Housing and Major Developments."

"Work is still progressing on Boutham Park ... a huge thank you to Steve and Caroline Bird and all the corporate teams ensuring that this project stays on track. Heritage Lottery Fund (our funder) ... were very impressed that we had kept this moving, where they have had so many projects fall back or by the wayside of late."

"And ... a final thank you tonight to all in Corporate Health and Safety – I have had numerous compliments and praise for the work that you have undertaken in many services to ensure the best advice is available to protect our staff, customers and businesses."

18 June 20. Following meetings across Lincolnshire about the longer term impact of the pandemic Kate Ellis said "What is coming through time after time is that the work we are all doing in Lincoln is ahead of the game, whether it is where we have used the last few months to review and redesign services; innovate methods of service delivery; re-examined priorities or challenged our approaches – we are all working to ensure that Lincoln emerges from the crisis in the best possible shape."

29 June 2020. "Some of the work done and outcomes achieved has been fantastic:

- Tenancy Services set up a Tenancy Hardship fund to directly help those tenants impacted on financially
- Rent collection levels have been maintained within the Council's target and rent arrears have not risen significantly, demonstrating we are working hard to help our tenants



- *The Rough Sleeping Team had to get 'everybody in' at the start of the pandemic, the team successfully found accommodation for all the rough sleepers in Lincoln and have helped people maintain this accommodation by visiting and supporting them at this difficult time*
- *The Homelessness Team currently have 123 open homelessness applications and are working hard to prevent homelessness or find alternative accommodation*
- *The Allocations Team and Voids teams are dealing with an average of 85 applications per week, but we are only getting about 4 properties becoming void every week*
- *Independent Living Coordinators (equivalent to 8ftes) are making on average 284 calls per day to council tenants plus currently an extra 35+ Befriending Calls per day*
- *LinCare Control Centre receive and make on average 3200 calls per week;*
- *Within our Independent Living accommodation, we have had no reported symptoms/cases of COVID-19; this is down to ensuring residents maintain social distancing and thorough cleaning of all areas within the accommodation."*

2 July 2020. *"Francesca has been coordinating a multi-agency team ... out patrolling the retail area from St Marks to Newport Arch 6 days a week ensuring advice and support is given to those businesses that have been reopening and ensuring that queuing in public areas has been managed well, with Louise's team ensuring that inside the businesses are 'covid complaint' - well done from us all!*

15 September 2020. *At Corporate Management Team today we had a report from Paul Carrick on an assessment of the Befriending Scheme ... I know I have talked about it many times BUT my goodness what an amazing life line that was developed at incredible speed to support the most vulnerable in the City ... Contact was made initially to around 18,000 residents to ascertain needs and then a regular call programme to tackle basic needs and loneliness ... our scheme has had national recognition because it deserved it ... well done to everyone involved."*



Awards

- Our Visitor Information Centre has received the Travellers' Choice award by TripAdvisor
- Winners of 'The Top Employer for the Public Sector' award at the national Virtual School Leavers Award Ceremony. This was the national school leavers award and there were huge companies involved here, including NHS, Goldman Sachs, McDonald's, TUI
- Awarded the 'Lincolnshire Carers Quality Award – You Care, We Care' recognising the commitment organisations demonstrate in valuing the important role carer's play and recognises that carers are an important source of information about those they care for.
- Achieved a Silver Award from Investors in the Environment. The team drawn from across the council is evidence of our successful One Council approach.
- The Arboretum, Boultham Park and Hartsholme Country Park have all been given Green Flag Awards, which recognises well managed parks and green spaces.
- Attained 'Loo of the Year' awards for Castle Square and Bus Station toilets again this year.

And last but not least – *“a lovely good news story from Carole Priestley. During lock down she joined a group called 'For the love of Scrubs Lincolnshire'. ... Carole has been making scrubs and masks since the middle of March and has already got through one old sewing machine. The group have been making Noah rainbow scrubs and these have been handed over to ICU and A and E at Lincoln County hospital ... well done Carole – we are very proud of you.”*

