

## Performance Scrutiny Committee – Member request monitoring table

Date of committee – 17 August 2023

Action No.	Name of committee report	Information requested / question asked	Member name	Officer responsible for providing response	Date response provided	Response
1	Minute Extract from Executive to Performance: Purchase Orders	Could Members be provided with data on just the invoices that could have a Purchase Order raised (excluding those that don't need a purchase Order)?	Councillor Preston	Jaclyn Gibson	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	<p>The calculation for the PI already excludes invoices for utility bills which do not have PO's.</p> <p>It is not possible, without reviewing each invoice, to assess whether it would warrant a PO or not. However, based on a high level estimate only, excluding those that would not warrant a PO would result in a performance of 65%.</p>
2	Financial Performance - Quarterly Monitoring	Why was the £4k moved from LAD3 Green Homes to Home Upgrade Scheme?	Councillor Lucinda Preston	Laura Shipley	25 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	This was the residual underspend on the LAD3 Green Homes grant and it was moved to Home Upgrades Grant to allow the underspend on both grants to be returned together, rather than two separate payments.
3	Financial Performance - Quarterly Monitoring	Why was there an underspend on the grant, and why didn't we spend this on full helping residents with energy improvements?	Councillor Lucinda Preston	Laura Shipley	25 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	The underspend on the HUG grant is due to the restrictive funding criteria which means only off gas households are eligible to apply and we have very few inefficient, off gas homes in Lincoln. We

						accepted the allocation (we didn't apply for this we were just allocated the grant) just in case we could identify a small number of Lincoln households that could benefit from the scheme and didn't want them to miss out. In the end we were able to identify and help 4 households install insulation measures and low carbon, more efficient electric heating under the HUG scheme.
4	Financial Performance - Quarterly Monitoring	There was an issue recruiting staff particularly in the trades in housing. Has any thought been given to delaying scheduled work temporarily to see if the situation improved?	Councillor David Clarkson	Matt Hillman	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	We would not consider suspending the scheduled repair process, the repairs would still need completing at some point and therefore we would have a back log of work and that would increase the workload of the teams.
5	Financial Performance - Quarterly Monitoring	A huge amount of money was being spent on contractors in the Housing Department. How much would it cost to employ staff instead of contractors?	Councillor Martin Christopher	Matt Hillman	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Maintenance and Investment deliver various different services and require very different operational management arrangements. In many instances external contractors deliver works that require specific skill sets and significant resources. It is not possible to estimate how much money it would cost to employ staff instead of contractors across the whole of the Directorate. The cost of operational set up, including preliminary costs, training, management, and mobilisation

						would be significant and pose operational risk to the Council in delivering key services.
6	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	Referred to the performance indicator “ <i>cumulative long term sickness per FTE (excluding apprentices)</i> ” and commented that it was concerning the number of days lost due to stress or depression. How many days were lost due to work related stress compared to personal stress?	Councillor Hilton Spratt	Claire Burroughs	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Work related stress – 49 days Personal related stress – 239.5  (Remaining days are anxiety/bereavement related absence)
7	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	Why was the number of days lost due to short term sickness much higher for apprentices?	Councillor David Clarkson	Claire Burroughs	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	The number of days lost was higher due to a variety of different sickness absence reasons including Covid as the top reason
8	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	Referred to the two performance indicators “number of calls logged to IT helpdesk” and percentage of first time fixes” . Why were these recorded as a volumetric?	Councillor David Clarkson	Matt Smith	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	Both of these indicators could be considered to be good depending on either direction of change. For example more calls may mean more issues, but it also mean more confidence in the helpdesk response. The number of calls received is also not dependant on the performance of the team i.e. more requests for service may be received purely dependant on service needs.

						<p>Number of first-time fixes. In some cases a first-time fix may be the right resolution. However, ICT staff are encouraged to give the 'right' resolution, meaning that more investigation and time spent maybe better than giving a first-time fix.</p> <p>Therefore rather than concentrating on the high level performance, each call is dealt with on its merits and these are recorded as volumetric for information.</p>
9	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	<p>Referred to the performance indicator “Number of properties ‘not decent’ as a result pf tenants refusing to allow work (excluding refusals)” Would it be possible to find out who in Abbey Ward was refusing work?</p> <p>Were there follow ups when people refused work?</p> <p>Could a target be set instead of volumetric?</p>	Councillor Martin Christopher	Kev Bowring	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	<p>The Council holds record of all the refusals of work across the estates. We will work with the information governance officer to ensure we can share this document.</p> <p>The tenant has the ability to accept the work in the future, and when setting up new programmes of work, we will check if the tenant's circumstances have changed and if they would now like the work undertaking.</p> <p>We have no control over a tenant's decision to refuse proposed work (unless its Health and Safety works).</p> <p>Setting a target would not be beneficial as we are only</p>

						monitoring the volume and cannot influence the numbers/performance indicator.
10	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	Referred to the performance indicator “Number of properties ‘not decent’ as a result of tenants refusing to allow work (excluding refusals)” Did this include where a property doesn’t need work for example a new kitchen was not needed following inspection or was this included in a separate performance indicator?	Councillor Joshua Wells	Kev Bowring	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	<p>The recording of a refusal is classed as when the tenant does not want the planned improvement work undertaking.</p> <p>If a new kitchen was not required, this would not be a refusal.</p> <p>Our asset management records would be updated with a revised planned renewal date in this instance and the property is classed as Decent.</p>
11	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	Referred to the performance indicator “ <i>percentage of waste recycled or composted (seasonal)</i> ” and commented that this was persistently low. Had there been an increase in the percentage of recycling for the areas in Lincolnshire that had been provided with bins for card and paper?	Councillor David Clarkson	Simon Walters	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	<p>The best answer to this question is to give a split answer.</p> <p>The amount of contamination seen clearly reduces significantly. With the separate collection and stringent enforcement, contamination in the recycling waste stream has broadly dropped from around 30% to below 10% on average.</p> <p>However, as non-recyclable contamination has moved from recycling collections to residual (black bin) waste collections it increases this element of the total waste stream, so recycling as a percentage of what is collected is not significantly improved.</p>

						The quality of what has been collected in the paper and card collection that is much better, and the quality of the remaining mixed recyclables is also improved
12	Quarter 1 2023/24 Operational Performance Report	What were City of Lincoln Council and Lincolnshire County Council's preferences and concerns regarding use of communal bins and their impact on recycling rates?	Councillor Joshua Wells	Simon Walters	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	The concerns with recycling communal bins are the amount of contamination. These bins have multiple users, so no individual can be held accountable for the contents. As such they tend to have very high levels of contamination, and enforcement is all-but impossible. With regret the City Council, after trying to get residents to use the bins properly, is having to withdraw the recycling option in many areas where these bins are in use.
13	Income and Arrears Monitoring Report	Clarification was requested on the relationship between the LHA grant funding and housing benefits payments for temporary accommodation.	Multiple Councillors	Martin Walmsley	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023	<p>The definition of Local Housing Allowance (LHA), is quoted on the GOV.UK website <a href="https://www.gov.uk/local-housing-allowance">Local Housing Allowance</a> - <a href="https://www.gov.uk">GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Valuation Office Agency Rent Officers determines Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates used to calculate housing benefit for tenants renting from private landlords.</i></li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>LHA rates are based on private market rents being paid by tenants in the <a href="#">broad rental market area</a> (BRMA). This is the area within which a person might reasonably be expected to live.</i></li><li>• <i><a href="#">LHA rates</a> are based on rents, and limited by legislation. These rents are being paid by people with the same number of bedrooms as the property where you live, or the number of rooms you and your household needs.</i></li></ul> <p>LHA rates not only set the maximum eligible rent on which Housing Benefit (HB) entitlement is calculated in the private sector, but for the Housing Element of Universal Credit (UC) for private sector rents, too.</p> <p>Current LHA rates have been frozen since 2020, based on rents in 2018/19. Therefore, the gap between actual rents and LHA rates is becoming wider and less reflective year on year. A recent Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) article explains the impacts of the LHA freeze for 2023/24 in some depth: <a href="#">Freezes in housing support</a></p>
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					<p><a href="#">widen geographic disparities for low-income renters   Institute for Fiscal Studies (ifs.org.uk).</a></p> <p>Another issue is in respect of homelessness, – exacerbated by the nature of temporary accommodation, where rents tend to be higher. However, for customers placed into such accommodation, HB subsidy will be limited to the one bedroom self-contained LHA rate – for Lincoln this is currently only £97.81 per week. Any HB paid above this level is not reimbursed through the HB subsidy system, therefore creating a significant financial pressure to the Council</p>
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