Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future

Policy and Scrutiny

Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director – Place	

Report to:	**Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee**
Date:	**28 October 2019**
Subject:	**Highways Fault Reporting Performance**

Summary:

To inform members of the Committee about the performance of highways fault reporting, highlight improvements made and recommendations for future improvements.

Actions Required:

The members of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the report and:
1. Scrutinise the performance of the highways fault reporting system and consider the recommendations for improvement to highways fault reporting performance.
2. Agree the timing of future updates on highways fault reporting performance.

1. Background

In 2015 as part of the new contract with Serco Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) commissioned a new website and customer portal. SAP CRM was decommissioned and replaced by Lagan.

The customer portal was to be used over all directorates and included highways fault reporting, registrars and Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) bookings.

Project working groups for the portal began 2015, scoping out requirements. This included logons for Cllrs and Parish Councils, a reporting function and mapping functions.

In 2017 Serco handed over to developers at Athium to design the portal which was to include selectable Assets from the mapping engine, Go Live for highways set for August 2018.

Changes brought about by GDPR in May 2018 meant the mapping used by the new portal could not be used. A decision was taken to scrap the portal and move to

FixMyStreet. Work took place with MySociety to develop work flows to include email notifications providing updates to customers.

FixMyStreet Pro was adopted as our fault reporting system in August 2018. A fault can be defined as something that is perceived to be wrong with the highway or highway asset which requires fixing.

This report will look at how quickly customers received an update about their fault report, if these updates are meaningful and how the experience could be improved.

2. Systems

2.1 Confirm

Confirm is LCC's highway asset management system containing all of the highway asset information. This includes carriageways, footways, drainage, street lights, structures and traffic signals asset groups. The system contains all data concerning the asset groups, condition, works history, faults, enquiries, inspections, etc.

Confirm is used by the Customer Service Centre (CSC) to log fault reports received by phone and email. LCC staff receives fault reports from the CSC and FixMyStreet (FMS) via Confirm. Highways officers will raise work instructions from the fault reports received in Confirm.
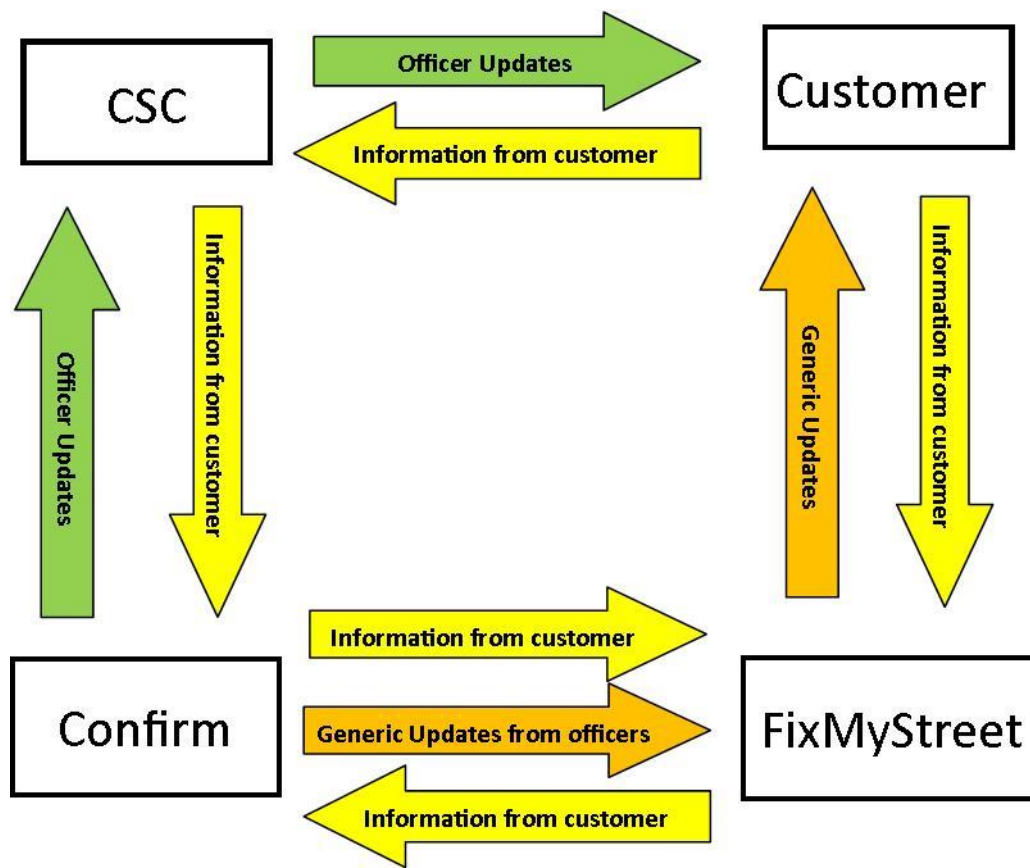
2.2 FixMyStreet Pro

FixMyStreet is a map based website and app by mySociety that helps people in the UK inform their local authority of problems needing their attention (mySociety, 2019).

FixMyStreet Pro is a mySociety product which enables integration with Confirm. This enables us to receive reports directly from FixMyStreet and to respond to these directly through Confirm.

LCC have a contract with mySociety to use FixMyStreet Pro until 2020. The site is accessible from the LCC website and is jointly branded. FixMyStreet is being used to communicate all information about fault reports to customers.

2.3 Integration between Confirm and FixMyStreet

Key
Green arrows – LCC officer input
Yellow Arrows – Information from customer
Orange Arrows – Generic updates

2.4 Ongoing Improvements to date

Pre FixMyStreet

Additional job statuses were added to Confirm to ensure the correct message was being sent out to customers following site visits for the following scenarios –
- Works completed
- Works completed and further works identified
- Site inspected but unable to complete works

This was a particular issue for street lighting. Customers reported street lights out. The gangs would attend and find they couldn't fix the issue in the first visit but the available job statuses didn't allow them to state this. Job status '0415 Inspected, follow up required' was added. A new message was created to send to customers informing them the site had been inspected.

Post FixMyStreet

Feedback from the public, staff and Councillors has highlighted potential improvements to FixMyStreet. These have been developed and implemented in the 12 months since it was launched.

As a result of gap analysis work with highways staff three new statuses were introduced in December 2018 to provide additional response to customers. These were –

- to tell the customer we are taking enforcement action,
- to tell the customer we will repair on the next programme if cyclic maintenance
- to tell the customer there wasn't enough information to find or action the fault.

Work has also been carried out In May 2019 to Confirm and FixMyStreet to ensure each fault code in Confirm is represented on FixMyStreet. This means that every fault reported through the CSC is now displayed on FixMyStreet.
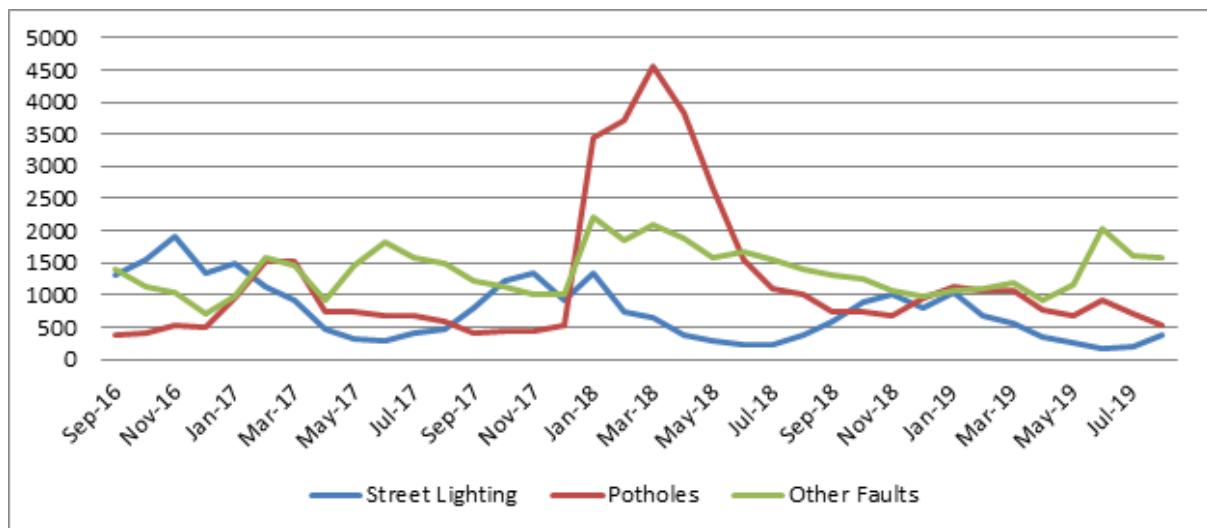
3. Volume and type of reports

3.1 How faults were reported 01/09/2018 – 31/08/2019
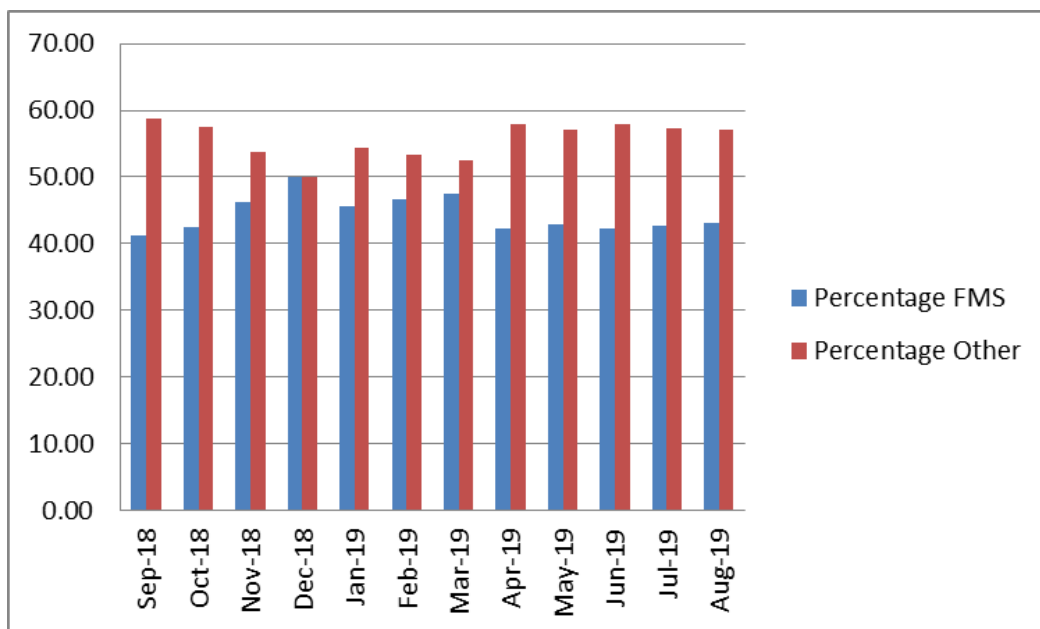
In the year since FixMyStreet Pro has been introduced (01/09/2018 – 31/08/2019) we have received 32,314 fault reports in total with 14,384 of these received from FixMyStreet.

3.2 Type of faults reported

The above graph shows the volume of faults reported broken down into street lighting faults, potholes and other reported by all methods for the last three years. This shows seasonal trends with the peak in pothole reports due to the 'beast from the east'. Also the yearly upturn in street lighting faults during the darker months.

4. Responses to customers

When a fault is reported to LCC it is displayed on FixMyStreet, regardless of the method of reporting (CSC or FixMyStreet). Faults then pass through Confirm statuses as they are investigated and acted upon by officers and contractors. These statuses trigger generic messages on FixMyStreet which are written by us.
If a fault is reported on FixMyStreet the reporter automatically receives updates. If a fault is reported by the CSC the reporter can find the fault and updates using the location or reference but the updates will not be received automatically. This is due to the origin of the customer details being in Confirm not FixMyStreet.

4.1 Generic responses from FixMyStreet

A list of responses sent by FixMyStreet is contained in Appendix A

4.2 Responses from the CSC

The CSC is able to inform customers of the update provided by the highways officer using Confirm. This may contain much more relevant information than the generic response.

5. Time taken to respond to customers

Fault reports can take time to finally resolve. Between reporting and resolving there can be several updates sent to customers using FixMyStreet. we have set a timescale of 10 working days for the customer to receive the first detailed update.

5.1 Customer Updates

There are 3 types of updates given from FixMyStreet:
1. System receipts e.g. when a fault is logged
2. Progress driven reports which are reliant on status updates
3. Detailed updates which are status driven but more informative in content

Detailed updates are sent from the following Confirm statuses:

Status	When used
0115	When a Fault is not the responsibility of LCC
0135	When a temporary or permanent repair is being made within 24 hours
0145	When a fault cannot be found or assessed due to insufficient information
0150	When investigation is required
0155	When investigation is on-going
0160	When investigations are complete and we are taking no immediate action
0165	When passed forward for inclusion in future permanent works programmes
0175	When we are taking enforcement action
0180	When the fault will be repaired on the next cyclic maintenance programme
0200	When a job for repair is raised
0230	When further work is identified
0250	When a job is passed to an Alliance Partner to repair
0300	When a job to repair is completed

5.2 Performance
In the period September 2018 to August 2019 79% of faults reported received a detailed update within 10 working days. In the period September 2018 to February 2019 88.5% of reports received a detailed update.

6. Current status of all faults reported 01/09/2018 – 31/08/2019

Data shown in Appendix B
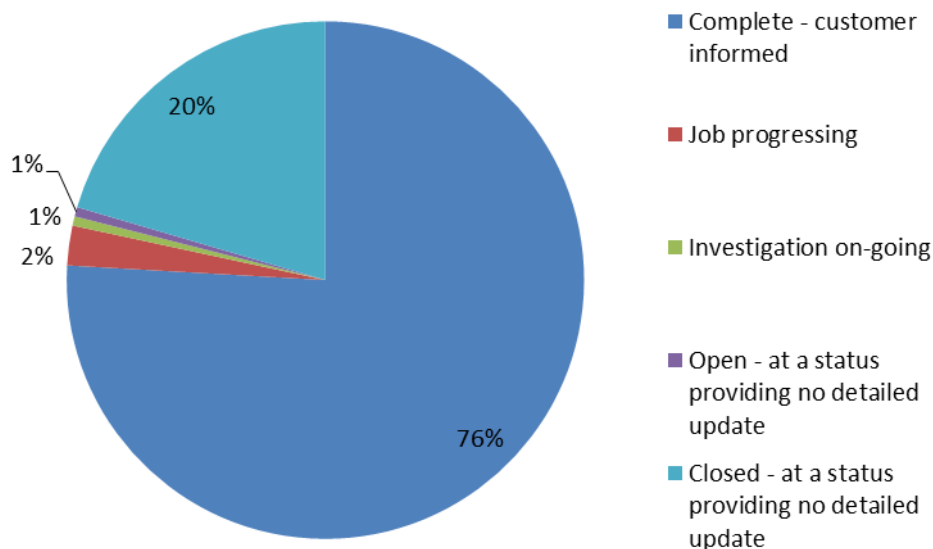
The above chart demonstrates that 76% of fault reports received in the six month period 01/09/2018 – 31/08/2019 were closed at a status which informed the customer on FixMyStreet. There were a low percentage of faults which were still being investigated, had jobs still progressing or were still open at a status which does not provide a detailed update on FixMyStreet. 20% of faults had been closed at a status which does not provide a detailed update on FixMyStreet. The supporting data in Appendix B demonstrates that most of these had been closed down at 'Enquiry Resolved'.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

If a customer reports through the CSC they do not automatically receive email updates. This has been explored and is a limitation of the systems. This is due to the origin of the customer details being in Confirm not FixMyStreet.

If a customer calls the CSC for an update the information given to them will be from highways staff making it more relevant than the generic update on FixMyStreet.

We are mostly achieving the target of 10 working days to provide a detailed update to customers.

The majority of customers receive a detailed update. As an off the shelf solution FixMyStreet does not deliver all our initial aspirations. For example there is functionality to display faults by electoral division for Councillors but not by Parish for Parish Councils.

Recommendations

1. Explore how more relevant, better quality responses can be delivered through FixMyStreet through detailed engagement with Councillors, the communications team and wider highways staff.
2. Through monitoring and management of the responses being used by highways and CSC staff, ensure 100% of reports receive the correct detailed update within 10 working days.
3. Carry out training and review with highway teams to ensure our staff understands the value of the information they give for both the public and CSC staff.
4. Examine in detail the use of all statuses to ensure the correct message is received by customers and fault reports are resolved appropriately.
5. Examine the customer journey from start to finish ensuring updates are appropriate and timely.
6. Embed continuous improvement methodology to ensure our processes are fit for purpose and fulfil the requirements of our customers when accessing our on line systems.

These recommendations are linked to the Highways Customer Engagement and Liaison Plan and will be implemented within 12 months. Implementation of these recommendations will improve the quality of the customer journey which will increase customer's confidence in Lincolnshire County Council.

8. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

8. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	FixMyStreet generic responses
Appendix B	Current Status of fault reports

This report was written by Georgina Statham, who can be contacted on 01522 553189 or georgina.statham@lincolnshire.gov.uk.