

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

Report to:	Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date:	20 July 2020
Subject:	Highways Service Performance Report, Quarter 4 (January 2020 – March 2020)

Summary:

This report sets out the performance of the highways service including:

- Major Highway Schemes Update June 2020;
- Lincolnshire Highways Alliance Performance Report Year 10, Quarter 4;
- Highways and Transport Complaints Report Q4 2019/2020;
- Highways and Transport Compliments 2019/2020 – Annual Overview;
- Update on FixMyStreet

Actions Required:

The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the detail of performance contained in the report and recommend any changes or actions to the Executive Member for Highways, Transport and IT.

1. Background

This report draws together performance and update information on the whole of the highway service in Lincolnshire.

This performance report contains:

- Major Highway Schemes Update June 2020;
- Lincolnshire Highways Alliance Performance Report Year 10, Quarter 4;
- Highways and Transport Complaints Report Q4 2019/2020;
- Highways and Transport Compliments 2019/2020 – Annual Overview;
- Update on FixMyStreet

2. Major Highway Schemes Update

The Authority currently has four major highway schemes:

- Lincoln Eastern Bypass
- Grantham Southern Relief Road
- Spalding Western Relief Road
- North Hykeham Relief Road

There are a number of other major highway and other infrastructure projects which are of a significant scale and may have a major impact on the County and surrounding area. All of these schemes are included in the Major Highway Schemes Update June 2020 found as Appendix A to this report.

3. Lincolnshire Highways Alliance Performance

3.1 Introduction

This performance report covers the final quarter of the Lincolnshire Highways Alliance. This was an Alliance between the Council, Dynniq, WSP and Kier and delivered the majority of highway services through the Traffic Signals Term Contract, the Professional Services Contract and the Highways Works Term Contract which all started on 1 April 2010.

Each of the Alliance contracts ended on 31st March 2020, and were replaced by the new Highways 2020 Contracts on 1st April 2020.

Lincolnshire County Council switched its works ordering software Confirm to a cloud based On Demand environment in preparation for the new contracts. This facilitates the sharing of information directly with operatives in the field and ensures that we are compliant with the introduction of Street Manager.

Enhanced collocation of teams was planned to take place in Lancaster House and the main depots at Willingham Hall, Horncastle and Pode Hole prior to the outbreak of Covid 19 but depot and office improvements are on-going in the expectation that joint working will recommence in some form. Kier and Balfour Beatty agreed terms for the transfer of Kiers depot in Sleaford and Colas have completed improvements to their Grantham depot.

A comprehensive programme of training has been undertaken to ensure staff are familiar with the new contracts and the new tablet devices.

New fleet and plant has been mobilised which incorporates the County Council livery.

3.2 Performance

Quarterly performance was reported through the Alliance management structure, with performance issues becoming the subject of an improvement action plan. A copy of the Lincolnshire Highway Alliance Performance Report for Year 10, Quarter 4 can be found in Appendix B. This covers the period of January to March 2020.

The Alliance partners managed to achieve their targets for Quarter 4. The results per contract area are:

- Highways Works Term Contract Performance Indicators (Kier) – down from 92.8% to 89.2%

- Professional Services Contract Performance Indicators (WSP) – remains at 89.1%
- Traffic Signals Term Contract Performance Indicators (Dynniq) – down from 99% to 98%
- Client Performance Indicators (LCC) – down from 66% to 61%
- Alliance Key Performance Indicators (LCC/Kier/WSP/Dynniq) – down from 85% to 72%

There has been a decrease in performance in most areas but a good overall performance achieved in Quarter 4. This was partly due to the impact of demobilisation. The Alliance Indicators were generally at a high level throughout Year 10.

This is the last quarter of these contract arrangements as from April 2020 the performance indicators and contractors are changing due to the introduction of the new Highways 2020 contract.

3.3 Highway Works Term Contract

The main focus of work through the Highways Work Term Contract is to improve the condition of carriageways. In Quarter 4 of Year 10 we repaired 18,249 potholes. So far in Q1 of 2020/21 we have repaired 5724 potholes so are tracking for a lower total. It is important to note that this was against the backdrop of COVID-19 and was mainly fed by routine inspections rather than public reports, which reduced substantially and have only now returned to near normal. We are also much more confident in the accuracy of the numbers as each pothole is ordered separately, rather than varying numbers on each job. This is also allowing us to track and address the quality of workmanship as each job has a before and after photo returned electronically on completion.

Throughout the year we carried out £5.8m worth of patching, £4.9m of carriageway resurfacing and £2.6m of carriageway reconstruction works. We delivered a surface dressing programme that covered over 700 individual sites, amounting to 250 miles of road being treated for an £8 m budget allocation. We reconstructed 9 miles of footway, with a further 155 miles being slurry sealed to provide a new surface for a combined budget of £3.7m. There were also over 180,000 gullies cleansed, 25,000 miles of grass verge cut and in excess of 200 miles of white lines refreshed throughout the year.

3.4 Community Maintenance Gangs

On 11th May, the Community Maintenance Gangs started work, delivering an additional £4.9 million of works during the 2020/21 financial year to make improvements throughout communities and the roads that link them. This work consists of minor aesthetic works, tidying of areas in poor condition, more large-scale civils works which sit out of our Asset Management Strategy, drainage investigation and repair focusing on problem sites from the 2019 floods and minor hand-lay patching work where pothole repairs are not sufficient. 1,217 individual jobs

have already been completed across the County by these gangs and Councillors will be provided with a report showing everything within their Electoral Ward throughout the year.

Alongside the Community Maintenance gangs we launched a new internal email address, Cllrhighwaysenquiries@lincolnshire.gov.uk, which was created as a single point of contact for members with complex or on-going enquiries where the issue will be picked up and forwarded to the correct Local Highways Manager or Programme Lead for the issue area. All communications from members are being tracked and response times monitored. Since March when it was launched, 93% of communications were responded to within 10 days with the average response time being 2 days. All enquiries receive an acknowledgement straight away, the 10 days is for a meaningful answer. This automatic logging was initially set up on LCC email addresses but we are adding private email addresses into the filter where these are being used. There have been 364 Councillor highways enquiries in total since March.

3.5 Professional Services Contract

The Professional Services Partnership performance for Q4 maintains a high score of 89.1/100, second only to Q2's overall highest ever score of 90.7. The average score of 88.8 for year 10 of this contract is up on the previous years' average score of 86.1, and the highest for the contract as a whole. Client Satisfaction remains good, with results improved at an average of 9.6 out of 10 for service and 9.7 out of 10 for product.

A recent focus of the management team has been to improve works delivery to time, with good progress being made. Q4's results are improved with 100% of schemes completing on time, within the quarter.

The timely completion of Highway Works Compensation Events was another focus, with Q4 delivering an improved performance with 87% of compensation events being actioned within 2 weeks.

Performance was maintained during mobilisation of the new contract with the locally based LCC & WSP teams continuing to be integral to the delivery of highway improvements including Lincoln's Riseholme Roundabout, and the development of Welton A46 Roundabout and Sleaford Rugby Club Junction. The partnership continues to progress efficiency and customer service initiatives through the annual Technical Services Partnership Action Plan.

3.6 Traffic Signals Term Contract

Dynniq final performance score for Q4 was 99 out of 100 for all activities.

Service Delivery:

The final quarter of the contract could have witnessed a drop in the performance by Dynniq as they worked through de-mobilisation however this did not happen

The current fault performance statistics demonstrate a reduction in reported faults on a monthly basis with a 94.5% of first time fault fixes. This has remained at the same level as the Q3 results. The trialling of a new first line maintenance intervention process helped reduce the number of faults passed through to our contractor, allowing them to concentrate on more pressing issues. This process is now also working successfully on the new Traffic Signals Term Contract.

The capital improvements programme saw the completion of the A607 Harlaxton Road Toucan crossing on the outskirts of Grantham. This site was funded by Highways England via Sustrans and included substantial cycleway surfacing and fencing works, as well as the creation of the new crossing which allows cyclist to cross safely from the canal path to re-join National Cycle Route 15 as it heads into Grantham.

Innovations:

March saw the trial of a new form of wireless communications which, if successful, will be rolled out to other areas of the county. We currently rely on fixed BT lines to provide our communications at traffic signals, and so the wireless solution will cut our yearly revenue costs. For example, the trial scheme should allow us to decommission 5 BT lines once we have proven the technology is stable and robust.

Environmental:

94.23% of materials recovered from site were recycled with the remaining 5.77% reused. 0% has gone to landfill. The reduction in Carbon emissions target had been set to 117.6 Tonnes target by the end of Q4 and this was achieved.

4. Highways and Transport Complaints and Compliments

Customer Compliments relating to highways and transport have seen a decrease from the last quarter by 31%, but there has been a 118% increase when compared to Q4 of 2018/19. When analysing the full year, 2019/20 compliments increased by around 40% when compared to 2018/19. In total there were 86 compliments compared to 61 for the previous year. There are a range of reasons for these compliments but those relating to road and pavement repairs accounted for 47% of all compliments.

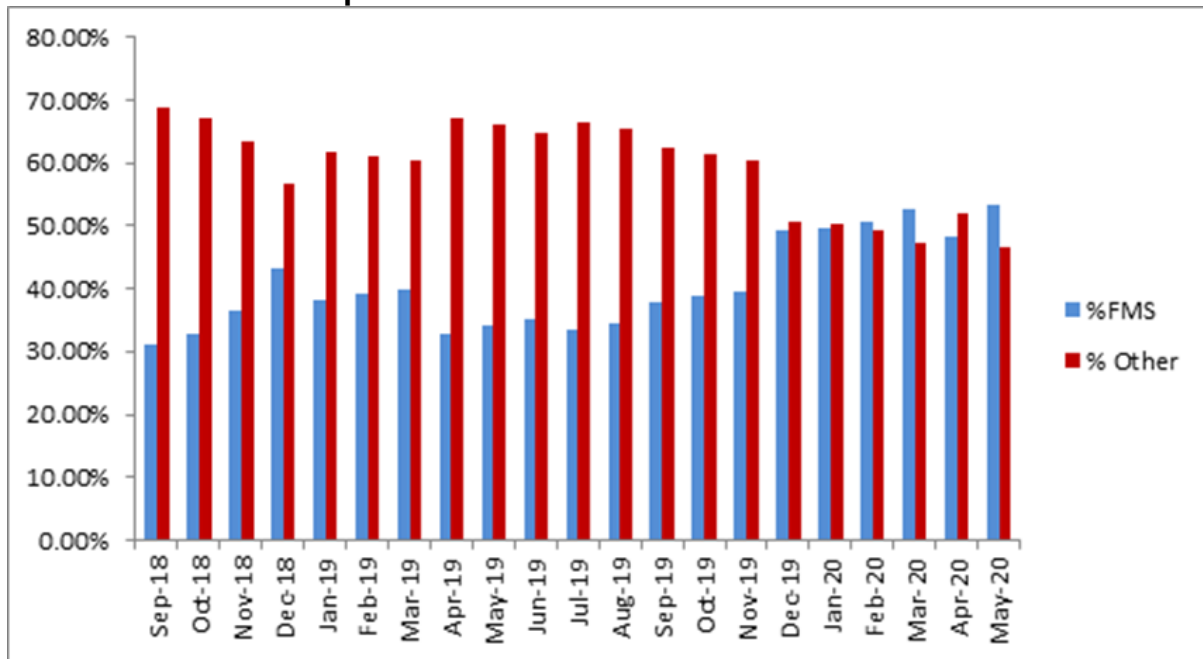
Customer Complaints relating to highways and transport have seen an increase from the last quarter by around 15%, but there has been a 49% reduction when compared to Q3 of 2018/19. There has also been a substantial decrease from last year in the complaint escalations from our area with 0% complaints escalated compared with 14% in Q4 of 2018/19. The complaints are of a varied nature however 63% relate to potholes and defects.

The full Highways and Transport Complaints Report Quarter 4 January to March 2020 can be found as Appendix C and the Highways and Transport Compliments report 2019/2020 can be found as Appendix D

5. FixMyStreet

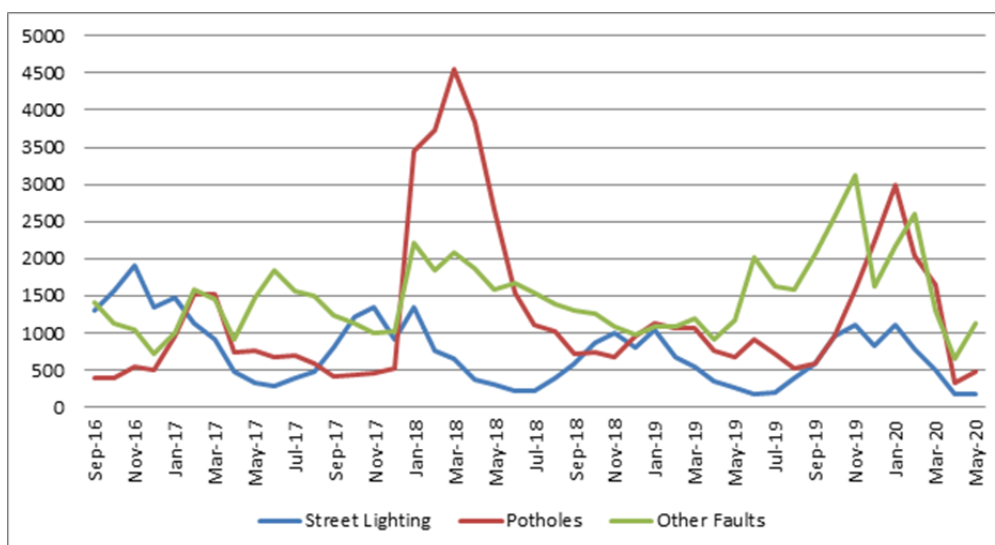
This is a summary of the changes and improvements to the FixMyStreet Pro system since the Scrutiny report in October 2019 and will provide details of improvements and progress with recommendations along with an overview of changes made due to Covid-19.

5.1 How faults were reported 01/09/2018-31/05/2020



The above graph shows the percentage split in the method that fault reports are received. There has been a change in how customers report faults with FixMyStreet and CSC reports now seeing an almost equal share in use.

5.2 Type of faults reported 01/09/2016 – 31/05/2020



The above graph demonstrates the seasonal fluctuations in fault reporting. It also highlights the decrease and subsequent increase in reporting during the Covid-19 lockdown.

5.3 Improvements to Customer Experience

Customers updating fault reports (Recommendation 2)

An improved method of passing updates made to fault reports by customers on FixMyStreet or through the CSC to highways staff was launched. All updates to fault reports made by customers are received by highways staff within 24 hours. If further action is likely to be required status changes are made to communicate this with the customer through FixMyStreet.

Training (Recommendation 3)

In November 2019 Karen Cassar addressed highways staff and Councillors at the launch of the Highways Customer Engagement and Liaison Strategy. A clear message about how we will respond to customer enquiries was delivered. Further face to face training in using FixMyStreet statuses was planned for March this year but has had to be delayed due to Covid-19.

Improved responses (Recommendations 1 and 4)

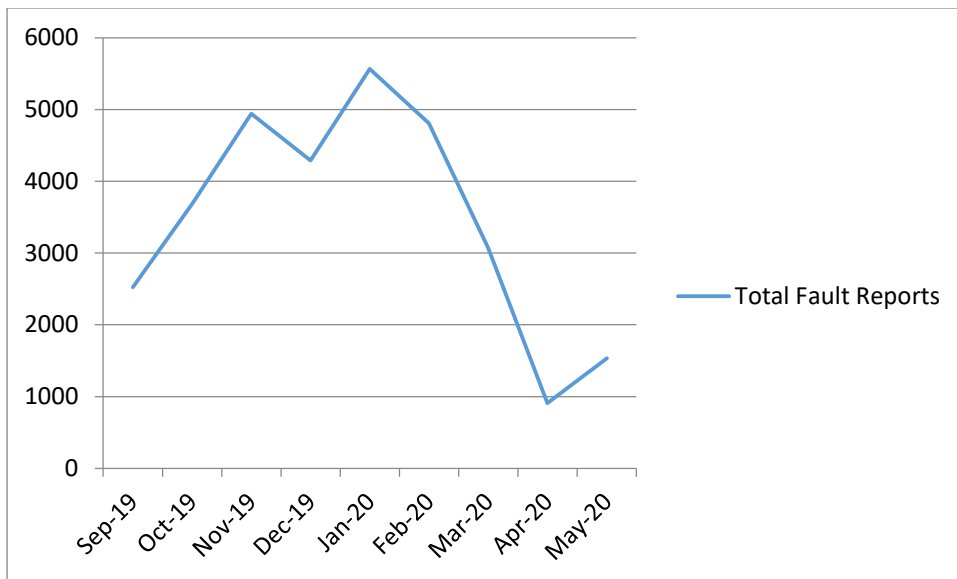
In December 2019 we updated our generic FixMyStreet responses. We moved to telling customers when they reported a fault that they would receive an update within 14 days. We also improved the quality of some of the responses to help customers understand why action hadn't happened immediately (Appendix E)

In the period September 2018-August 2019 88.5% of reports received a detailed update. In the period September 2019-January 2020 this had increased to 92%. Following the work outlined in 3.4 this further increased in February 2020-April 2020 94% of faults receiving a detailed update.

Personalised updates (Recommendations 1 and 4)

In February 2020 we started updating FixMyStreet with personalised responses when faults were not our responsibility or when we were not taking immediate action. Customers now receive a personalised and relevant response letting them know why we are not taking action. This can include who the fault should be reported to and if we have reported faults to a third party.

5.4 Adapting for Covid-19



The above graph shows the number of fault reports received before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

To help manage expectation during the Covid-19 pandemic we have updated our FixMyStreet template responses (Appendix F)

5.5 Next Steps

Customer journey review (Recommendations 5 and 6)

An end to end process review of highways fault reporting is being undertaken. This on-going work includes capturing changes made possible by the new contract with Balfour Beatty.

Continuous monitoring (Recommendations 2 and 6)

More detailed reporting will be developed to assess how quickly we respond to fault reports. This will establish when we may be slower to respond to customers and enable us to assess why and improve in these areas.

Expanding FixMyStreet to other services

Work is being undertaken to look at expanding FixMyStreet to use as a fault reporting system for bus stops and rights of way.

6. Conclusion

The overall Lincolnshire highway service continues to perform at a high level and action continues to be taken to improve the perception of our highway service to ensure that it fully reflects this high performance.

The Lincolnshire Highways Alliance has been a successful highway service delivery model for the last 10 years. The three private sector partners have worked hard to support this success and to ensure the delivery of a high performing highways service.

The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the detail of performance contained in the report and recommend any changes or actions to the Executive Member for Highways, Transport and IT. They are also asked to consider and comment on the conclusion to the Lincolnshire Highways Alliance and its performance over the last 10 years.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Major Highway Scheme Update Report June 2020
Appendix B	Lincolnshire Highways Alliance Performance Report Year 10 Quarter 4 January to March 2020
Appendix C	Highways and Transport Complaints and Compliments Report Quarter 4 2019/2020
Appendix D	Highways and Transport Compliments Report 2019/2020 - Annual Overview
Appendix E	How to use Confirm statuses
Appendix F	How to use Confirm statuses Covid 19

8. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Paul Rusted, Head of Highways Services, who can be contacted on 01522 782070 or paul.rusted@lincolnshire.gov.uk

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