



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

Report to:	Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date:	06 March 2023
Subject:	Highways Performance Report, Quarter 3 (01 October to 31 December 2022)

Summary:

This report sets out the performance of the highways service, including the Major Highways Schemes Update, Lincolnshire Highways Performance Report and Highways and Transport Complaints Report.

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 provides an update on all aspects of the highways service delivery, including major schemes, quarterly performance data for the key contracts (Highways Works, Traffic Signals and Professional Services) and strategic highlights relevant to the Highways Service in Lincolnshire.

This report contains:

- Major Highways Schemes Update February 2023
- Lincolnshire Highways Performance Report, Year 3, Quarter 3
- Highways Complaints Report, Quarter 3
- NHT Public Satisfaction Survey - 2022

2. Major Highways Schemes Update

The Authority currently has three major highways schemes that are in progress:

- Grantham Southern Relief Road
- Spalding Western Relief Road
- North Hykeham Relief Road

There are a number of major highways and other infrastructure projects, which are of significant scale and have a major impact on the County and surrounding area. All of these schemes are included in the Major Highways Schemes Update, February 2023, found in Appendix A to this report.

2.1. Lincolnshire Highways update

2.2. Performance Report

Quarterly performance is reported at the Lincolnshire Highways Performance Working Group. Here performance issues are discussed and if required, escalated through the governance structure, with performance issues becoming the subject of an Improvement Plan.

A copy of the Lincolnshire County Council Highway Performance Report for Year 3, Quarter 3 can be found in Appendix B. This covers the period of October to December 2022.

The partners managed to achieve their targets for Quarter 3. The results per contract area are:

- Highways Works Term Contract Performance Indicators (Balfour Beatty) – 75.0%
- Professional Services Contract Performance Indicators (WSP) – 75.4%
- Traffic Signals Term Contract Performance Indicators (Colas) – 86.0%
- Client Performance Indicators (LCC) – 75.0%
- Alliance Key Performance Indicators (LCC/Balfour Beatty/Colas/WSP) – 81.0%

The success for Quarter 3 performance data was holding the scores that were achieved for Quarter 2. The other success to note was the continued rise in the Highways Works PI3 which has risen from 4 to 7 following a significant package of works during the summer months of 2022 and increased focus on the reactive service.

For specific areas of the Service that are below the targeted performance, the following Improvement Plans are in place:

- Highway Works – PI3 – Tasks Completed within timescales – Reactive Works
- Highway Works – PI8 – Street Lighting Service Standard
- Highways Works – PI6 – Quality Assessment of works

In line with the contractual procedures, PI3 and PI8 have triggered a Low Service Damage penalty within the contract and continue to receive increased focus and effort. PI3, whilst improving dramatically has scored below the tendered bid position of 8. Low performance for PI8 has occurred due to a delay in the delivery of routine maintenance. The service continues to focus on these aspects.

2.3. Contract Specific Update

The delivery of the three key highway delivery contracts (Professional Services – WSP / Highways Works – Balfour Beatty / Traffic Signals – Colas) are now in quarter 4 of year three

of the contract. The linked contracts are due for renewal on 31 March 2026 with the possibility of extension up to 31 March 2032.

2.4. Highway Works Term Contract – Balfour Beatty

The Highways Work Term Contract delivers the vast majority of highway service, with maintenance of carriageways a priority but with footways and cycleways also being proportionally addressed according to the Highways Asset Management Strategy. Minor reactive works are used predominantly to address safety issues and faults within the carriageway and footway network. The contract also delivers most of the drainage, structures and streetlighting maintenance improvement schemes.

In Quarter 3 of 2022/23, Lincolnshire Highways repaired 16691 faults, including 7722 carriageway potholes (including edge potholes). The service fixed 347 gully grates/manhole covers, 948 footway defects, replaced 12 gully pots completely, as well as conducting 288 kerbing jobs, 74 minor tree jobs and repaired or replaced 215 signs.

During the third Quarter of 2022/23 Lincolnshire Highways completed a variety of schemes as detailed in the table below. This included 14 miles of carriageway patching and surfacing, 21 miles of footway resurfacing and reconstruction, and refreshed 7.5 miles of carriageway lining.

Work Types	Miles	Schemes
Drainage Improvements		10
Footway Reconstruction	2.5	8
Footway Micro Asphalt	18	47
Main Line Replacement	7.5	2
Carriageway Patching	10.3	11
Carriageway Recycling	0.8	2
Residential Resurfacing	1.7	13
Carriageway Resurfacing	2.3	6
Street Lighting Replacement		2
Structures Improvements		7
Traffic Signals Improvements		5

2.4.1. Minor Works Gangs

The minor works gangs continue to deliver work slightly larger in scope than the reactive safety works covered by Series 6300, of the Term Maintenance Contract. The service continues to focus on the most beneficial aspects of this work, such as civils, minor patching, and drainage.

641 individual jobs of this type were completed across the County in Quarter 3 of 2022/23. This included 201 tree jobs, 136 carriageway sites, 57 drainage jobs, 12 kerbing repairs and 79 footway repairs.

2.4.2. Challenges / Improvements

Over the past 24 months, inflation within the construction sector has caused significant challenge for the Highway service. During that time period, the average cost of a scheme has risen by 23% on average. Over the past three months the rate of inflation rise has started to reduce, and it is anticipated to level off for the remainder of 2023.

The additional LCC highway funding announced in the 2023 budget will ensure that the existing service levels can be maintained for financial year 23/24. Whilst the LCC contribution of funding continues to increase, the Department for Transport (DfT) - Highways Maintenance Block allocation announced in November 2021 remains static and is likely to do so until 31st March 2025 under a three-year settlement. LCC Highways continue to lobby the DfT via regional bodies in relation to this ongoing pressure.

The Highway service continues to focus on the reactive (potholes and faults) and the Street Lighting operational delivery. The scale of demand, resource requirements and commercial pressure within the contract remain challenging, but all parties involved (including the supply chain) are making the necessary improvements.

During the winter months LCC anticipate and plan for both the reactive and street lighting service to be placed under additional strain. The number of live faults remains under constant review and additional resource has been introduced to the contract. Keeping the number of live jobs in a manageable position ensures that the service operates in line with the Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan.

2.5. Professional Services Contract – WSP

WSP work alongside Lincolnshire Highways colleagues in the Technical Services Partnership (TSP), where three Performance Indicators measure WSP performance directly and seven measure TSP as a whole (LCC & WSP). All schemes which completed in Year 3 Quarter 2 feed into this reporting period.

The overall Professional Services Partnership score for Year 3 (2022/23) Quarter 3 is 75.4 out of 100, a slight increase on the adjusted Quarter 2 score of 74.6.

WSP are on target to deliver nine out of 10 of the selected Year 3 quality statements, which are measured annually. An example of a quality statement provision is the ongoing provision of 'Volunteering Days' which are being used through the Lincolnshire Councillor nominated Councillor Volunteering Schemes. WSP are also encouraged to develop continuous improvement / innovation initiatives, which target year on year cost savings for the contract. To date, cost savings have included innovative approaches to problem solving on highways schemes, the provision of free training for local LCC highway colleagues and the trial use of a drone to improve safety on LCC structure inspections. LCC can also benefit

from innovations which have been used elsewhere within WSP, which are shared through the Lincolnshire Highways Partnership innovation group.

WSP colleagues are also actively engaged in wider social value activities, including leading on the most recent volunteering scheme at Theddlethorpe Village Hall playing fields, where a combined WSP, Balfour Beatty, Colas and LCC Highways team worked alongside the parish council to clear an overgrown ball court that is now back in use within the community. Local WSP colleagues have also continued working with this year's cohort of the Construction and Built Environment students at Lincoln College, where careers support has been provided and the students are developing a 'real life' feasibility study for them to include within their studies.

The four measures which focus on TSP's ability to deliver highway schemes to time and cost achieved an average score of 8.4/10 for Y3 Quarter 2, which is up on the previous quarter at 7.9/10.

There is an opportunity to continue improving performance in the timeliness of contract notifications within TSP Highway Schemes. The score of those completed to time in Y3 Quarter 3 is 5/10 which is the same as Quarter 2.

Internal TSP Client satisfaction scores, obtained through Client Satisfaction Questionnaires for those schemes completing in the quarter, have improved in Quarter 3 with most clients being satisfied with the service score at 6/10.

Within the measures WSP are targeted to fill requested vacancies within 3 months. The score for Quarter 3 equates to 4/10, a continued downward trend of 2 marks lower than Quarter 2. Whilst much effort goes into identifying quality candidates to the Lincolnshire contract it is currently proving difficult to attract potential colleagues who have the right qualifications and experience, who are affordable as industry wide salary expectations continue to increase. Inflation rises for Professional Services are not showing signs of slowing like the wider construction inflation with a 2.2% increase occurring in January 2023 alone.

2.5.1. Challenges / Improvements

Recruitment for specialist roles within the engineering sector is proving difficult to attract and retain in the current climate. LCC have needed to pursue alternative routes to obtain staff on occasion to backfill hard to fill positions.

LCC and WSP are implementing a number of initiatives to tackle the recruitment challenges and are looking to bring staff based in WSP national offices into the LCC highway offices to bolster service delivery.

2.6. Traffic Signals Term Contract – Colas

Quarter 3 scoring was on target to be in line with recent quarterly performance, until the cold snap arrived in early December. This brought freezing temperatures that impact the performance of our pedestrian push button units, making them stick in the "On" position,

forcing the pedestrian crossings to constantly cycle as if the button is being pressed repeatedly. This is deemed as an emergency fault due to the network disruption it causes and has the potential to increase risk of driver non-compliance.

Another issue within the reporting period was two serious power spikes in Lincoln which caused multiple signal aspect failures (over 30 on one occasion). The overall PI score of 90 has therefore dropped to 86 this quarter mainly as a result of these events.

In terms of operational delivery, the overall statistics for Quarter 3 were as follows:

- 101 emergency faults (2-hour response) of which 96 were attended in time (95%).
- 527 standard faults (response within 12 contract hours) of which all 497 attended in time (94.3%).
- 59 requests for signals to be switched off for road works.

The Traffic Signal Capital Refurbishment Programme for Quarter 3 saw the following schemes undertaken:

- High Street / Victoria Road, Mablethorpe – complete junction refurbishment that was due for completion before Christmas. Serious issues were found with low-lying utilities in the footways and so the scheme was not completed until the end of January.
- High Street (Silver Street), Coningsby – crossing refurbishment that also saw issues with utilities in the footways causing power disruption to 27 houses in the village.
- High Street (Rutland Road), Mablethorpe - installation of a new Puffin crossing outside the primary school.

2.6.1. Challenges / Improvements

The utility issues highlighted above have brought about a change in our processes when commissioning work in footways with known utilities. At larger junctions, GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) surveys will be carried out to accurately pinpoint the location of services.

The wider Colas business continue to offer support to the Highway Service as a sub-contractor providing recycling schemes on the unclassified road network. Colas have also been engaged to carry out street lighting column integrity testing.

3. Complaints

A copy of the Highways Complaints Quarter 3 report can be found in Appendix C. During quarter 3 the highway service received a total of 19,010 Fix My Street submissions, CSC calls and CSC emails. LCC received a total of 189 contacts to the Customer Relations Team during this period, accounting for less than 1% of all contacts received.

Of these 189 contacts 151 entered the formal complaints process, accounting for 80% of these contacts, with the remaining 38 being resolved informally in early resolution.

The number of complaints entering the formal complaints process has decreased by 20% in comparison to the previous quarter.

4. NHT Public Satisfaction Survey

The Council has participated in the NHT Public Satisfaction survey since 2008 and this enables LCC to understand the views and preferences of a sample of residents and to compare these against other similar councils. The survey, undertaken by Ipsos MORI, is based on a sample of residents, and is designed to represent a spread of customers' views of the service across the County, geographically by gender and by age.

A copy of NHT Public Satisfaction Survey – 2022 can be found in appendix D. The content of this report gives a general overview of the Authority's position in relation to where Lincolnshire Highways stand against last year's results. It is also possible to analyse the data for individual service areas and for geographical locations.

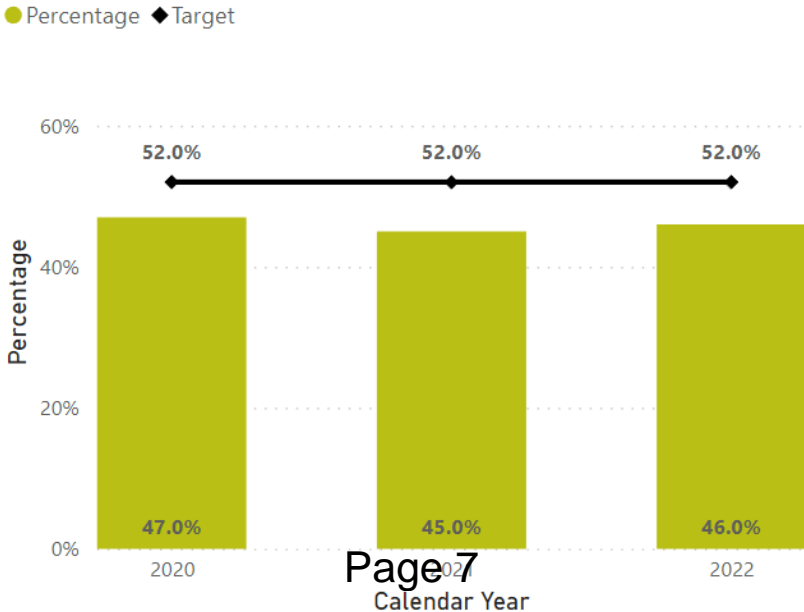
Lincolnshire Highways are currently investigating a number of opportunities to improve its NHT Public Satisfaction. Improvement work will be focused on continued service delivery improvements, improvements with our digital reporting platform and continued delivery of our communications calendar that is focused on seasonal activity.

The overall NHT score is monitored as a Service Level Performance measure.

PI 108 – Public Satisfaction with Highways and Transport Services ✖

- 0 measures that exceeded their target ★
- 0 measures that achieved their target ✓
- 1 measure did not meet their target ✖
- 0 measure that does not have a target (contextual)

LCC's score for 2022 has improved from the previous year of 45% to 46% showing a slight increase in public satisfaction. Our target of 52% is based on the average percentage of all other authorities in 2019. This level was chosen with the aim of having parity and is still our aspirational target. It is worth noting that the national average now is 50% which shows that whilst we are still behind the national average, our score is improving whereas nationally scores are decreasing.



Conclusion

Lincolnshire's Highway team and its strategic partners continue to deliver an efficient and effective service during extremely challenging market conditions. Performance reported for Quarter 3 demonstrate that the service has continued to improve. Whilst some areas have improved, the service continues to pursue further initiatives to tackle areas of low performance and is consistently striving to implement value for money savings across the wider service.

The latest data suggests that the rapidly rising inflation experienced over the past 24 months within the Construction sector is starting to plateau. The service will continue to monitor the impact this has on service delivery and ultimately the buying power of the Highway Service going forward.

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.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Major Highways Scheme Update Report February 2023
Appendix B	Lincolnshire Highways Performance Report (01 October to 31 December 2022) Quarter 3
Appendix C	Highways Complaints Quarter 3 Report
Appendix D	NHT Public Satisfaction Survey - 2022

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 Jonathan Evans, Head of Highways Client and Contractual Management Services, who can be contacted on 01522 55222 or Jonathan.evans@lincolnshire.gov.uk.