



Special Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Date **Thursday 7 July 2022**
Time **1.30 pm**
Venue **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham**

Business

Part A

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement.**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Report on the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 - Quarter 4 - 2021/2022 - Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Pages 3 - 6)
5. Quarter Four, 2021/22 - Performance Management Report - Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Pages 7 - 100)
6. Customer Feedback Report, Year End update, 2021/22 - Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Pages 101 - 132)
7. County Durham Partnership Update - Report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 133 - 160)
8. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 - Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Pages 161 - 182)
9. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

Helen Lynch
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
29 June 2022

To: **The Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

Councillor C Martin (Chair)
Councillor C Lines (Vice-Chair)

Councillors E Adam, A Batey, R Charlton-Lainé, J Charlton, I Cochrane,
J Cosslett, B Coult, R Crute, J Elmer, O Gunn, P Heaviside, C Hood,
L Hovvels, J Howey, A Jackson, P Jopling, L Maddison, R Manchester,
C Marshall, B Moist, K Shaw, M Stead, A Surtees and M Wilson

Contact: Jackie Graham

Tel: 03000 269 704

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

7 July 2022



**Report on the Council's use of powers
under the Regulation of Investigatory
Powers Act 2000 - Quarter 4 - 2021/2022**

Report of Helen Lynch, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members about the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') during the period 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022 (quarter 4) to ensure that it is being used consistently with the Council's policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose.

Executive summary

2. This report provides an update of the activity for quarter 4 of 2021/22 for Durham County Council in exercising its use of powers under RIPA for Directed Surveillance (DS) and Covert Human Intelligence Surveillance (CHIS).
3. The Council's Senior Responsible Officer is satisfied that the Council's use of its powers under RIPA during quarter 4 is consistent with the Council's policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Members:
 - i. Receive the quarterly report on the Council's use of RIPA for the period covering quarter 4 2021/22.
 - ii. Resolve that the powers are being used consistently with the Council's policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose.

Background

5. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) enables local authorities to carry out certain types of surveillance activity provided that specified procedures are followed.
6. Directed surveillance is covert surveillance that is not intrusive and is carried out in relation to a specific investigation or operation in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about any person (other than by way of an immediate response to events or circumstances such that it is not reasonably practicable to seek authorisation under the 2000 Act).
7. The Local Authority is able to rely upon the information obtained from those surveillance activities within court proceedings.
8. This report gives details of RIPA applications that have been authorised during the quarter 4.

Quarter 4 Activity

- 9 During quarter 4 there were no directed surveillance and no CHIS applications presented to the Court.
- 10 The authorisations relate to ongoing investigations and the outcome of these will be reported at a future meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Comparison Quarter 4 2020/21

- 11 For information the comparison of authorisations granted for the previous year in quarter 4, there were no authorisations for directed surveillance or CHIS authorisations.

Background papers

- None.

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Appendix 1 - Implications

Legal Implications

The Council's objective is to make lawful and appropriate use of surveillance techniques where required whilst complying with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, in particular the provisions of Article 8 of the ECHR securing respect for an individual's (qualified) right to privacy. Quarterly oversight by the board helps secure this objective.

Finance

Not applicable.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable.

Climate Change

Not applicable.

Human Rights

Use of investigatory powers potentially engages the Human Rights Act 1998 and in particular the qualified right to private and family life under article 8 of the European Convention. This right may only be interfered with in circumstances where it is necessary and proportionate to do so in pursuit of the public interest. Oversight by the Board of the Council's RIPA operations is designed to facilitate compliance with the Human Rights Act.

Crime and Disorder

The appropriate use of an oversight of RIPA powers will enable the Council to provide evidence to support appropriate prosecutions and tackle crime.

Staffing

Not applicable.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

An individual may complain to Investigatory Powers Tribunal that surveillance has been unlawful and if found to be unlawful could result in financial penalties and reputational damage.

Procurement

Not applicable.

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

7 July 2022

**Quarter Four, 2021/22
Performance Management Report**

Ordinary Decision



Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present an overview of progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework and highlight key messages to inform strategic priorities and work programmes.
- 2 The report covers performance in and to the end of quarter four, January to March 2022.

Executive Summary

- 3 The government has now removed the last remaining COVID-19 restrictions and launched a plan for '[living with COVID](#)' based on choice and personal responsibility.
- 4 However, as we transition from the pandemic, the household budgets of many of our residents remain tight. As of January 2021, the cost of living was at a 40 year high, prices had increased by almost 6% over a 12-month period, inflation is rising faster than wages and expected to climb above 10% within the year, and private rents are 7% higher than pre-COVID levels. In addition, more financial pressures are emerging with energy bills expected to increase by 50% following the removal of the energy price cap, and a 1.5% rise in National Insurance contributions in April 2022.
- 5 The latest published data estimated that almost 15% of households across the county were experiencing fuel poverty. However, this data relates to 2020, before the latest cost of living increases and escalation in energy prices. It is therefore expected that the actual percentage to be both higher and to increase over the coming months, with people in rural areas and/or already struggling being disproportionately affected. As

fuel prices increase, the cost of transport will increase and accessibility of the poorest people to essential services is likely to decrease, again exacerbated in rural areas.

- 6 Through the Poverty Action Steering Group (PASG) we have adopted a coherent and co-ordinated strategic approach, both within the council and across our partners to address poverty across County Durham. We are currently consulting on a revised [Poverty Action Plan](#), which sets out a comprehensive response to the impacts of the wide-ranging poverty issues within the county.

More and Better Jobs

- 7 A number of macroeconomic indicators show a positive trend. Latest data (December 2021) shows that employment rate has not fallen significantly despite the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) ending at on 30 September.
- 8 The unemployment rate has fallen to 4.1%. We have now seen 12 consecutive months of reducing unemployment since the peak of 7.3% (December 2020), levels are now lower than the pre-pandemic rate of 6.5% (March 2020). Nationally, the level of job vacancies in the labour market is still increasing although the rate has slowed.
- 9 Since May 2021 the Universal Credit claimant count has continued to fall and now stands at 4.0% (March 2022), returning to the pre-COVID position in March 2020. Both these rates show County Durham in a more positive situation when compared to England and north east rates which remain higher than pre-pandemic levels. However, as the cost of living begins to impact, we have noted an increase in demand in people wanting to access discretionary benefits such as Discretionary Housing Payments and welfare assistance.
- 10 Sub-county variations remain with Easington having the highest claimant count of the six parliamentary constituency areas. In relation to the 18-24 year olds cohort, all areas are showing rates lower than the March 2020 position, particularly Bishop Auckland. The age group with the highest proportion of claimants is the 30-34 year olds, although the largest gap between the latest position and March 2020 can be seen in the 35-39 and 40-44 year old cohorts.
- 11 Throughout the year demand has been high across the entire Business Durham portfolio and occupancy currently stands at 98.5%. Jade Business Park is now 100% occupied and accounts for 20% of the total commercial portfolio. Work continues on the development of strategic employment sites at NETPark and Merchant Park.

- 12 Business support has performed well throughout the year with the number of inward investments, businesses intensively assisted by Business Durham and businesses engaged with the economic development team exceeding targets. To date the County Durham Growth Fund has awarded £7.7m of the £8.9m fund, creating 239 jobs; and within the year Finance Durham invested £10m in 21 companies. Additional business support through our regeneration and economic development teams have created 108 jobs through the Targeted Business Improvement scheme and 48 jobs via our Towns & Villages Programme. However, although 571 businesses were engaged during quarter four, this is 296 fewer than the same period last year (-34%).
- 13 Registrations to Employability Durham are down as fewer people require support due to the healthy labour market and more people moving into employment.
- 14 Although our tourism and cultural sector was particularly hard hit by the pandemic and we have seen a reduction in the number of core tourism business since July 2021, confidence across tourism businesses is beginning to improve and visitor numbers to core attractions and our cinemas, theatres, attractions and libraries are increasing. Although County Durham was not named UK City of Culture, we remain committed to delivering a cultural programme with a lasting legacy. As a runner-up, we received a £125,000 grant to support the development of this programme.
- 15 Of the 22 schools in the county inspected by Ofsted during the quarter, 17 now have a good or outstanding rating, an increase of six schools. The remaining five schools either require improvement to be good or are classed as inadequate, a net reduction of two schools.
- 16 Fourteen qualifying safeguarding complaints were made to Ofsted in relation to schools during quarter four. Although higher than the five received in the same period last year, it is four lower than quarter three which suggests stability might be returning to the school environment.
- 17 We have seen a year-on-year increase in children and young people electively home educated; there are 637 children in County Durham in this cohort, less than 1% of all pupils.
- 18 In the last 12 months, we have seen a 10% increase in contacts to the Housing Solutions Service, mainly due to an increase in presentations earlier in the year as a result of the eviction ban being lifted and eviction numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels, private sector properties becoming less sustainable and fuel poverty issues. We continue to see an increase in the number of rough sleepers; as well as these cases being more complex. Throughout the year the number of new households in temporary accommodation (TA) and the average length

of time placed in TA have reduced by 11% and 1.5 days respectively when compared to 2020/21.

Long and Independent Lives

- 19 Data for the period 2018-20 show a reduction in both life expectancy (LE) and healthy life expectancy (HLE) in County Durham since the previous release (2017-19), with the exception of female HLE which has increased by a full percentage point. However, HLE in both males and females continue to remain lower than national levels. It is expected that future data releases covering the period of the pandemic will demonstrate a continued negative impact on LE and HLE.
- 20 The impact of the pandemic on the mental health of the population is also demonstrated through increasing hospital admission rates for intentional self-harm, particularly in the 10-24 year-old age group. Increases in admission rates for alcohol specific conditions have also been identified for the same period. A new campaign, '[Now You're Talking](#)', has been developed, to encourage people to talk about their mental health. The campaign is due to roll out in spring 2022.
- 21 Data from adult social care highlight the continuing reduction in permanent admissions to residential and nursing care, with admission rates reducing by approximately 33% since the start of the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic and challenges associated with embedding a new case management system, and the associated activity data, have both impacted on this apparent reduction.
- 22 As we come through the recovery phase of COVID, competing operational pressures continue to impact negatively on services users being reviewed within 12 months. 65% of service users received an assessment or review in the last 12 months, compared to almost 90% the previous year. Following additional resources into Adult Care, and mitigating actions to address this, it is expected that performance should improve during 2023.
- 23 However, the proportion of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation services continues to increase. The latest position (88.7%) is the highest performance for four years.
- 24 Despite a steady increase throughout the year, in 2021/22 visitors to leisure centres were below target by 33%, with 1,163,667 fewer visitors than at the start of the pandemic. We have also seen an increase in cancellations of gym and swim memberships compared to last year with initial indications showing that the increases in the cost of living are having an impact.

- 25 Although higher than pre-pandemic levels, the amount of household waste collected in 2021 is broadly in line with that collected in 2020 suggesting volumes are stabilising. This, combined with planned maintenance at the energy from waste plant and changing of regulations on the recycling of carpet, means a smaller proportion of waste was diverted from landfill – 89.4% compared to 93% for the same period last year. In addition, contamination of kerbside recycling bins continues to increase and is currently 33% (from a pre-COVID rate of 29%); we continue to tackle contamination, with more than 7,700 contamination notices issued in the last 12 months.

Connected Communities

- 26 Although overall reports of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) decreased by 7% over the last 12 months, they remain higher than the pre-COVID level. Personal ASB is almost 5% higher than the pre-COVID figure, and we remain concerned that the pandemic has exacerbated mental health issues and minor arguments are escalating as resilience levels remain low and people spend more time at home. Nuisance ASB decreased over the last 12 months but remains 10% higher than the pre-COVID level with noise complaints being a major factor.
- 27 We are also aware that ASB fires (deliberate primary and secondary fires) have increased over the last 12 months. Many of these incidents are confined to the east of the county.
- 28 Overall recorded crime increased 6%. Increases were noted across all crime categories except violence against the person. However, these increases are due to comparatively low levels of recorded crime for the previous year, much as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions which limited opportunities to commit crimes due to people spending more time at home, shops and leisure facilities being closed and fewer journeys being made. If we compare the latest data with pre-COVID levels of recorded crime, we can see that overall recorded crime is 7% lower.
- 29 We continue to maximise investment in our towns and villages. County Durham has been awarded £33.6 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which includes £2.8 million Multiply funds, for the period April 2022 to March 2025 to be delivered around the themes of Community and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. However, this is estimated to be roughly half of previous European Union funding. We are also developing five proposals for County Durham worth up to £117 million for the Government's second round of Levelling Up Funding.

- 30 Construction of the new Durham Bus Station has recommenced following a temporary pause due to unforeseen structural works, and is expected to become operational in July 2023.
- 31 In response to the crisis in Ukraine, the council has established a multi-agency humanitarian support working group and an operational team scheme to assist individuals and families coming to the UK. Under the Government's Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, as at the end of April there were over 130 residents in County Durham who had put themselves forward; we are working to support both the sponsor and the refugees.
- 32 We continue to progress schemes to deliver high quality housing and ensure high quality standards within the social and private rented sectors. 64 out of the 67 constructed Chapter Homes located at Oakerside Drive in Peterlee are sold and construction of 60 new homes at Gilesgate site is on track for completion in December 2022. Our Selective Licensing Scheme which covers 42% of the private rented sector in County Durham came into operation on 1 April 2022, and in February Cabinet approved a Council Tenancy Strategy that sets out the Council's expectations to the registered providers of social housing operating.
- 33 Phase 1 of the Council Housing Building Programme to build 155 homes across seven sites continues with financial viability assessments currently being produced which will see individual sites progressing to planning and construction.
- 34 Ofsted announced the council's inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) on 29 April 2022. The inspection is focussed on the effective of local authority services and arrangements to help and protect children, the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home, the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption and the experiences and progress of care leavers.
- 35 They will also evaluate the effectiveness of leaders and managers, the impact they have on the lives of children and young people and the quality of professional practice.
- 36 Demand for children's social care support remained high throughout 2021/22 despite a reduction in referrals from the 2019/20. Over pandemic period, a combination of COVID-19 and increasingly complex cases have taken longer to work to a satisfactory outcome.
- 37 This higher demand has led to sustained high caseloads over the year which in turn led a decline in performance in some key performance areas around the timeliness of our assessments and other processes.

The service continues to recruit over-establishment to mitigate these pressures.

- 38 However, the measure to track the overall quality of service, our re-referral rate, continues on a positive trajectory much reduced from pre-pandemic and now lower than all benchmarks.
- 39 Placement sufficiency for looked after children was a key challenge throughout the year. The service continues its Residential Care and Fostering Transformation Programmes intended to build capacity and choice of placement to meet the needs of all children in our care.

An Excellent Council

- 40 The council continues to face significant financial pressure resulting from the pandemic. The additional costs incurred and loss of income are forecast to be around £20.4 million this year, offset by COVID-19 related underspends (relating to closure of facilities and disruption to normal service activity as a result of the pandemic) of £5.9 million – a net overspend of £14.5 million, which is presently within the forecast circa £18.2 million the council expects to receive from the Government to cover the financial impact of the pandemic.
- 41 With the removal of the last remaining COVID-19 restrictions, our office staff returned to their workplaces on a hybrid basis, and services impacted by COVID-19 reverted to their pre-COVID position. Digital Services staff continue to provide, promote and support the use of Office 365 applications across the council to assist in the return to offices. Plans are being developed for a new civic headquarters (in support of the future commercial development of the Aykley Heads site) and office space in Stanley will provide a basis for further external investment in the town.
- 42 Having declined during the pandemic, staff turnover has increased and is currently above the pre-pandemic figure of 7.2%, at 9%. We continue to modernise our approach to recruitment to increase our appeal in a hugely competitive market. Attracting skilled workers remains a challenge, with local and national skills shortages driving competition amongst all neighbouring local authorities and other employers including the private sector.
- 43 We have launched our 2022 Apprentice Recruitment Campaign. The 97 successful candidates will join our apprenticeship programme which has helped almost 1,300 employees to develop new skills (2.3% of our workforce is currently enrolled). 647 apprenticeship standards are available (and a further 46 are in development) and have been mapped to each service area via our learning and development system.

- 44 As COVID-19 restrictions eased, both health and safety incidents and days lost to sickness increased. Our sickness rate for the last 12 months is 11.59 days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE), with circa 83% of employees recording less than five days sickness and 58% recording no sickness. If we adjust for COVID-related sickness, the rate drops to 10.31 days per FTE. This is 0.5 days lower than the rate recorded pre-pandemic. 95% of all reported accidents are either no injury or near miss.
- 45 Days lost to 'mental health and fatigue' is 14% higher than last year, and 7% higher than pre-pandemic, driven by increases in anxiety and non-work related stress. Although work related stress increased 20% compared to last year, days lost during 2021/22 is half that recorded pre-pandemic.
- 46 Our Performance Development Review process has been reinstated and is now complete for 117 leaders (100%) and 840 managers (83%). It has been rolled out to the remaining 9,967 employees for completion by 30 June 2022.
- 47 Throughout the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 we received more than 1.8 million contacts through our reported channels – an increase of 26% on the previous year. The significant increase in call volume over the last 12 months is due to transferring lines to the ACD system and reinstating lines closed due to the pandemic, such as coroners and leisure centres. More recently, the £150 energy rebate has driven increased levels of contact.
- 48 More than 164,000 households now have an online account for requesting services through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. In addition, an increasing number of residents are setting up accounts to access council tax and housing benefit information through the Revenues and Benefits Portal.
- 49 Although we received 1% fewer service requests through our CRM system, compared to the previous year (-5,538), the number remains 28% higher than the pre-COVID level (+92,226). Almost half of these service requests are linked to a performance standard (which was met in 72% of cases) and 82% of the 20,000 respondents to the satisfaction survey stated they were satisfied with service delivery.
- 50 We received 2,466 corporate complaints, which is broadly in line with the previous year (six complaints per 1,000 service requests), and just under half were upheld. Although 128 were escalated to independent investigation (5%), analysis suggests 26% could have been avoided through either timelier or more comprehensive updates from services, and/or completion of the agreed action in the first instance. The

Ombudsman delivered decisions relating to 69 complaints – 17 were upheld, either fully or partially.

- 51 Almost two thirds of service level complaints were completed and responded to within timescale, which is broadly in line with the previous year, and the most frequent cause for complaint, representing 15% of all complaints, continues to be missed bin collections. Of those investigated in the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, 78% were upheld. However, it is important to note that whilst we received 381 missed bin complaints, the complaint to delivery ratio is just 0.003%. In addition, a smaller proportion of missed bin reports are progressing to complaints.
- 52 We are continuing to drive improvements across customer services and enhance the customer experience with a new Video Relay Service to communicate via British Sign Language, more services migrating to the ACD system, more performance standards, more processes complying with web content accessibility guidelines, and updated forms with standardised address / location search function.
- 53 The council's digital fixed penalty notice (FPN) project for littering has been including in several award nominations recently. We won Litter Initiative of the Year in the Keep Britain Tidy Awards and were awarded a certificate of excellence in the Public Sector Transformation Awards. In addition, the council has been shortlisted in the Municipal Journal awards in the digital transformation category for the Tech to Tackle Litter project.
- 54 We have also been shortlisted in the LGC Awards 2022 in the Public Health category for our work on health, especially around mental health, the results are expected in July.

Risk Management

- 55 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects. The latest report can be found [here](#).

Recommendation

- 56 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board notes the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter four performance, the impact of COVID-19 on performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic.

Background

- 57 The performance report is structured around the three components.
- (a) High level state of the County indicators to highlight areas of strategic significance. These are structured around the [County Durham Vision 2035](#).
 - (b) Council initiatives of note against the ambitions contained within the vision alongside a fourth 'excellent council' theme contained within our [Council Plan](#)¹.
 - (c) A long list of key performance indicators against the themes of the Council Plan.
- 58 It also includes an overview of the continuing impact of COVID-19 on council services, our staff, and residents.

Background papers

- County Durham Vision (County Council, 23 October 2019)
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s115064/Draft%20Durham%20Vision%20v10.0.pdf>

Other useful documents

- Council Plan 2020 to 2023 (current plan)
<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2366/Council-Plan>
- Quarter Three, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s152742/Performance%20Report%202021-22%20003.pdf>
- Quarter Two, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s149087/Q2%20Performance%20Report%202021-22%20-%20Cabinet.pdf>
- Quarter One, 2021/22 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s144872/Q1%20Performance%20Report%202021-22.pdf>

Author

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¹ approved by full council October 2020

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Climate Change

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

Procurement

Not applicable.



Durham County Council Performance Management Report

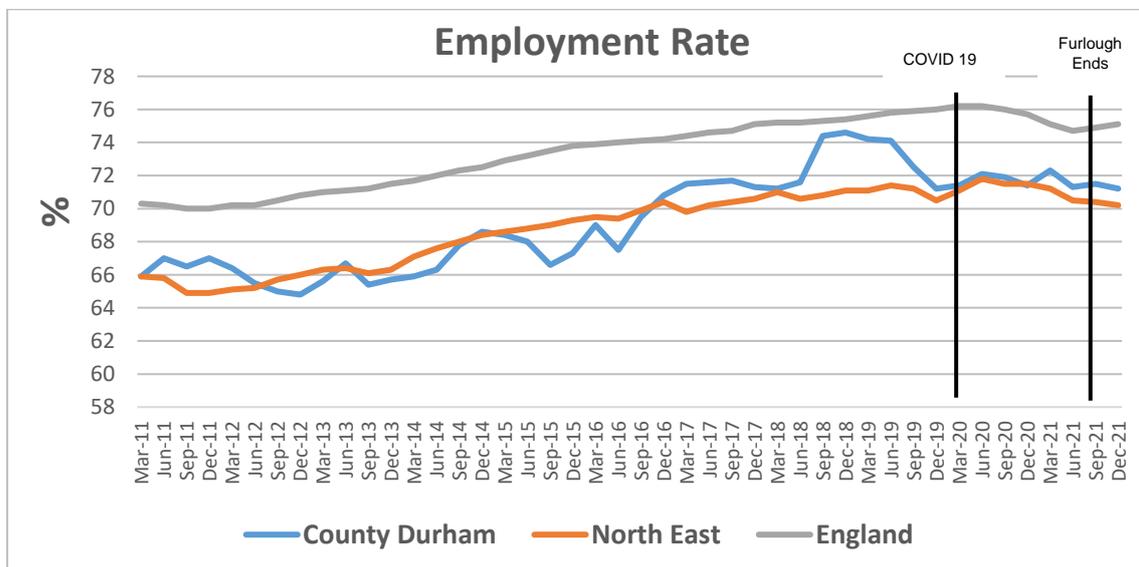
Quarter Four, 2021/22



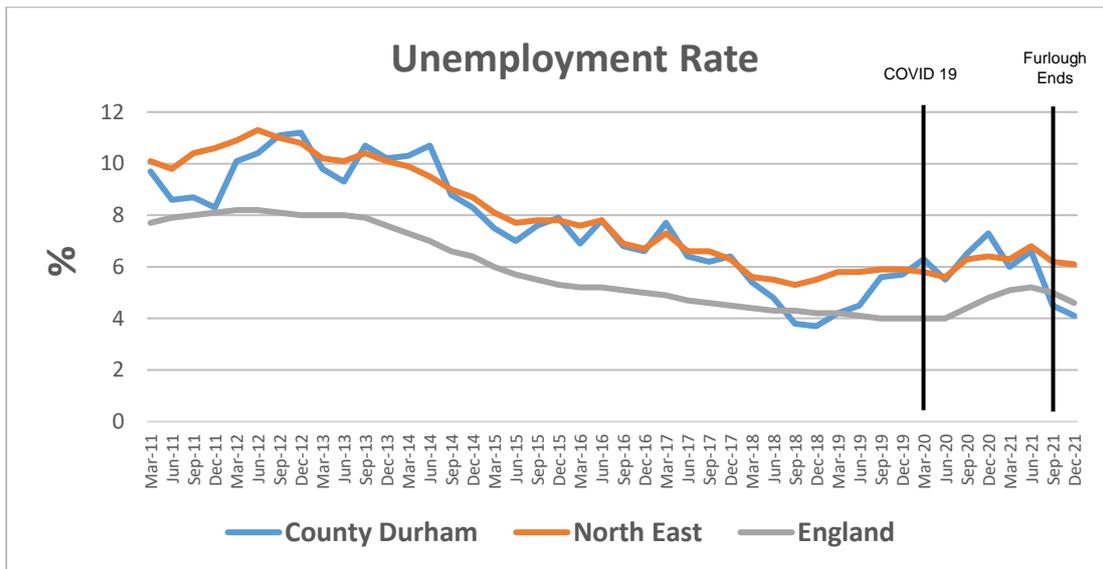
More and Better Jobs

- 1 The ambition of More and Better Jobs is linked to the following objectives:
 - Delivery of a range of employment sites across the county;
 - A strong, competitive economy where County Durham is a premier place in the north east to do business;
 - A broader experience for residents and visitors to the county;
 - Young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment;
 - Helping all people into rewarding work;
 - Fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the county.

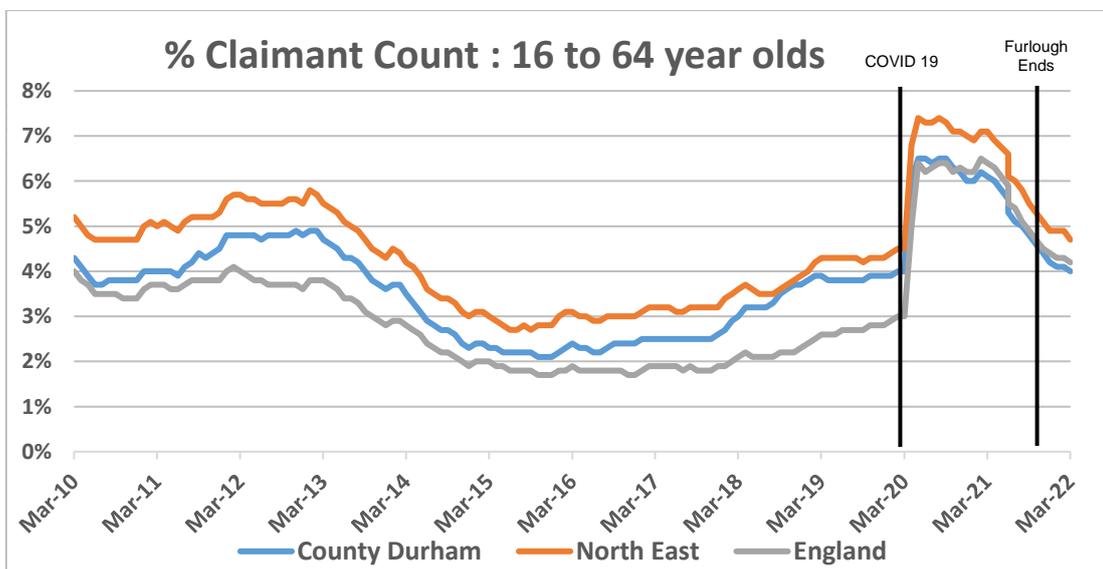
National, Regional and Local Picture



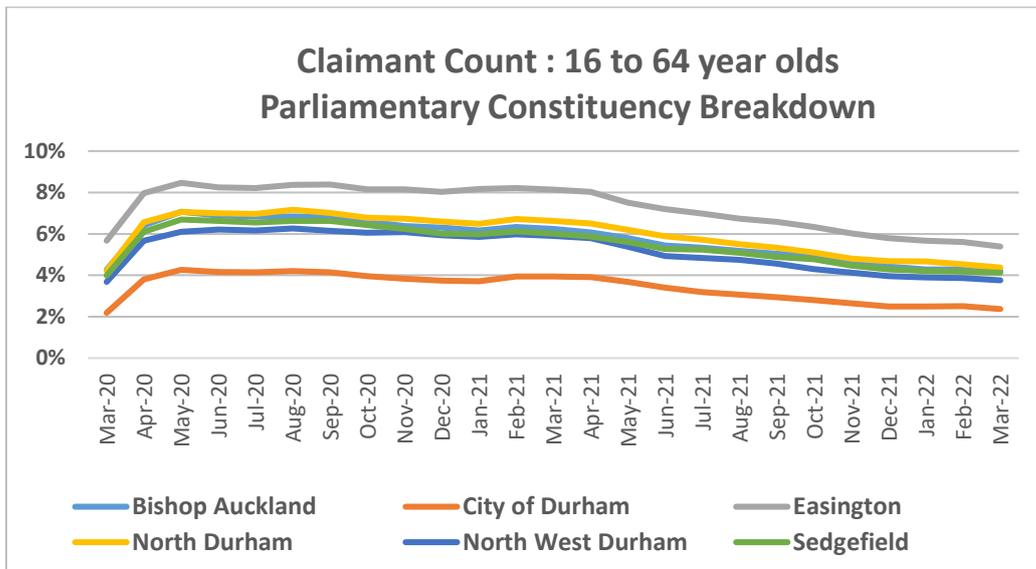
- 2 Latest data (December 2021) shows the employment rate has fallen slightly, in line with England and regional trends, but remains within the confidence levels for this data and therefore is not considered a significant change. Although the government removed its support packages (furlough and self-employment income schemes) at the end of September, we have yet to see any impact on the employment rate.



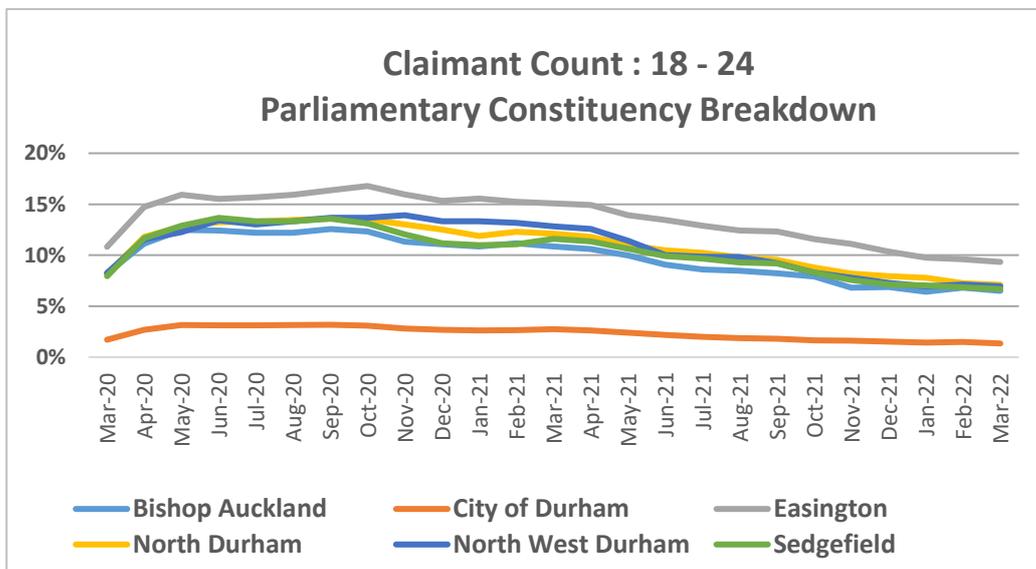
3 Similarly, the unemployment rate has fallen to 4.1% from 4.5% in the previous period, although this is within the confidence levels for this data and therefore is not a significant change. However, we have now seen a consecutive 12 months of reducing unemployment from the peak of 7.3% in December 2020 and levels are now lower than the pre-pandemic rate of 6.5% in March 2020. This shows County Durham in a more positive position compared to England and the north east which both still have higher unemployment rates than prior to the pandemic.



4 Following a significant rise in people claiming employment benefits between March and May 2020, the claimant count remained relatively static throughout 2020 and 2021 until the first notable drop in May 2021. Since this time, it has continued to fall and now stands at 4.0% (March 2022), returning to the pre-COVID position in March 2020. Again, this shows County Durham in a more positive position compared to England and the north east rates which both remain higher than prior to the pandemic.

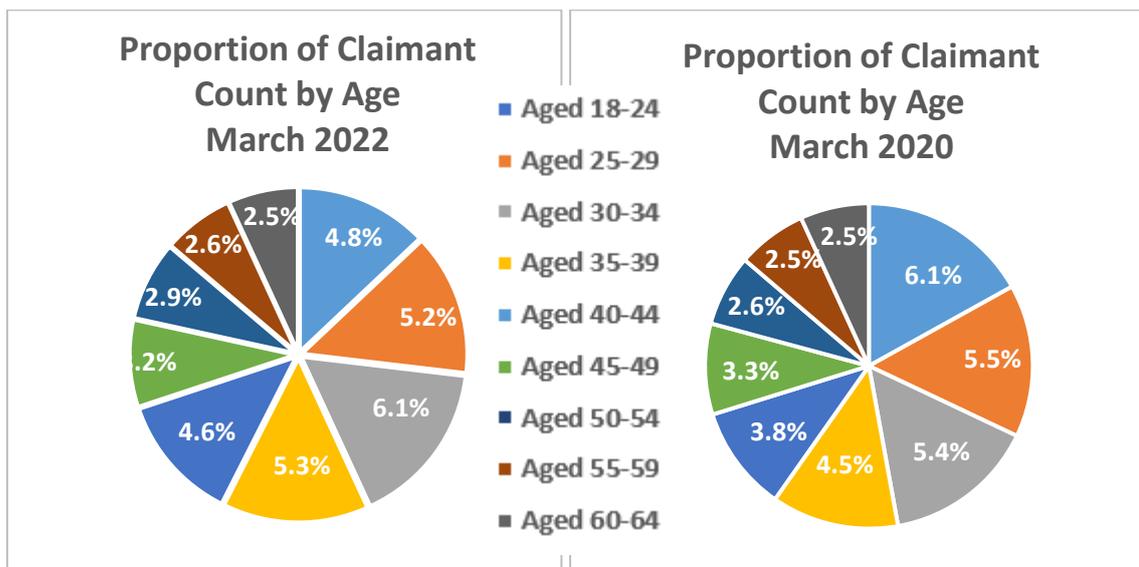


5 In relation to the 16-64 year olds cohort, Bishop Auckland and Easington areas have returned to their pre-COVID position with the rest remaining marginally higher than at March 2020. North Durham and Durham City are showing the largest difference between the latest position and March 2020, at 0.5pp and 0.3pp respectively and therefore are the furthest away from returning to their pre-COVID position.



6 However, in relation to the 18-24 year olds cohort, all areas are showing rates that are lower than the March 2020 position, particularly Bishop Auckland which at 6.4% is 2.2pp lower than March 2020.

7 Easington has the highest rate of claimants within both the 16-64 and 18-24 age groups.



- 8 The age group population with the highest proportion of claimants is the 30-34 year olds at 6.1%, 0.7pp above the pre-COVID (March 2020) position. Although, it is the 35-39 year old (5.3%) and 40-44 year old (4.6%) cohorts that are showing the largest gap between the latest position and March 2020 by 0.8pp.
- 9 Nationally there were around 1.3 million vacancies between January and March, again a record high and an increase of 492,000 from the pre-pandemic January to March 2020 position. Although vacancies are still increasing, the rate of growth has continued to fall since its peak of 43.3% in May to July 2021 to 4.1% this period, the lowest level of growth since June to August 2020.
- 10 The percentage change in the number of visitors to the core attractions² in County Durham continues an upward trend. As at the end of December 2021, there has been a 184% increase in visitors compared to the same period last year. However, it should be noted that last year many attractions were closed or offering reduced capacity entrance due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- 11 Latest data (February 2022) show that 495 young people aged 16-17 (from a cohort of 11,187) are not in employment, education or training (NEET). This equates to 4.4% of the cohort of 16-17 year-olds in County Durham, and compares to an average of 2.6% for England and an average of 4.4% for the north east.
- 12 The proportion of young people whose current destination is 'not known' in County Durham is 0.6%, which is lower than the average for England (1.7%), as well as the average for the north east (0.7%). The combined proportion of young people aged 16-17 in County Durham who are NEET or whose destination is not

² Auckland Castle; Beamish Museum; Botanic Garden; Diggerland; Killhope Museum; Oriental Museum; Palace Green Library; Raby Castle; Bowes Museum.

known is 5.1%. This compares to an average rate for England of 4.3% and an average rate for the north east of 5.1%.

Council Services

Delivery of a range of employment sites across the county

- 13 The NETPark planning application was approved in March 2022 for the third phase extension providing up to 270,000sq ft of new laboratory, office, production and storage space. The new phase could generate up to 1,250 skilled jobs and be worth up to £625m to the County Durham economy. Works are expected to start on site October 2022.
- 14 The construction of the industrial units at Station Place, Merchant Park (55,000sq ft in total) is progressing well with construction due to be complete by June 2022 when Business Durham will take responsibility for management and lettings.

| | Business Durham activity | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | Jan-Mar 2022 | Compared to last year | |
| Floor space occupied | 98.5% | +15.5pp | ↑ |

- 15 Within the quarter we saw a 3% increase in Business Durham portfolio occupancy rates, primarily due to increased lettings at Salvus House, Aykley Heads. Throughout the year high demand has been seen across the entire portfolio but especially at NETPark and Jade Business Park, which is now 100% occupied and forms 20% of the total commercial portfolio.

A strong competitive economy and premier place to do business

| | Business Durham activity | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | Jan-Mar 2022 | Compared to last year | |
| Inward investments secured | 7 | +4 | ↑ |
| Businesses engaged | 571 | -296 | ↓ |
| Jobs created or safeguarded | 1,269 | -292 | ↓ |
| GVA from jobs created or safeguarded (£'million) | £37.1 | -£8.7 | ↓ |

- 16 Seven inward investments were secured during the quarter, generating 222 jobs. In total for 2021/22, 18 inward investments were secured, exceeding the target of

- 10, signalling a recovery in the economy after COVID-19 and the uncertainty of Brexit.
- 17 The number of businesses engaged³ in 2021/22 totals 1,210, of which 270 were intensively assisted, exceeding the target of 140. This was driven by the number of businesses (188) intensively assisted⁴ through the Durham Business Recovery Grant. Business engagement also took place through regular networking events and large events such as the New Frontier Space Conference; as well as one to one engagement and via funded programmes.
- 18 Now in the third year of operation the Durham Ambitious Business Start-ups (DABS) Programme, has 260 (169 pre-start clients and 91 newly-started SMEs) actively engaged on the programme; an increase of 70 from last quarter. During February and March face-to-face client engagement has increased with a new seven-week programme of support named DABS Launch.
- 19 The County Durham Growth Fund has awarded a further £336,631 to eight businesses in quarter four. At the year-end the Fund had awarded around £2.3 million to 18 businesses, bringing the total awarded to date to £7.7 million out of the £8.9 million fund. 239 jobs have been created and private sector contributions have exceeded £10.4 million.
- 20 At the start of the year Finance Durham had invested £6.1 million in 15 companies. At the year-end it has invested £10 million in 21 companies with £2 million in the final quarter, in four companies; there were 10 investments during the year with six being new investments and four re-investments. An exercise is underway for the re-procurement of the fund management of the Finance Durham scheme.
- 21 During 2021/22, 31 businesses have been supported through the Targeted Business Improvement scheme (TBIs), creating 108 jobs. Additionally, we supported 22 businesses and created 48 jobs via our Towns & Villages programme, and one business via Seaham Townscape Heritage Business Improvement scheme, with four in the pipeline for grant offers. The Community Economic Development Team have also engaged with and supported 192 new businesses throughout the year which is well above our annual target (120).

³ Businesses engaged are those Business Durham engaged with through direct contact, attendance at Business Durham events, meetings or business networks or participating in business support programmes.

⁴ Businesses intensively assisted is a sub-set of businesses engaged where the assistance has been significant e.g working with the business over a period of time in relation to expansion or addressing key business needs, businesses receiving at least 12 hours support through ERDF programmes or those who have been awarded grants.

- 22 We have also delivered a package of improvements funded from the Welcome Bank Fund (£506K) and an underspend from the Re-opening High Street Safely Programme (£469K) to assist retailers in re-establishing positive trading conditions following the end of lockdown restrictions in England. The programme included positive communication messages, clean and protect works to public areas in town centres and street entertainment festivals.

Helping all people into rewarding work

- 23 Despite referrals to Employability Durham increasing between October and December, registrations onto employment programmes have decreased. This is due to a combination of a healthy labour market and people finding jobs themselves before they are registered onto programmes; and an increasing number of people not engaging as they are still not mandated by Job Centre Plus to complete employability activity.
- 24 Fewer registrations this quarter has also seen a decrease in people moving into employment, however for the period April to December figures are higher than pre-COVID levels.
- 25 Although a large proportion of our clients have limited digital skills which prevent them from doing online courses, levels of people moving into education or training is slightly higher this quarter, mainly through our delivery partners on the LINKCD programme. We anticipate figures will continue to increase due to delivery partners starting to deliver more training courses face-to-face.
- 26 Despite the impact of COVID-19, volunteering opportunities continue to grow within the council's culture and sport service, with 2,770 volunteers currently supporting the provision of these services. Since the start of the scheme in 2017, the culture and sport volunteer and skills team has also trained and supported 105 volunteers into employment. During 2021/22, 461 volunteers joined the service, and 13 were successful in gaining employment.

A broader experience for residents and visitors to the county

- 27 County Durham was one of just four locations to be shortlisted for the prestigious UK City of Culture 2025 title, following the interview and judging process the winner of UK City of Culture 2025 title was announced on the 31st May. Unfortunately we were not named UK City of Culture 2025, which went to Bradford. However as a runner-up, County Durham has received a grant of £125,000 to support the development of key elements of our City of Culture bid.
- 28 Killhope Museum was awarded £475,000 from MEND (Museum Estate and Development Fund) which we will match with £50,000 to fund the emergency works required to address structural issues and flooding at the mine entrance

allowing the full site to be reopened for public access. Works will not prevent the visitor centre from opening and a programme of activity has been planned for unaffected parts of the site.

- 29 There were 11,154 visitors to Killhope between mid-May and October 2021, this performance is above the pre-COVID level of 11,066 visitors between April and October 2019. 2021 was also a shorter season than usual and was adversely affected by inclement weather closures. Visitor feedback suggests the increased numbers are due to the removal of admission charges which had been a barrier for some, and the improvements to the food and beverage offer
- 30 At the end of quarter four, there were 545 core tourism businesses across the county, of which 43.3% (236) were actively engaged with Visit County Durham, which is on par with the baseline in July 2021. However, there has been a reduction in core businesses of 8% compared to the baseline due to some businesses ceasing to operate, being sold or using Airbnb as their sole promotional tool.
- 31 Audiences at our 2021/22 festivals are around 70% of previous figures. This is due to a combination of customer caution about returning, and restrictions put in place to create COVID-19 secure events, for example, limiting numbers to lighting installations within the peninsula as part of the Lumiere festival. However, the appetite to return to events seems to be building and we are confident of a full return in 2022/23.
- 32 Theatre audiences for 2021/22 show a reduction on 2019/20 figures due to the venues being closed for the first quarter of the year, and a slow post-COVID recovery in the second quarter. Gala figures for quarter four have shown a move towards pre-COVID levels, with the majority of performances now hitting sales targets, a greater number of sell out performances and an increasingly busy café/bar trade. Empire experienced slow sales in the opening months; however, the latest two quarters have seen attendances steadily increase.

| | Ticket Sales | | |
|--------|-----------------------|------------------------|---|
| | July 21 - March 22 | Compared to 2019/20 | |
| Gala | 83,230 | - 54% | ↓ |
| Empire | 56,399 | - 51% | ↓ |

- 33 Durham Town Hall re-opened May 2021 and delivery of a Heritage Tour offer increased from one to six days until December to encourage the return of patronage. Due to COVID-19 restrictions for large gatherings, many events were

cancelled but the Lunar New Year celebration in February saw more than 2,000 visitors over one weekend. The overall visitor number for the last financial year was 12,528. Large scale bookings are now picking up including weddings and festivals such as the week-long Durham Fringe event to be held in July and Mayor Making on 9 June.

- 34 Visitor figures to Bishop Auckland Town Hall have increased significantly since the building fully re-opened in May 2021, following the refurbishment during the first COVID-19 lockdown. In that time, the town hall had 18,800 visitors to the new gallery and café attendances have increased by 100% due to a new menu and the ground floor location. Cinema screenings have increased from one per week (pre-refurbishment) to six, with audience numbers now gradually building. Library visitors are slowly increasing. Our new arts engagement sessions attract an average of 15 participants in the weekly art group, 10 participants for the weekly creative writing group and 10+ participants each for the monthly family singing group and veterans drop-in sessions.
- 35 Visitors to Hardwick and Wharton Parks continue to be at higher levels than pre-COVID with approximately 600,000 in the last 12 months. Planning for future events and activities in the parks is underway.
- 36 There was a small increase in the number of registered members in our libraries during 2021, and we have maintained this small growth to the end of the year. Visitors to libraries pre-COVID were around 1.1 million, this dropped to just over 38,000 during 2020/21 due to closures or reduced hours, because of lockdowns and the pandemic response. Since April 2021 the number of people visiting libraries in person has increased, with 339,639 visits during 2021/22. Library events have started to resume albeit on a smaller scale at present.

Young people will have access to good education, training and employment

- 37 During quarter four, Ofsted inspected 18 primary schools, three secondary schools and one special school. Of these:

| | School type | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|----------|
| | Primary | Secondary | Special |
| moved from 'outstanding' to 'good' | 2 | | |
| maintained 'outstanding' or 'good' rating | 8 | 1 | |
| moved from 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' to 'good' | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Total 'outstanding' or 'good' | 14 | 2 | 1 |

| | | | |
|---|----------|----------|--|
| moved from 'good' to 'requires improvement' | 3 | 1 | |
| remained at 'requires improvement' | 1 | | |
| Total 'requires improvement' | 4 | 1 | |

- 38 Children Looked After (CLA) continue to be supported by the virtual school. There are 654 CLA of statutory age as well as 85 in early years and 119 post-16. All Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings for the spring term took place during the period.
- 39 Attendance rates were 92.9% across all settings on 3 March 2022. This improvement in the attendance rate followed a period in January 2022 when rates declined to 84.5% around the same time as there were increases in infection rates associated with COVID-19. The decline in attendance in January 2022 was mirrored nationally. Rates of attendance for children and young people with a social worker were 88% and for those with an EHCP 91% on 3 March 2022 and the same trend was noted of declining rates in attendance for vulnerable groups in the month of January 2022.
- 40 Overall numbers of pupils electively home educated (EHE) remain low fluctuating between 0.6% and 0.8% of the school age population. Year on year, comparing similar time period markers there is an ongoing rising trend in EHE numbers. This trend has continued in the current quarter and this trend is reflected nationally. Staff continue to support families to return to school where this is the preferred choice of families and a multi-agency EHE panel continues to support EHE children and young people via meetings, safe and well calls and other checks. A newly developed business application tool adds an additional layer of oversight for the cohort, and it is anticipated that this will enable more sophisticated triaging moving forward.
- 41 During quarter four, 14 qualifying safeguarding complaints were made to Ofsted in relation to County Durham schools. This compares to five in the same period last year. This increase could be a consequence of the pandemic, given that most children and young people were accessing virtual learning rather than attending schools for large parts of 2020, so their social interaction with staff and peers was limited. During quarter three this year there were 18 qualifying complaints, which highlights that there has been a slight reduction during quarter four and may indicate that stability is returning to the school environment.
- 42 Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to identify children missing from education in their area. With partners, a protocol is in place to establish the whereabouts of a child before the school can delete their name from the school register. The protocol includes referral to children's social care, police, NHS and

local authority services to ensure children moving between areas are tracked, in appropriate cases. In quarter four, 125 students were referred to the local authority.

| | No. of children |
|--|-----------------|
| Successfully tracked | 87 |
| Moved within county. School transfer discussions ongoing | 1 |
| Moved out of county. Relevant local authorities informed | 16 |
| Referred for school attendance enforcement action | 1 |
| Processing as admissions to schools in County Durham | 13 |
| Has an EHCP is and awaiting placement | 2 |
| Awaiting further information from referrer | 5 |

- 43 Our Behaviour and Inclusion Panels continue to provide support to pupils at risk of exclusion. During quarter four, 24 pupils were supported by the primary panel (none were permanently excluded) and 331 by the secondary panel (there were 24 permanently excluded pupils from panel schools and two from the two schools who do not participate within the panel arrangements and one from a Special School).
- 44 Managed moves for 57 secondary pupils and one primary pupil were arranged. Of the 24 secondary best advice transfer meetings, two moved from out of county to Durham and 22 from Durham to Durham schools. Fourteen students transferred following the meeting and the other 10 remained at their home school.
- 45 Eight quality assurance visits were carried out at alternative provision providers (providers such as pupil referral units that are used when pupils are unable to access mainstream school for reasons such as exclusion, behavioural issues or illness) and resulting action plans shared. Three students were reintegrated back into mainstream education following a permanent exclusion.
- 46 Young people aged 15-24 who are NEET / at risk of becoming NEET are supported through DurhamWorks. The original programme, which commenced in 2016, came to an end in December 2021. Overall, 8,750 young people were supported by DurhamWorks during this period, of which 55% were defined as 'vulnerable'. 6,297 (78%) young people subsequently progressed into education, employment and training or gained a qualification on completion.
- 47 The original programme achieved 94% of its target for 'starts', as well as 104% and 111% of its targets for 'completions' and 'progressions' respectively. An analysis concluded that for every £1 spent on the DurhamWorks, the social return on investment achieved was £2.78.

- 48 As a result of funding secured from the European Social Fund / Youth Employment Initiative, as well as the Youth Futures Foundation, three new DurhamWorks programmes commenced in January 2022: DurhamWorks, DurhamWorks 3 and DurhamWorks Futures. These programmes ensure that young people who are NEET / at risk of becoming NEET (including young people who are defined as 'vulnerable' and experience significant labour market disadvantage) will have access to transition support, financial support to overcome specific barriers, as well as a range of learning provision and activities to enable them to progress into education, employment and training.
- 49 As part of our statutory responsibilities, we collect the destinations of Year 11 school leavers on an annual basis. The latest report shows that of those young people who completed secondary education in June 2021, 93.3% (5,246) progressed into post-16 learning, 2.9% (162) became NEET, out of a cohort of 5,621 young people. This compares to 93.9% (4,907) of young people who completed secondary education in June 2020 who progressed into post-16 learning and 3.2% (169) who became NEET, out of a cohort of 5,228 young people.
- 50 Following collaboration with Durham University to launch Durham Global Alliance in October, we have jointly promoted the Lunar New Year celebrations, the Language Detective programme for schools and the continuing professional development event for teachers of Spanish. Working with the University's School of Modern Languages and Cultures we engaged their students in delivering activities for 1,150 County Durham pupils. We have also created opportunities for 30 international students to work as volunteers in our schools; a further 12 supported Lunar New Year and 150 pupils were engaged in the 'It's a small world' project in March.
- 51 In addition, during the year, we have delivered a successful programme of events to school audiences across County Durham and the wider north east region that helped build language and intercultural awareness skills. The programme delivered 12 events, mostly achieved online due to pandemic restrictions, and involved 3,320 learners.
- 52 Government funding for international opportunities in education and training is limited to the Turing Scheme and in 2021/22, 11 of the of the successful 114 projects nationally were from County Durham schools which received more than £300,000 in grant awards.

Fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the county

- 53 During quarter four, 3,594 households contacted Housing Solutions, an increase on the previous quarter and last year; this was mainly in relation to energy advice

linked to the current energy crises. During 2021/22, 13,493 customers contacted the service which represents a 10% increase from the previous year, mainly due to an increase in presentations earlier in the year as a result of the eviction ban being lifted, private sector properties becoming less sustainable and fuel poverty issues.

- 54 During 2021/22, 649 households were assisted via the Managing Money Better (MMB) initiative, achieving an average saving per households of £135.36. It is anticipated that requests for assistance will increase over the coming months as fuel tariffs continue to rise. The Citizens Advice Bureau is also on standby to assist if numbers become too high for the MMB service to manage at any one time.
- 55 Homeless cases may also increase as renting privately may become unaffordable for tenants in the longer term and private sector properties become less sustainable for landlords. We will be closely monitoring the position going forward and a priority-based system is currently being developed where applicants will be managed on a first come first served basis and dependent on vulnerability.
- 56 Eviction levels have now returned to pre-pandemic levels with a further increase expected as the case backlog in courts is addressed. However, difficulty remains in finding alternative properties to house homeless cases. The shortage of available property in the private rented sector means landlords can find other tenants more quickly than we can carry out an inspection and discharge our duty.
- 57 The government's Early Intervention Funding (£157,000) to address COVID-related rent arrears in the private rented sector and outstanding COVID Outbreak Management funding (COMF) monies, has been used to help avoid seven families becoming homeless and/or being housed in temporary accommodation since the start of 2022.
- 58 The number of households placed in temporary accommodation (TA) and the average length of time household are placed in TA have both increased this quarter driven by family no longer willing or able to accommodate, domestic violence cases and the end to private rented tenancies. Placements are monitored closely to ensure they are not staying for longer than is necessary, with all accommodation options considered. However, there is an issue around finding permanent accommodation in high demand areas that is affordable, therefore we are working with clients to consider widening their areas of preference.
- 59 Over the year, both the number of new households in TA and the average length of time placed in TA have reduced compared to 2020/21 by 11% and 1.5 days respectively.

- 60 We continue to see high levels of rough sleepers, with 255 reported during the quarter and 67 found and assisted. During 2021/22, the team have responded to 764 reports of rough sleeping (individuals could be reported more than once) and verified 250 rough sleepers. This is a large increase on last year's 175 total. As well as complex rough sleepers, the team are encountering more 'man in a van' cases where men are rough sleeping in vehicles following a relationship breakdown. Many of these have no previous tenancy history and/or no identification or belongings, therefore, finding suitable long-term accommodation can take time.
- 61 We have also supported more rough sleepers into long term accommodation this financial year through the County Durham Lettings Agency (CDLA) which has achieved its Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP), COMF and Buy to Lease targets, purchasing 30 properties with the majority refurbished. There are five that did not achieve practical completion, and Homes England has granted an extension to September 2022, however we envisage all works will be complete by end of April 2022.
- 62 In December 2021 Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced the Protect & Vaccinate (P&V) initiative, requesting where possible all rough sleepers are accommodated for at least five months and supported through the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Durham supported 40 rough sleepers through accommodation as part of this scheme, with many previously housed, taking up the vaccine for the first time due to incentive packages, including TVs, mobile phone, bus passes, additional clothing. Also, as part of moving rough sleepers into longer term accommodation through P&V we have provided an enhanced household start pack including items not currently provided through welfare assistance packs such as kitchen bins, basic food and cleaning starter packs.
- 63 Following £300,000 funding from RSAP and Homeless Support Grant, planning permission has been granted to convert Shildon People's Centre into four self-contained flats. Work has commenced and is scheduled for completion in September 2022.
- 64 CDLA is currently bidding for RSAP5 monies and is looking to purchase and repair 10 properties in 2020/23 and lease and repair a further 10 in 2023/24. This will be a joint bid with Karbon Homes who are looking to develop a Husk model for converting a former garage block into six one-bedroom bungalows. North Star are looking to develop 8-10 units in the south of the county. Further details will be provided in quarter one.
- 65 Durham County Council's bid on behalf of the Durham (joint North East Region) to the Rough Sleeping Initiative 2022-2025 (RSI5) has been successful with the

eight north east regions being allocated £3,777,842 over a three year period. Durham has been allocated £1,454,442 from the joint bid. DCC has also been awarded a three-year settlement from RSI5 of £617,462 to fund the County Durham Lettings Agency (CDLA).

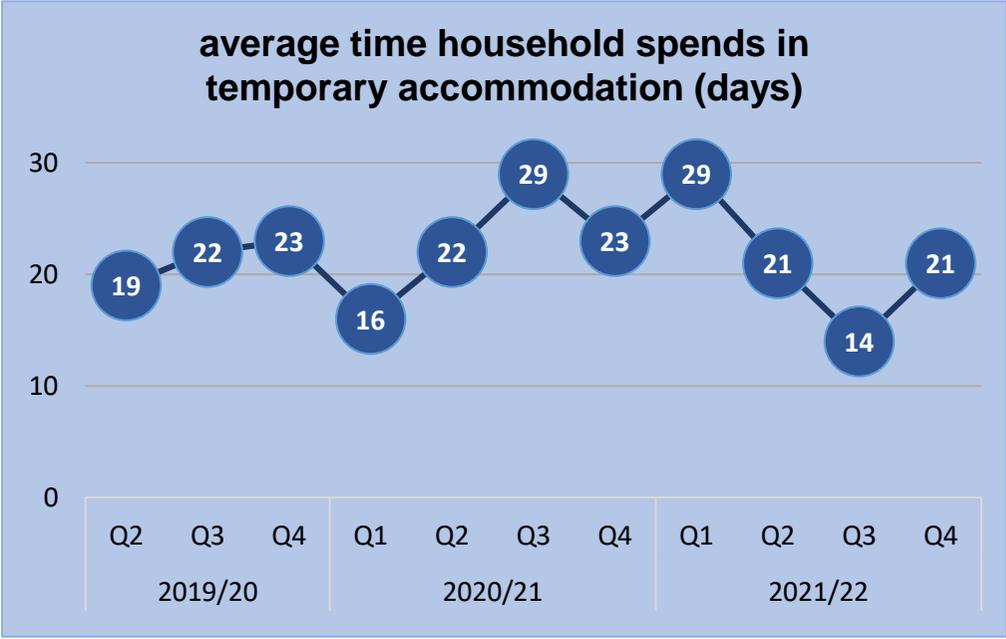
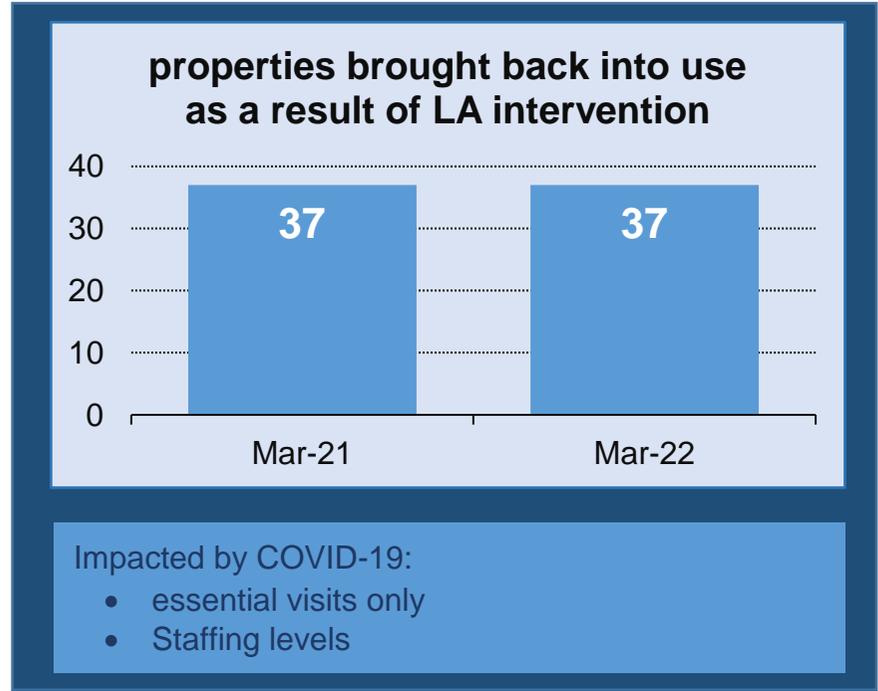
MORE AND BETTER JOBS

Housing advice and support

| | | |
|--|-------|--------|
| properties improved, adapted or brought back into use | 1,230 | up 65% |
| households accessing Housing Solutions | 3,594 | up 7% |
| households helped to move to alternative accommodation | 239 | up 9% |

386
households helped to stay in their homes
up 47% on last year

141
'new' households placed in temporary accommodation
up 66% on last year



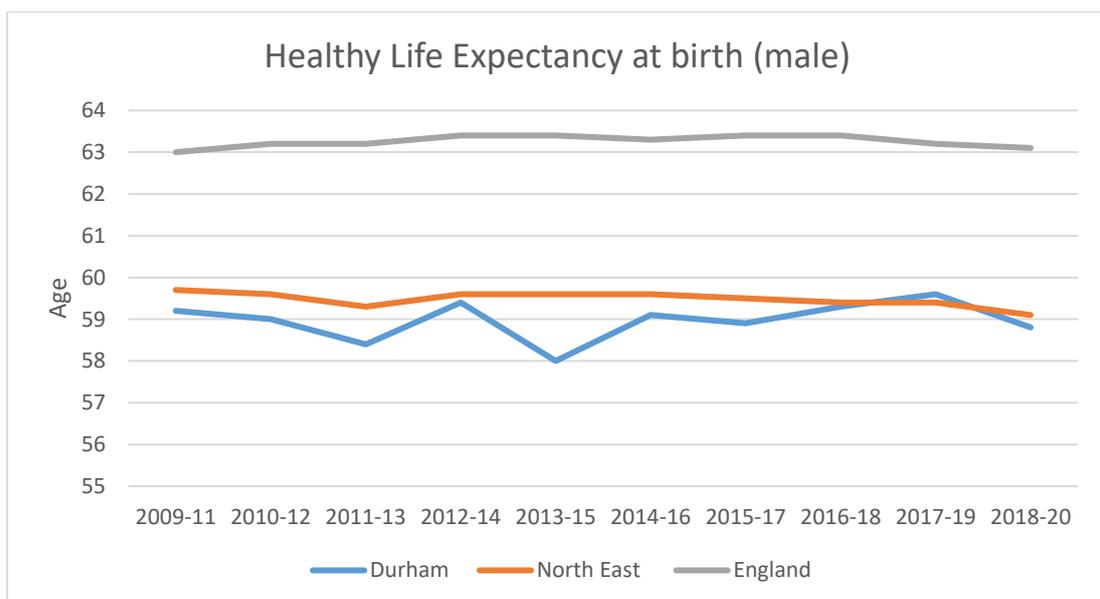
Long and Independent Lives

66 The ambition of Long and Independent Lives is linked to the following key objectives:

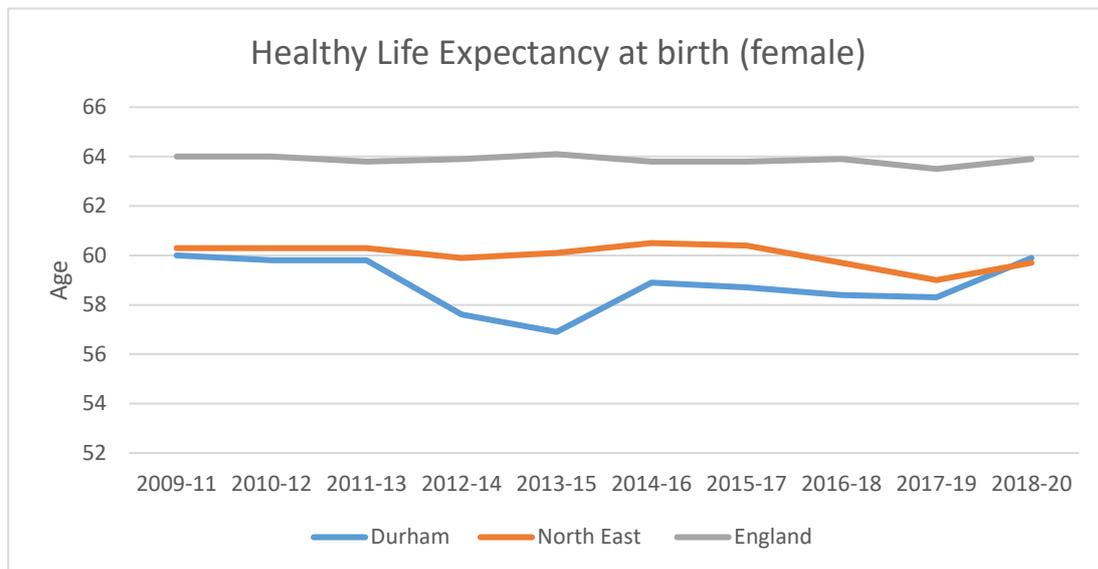
- (a) Children and young people will enjoy the best start in life, good health and emotional well-being;
- (b) Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will achieve the best possible outcomes;
- (c) County Durham will have a physical environment that will contribute to good health;
- (d) We will promote positive behaviours;
- (e) Health and social care services will be better integrated;
- (f) People will be supported to live independently for as long as possible by delivering more homes to meet the needs of older and disabled people;
- (g) We will tackle the stigma and discrimination of poor mental health and build resilient communities.

National, Regional and Local Picture

67 Recent [data](#) (for the 3-year pooled period 2018-20) shows a reduction in male healthy life expectancy (HLE) whilst female HLE has increased by over one percentage point since the last release (2017-19). Both sets of data follow regional and national trends, with male HLE reducing at regional and national levels, while HLE for females has increased. Male HLE at birth has reduced over the last 10 years, however, the reduction is not statistically significant.



68 Whilst female HLE has increased and is now above the regional average it remains similar to 2009-11 levels. Changes to female HLE are not statistically significant.



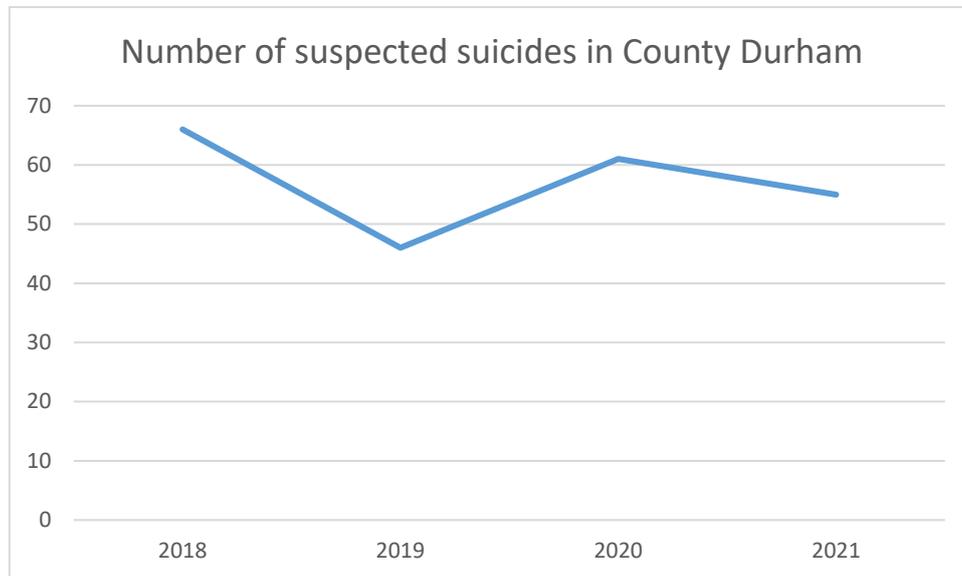
69 The gap between life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth for both females (59.9) and males (58.8) in County Durham remains (statistically significantly) lower than the England averages for the same period (63.9 and 63.1 respectively).

70 Data for HLE contrast with life expectancy (LE) data released last year, with both male and female LE reducing over the same period. Both sets of refreshed data (LE and HLE) are for the period (2018-20) which includes the first year of the pandemic. The [Office for National Statistics](#) highlights that the pandemic has resulted in a significant impact on LE data. Once further data are released to cover the full period (2020-22), a clear understanding of the full impact will be available.

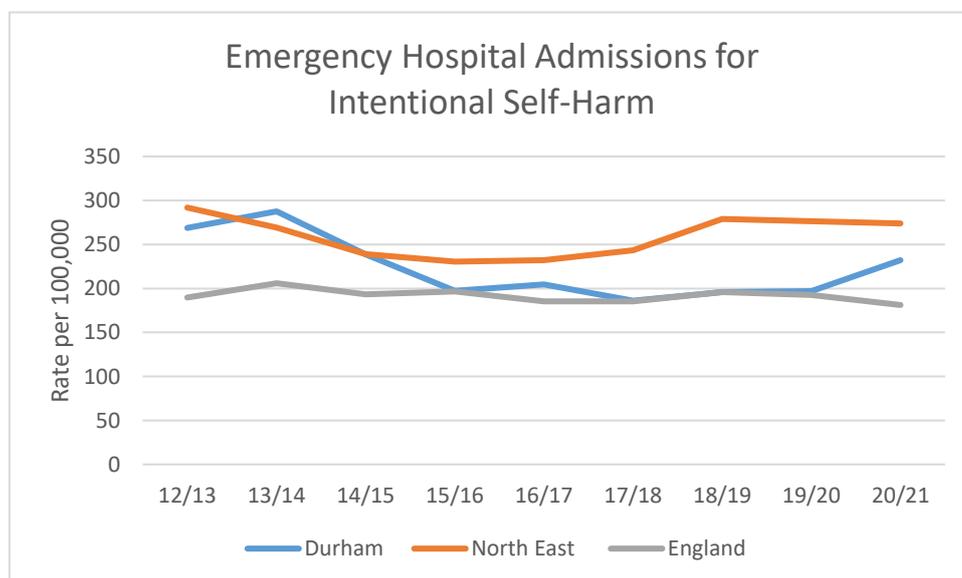
71 The recent '[Levelling Up the UK](#)' White Paper aims to reduce the gap in HLE between the lowest and highest areas, with the aim that, by 2035, HLE across the UK will have risen by five years. Analysis from the [Health Foundation](#) found that without significant resource to tackle this, these targets are unlikely to be achieved.

72 The impact of the pandemic on mental health continues, with many organisations conducting research into specific areas. The [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO) has recently concluded that 'the pandemic has led to a worldwide increase in mental health problems, including widespread depression and anxiety'.

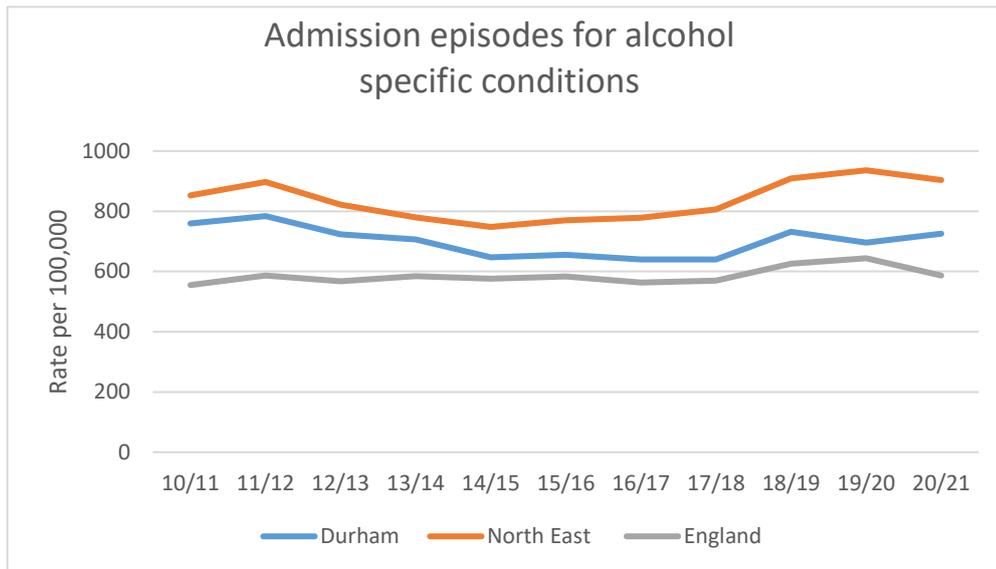
- 73 The WHO report noted that rates of suicide did not increase during the pandemic. Data from Public Health confirms this position in County Durham with a similar number of suspected suicides during the pandemic compared to previous years.



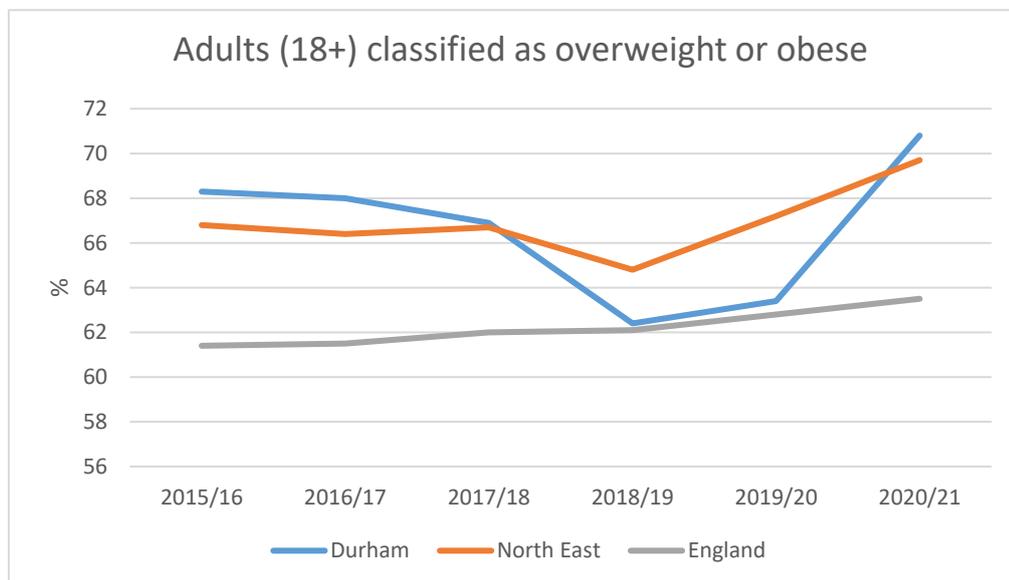
- 74 Whilst finding suicides did not increase, the report outlines that numbers of reported acts of self-harm varied. Recent data for County Durham highlight an increase in the rate of hospital admissions for intentional self-harm in the first year of the pandemic, while regional and national rates reduced.



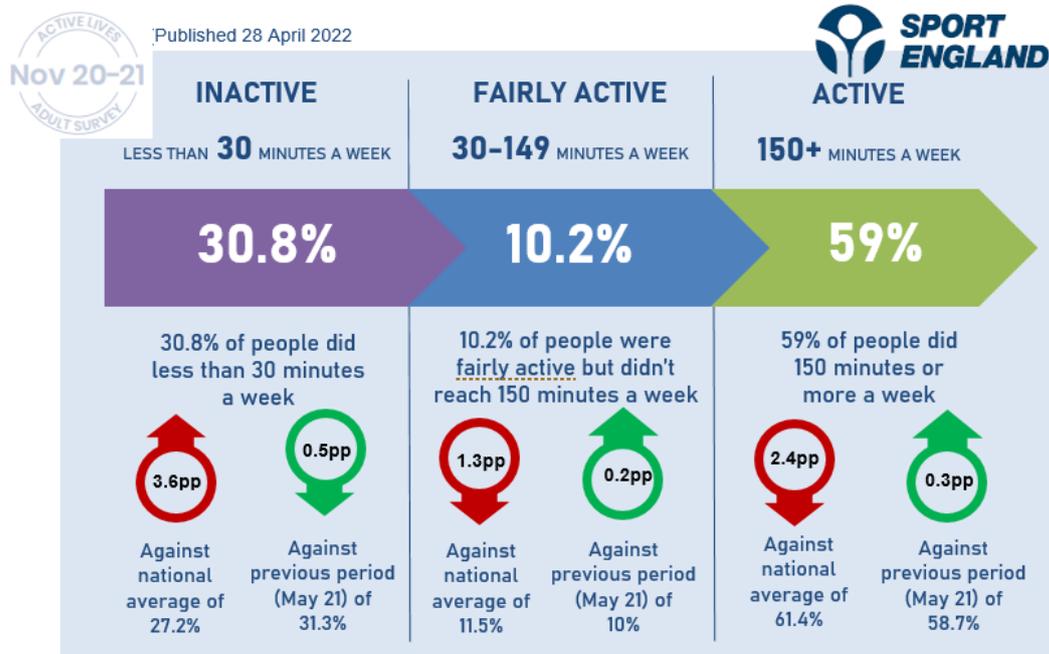
- 75 Alongside increasing admission rates for self-harm, data for County Durham also demonstrate rising [admission rates for alcohol specific conditions](#) during the first year of the pandemic. Regional and national rates have reduced over the same period, which leads to concern that higher admissions in County Durham will reflect a greater number of people drinking at home, causing [‘silent harm’](#) to themselves, compared to other areas of the country.



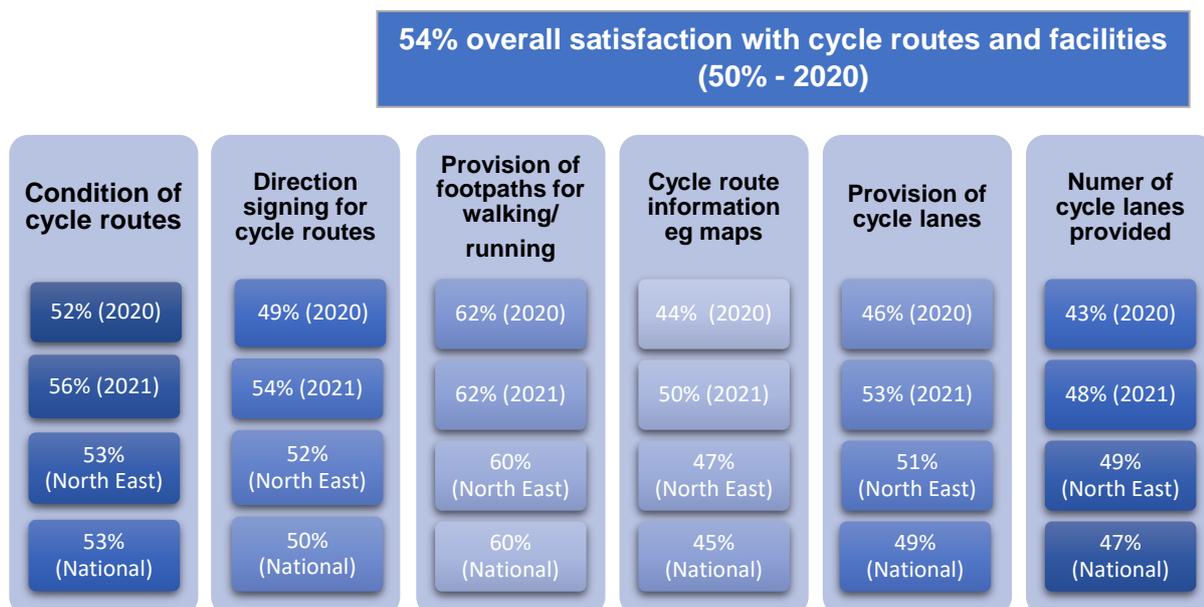
- 76 Under-18 conception data have shown a continued reduction in rates which continue to be below the north east average, although latest data do not include any period of the pandemic.
- 77 Latest regional and national data demonstrate that the percentage of adults classed as overweight or obese has been increasing over the last few years. Whilst this had been reducing in County Durham, and was very similar to the national average between 2018-2020, this increased significantly during the first year of the pandemic with 70.8% of adults classed as overweight or obese.



78 Latest data from the Active Lives survey (November 2020 to November 2021) show as the pandemic has progressed, activity levels have stabilised over the past 12 months. Levels of low or no activity for County Durham (<30 minutes a week) was on par with the previous 12 months, but above the national average. 'active' participation levels (150+ minutes per week) continue to remain relatively static but below national average.



79 The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey 2021 shows that overall satisfaction with cycle and walking routes and facilities has increased to 54% from 50% in the 2020 survey¹, however this is within the confidence levels for the survey.



¹NHT Survey, performance is significantly better if performance is 4pp or more above average and significantly worse if performance is 4pp or more below average.

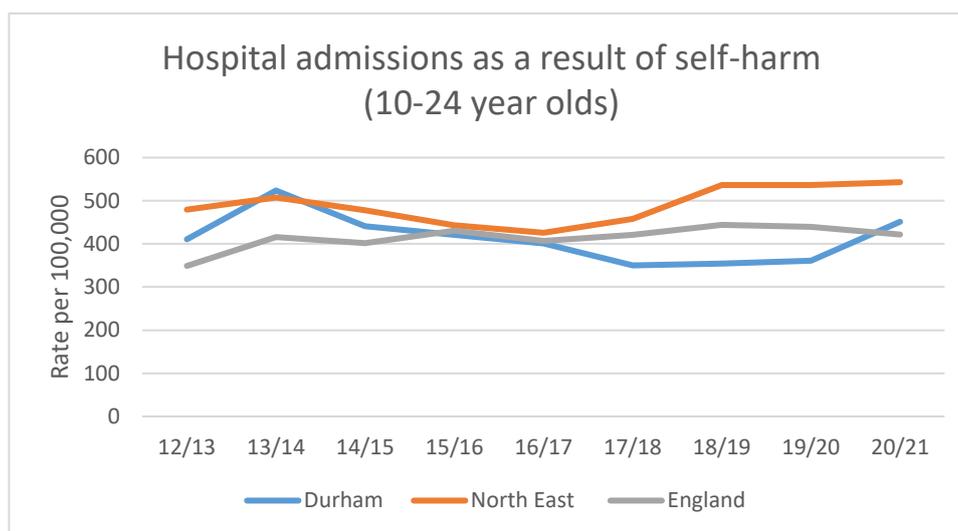
Council Services

Children and young people enjoying the best start in life, good health and emotional well-being

- 80 Work is taking place to refocus the Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health Steering Group, to narrow the gap and address inequalities which young people may face.
- 81 Work to support the Active 30 scheme has continued and is now embedded in the Fun and Food website to support young people to be active during holiday periods. The half term holiday in February 2022 saw an increase in people accessing the website for ideas. The public health team is exploring how the programme can further support secondary schools from September 2022.
- 82 Consultation has been undertaken in Shildon to gauge appetite for the Play Streets pilot scheme, with the pilot expected to take place during the school summer holidays. This aims to empower residents to encourage outdoor play, to support physical health and mental wellbeing.
- 83 The 2020/21 National Child Measurement Programme data collection was severely hampered by COVID, with the result being that most local authorities have no data for that year due to an insufficient sample. Analysis by NHS Digital and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, however, demonstrates that the national data is reliable and comparable to previous years.
- 84 Key points from the national release include:
- There was an unprecedented increase in the prevalence of obesity and severe obesity for Reception and Year 6, for boys and girls, between 2020 and 2021 (nationally).
 - Boys, particularly in Year 6, have experienced the largest increases in obesity and severe obesity.
 - The largest increases in the prevalence of obesity and severe obesity in boys and girls have occurred in the most deprived areas of England, resulting in the large and persistent disparities in child obesity having worsened.
- 85 In County Durham, childhood obesity has been rising over time, so we can reasonably expect that trend to continue into the pandemic period. Based on the national data we can also reasonably assume that the gap between the most and least deprived children in terms of obesity will also increase locally.
- 86 In Reception around 1 in 4 pupils is of excess weight (overweight or obese) in County Durham (24.9%, 2019/20). This means that 3 in 4 Reception pupils are of

healthy weight. For Year 6 pupils being of excess weight increases to around 1 in 3 (37.6%, 2019/20).

- 87 The increase in overall admission rates for self-harm is also reflected in data specifically for those under-18. While regional and national rates reduced or remained the same during the first year of the pandemic, admission rates for children due to self-harm in County Durham increased significantly. This also reflects studies noted in the WHO report, which found ‘a general rise in self-harm presentations among adolescents’.



- 88 Significant work has been undertaken at the request of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Partnership, to better understand self-harm, with a particular focus on under-reporting and recording. A multi-agency Self Harm Action Plan has been developed and focuses on data, response and prevention.
- 89 In relation to the Stronger Families programme, the 2021/22 target of 760 families turned around was achieved. Overall, between April 2015 and March 2022, 6,077 families have been turned around, out of 14,444 eligible families identified through the programme to date.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will achieve the best possible outcomes

- 90 We have continued to see an increase in new requests for education, health and care plan (EHCP) assessments. For the period January to March 2022, there has been a 73% increase in the number of requests compared to 2021, which is also an increase of 45% since 2019 (pre-pandemic). 53% of assessments completed in the period (excluding exceptions) were within the 20 week timescale which is lower than for the same period last year although there has been a 13% increase in the total number of assessments completed in the period following the embedding of a new casework team.

Stronger Families

6,077 families turned around

(2015 – March 2022)

following intervention...

2,525 workless families progressed to work

3,513 families reported reduced mental health issues

1,697 families reported reduced substance misuse

% EHCP completed within 20 week time period



Adult Social Care

513.3

per 100,000 adults aged 65+ admitted to residential or nursing care (April 21 - March 22)

88.7%

of patients discharged into reablement/ rehabilitation services still at home after 91 days (Jan-Dec 2021)

65.0%

of service users receiving an assessment or review within the last 12 months (April 21 - March 22)

92.2%

of individuals achieved their desired outcomes from the adult safeguarding process (April 21 - March 22)

worse than last year

better than last year

similar to last year

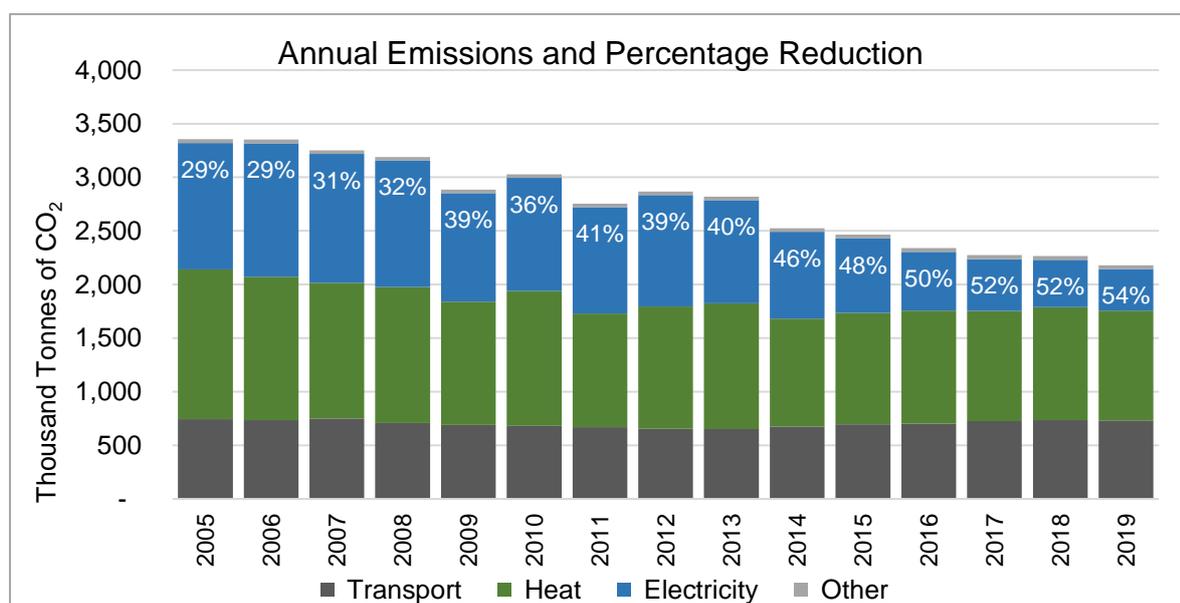
Not comparable

A physical environment contributing to good health

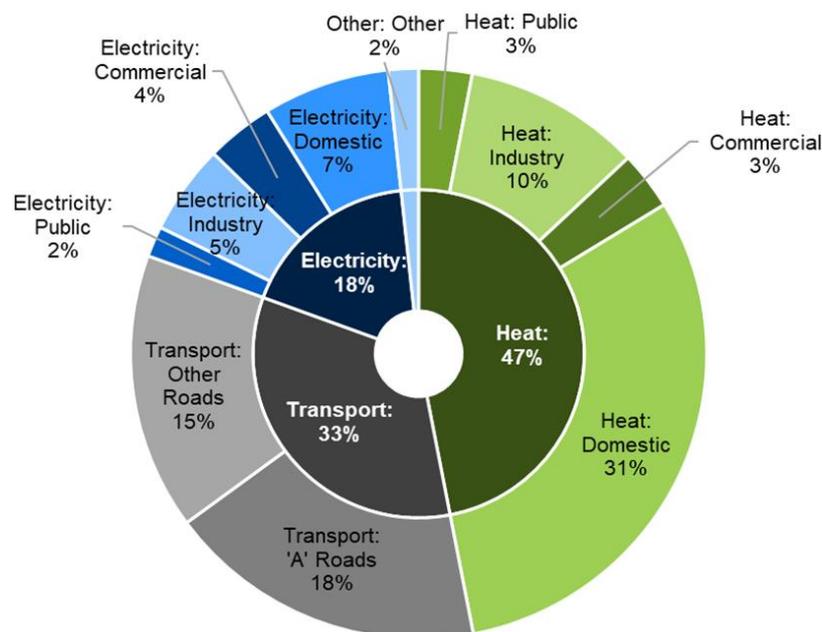
- 91 A £2.8 million grant from National Lottery Heritage Fund is being used to showcase coastal and marine heritage in the North of England between the Tyne and the Tees. A partnership scheme called SeaScapes has been established. SeaScapes works to improve access to beaches, explore the shipwrecks and habitats beneath the waves, improve biological recording, tackle marine litter and create opportunities for local people and visitors to enjoy. Currently, SeaScapes is liaising with Newcastle University Beneath the Waves (shipwrecks) project, which is attracting interest from the diving community. A short film in collaboration with the East Durham Artists Network, Durham University, Sunderland University and former miners has been made, based on Blast Beach. A “Source to Sea” workshop on the issue of plastic pollution for the River Wear has also been held.
- 92 Additional resources have been secured for both tree inspections and the provision of new trees and woodland. Initiatives are underway to increase tree coverage and improve woodland across the county, including the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, the North East Community Forest, Trees for Children and Durham Woodland Revival (DWR). We are working with landowners on the potential creation of woodland and have provided training to landowners and community groups, with contractor training planned for the autumn. DWR has also planted 1.9km of hedging and in the last year 37,368 trees have been planted across all the initiatives.
- 93 We continue to offer free walking, running and cycling activities. During 2021/22, 6,097 people attended our Walk Durham programme across 47 different venues ranging from Gentle Steps to 90 minute Wellbeing Walks; and 218 people joined our Run Durham ‘get into running’ courses. We also provide a wide range of community-based wellbeing activities. During the year, 2,332 people took part in 280 sessions across 22 different venues and 111 sessions were also delivered across our library sites, attended by 1,111 people. Ten people also accessed the Borrow a Bike scheme.
- 94 Leisure centre visitor numbers have increased this quarter, mainly due to the MOVE campaign. However, despite a steady increase quarter on quarter, the year-end position shows visitor numbers are below target by 33%, with 1,163,667 fewer visitors than at the start of the pandemic (end of March 2020). Gym memberships have also increased steadily throughout the year, with 17,202 at the end of March. Although memberships are higher than pre-COVID levels, figures are inflated due to three additional leisure centres in-sourced post-COVID and if the new sites are excluded, actual comparable figures are still below pre-COVID levels. During March 2022, gym memberships experienced the highest cancellations this financial year, with initial indication that the cost of living crisis has led to cancellations. Similarly, swim membership cancellations have also

increased compared to last year. However, actual swim memberships are performing well, with 1,460 members at the end of March. Although the year-end position includes members from two new sites (Peterlee and Wolsingham), swim memberships are above pre-COVID levels even without those two sites included. We will continue to monitor gym and swim memberships closely, however the service is targeting a full recovery by the end of March 2023.

- 95 Our MOVE pilot finished at the end of March with final memberships totalling 3,193 which is well above target of 1,750 memberships. 230 memberships were issued to young people aged 11 to 15 years. A final report is being produced that will set out the full monitoring and evaluation of the pilot scheme. The support element of this initiative, including one-to-one appointments and signposting, will continue to the end of September to allow a full 12-month pilot to ascertain impact. The MOVE programme was funded by the government (£1.2 million) to provide free gym or swim memberships to encourage people to get moving and keep moving as part of their everyday lives.
- 96 The latest CO₂ emission results released for 2019 show a reduction across the county of 54% on 1990 levels. The CO₂ tonnage on a per person basis shows that County Durham equates to 4.11 tonnes per person; lower than the North East at 4.49 tonnes and England at 4.24 tonnes.
- 97 The greatest source of emissions is heat at 47%; with domestic heating being the highest sub-category at 31%. To contribute to achieving our carbon emissions targets, households across the county must reduce their gas use, this could be achieved by the equivalent of around 20,000 households fully decarbonising, or everyone using about 8% less coal, gas or oil; this is achievable in part through improved home insulation.



- 98 Emissions from transport has reduced slightly since 2005. Transport emissions make up 33% of the county's total carbon emissions. Replacing around 24,000 vehicles with ULEV or reducing fossil fuel vehicle mileage by 8% over two years would keep us on track to achieve our carbon neutral county target. This could be achieved if everyone reduced their personal vehicle use, walked, cycled or used public transport more and avoided unnecessary travel through use of remote working and video conferencing.
- 99 Emissions from electricity have reduced from 35% in 2005 to 18% in 2019. In the main this is due to the decarbonisation of the grid moving from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources.



Promoting positive behaviours

- 100 During the pandemic Public Health has continued to work on key areas to improve the health of the population including the aim to reduce smoking prevalence and to increase healthy eating opportunities whilst encouraging increasing levels of physical activity.
- 101 To increase awareness, the Health and Wellbeing Board received a [presentation](#) outlining the latest position to tackle smoking and encouraged the partnership to endorse the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Smoking, including a [commitment](#) to securing the government's goal of a smokefree country by 2030. This included the relaunch of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and the NHS Smokefree Pledge, to celebrate No Smoking Day on 9 March 2022.
- 102 Public Health has been working closely with independent takeaway food outlets to promote healthy cooking practices and menu options. This involves the offer of

training sessions for staff in these outlets and should lead to healthier options for residents of County Durham. It is expected that the training will take place later this year.

- 103 A new physical activity strategy is under development, based on feedback from partner workshops held at the end of 2021. The strategy aims to provide a high level overview of the importance of physical activity, with a draft to be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2022.

Better integration of health and social care services

- 104 Work continues to support the developing integration structures for health and social care across County Durham. The Health and Wellbeing Board received a recent [presentation](#) outlining the implications of the government’s Health and Social Care Integration [White Paper](#) and the developing place-based governance across the county. The shared vision for integration in County Durham was agreed as: ‘To bring together health and social care as well as voluntary organisations to achieve improved health and wellbeing for the people of County Durham’. Integration programme principles and workstreams were also confirmed.

People will be supported to live independently for as long as possible

- 105 Ongoing issues associated with the impact of the pandemic and the change to a new case management system in June 2021 are evident in the continuing reduction in permanent admissions to residential and nursing care. Due to administrative pressures created by the implementation of our new case management system however, we are currently unable to identify whether the reduction in permanent admissions reported is a true reduction, or is an artificially low figure that will be rectified once the system issues are addressed.

| Permanent admissions to residential and nursing care (rate per 100,000 population) | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2019/20 (pre-COVID) | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
| 757.3 | 625.8 | 513.3 |
| | 145 fewer people from 2019/20 | 124 fewer people from 2020/21 |

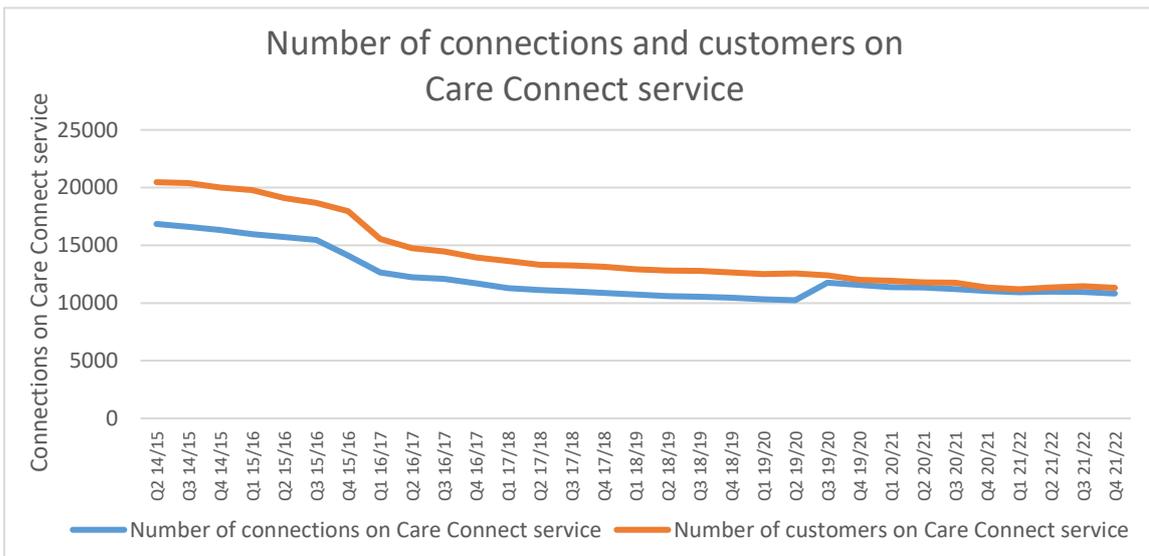
- 106 The proportion of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation services continues to increase. The latest position (88.7%) is the highest performance for four years.
- 107 In relation to the adult safeguarding process, 92.2% of individuals achieved their desired outcomes during quarter four. This is a slight reduction since the previous

quarter and is also lower than the same period last year (95.0%). Performance for the last two quarters is the lowest since this indicator was recorded in 2016/17.

- 108 The change to a new case management system, which has increased the administrative burden for the recording of reviews, has continued to impact negatively the percentage of service users assessed or reviewed within the last 12 months.

| Service users assessed or reviewed within the last 12 months | | |
|--|---------|---------|
| 2019/20 (pre-COVID) | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
| 87.8% | 89.9% | 65.0% |

- 109 The administrative burden in recording reviews will last until the first 12 month cycle is complete, following implementation of the new system. This has also been compounded by the need to reprioritise work due to operational pressures as we come out of the pandemic. Adult Care has provided further resource to support the mitigation of these issues and it is expected that performance for these indicators will improve during the course of 2023.
- 110 During quarter four, Care Connect answered 97.6% of calls within a minute, showing an improvement on the previous quarter (97.5%) and slightly higher than the service target (97.5%). The Care Connect emergency response rate (arriving at the property within 45 minutes of a call) is consistently above the 90% target and this quarter was 97.7%, with 3,952 calls responded to within 20 minutes.



- 111 There has been a reduction in the number of Care Connect customers this quarter, reflecting the longer term downward trend in both the number of customers and connections. At year end, the number of connections decreased by 2.1% and the number of customers by 0.25% compared to 2020/21, The full

reason for the decline in use is not fully understood, however, there have been numerous impacts as a result of the pandemic. This may be indicative of various changes including patterns of behaviour, changing needs, cost of living increases, the emergence of mobile phone and associated digital technologies in the market place.

Tackling the stigma of poor mental health and building resilient communities

- 112 To support mental health in County Durham, the Health and Wellbeing Board reviewed the work of the Mental Health Strategic Partnership and the Mental Health Strategy and Concordat 2018-21, with the aim of revising governance arrangements across the county. This has been particularly important in light of the pandemic's impact on mental health and the ongoing integration of mental health provision through the Integrated Care System (ICS).
- 113 The Health and Wellbeing Board agreed to support the development of a new system-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing, which will provide strategic governance for approaches representing prevention, early intervention and specialist delivery across the life course.
- 114 A new campaign, '[Now You're Talking](#)', has been developed, to encourage people in County Durham to talk about their mental health. Consultation has taken place during quarter four, with the campaign due to roll out in spring 2022 across various local media outlets and on public transport.
- 115 To improve access to employment opportunities, three Mental Health Employment Practitioners have been appointed. The posts are hosted by [Durham Enable](#) and work with clients requiring mental health support, by offering advice, guidance, signposting and training. This ensures that people receive appropriate information and resources to improve their mental health and to support access to paid employment.
- 116 In January 2022, Durham County Council was awarded the Better Health at Work 'Maintaining Excellence' Award, which recognises the council's ongoing commitment towards achieving and maintaining excellent workplace health and wellbeing. Throughout 2022/23, the council will continue to promote good workplace health and wellbeing through targeted staff campaigns on matters such as mental health, financial wellbeing, menopause, healthy eating, musculoskeletal issues and cancer awareness.
- 117 The council has also been shortlisted for the LGC Award 2022 in the Public Health category for our work on health, especially mental health. The winners will be announced July.

Connected Communities

118 The ambition of Connected Communities is linked to the following key objectives:

- All children and young people will have a safe childhood;
- Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock;
- Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe;
- People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities;
- Communities will come together and support each other;
- Delivery of new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents.

National, Regional and Local Picture

119 Recorded crime increased 6% during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, compared to the previous year. Increases were noted across all crime categories except violence against the person. The main increases were across the categories of theft related offences (+20%), burglary (+15%), vehicle crime (+5%) and criminal damage (+22% to vehicles and +15% to dwellings).

120 However, these increases are due to comparatively low levels of recorded crime for the previous year, much as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions which limited opportunities to commit crimes due to people spending more time at home, shops and leisure facilities being closed and fewer journeys being made. If we compare the latest data with pre-COVID levels of recorded crime, we can see that overall recorded crime is 7% lower.

121 Between 2019/20 (start of the pandemic) and 2020/21, reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) increased by almost 15%. The driver for this increase was people spending more time at home or in their local area, and mainly impacted environmental ASB (for example, more reports of littering and dog-fouling) and nuisance ASB (for example, more reports of noise and breaching COVID restrictions). Although overall reports of ASB decreased by 7% over the last 12 months, they remain higher than the pre-COVID level.

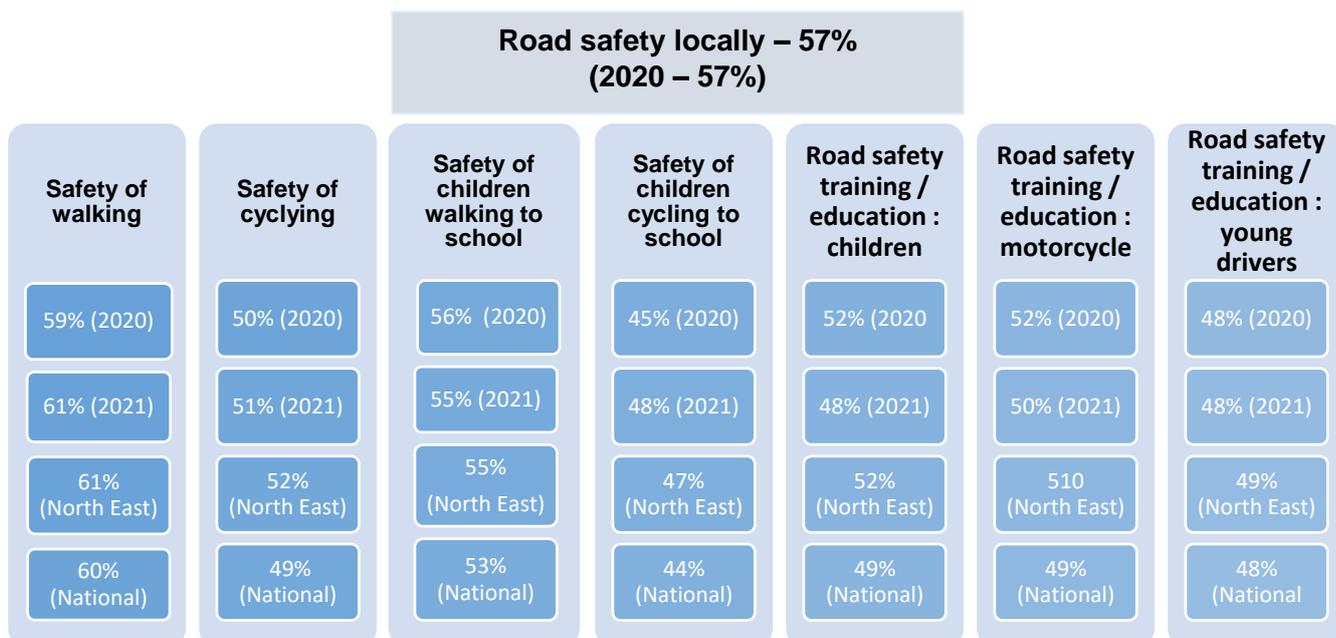
122 More detailed analysis of ASB shows that only environmental ASB is broadly returning to pre-pandemic levels. Personal ASB has shown a further slight increase and is now almost 5% higher than the pre-COVID figure. We remain concerned that the pandemic has exacerbated mental health issues and minor arguments are escalating as resilience levels remain low and people spend more time at home. Although nuisance ASB has decreased over the last 12 months, it

remains 10% higher than the pre-COVID level with noise complaints being a major factor.

- 123 We are also aware that ASB fires (deliberate primary and secondary fires) have increased over the last 12 months. Many of these incidents are confined to the east of the county. These reports are currently not included in the overall reports of ASB. However, work by the Safe Durham Partnership to agree a shared definition (across the police, fire, registered housing providers and council) and shared data pool, will soon be complete and will give us a countywide view of ASB as reported to all agencies. An update will be provided in the next performance report.
- 124 Within the last 12 months personal incidents have reduced by 28.1%. Enviro-crime accounts for 59.7% of all council related ASB incidents, with those relating to litter accounting for 26.2% of this; and Nuisance 37.3% of which 24.4% is noise related.
- 125 Due to an issue in our customer relationship management system we are currently unable to report the latest numbers of fly-tipping incidents that have been resolved. Software specialists are working to rectify the problem.
- 126 Over the five year period 2017–2021 the main causation factors for collisions within County Durham is ‘failure to look properly’ followed by ‘drink/drug driving’. During the same period, this latter category and ‘impaired by alcohol’ have shown the greatest increases in the proportion of collision they are attributed to.

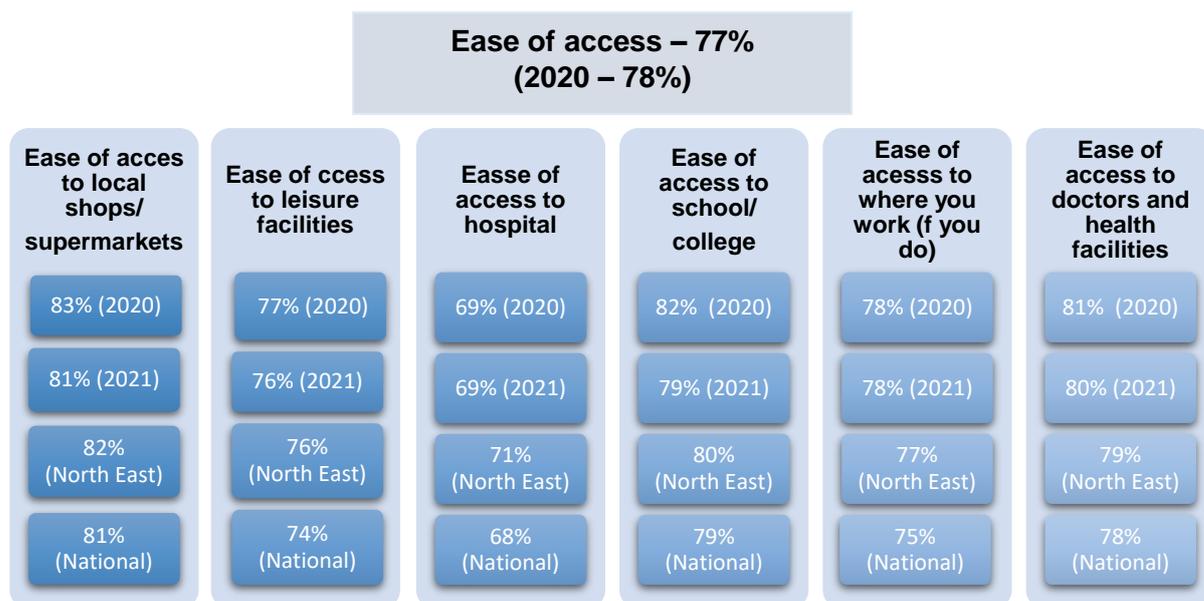
| Contributory Factor | Fatal | Serious | Slight | Total | 2017 | 2021 |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|--------|-------|------|------|
| Failure to look properly | 36% | 44% | 50% | 48% | 6% | 15% |
| Speeding | 21% | 19% | 15% | 16% | 20% | 16% |
| Impaired by alcohol | 11% | 12% | 9% | 10% | 6% | 15% |
| Distraction | 13% | 4% | 5% | 5% | 9% | 7% |
| No seatbelt | 20% | 10% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 8% |
| Drink / drug driving | 13% | 15% | 11% | 12% | 7% | 17% |

- 127 The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey 2021 indicates that overall satisfaction with road safety locally has remained unchanged from 2020 at 57%, with the majority of categories being in line with the 2020 results and above national levels¹.



¹NHT Survey, performance is significantly better if performance is 4pp or more above average and significantly worse if performance is 4pp or more below average.

128 The survey also indicates that ease of access to leisure, shops, work and health facilities in line with regional and national averages and the 2020 survey results¹.



¹NHT Survey, performance is significantly better if performance is 4pp or more above average and significantly worse if performance is 4pp or more below average.

129 Results from the 2020 National Highways and Transport Survey (NHT) indicates that satisfaction continues to be in line with national levels¹. Satisfaction with the condition of our highways, was higher than the average.

| | 2018 | | 2020 | | 2021 | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-------------|--------|-------------|--------|-------------|--------------------|
| | Durham | NHT Average | Durham | NHT Average | Durham | NHT Average | North East Average |
| Overall | 57% | 53% | 55% | 52% | 54% | 51% | 51% |
| Condition of highways | 38% | 31% | 41% | 36% | 37% | 32% | 33% |
| Highway maintenance | 51% | 49% | 51% | 50% | 44% | 42% | 42% |
| Highway enforcement/ obstructions | 51% | 49% | 47% | 45% | 47% | 43% | 45% |
| Provision of street lighting | 62% | 65% | 57% | 62% | 57% | 60% | 61% |
| Public rights of way (overall) | 58% | 57% | 58% | 57% | 58% | 56% | 57% |

¹NHT Survey, performance is significantly better if performance is 4pp or more above average and significantly worse if performance is 4pp or more below average.

Council Services

Victims of crime will have access to the right level of support, with services available to address their needs

- 130 Further funding has been secured to continue the Safety of Women At Night (SWAN) project which provides a staffed night-time safe hub for women who feel vulnerable or at risk and is based at St Nicholas' Church in Durham City until July. We are currently exploring further funding options to continue the scheme past this date.

All children and young people will enjoy a safe childhood

- 131 In 2021/22, we received almost 5,000 safeguarding referrals into our children's social care teams. Domestic abuse remains the most common reason for referrals into children's social care, followed by neglect and sexual abuse. Both COVID-19 and complexity of cases has led to around 3,500 children and young people open to statutory social care teams in County Durham at any one time.
- 132 This has impacted on social worker caseloads, and some have higher caseloads than we would want. Due to demand pressures on our frontline teams some key areas of performance have decreased in recent months, for example the proportion of our assessments which are completed within a 45 working day timescale and timeliness of initial child protection conferences. Senior managers are aiming to address this with service redesign and continued close work with colleagues in early help. The council continues to support children's social care to recruit staff over-establishment.

- 133 A key area for improvement which we have focused on since 2019/20 was reducing the re-referral rate. This means children who are referred back into children's social care who had a previous referral in the last 12 months. This has decreased to 19% from 28% in 2019/20, and is now lower than in our national, statistical and regional neighbours.
- 134 Whilst the number of children in care across the county reduced following increases during COVID, primarily due to the inability for children to leave care due to court closures etc., we have experienced a recent increase and although this has not reached levels during COVID we are facing significant placement pressures. This is not just an issue local to County Durham but is also being experienced regionally and nationally.
- 135 We are working closely with colleagues in County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust's Children Looked After Team to ensure our children in care receive timely health assessments and at least annual dental checks. This is closely monitored through the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- 136 We continue to progress our Residential Care and Fostering Transformation Programmes with the aim of increasing in-house capacity through recruitment and retention of foster carers and longer-term development of new council-run children's residential homes.
- 137 We have rebranded marketing materials, reviewed social media campaigns, and launched targeted campaigns to attract foster carers with the skills and expertise to care for children with disabilities and sibling groups. We have also increased capacity in the recruitment team to increase assessments and their timeliness, and developed a new training programme for our foster carers.
- 138 The current residential care transformation work programme includes one new children's home delivered in 2021/22, five homes planned for 2022/23 and two future children's homes identified for 2023/24. There may be some slippage of future projects, dependent on our ability to develop these at pace and we are working closely with colleagues across the council in regeneration, legal and finance.
- 139 Ofsted announced the council's Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) on 29 April 2022. The inspection focussed on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements:
- to help and protect children;
 - the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home;
 - the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption;

- the experiences and progress of care leavers.

140 They will also evaluate the effectiveness of leaders and managers; the impact they have on the lives of children and young people and the quality of professional practice.

Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe

141 The government announced in April that County Durham has been awarded £33.6 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which includes £2.8 million Multiplier funds. The allocation is for a three-year period (April 2022 to March 2025) and covers three themes, Community and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. Investment Plans are to be submitted by August 2022 with the first payments expected from October 2022. Meetings have taken place with partners to start planning programme of activity to engage stakeholders and develop UKSPF Investment Plan.

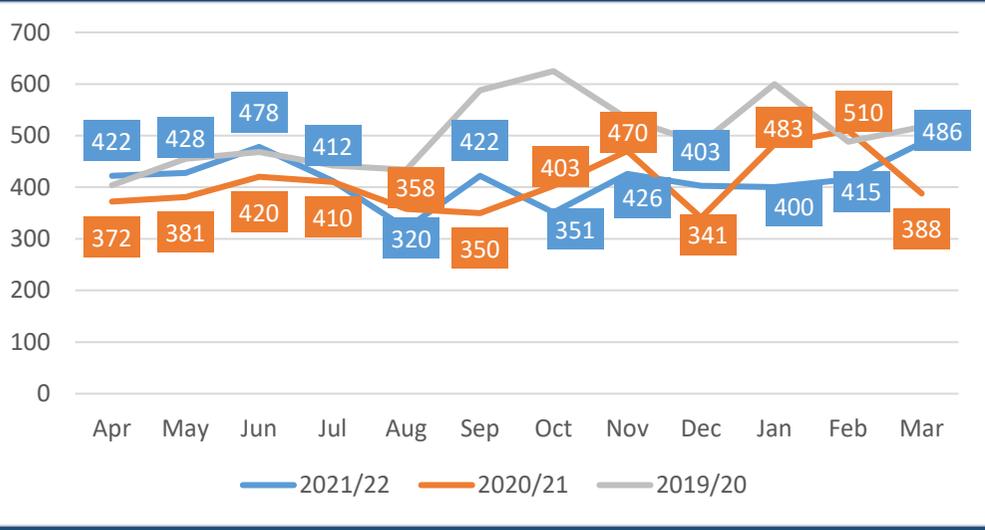
142 An approximate calculation based on an average 3 year ESIF allocation, suggests that the SPF allocation is estimated to be roughly half of previous European Union (EU) funding. It is worth noting that had the UK remained within the EU we would now be classed as a 'less developed' region benefitting from a greater share of funding, greater flexibilities and intervention rate; and therefore has also lost this opportunity of increased investment.

143 The government has launched its second round of Levelling Up Funding, a £4.8 billion pot that will support transport, town centre regeneration and cultural investment. We are developing five proposals for County Durham covering five parliamentary constituency areas worth £117 million, with up to £20 million per area being sought from the Levelling Up Fund and the remaining from match funding. Business cases will consider the best opportunity for investment in line with the fund criteria and local priorities. Timescales are tight with proposals to be considered by Cabinet in June 2022 ahead of submission by 6 July. If successful, the bids will be awarded funds as part of the 2022 Autumn Statement.

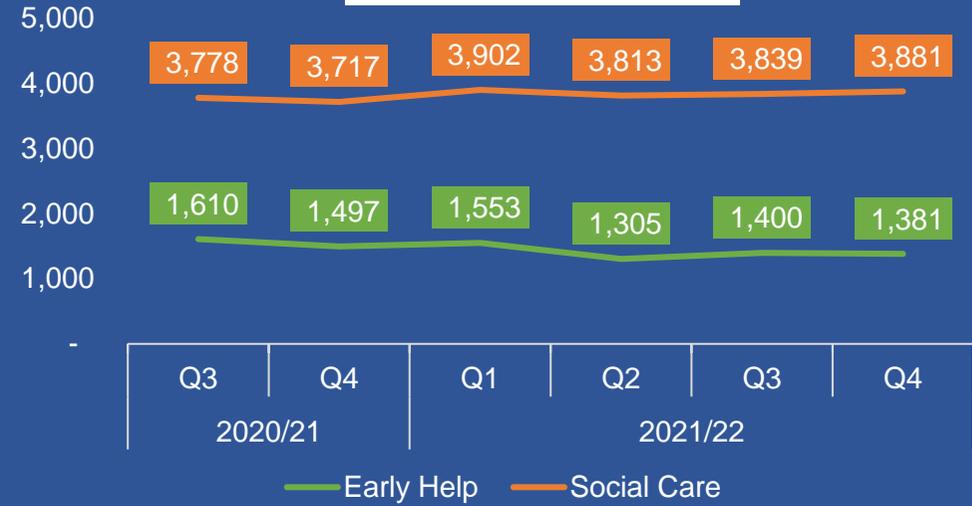
144 Sixteen physical improvements have been completed across the county during the year; five from the Town Centre Capital Programme, seven from Towns & Villages Programme and four from the Seaham Townscape Heritage Programme. Schemes include a new town centre car park in Spennymoor that complements the wider Festival Walk Retail Site, memorial project and community centre project in Wingate, widening of footway at North Terrace, Seaham to help improve the café culture and the re-provision of car parking bays at Terrace Green, Seaham.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

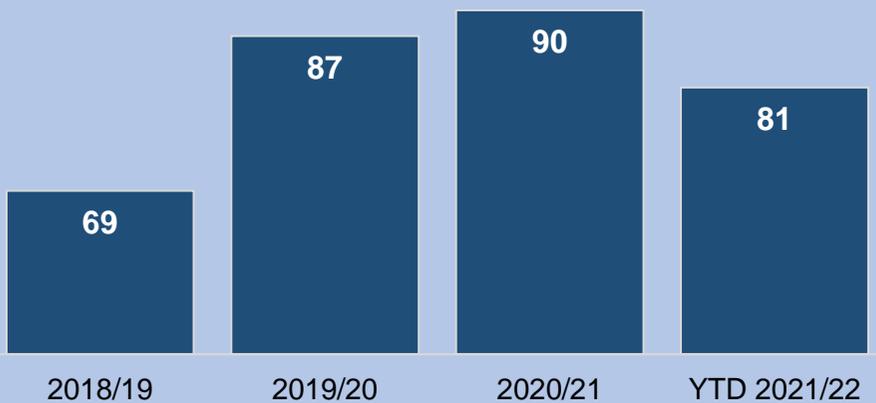
Referrals



No. of open cases



% Initial Child Protection Conferences held within 15 days of S.47 investigation commencing

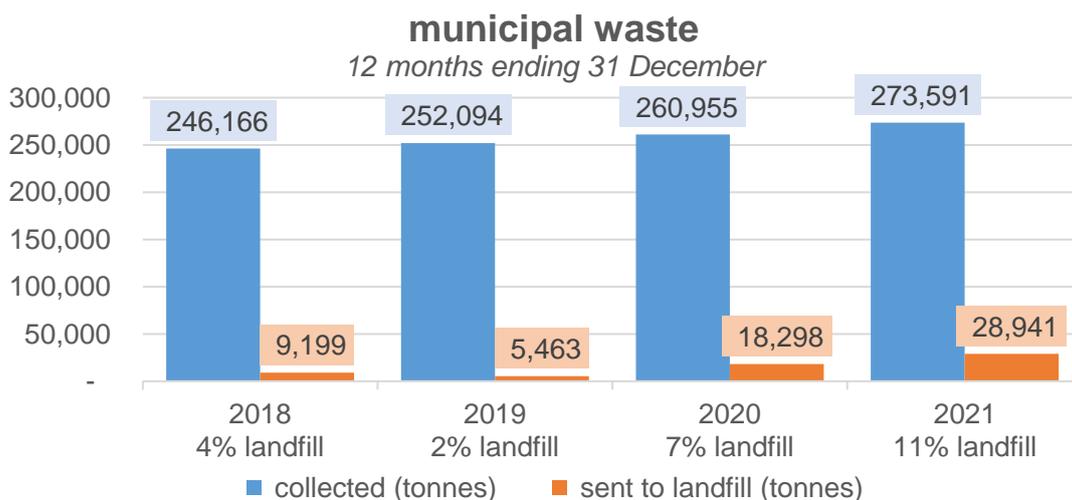


No. of children subject to a child protection plan

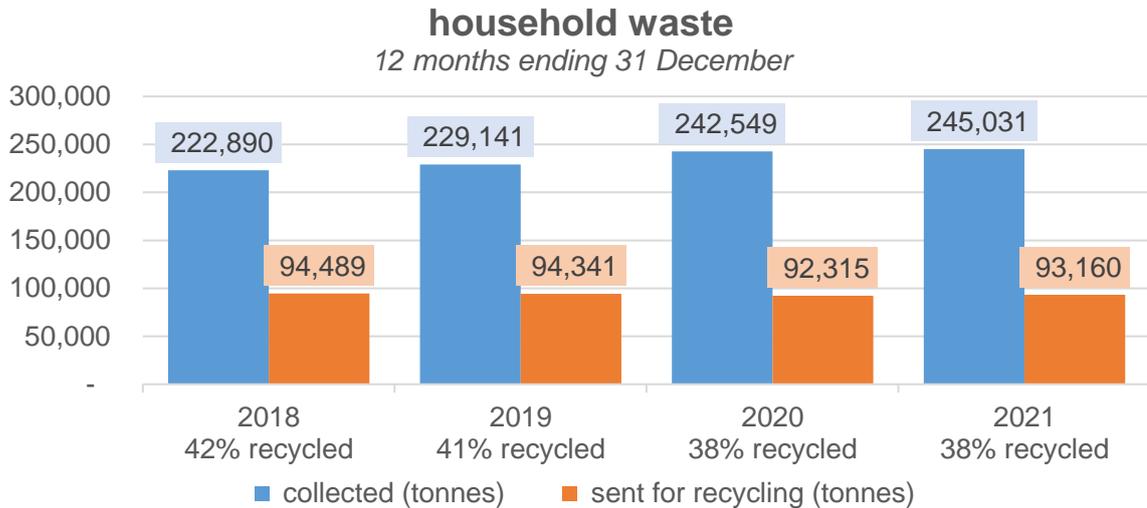


- 145 The installation of free w-fi in Crook, Spennymoor and Consett has been delayed due a global shortage of hardware. Expected delivery date for hardware is November 2022, with implementation scheduled for December 2022. Installation of free wi-fi in Durham City has also been delayed, with implementation date to be confirmed, as part of the network is being re-designed due to an issue with third party licence agreements that need to be in place prior to installation. The scheme is to encourage people to spend more time in our town centres and boost the local economy as well as providing valuable information through the anonymous footfall data to identify trends and monitor the impact of changes to the high street, which can then be used to shape future regeneration projects.
- 146 2,640 fly-tipping enforcement actions were undertaken during 2021/22 which is an increase of 14.7%. This included further investigations, deployment of cameras, stop and search operations and the use of Fixed Penalty Notices.
- 147 During quarter four, our Find and Fix programme continued to clear shrubs and vegetation, plant, edge pavements, paint street furniture, repair and replace fences, bins and play equipment, and remove fly-tipping and graffiti. The team also supported the wider clean-up following the winter storms, removing fallen trees, repairing fencing and tidying affected areas.
- 148 During quarter four, our Community Action Team reviewed previous projects in Shildon, South Moor and Blackhall Colliery and also at Horden collaborating with the Horden Together team. The review walkabouts identified 264 issues with 168 legal notices served. Issues included fly-tipping, dog fouling, untidy yards and gardens and problem commercial property. The latest CAT project has started in Easington Colliery.
- 149 We continue to deliver road safety education and training in relation to communities and with individuals with road safety delivery, the School Crossing Patrol service, Bikeability training and SAGE all operating normally following 'living with COVID-safe guidelines'. However, school based road safety education continues to be offered virtually as many schools continue to be focused on catching up with core curriculum learning that was missed during COVID-lockdowns.
- 150 We are now providing professional support in terms of driving assessments as part of the Taxi Driver Refresher Training Scheme, with the first clients receiving training in April 2022. We are also working with Durham Constabulary to deliver a motorcycle safety initiative for spring/summer 2022.
- 151 Both water safety forums, responsible for managing water safety in the city centre and countywide, met during quarter four. The multi-agency groups reviewed risk assessments and planned controls for open water across the county, including Durham city centre.

- 152 The City Safety Group made further progress against its action plan and the independent RoSPA river corridor safety report was tabled for consideration (following previous assessments in 2015 and 2018).
- 153 The countywide group continued to plan for future activities and interventions. The group identified the national open water safety campaigns and awareness raising initiatives which are to be utilised across the county in 2022.
- 154 Further interventions, particularly regarding education and awareness for young people in the Chester-le-Street riverside complex area were progressed. A further meeting was convened at the request of local councillors and residents group leaders and plans were finalised to provide all schools in this area with the opportunity to have open water safety assemblies, delivered by emergency services and featuring the council’s ‘dying to be cool’ campaign.
- 155 Plans were also put in place to reassess priority open water safety sites prior to peak periods of footfall and warmer weather.
- 156 During the 12 months ending 31 December 2021, 273,591 tonnes of municipal waste was collected and disposed of, 4.8% more than the previous year. The increased volume of waste reduced the spare capacity within the waste disposal system so, when planned maintenance at the energy from waste plant was required, more waste had to be sent to landfill. The issue has been further compounded due to the changing of regulations on the recycling of carpet. This decreased our landfill diversion rate to 89.4%, less than the 93% of last year.



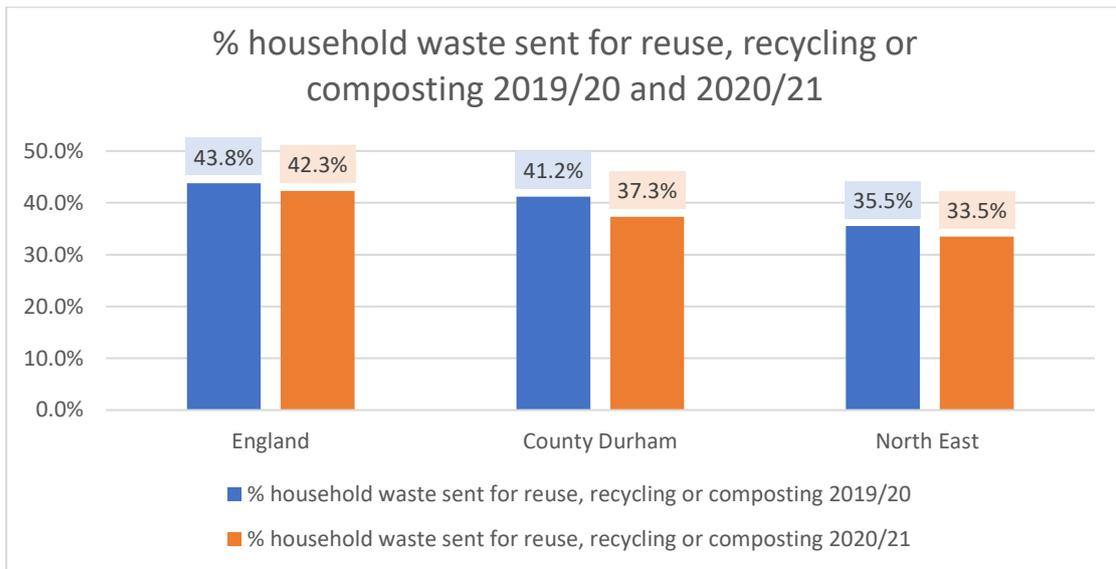
- 157 During the same period, 245,031 tonnes of household waste was collected and disposed of, an increase of 1% on the previous year and 6.9% higher than the same period pre-COVID. However, the increase is reducing suggesting a return to more normal levels.



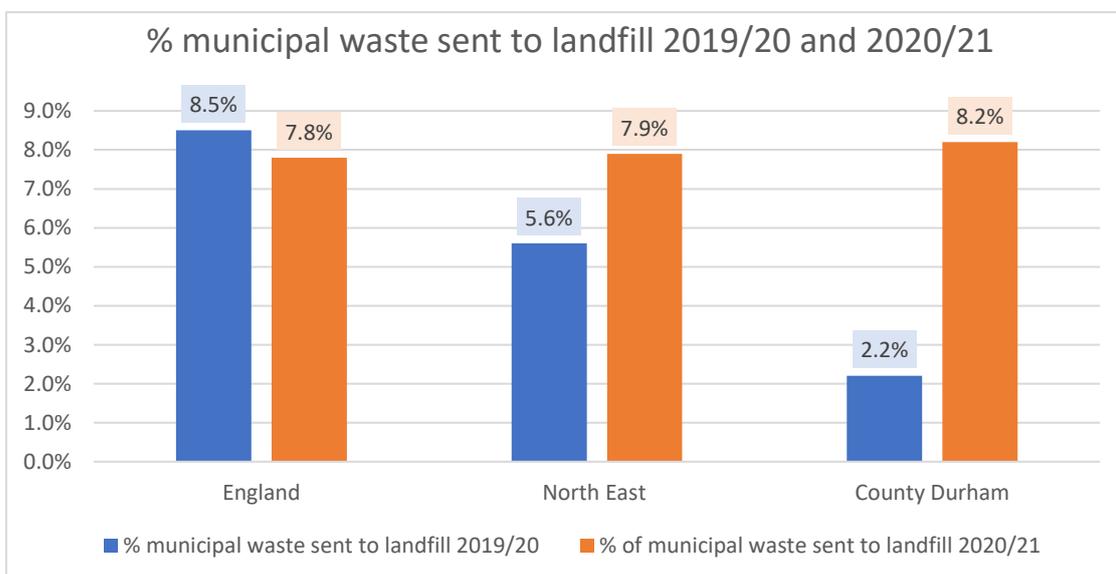
158 Benchmarking data for 2020/21 saw an increase in the amount of household waste collected per person in most local authority areas. County Durham saw a greater increase (+5.2%) compared to the national level (+3.3%) but lower than the regional increase (+5.6%).



159 In relation to the recycling rate, deterioration was seen at both national and regional levels (-1.5pp and -2pp respectively) but to a greater extent within County Durham (-3.9pp).



160 The landfill rate shows a differing picture. Nationally, there was a slight improvement in the rate and a deterioration at the regional level and within County Durham, bringing the rate locally above both the regional and national averages, where previously it had been significantly below. This places us within the 3rd quartile of the 122 local authorities who have responsibility for the disposal of waste. Waste disposal arrangements differ across local authorities, with some having their own 'energy from waste' facilities; where others, like ourselves, have contracts with large waste companies. The latter of which can be affected when there is an increase in tonnage from a number of local authorities, impacting on the capacity in the system particularly when routine maintenance is needed. The change in the national rate suggests an increase in the amount of waste sent to 'energy from waste' sites, given the decrease in the recycling rate and the increase in the amount of waste collected; and the latest benchmarking data overall reflect the changes in behaviours due to the first year of COVID-19 restrictions.



- 161 The levels of contamination of waste such as black bags, wood, food waste, nappies and textiles in household blue bins continues to be higher than pre-covid levels. The 12 months to the end of December 2021 showed contamination levels of 33.4%, lower than the previous 12 month figure of 34.4% but still over 2,000 tonnes more than pre-covid levels.
- 162 We continue to tackle contamination, with more than 7,700 contamination notices issued in the last 12 months, and have also undertaken door knocking of targeted households. A countywide contamination campaign is planned for the summer.
- 163 The small electrical recycling project continues to grow. Over 100 collection points are located in community buildings and schools across the county. Waste awareness events have taken place within schools, community groups and residents' groups.
- 164 16,877 tonnes of green waste was collected at the kerbside during 2021 and sent to the Joint Stocks composting site. Garden waste collections re-commenced on 29 March 2022.

Communities will come together to support each other

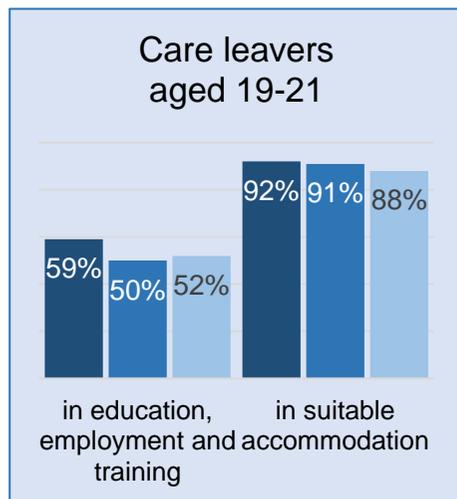
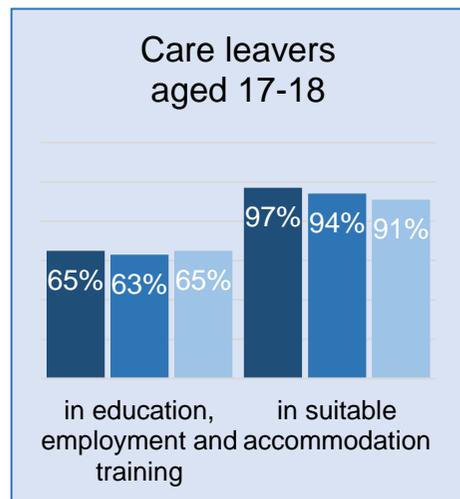
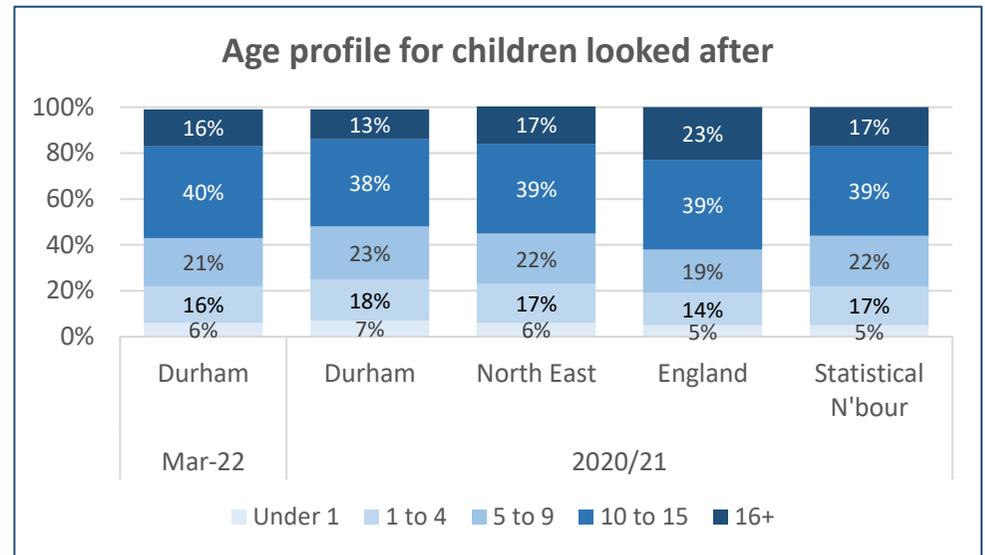
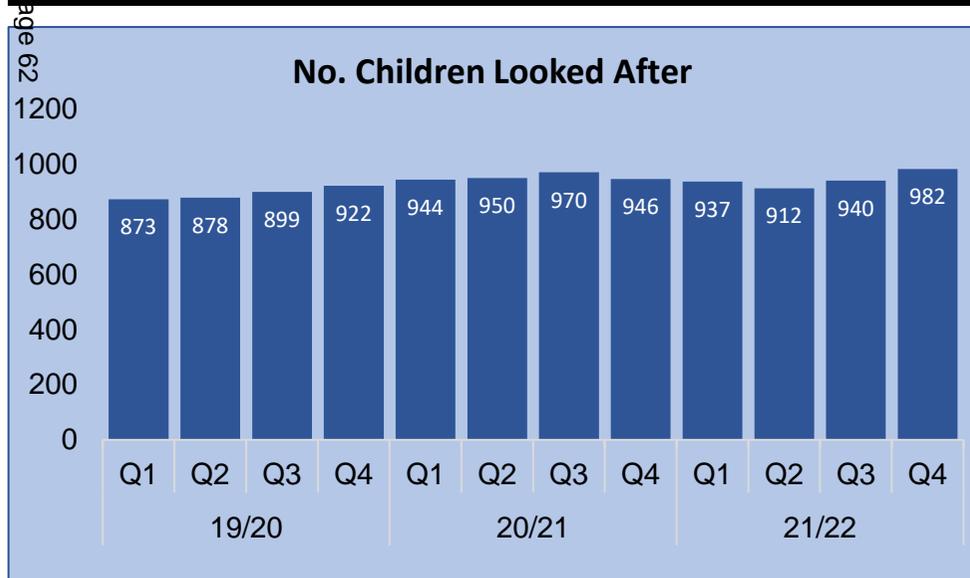
- 165 The Horden Together project which is a placed-based partnership that aims to improve public safety by offering support with a broad range of issues commenced in September 2021 and to date has made over 150 referrals through Making Every Adult Matter and served more than 180 notices through Environmental Health regulations. A multi-use games area has also recently been re-opened for use by children and young people.
- 166 A wide range of activity has been undertaken through the multi-agency problem solving (MAPS) teams across the county. Examples of these include working with partners to deal with off road/quad vehicle nuisance including the seizure of vehicles, the issuing of notices and target hardening hotspot areas and the use of drones and other technology to help identify offenders; liaising and walkabouts with partners, residents and elected members over local concerns across the county; liaising with partners to target harden areas being used for fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour.
- 167 In response to the crisis in Ukraine, the council has established a multi-agency humanitarian support working group and an operational team focussing on safeguarding and accommodation inspections, wrap around support and translation services, health, education and welfare benefits for individuals and families arriving under the government's schemes to assist Ukrainians to come to the UK, the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. In relation to the latter, as at the end of April there were over 130

residents who had put themselves forward and work is taking place to support both the sponsor and the refugees coming to County Durham.

Delivery of new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents

- 168 Phase 1 of the Council Housing Building Programme to deliver 155 homes across seven sites has been delayed pending approval to proceed to RIBA Stage 3 (Detailed and Technical Design), once received the programme will be updated. Soft market testing is currently underway, and the outcome will inform the next steps in developing tender stage documents.
- 169 Viability assessments have been undertaken for each scheme within Phase 2, apart from the sites which have been brought in to replace sites withdrawn from the Programme. Once instructions are received on brief and sites, a programme will be developed to Stage 3.
- 170 Work continues to deliver the Chapter Homes business plan. Following the construction of 67 new homes located at Oakerside Drive in Peterlee, 64 properties have now been sold, with the remaining three properties scheduled for completion in April. Construction of 60 new homes at Gilesgate site is on track for completion December 2022, and at the end of March, 18 reservations have been received.
- 171 Work continues to deliver the Seaham Garden Village project and a further £135,000 has been secured from Homes England, however ongoing issues with s73 planning application around the Wellbeing Hub, alongside the Innovation Hub, means a further s73 application has been submitted and is being considered.
- 172 Delays in determining s73 planning application for the Seaham Garden Village Scheme has had an impact on the delivery of the Geothermal Minewater Heat Scheme in Seaham with completion of negotiations on land acquisition, easements and non-statutory rights over highway; and the land purchase from the Coal Authority to build the Energy Centre being delayed to August 2022 from March 2022.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



As at 31 Mar 2022

■ County Durham ■ North East ■ England

Where our children in care live

| | | | |
|--|-----|---|-------|
| In-house foster care | 41% | Independent living (incl. supported lodgings) | 4% |
| Independent fostering agency | 18% | Placed for adoption | 4% |
| Friends and family | 15% | In-house children's homes | 3% |
| Placed with parents | 7% | NHS/ Health Trust | <0.5% |
| External residential (incl. children's homes and res school) | 7% | Secure (incl. YOI and prison) | <0.5% |

173 Lunson Mitchenall has been appointed as commercial agent for the redevelopment of Milburngate. However, appointment of a Residential Manager is delayed pending the developer entering into a pre-construction services agreement with LIV, the housing management company. Completion of legals for tenants has also been delayed due to complexities in relation to the fire ventilation and extractions system, however, side letters are in the process of being agreed with tenants to allow the leases to be entered into. Work is ongoing to establish the Housing Company with marketing of the residual units expected to commence in May.

Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock

174 The Selective Licensing Scheme that will cover 42% of the private sector rented sector in County Durham went live on 1 April. The application process opened 1 February and 1,500 applications have been received, however it is anticipated that this will increase dramatically as the early bird discount draws to a close in July. An inspection programme will commence in August with all licensed areas being visited on a monthly programme in the first two years. A form is available on our website for the public to report landlords without a licence or who breach their conditions.

175 Additionally, promotional work continues on the implementation of the hybrid accreditation scheme, 'The Durham Rental Standard' and it is anticipated the scheme will go live before the end of May.

176 A Council Tenancy Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February that sets out the Council's expectations to the registered providers of social housing operating within the County regarding the types of tenancy they should offer to their tenants. Cabinet also approved the adoption of an Introductory Tenancy Scheme for all new council tenancies, that provides a probationary tenancy for the 12 months for all new tenants, and a Council House Secure and Introductory Tenancy Agreements that sets out contractual relationships between the Council as landlord and the tenant.

177 During the quarter, 37 empty properties were brought back into use, bringing the total for 2021/22 to 155, below the target of 200. The challenges throughout the year in response to ongoing Government restrictions around COVID-19 has impacted on delivery, especially during quarter one and again in quarter three due to the Omicron variant. However, the main challenges have been the complexities involved and the nature of the work required due to the length of time properties have been empty or in identifying ownership.

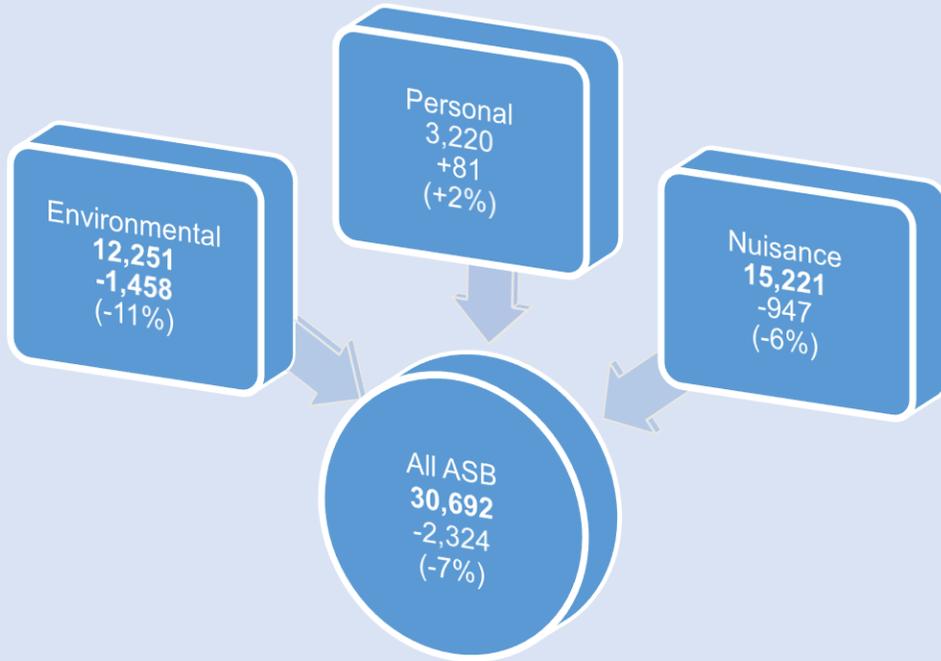
- 178 During 2021/22, 3,341 properties have been improved or adapted as a result of energy efficiency measures, regeneration initiatives, disabled facilities grants or via the financial assistance policy. This represents an increase of 76% (1,448 properties) compared to 2020/21, mainly due to an increase in properties benefitting from an energy efficiency measure.
- 179 At the end of this financial year, 1,961 households benefitted from an energy efficiency measure compared to 1,183 last year. This included 1,364 households benefitting from energy efficiency measures via the Warm Homes scheme, including boiler grants and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) insulation grants totalling £2,332,100. 597 households benefitting from regeneration energy efficiency measure through the Local Authority Delivery scheme (LAD).

People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities

- 180 Construction of the new Durham Bus Station recommenced in March/April 2022 following a temporary pause at the end of 2021 due to unforeseen structural works being required to the gable end of the Grade 2 Listed Manse, which were identified following demolition of the bus station. The bus station is now still likely to become operational to passengers in July 2023.
- 181 In March 2022, Cabinet agreed to redirect £2 million of savings from the Concessionary Fares budget to support bus services across the County to maintain access to employment, education and essential services, give passenger numbers more time to recover and allow time for clarification of future Government support and for the true state of a post-COVID transport system to emerge.
- 182 In April 2022 the Department for Transport (DfT) awarded £163.5 million to the north east region for its Bus Service Improvement Plan. While the allocation is among the highest in the country it is lower than the original £804 million funding bid submitted in October last year. Improvements under the areas' bus service improvement plans include making services more frequent, better reliability, cheaper fares, and greener vehicles.
- 183 The 2021/22 winter maintenance plan has been successfully delivered with in-house driver shortages covered by sub-contractors which has resulted in extra costs, salt and fuel costs have also increased. The overall cost of the provision has exceeded the base budget, and this has been covered by an existing reserve.
- 184 The review of the Winter Maintenance Plan and Policy for the winter season 2021/22 was complete and published in March 2022.

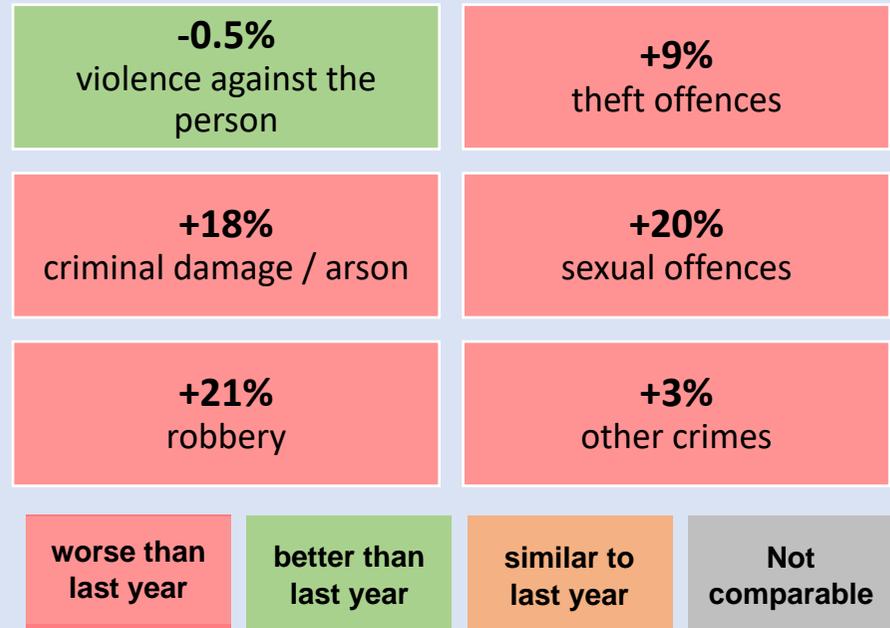
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Police and council reported ASB



Crime

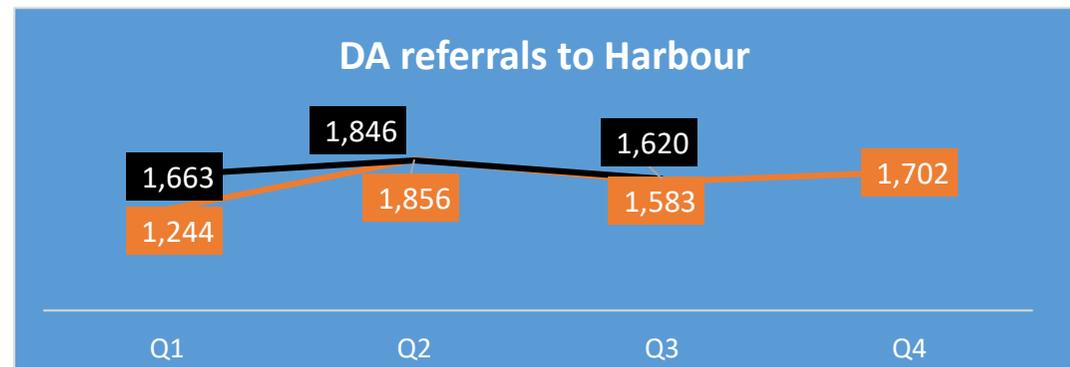
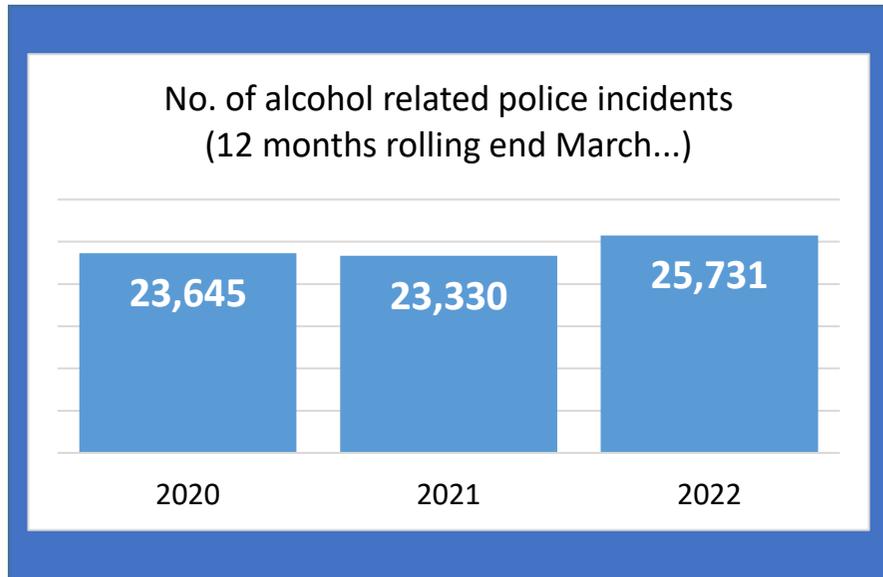
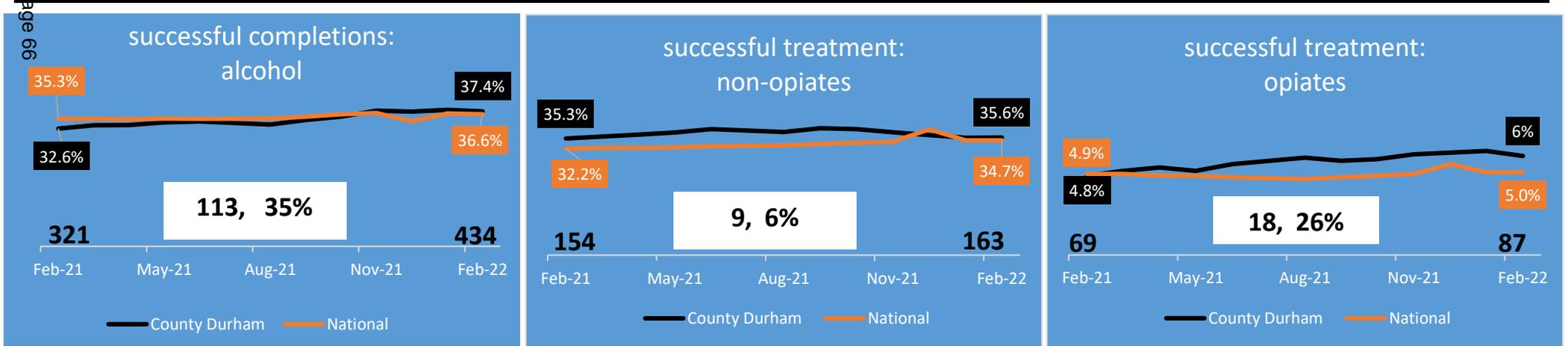
47,780 crimes (↑ 6%)
89.6 per 1,000 population



ASB incidents (12 month rolling)



CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

reported fly-tipping incidents
(12 months ending 31 December)



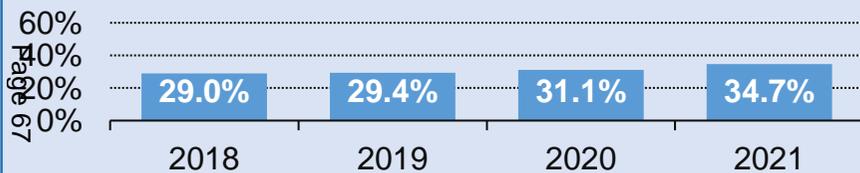
municipal waste diverted from landfill



household waste re-used, recycled or composted



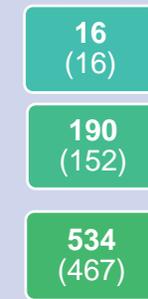
dry recyclable household waste collected from the kerbside that is contaminated



Road traffic collisions

- Killed
- Seriously injured
- Slightly injured

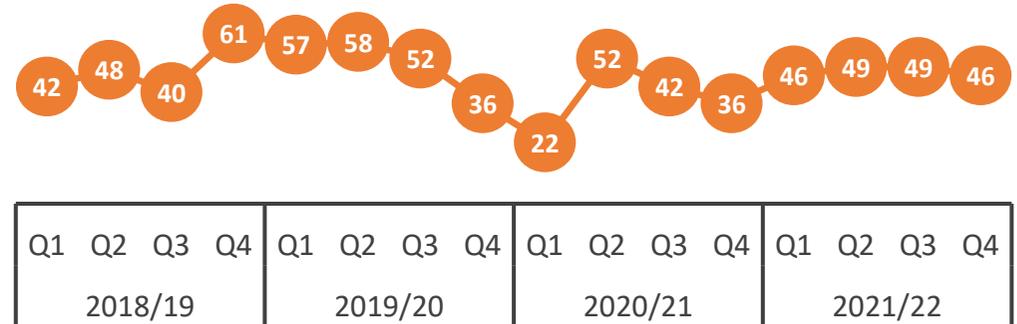
All casualties
21/22
(20/21)



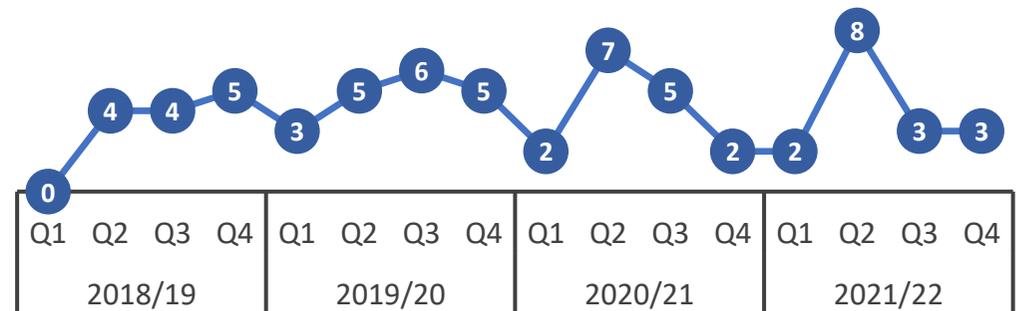
Children
21/22
(20/21)



Serious Injuries



Fatalities



An Excellent Council

185 The ambition of an excellent council is structured around the following key objectives:

- (a) Our resources will be managed effectively;
- (b) We will create a workforce for the future;
- (c) We will design our services with service users;
- (d) We will use data and technology more effectively
- (e) We will actively performance manage our services.

The impact of COVID-19

186 The council continues to face significant financial pressure resulting from the pandemic. The additional costs incurred and loss of income are forecast to be around £20.4 million this year, offset by COVID-19 related underspends (relating to closure of facilities and disruption to normal service activity as a result of the pandemic) of £5.9 million – a net overspend of £14.5 million, which is presently within the forecast circa £18.2 million the council expects to receive from the Government to cover the financial impact of the pandemic.

187 The government has now removed the last remaining COVID-19 restrictions and launched a plan for '[living with COVID](#)' based on choice and personal responsibility. Consequently, our teams have returned to their workplaces on a hybrid basis. Spending at least 60% of their working hours in their workplace will especially benefit new employees and those younger and/or less experienced. A permanent hybrid policy and amended home working policy are being developed.

188 Employee support continues as staff return to their workplaces, with reasonable adjustments for staff struggling with long-COVID or who are clinically vulnerable. In addition, practical advice and information is available on the [COVID-19 pages of our intranet](#), alongside access to support mechanisms which increase emotional resilience, protect health and well-being and reduce anxiety when returning to the workplace⁵.

189 All non-essential face-to-face training has been reinstated as part of a blended approach, and lead officers for recruitment have the option of undertaking virtual or face-to-face recruitment.

⁵ e.g., [employee well-being guide](#), [Employee Assistance Programme](#), 'mental health awareness for managers' training, well-being portal, CMT vlogs, e-learning courses (including building personal resilience; how to be effective, productive and maintain your resilience; managing remote teams; leading and managing dispersed teams; working at home in extraordinary circumstances)

Our resources will be managed effectively

- 190 Durham University has agreed to buy the new building at The Sands in Durham City, and the council will develop a new civic headquarters as part of plans supporting the future commercial development of the Aykley Heads site. In addition, office space in Stanley will provide a basis for further external investment in the town⁶.
- 191 Although the pandemic continued to impact the collection of both council tax and business rates during 2021/22, year-end collection rates were higher than both the same period last year and the north east average. Pre-pandemic council tax collection rates ranged from 96-97%; business rates were around 98%. 17.5% of the council tax collectable charge is offset by council tax reduction, which is less than same period last year (18.3%). The net charge of business rate was nearly 50% more than in 2020/21 reflecting the end of COVID reliefs. The council is continuing to offer flexible and supportive options which proactively support residents and businesses whilst steadily increasing collection rates.
- 192 All Customer Access Points (CAPs) have now re-opened on an appointment basis and all committee meetings have returned to County Hall with the Council Chamber once again used for full council meetings.
- 193 We are continuing our work to reduce carbon emissions: various decarbonisation schemes, including lighting improvements, heating replacements and solar installations, have been implemented at council buildings, four electric vans have been purchased as part of the “try before you buy” scheme, and a new mandatory e-learning module for all staff on climate change has been launched.
- 194 Digital Services teams continue to provide, promote, and support the use of Office 365 applications across the council (such as Teams, SharePoint and OneDrive), and increases in usage across all applications have been noted in the last quarter. There has been a significant increase in the use of Yammer⁷ as part of initial design and prototyping work for the Intranet project. The outcomes of this project will inform the use of Yammer in the future.
- 195 The government is committed to providing gigabit-capable broadband coverage⁸ to a minimum of 85% of properties by 2025. Commercial plans by network infrastructure providers are expected to reach 80% of UK properties and public sector intervention under Project Gigabit, overseen by the Department for Digital,

⁶ [Report to Cabinet of 27 April 2022](#)

⁷ A Microsoft tool that allows people to connect, build communities, share knowledge and engage

⁸ Gigabit-capable broadband can provide broadband speeds of at least 1,000 Megabits per second (Mbps), for comparison superfast broadband is just 30Mbps.

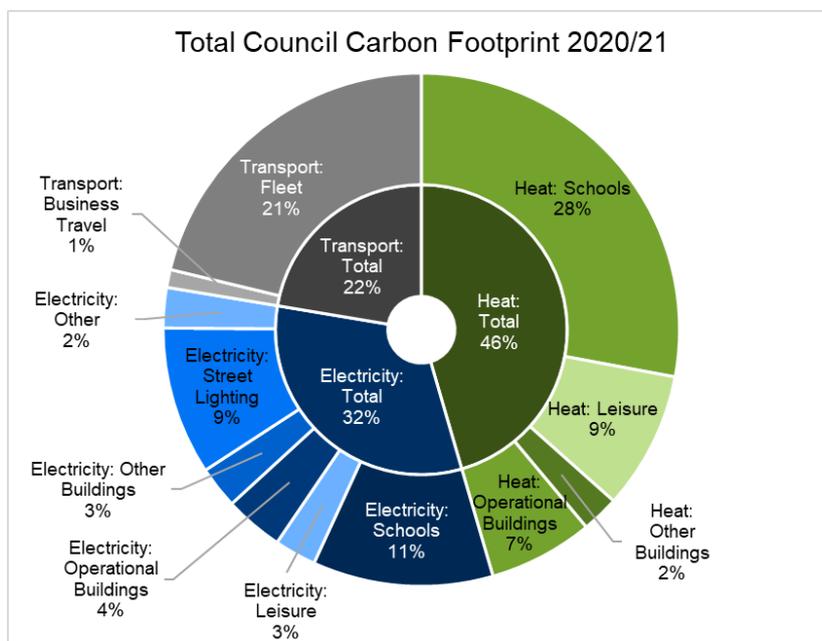
Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), is expected to support the harder to reach final 20%.

196 Gigabit coverage in County Durham currently stands at 46% which is a 22% increase in the last 12 months. Superfast is 97% which is in line with the UK average.

197 Every week the council is subjected to around 12.5 million cyber reconnaissance attacks, of which 2,500 are targeted attempts to breach council services. In addition, 72,000 SPAM emails are handled and discarded automatically. To better protect council services, we have brought together various documents to create a single overarching Cyber Security Strategy for the council. The strategy which will focus on developing a baseline, training support staff and reviewing our security model, is being designed for publication. Associated policies have already been published on the council's intranet.

198 Most devices replaced under the council's replacement programme are not suitable for recycling, However, a small number of iPads and laptops have been donated to charities supporting Ukrainian refugees to help them keep in touch with friends and family and assist with continued education for children.

199 The council's 2020/21 carbon footprint is made up as follows:



200 We continue to tackle heating issues with better heating controls, insulation, and low carbon heating systems. Fleet emissions will be addressed in coming years as we transition to electric vehicles.

201 The following table shows the changes in emissions from the 2009 baseline:

| CO₂ emissions from council activity | | | |
|---|---------|---------|----------|
| | Tonnes | | % change |
| | 2008/09 | 2020/21 | |
| Social care | 6,125 | 597 | -90% |
| Business mileage | 4,083 | 499 | -88% |
| Street lighting | 17,353 | 4,133 | -76% |
| Electricity distribution | 3,996 | 1,127 | -72% |
| Secondary schools | 17,353 | 5,835 | -66% |
| Leisure and culture | 13,270 | 5,008 | -62% |
| Operational buildings | 11,229 | 4,538 | -60% |
| Primary schools | 16,332 | 9,710 | -41% |
| Other schools | 3,062 | 1,850 | -40% |
| Miscellaneous | 2,042 | 1,613 | -21% |
| Fleet | 11,229 | 9,409 | -16% |

- 202 Our buildings mainly use gas for heating and electricity to operate. Electricity in the grid is becoming less carbon intensive, and we have worked to improve the efficiency of equipment in our buildings including gas boilers. It has been more difficult to drive reductions within schools as they have their own delegated budgets. A proportion of the reduction across social care is due to outsourcing (as more services are outsourced, we will adjust the baseline).
- 203 The reduction in street lighting has been achieved through decarbonisation of the electricity grid and replacing almost all of our street lights with LED lighting through the street lighting energy reduction project.
- 204 Miscellaneous includes a number of very small buildings such as community rooms. In the past, we prioritised larger buildings such as offices and leisure centres for energy efficiency works as it is more cost effective.

We will create a workforce for the future

- 205 Significant work has already been undertaken to modernise our approach to recruitment to increase our appeal in a hugely competitive market; including branding and reach through social media. The attraction of employees remains an ongoing and increasing challenge for the council; local and national skills shortages are impacting heavily and driving competition for skilled workers amongst all neighbouring local authorities and other employers including the private sector.

206 Understanding employee turnover is intrinsically linked to the modernisation work being undertaken on recruitment and the issues impacting wider workforce stabilisation. Whilst our turnover rates have not dramatically increased, further action is required to gather insights from employees who leave employment with a view to maximise retention of our best employees.

207 A review of the exit interview process was therefore undertaken to streamline the existing process and ultimately increase completion rates. This will then enable effective reporting to inform targeted support and intervention for teams and services. The purpose of an exit interview is to gain a better understanding of an individual’s motivations for leaving their role. When used effectively, the data collected will help inform and appropriately direct support, for example, higher than average retirement levels leading to gaps in knowledge/reduction in skill level and/or ageing workforce.

208 The council continues to provide many learning and development opportunities to staff to help them further develop their knowledge, skills and abilities, and ensure they are appropriately equipped to undertake their role.

209 The following are the latest additions to our mandatory e-learning programme:

| E-learning course <i>(required completion date)</i> | Total | Completed | |
|---|-------|-----------|-----|
| General Data Protection Regulation <i>(31 March 2022)</i> | 8,531 | 5,583 | 65% |
| Climate Change <i>(30 September 2022)</i> | 8,531 | 1,970 | 23% |

210 Since May 2017, we have spent almost half of the £9.4 million invested into the apprentice levy. £916,800 has expired (i.e., not used within 24 months of entering our digital account) so has been transferred to central government to fund apprenticeships for small employers.

211 647 apprenticeship standards have now been approved for delivery, with a further 46 standards in development. Full details of the standards available and those being developed are available via the following [link](#).

212 Suitable apprenticeship standards have been mapped to each service area on the Durham Learning and Development System to support employee upskilling and workforce planning,

213 385 employees are currently enrolled in the apprenticeship programme. This equates to around 2.3% of our workforce.

| | In service areas | In schools | Total |
|----------------------|------------------|------------|-------|
| Apprentices employed | 113 | 99 | 212 |
| Employees upskilling | 145 | 28 | 173 |

214 385 employees are currently enrolled in the apprenticeship programme. This equates to around 2.3% of our workforce.

215 Since the programme started in 2017, 1,266 employees have enrolled on our apprenticeship programme:

| Year | apprentices employed | employees upskilling | Total |
|---------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| 2017/18 | 106 | 94 | 200 |
| 2018/19 | 154 | 177 | 331 |
| 2019/20 | 140 | 154 | 294 |
| 2020/21 | 87 | 107 | 194 |
| 2021/22 | 142 | 105 | 247 |
| Total | 629 | 637 | 1,266 |

216 Between 1 October 2021 and 31 March 2022, 40 apprentices in service areas moved on from their apprenticeship post – of these 30 moved to permanent employment and seven to temporary employment.

217 The 2022 Apprentice Recruitment Campaign is now underway with interviews planned for end of June and start dates of September. 97 apprenticeship opportunities are available.

218 The council is developing a policy to support skills development across local businesses through a levy transfer.

219 We have started surveying our staff to assess the organisation's current digital skills and confidence levels. The results will not only help us shape the future of our digital training offer, and maximise the benefit of technology at both work and home, it will also inform other key pieces of work such as IT licence renewals, IT user profiles, hardware requirements and recruitment processes. More than 1,100 employees have responded to the survey to date.

220 As a consequence of the restrictions put in place throughout the pandemic (working from home, hand-washing, social distancing) both health and safety

incidents and days lost to sickness remained low. However, as restrictions have eased, both health and safety incidents and days lost to sickness have increased. However, 95% of all reported accidents are either no injury or near miss.

- 221 Throughout the pandemic, our sickness rate showed a steady decline, reaching its lowest level since 2010/11 at year-end 2020/21. But, over the last 12 months our sickness rate has increased and is now above pre-COVID levels.
- 222 Of the days lost due to sickness during the 12 months ending 31 March, 11% was COVID-related (8,818 days) compared to 9% during the same period the previous year (5,690 days). Therefore, if we adjust our sickness rate by extracting sickness due to COVID-19 then our rate remains comparatively low (albeit increased over the last year) at just over 10.31 days per full time equivalent (FTE).
- 223 Days lost has increased across all sickness types over the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, most notably cold and flu infections (excl. those which are COVID related), mental health, most notably stress (both work and non-work related), and anxiety disorders. Musculo-skeletal absence has also increased, this includes back problems, knee replacements and injury to muscles/joints.
- 224 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, there were 1,166 clinical consultations with our Occupational Health Service (OHS), 534 routine physiotherapy session and 364 counselling sessions.
- 225 Of the employees referred to OHS during quarter four, 99 related to long term sickness absence and 77 to management concern. In 16% of cases (29) the employee stated the underlying cause was work-related.
- 226 The project to digitise and archive paper occupational health records is continuing. However, due to the scale of the project and delays caused by the pandemic, completion has been delayed until December 2022.
- 227 Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy for 2022-25 was revised during quarter four. The revised strategy focuses on the six key areas of control, compliance, culture, co-operation, competence and communication.
- 228 We have reinstated our Performance Development Review (PDR) process on a phased top down approach (leaders, managers then core employees). The process is now complete for 117 leaders (100%) and 840 managers (83%), and has been rolled out to the remaining 9,967 employees for completion by 30 June 2022 (8,415 will be digitally and 1,552 paper based).
- 229 To support the process, we continue to hold PDR briefing sessions. 96% of leaders and 84% of managers have attended the sessions. Sessions for core

employees are currently being rolled out and as at mid-May, 1,312 employees had enrolled on the sessions.

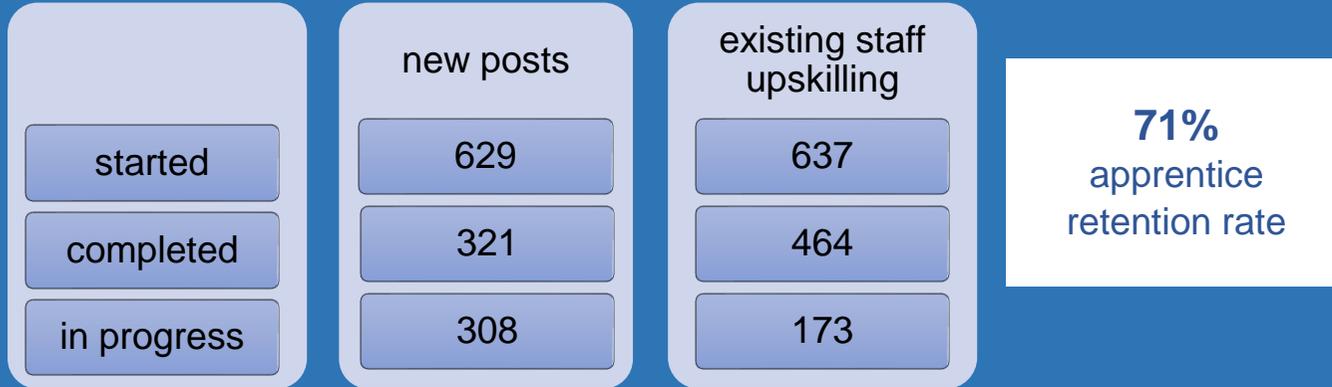
- 230 Further engagement will take place with all leaders and managers to assess the effectiveness of both the PDR system and the digitised process.
- 231 The council staff networks which include LGBT+, disability, carers and Black, Minority and Ethnic now have more than 200 members in total. Members have recently provided feedback in relation to our HR policy (including our hybrid working model, reasonable adjustments, and how we can attract and retain a diverse workforce) and the prototype for the new staff intranet.
- 232 Our gender pay gap is much lower than pay gaps in some other sectors and is one of the lowest of local authorities across the north east.

| | % gap lower for women | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Mean (average of the salaries) | 3.4 | 1.9 | 3.6 | 2.6 | 1.9 |
| Median (the middle salary) | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.9 | 3.9 |

- 233 To help us better monitor and analyse workforce diversity, we are continuing to encourage staff to update their personal information in relation to protected characteristics within our HR system. We will provide an update in quarter one.

Training & Development

1,266 apprenticeships started since 2017



Health & Wellbeing support

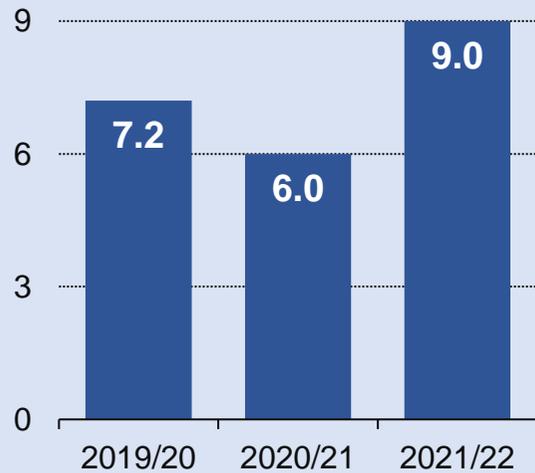
188 routine physiotherapy sessions

217 Mental Health First Aiders

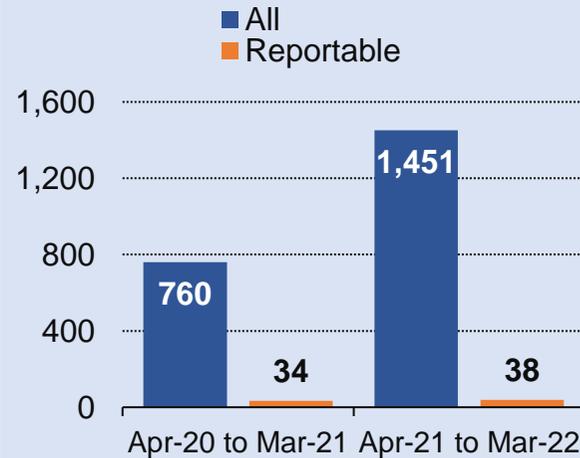
54 Health advocates

73 Anti-Stigma Ambassadors

Staff Turnover (excl. school staff)



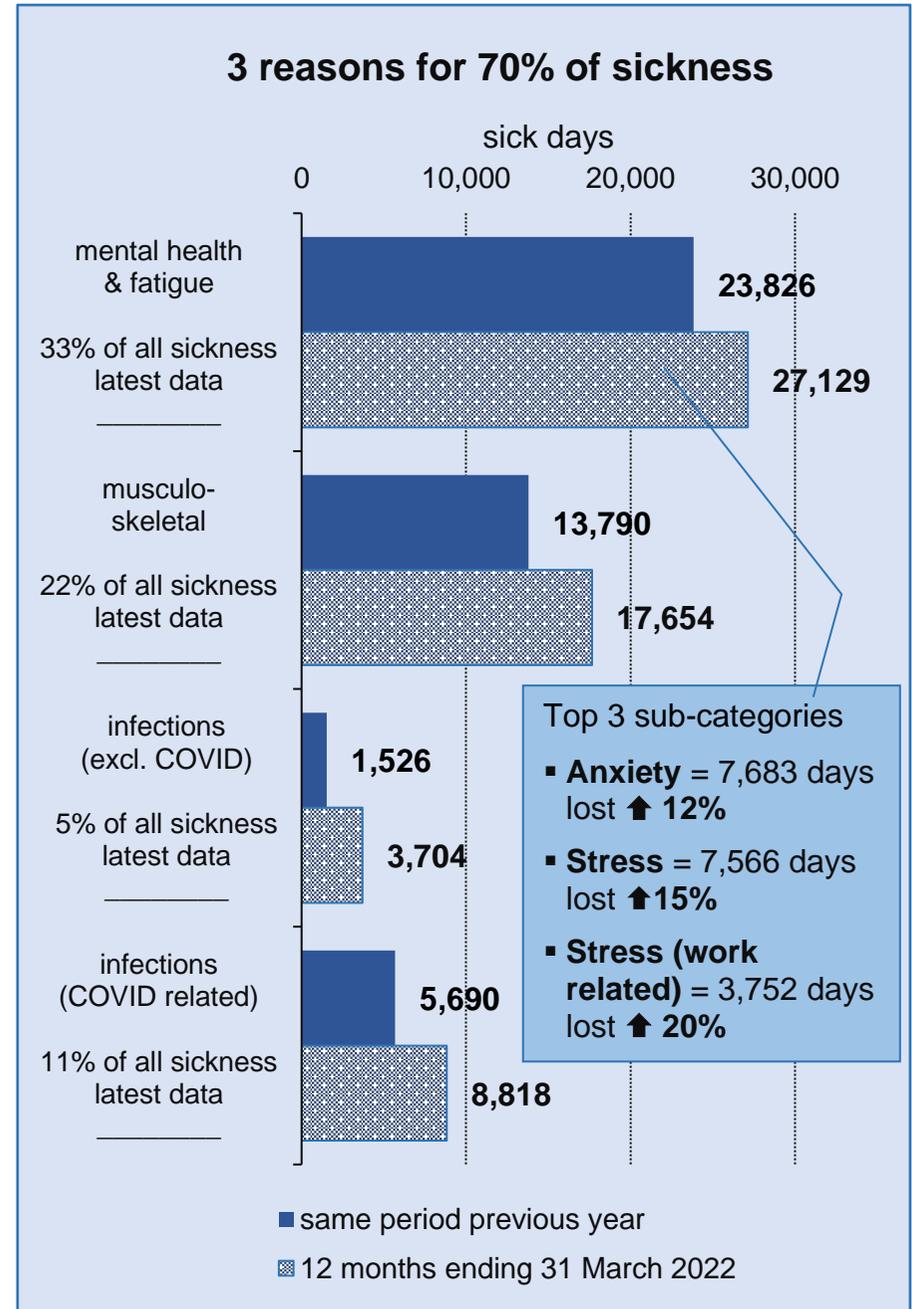
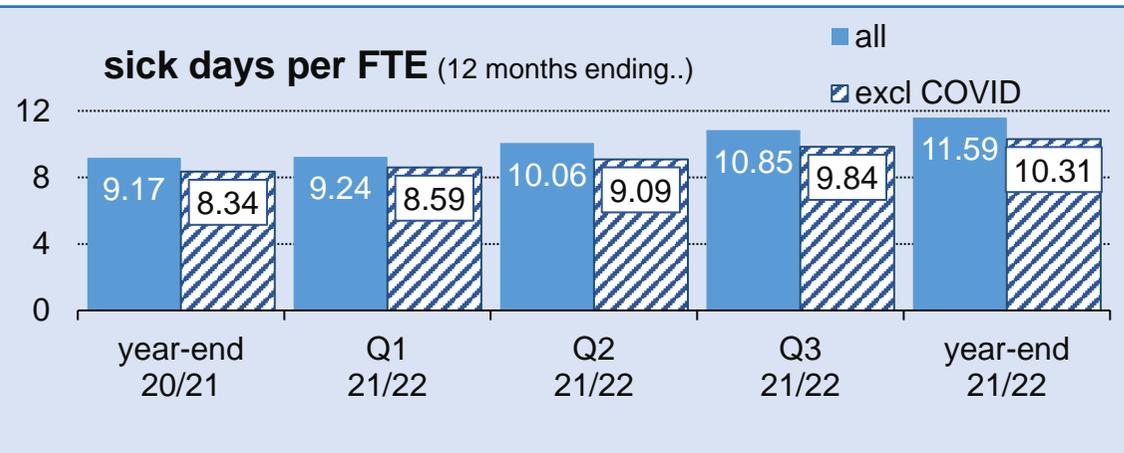
work related accidents/incidents



94% average compliance score

from 148 audits carried out during quarter four

AN EXCELLENT COUNCIL



81,464 days lost to sickness (↑7.8%)
11.59 days per FTE (↑ 0.74 days)

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>22% short-term (5 days or less)</p> | <p>17% medium-term (6 to 19 days)</p> | <p>61%* long term (20 days or more)</p> |
| <p>58% staff with no sickness</p> | <p>83% staff with less than 5 days sickness</p> | <p>17%* staff with more than 5 days sickness</p> |

*of the 23 cases in March, 7 have been dismissed and are on notice.

worse than last year

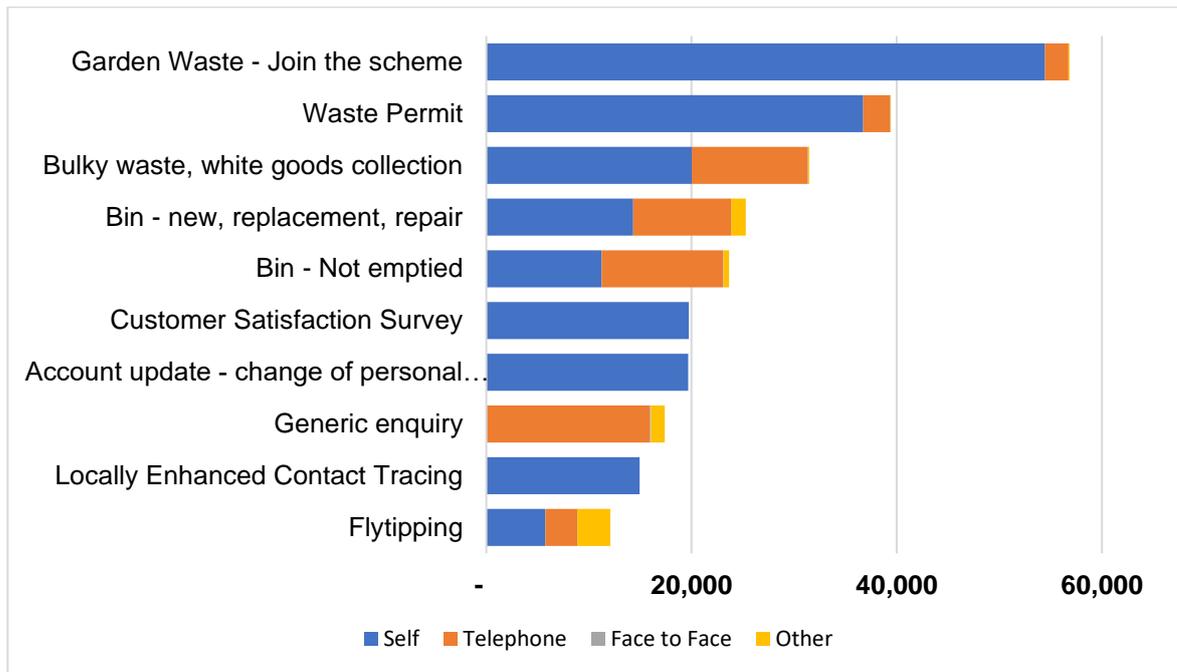
better than last year

similar to last year

Not comparable

We will design our services with service users and will use data and technology more effectively

- 234 Throughout the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 we received more than 1.8 million contacts through our reported channels – an increase of 26% on the previous year. All channels, except social media, showed increased contact, but the telephone remained the most frequently used channel for contacting us.
- 235 The increased call volume over the last 12 months is due to a combination of transferring lines to the ACD system, and reinstating lines closed due to the pandemic, such as coroners and leisure centres.
- 236 More recently, the £150 energy rebate has driven increased levels of telephone contact (more than 6,400 contacts were received, 3,500 via telephone, the remainder through our digital channels).
- 237 More than 164,000 households now have an online account for requesting services through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. In addition, an increasing number of residents are setting up accounts to access council tax and housing benefit information through the Revenues and Benefits Portal.
- 238 In line with previous reports, around a quarter of all contact led to the creation of a service request in our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. The remaining three quarters were from customers seeking advice, information, wanting to be transferred to another team, book an appointment, or request a progress update.
- 239 Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a steady increase in the number of service requests received. Although, over the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 1% fewer compared to the previous year (5,538 fewer), the number remains 28% higher than the pre-COVID level (additional 92,226).
- 240 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, the ten most frequently requested services were:



241 Notable changes during this period included:

- 27% reduction in reports of fly-tips (-4,560). This means that the number of reported fly-tips has returned to its pre-COVID number of around 12,000 per year.
- 23% reduction in missed bin collections (-7,379). However, the number of missed collections remains 40% higher than the pre-COVID number of almost 17,000.
- 11% increase in bulky waste collections (+3,108) with more than 31,000 collections requested, 23% higher than the pre-COVID number.
- 17% increase in requests for a waste permit (+5,759) with more than 39,000 requests received, 14% higher than the pre-COVID number.

242 These changes have had a knock-on effect to our customer satisfaction survey, with more surveys distributed and almost 6,500 additional people responding (up 49% to almost 20,000).

243 To help monitor delivery timescales of service requests logged within our CRM system, we have applied performance standards within the system where possible. A reportable and accurate performance standard has been applied to 58 service request types (a further eight have been identified and we are working to implement) which accounts for almost half of all service requests received during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 – the standard was met in 72% of cases.

244 Our CRM system enables customer satisfaction surveys (CSS) to be automatically sent to the customer when their service request (SR) is closed.

During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we emailed almost 172,000 surveys to our customers and received almost 20,000 responses (11%) which is almost 6,500 more than the previous year (+49%).

- 245 Although the satisfaction survey is linked to 127 service request types, eight service request types, summarised in the table below, made up 60% of total responses.

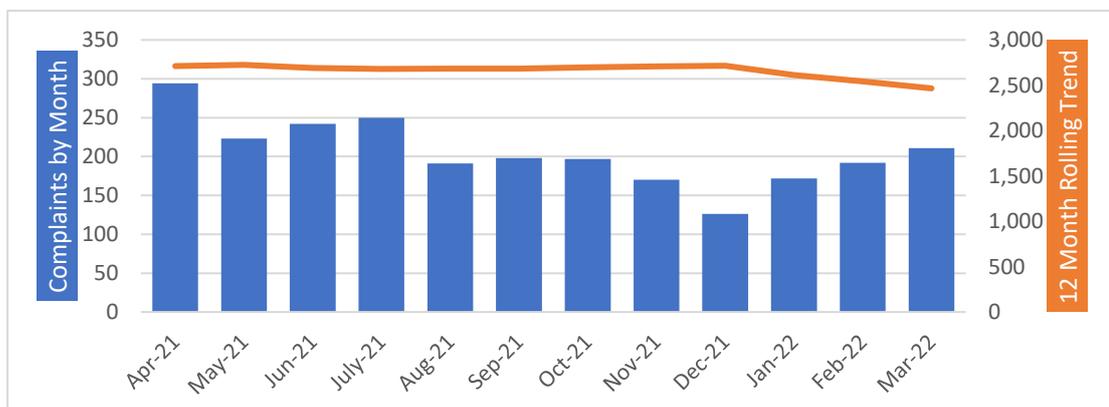
| | Response Rate | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| | Surveys returned / total SRs 12 months ending 31 March... | |
| | 2021 | 2022 |
| Bin: missed collection | 10.0% 4,327 / 31,042 | 18.2% 4,311 / 23,663 |
| Bulky Waste | 0.1% 21 / 28,351 | 12.1% 3,820 / 31,459 |
| Complaint | 11.8% 552 / 4,692 | 18.6% 794 / 4,257 |
| Council tax – change of payment method | 12% 642 / 5,342 | 5.9% 428 / 7,302 |
| Fly-tipping | 6.1% 1,015 / 16,654 | 6.7% 811 / 12,094 |
| Join the garden waste scheme | 1.0% 576 / 58,205 | 0.7% 401 / 56,835 |
| Road or footpath | 7.6% 568 / 7,488 | 7.4% 507 / 6,852 |
| Street lighting | 12.2% 790 / 6,470 | 10.5% 7016,703 |

- 246 Satisfaction rates vary significantly across different service request types. Analysis of satisfaction with service delivery shows seven areas attained satisfaction ratings of at least 90%: early help (94%), bulky waste collections (97%), waste permit requests (97%), birth death and marriage certificate requests (98%), joining the garden waste scheme (95%), applying for free school travel (96%), and changing the payment method for council tax (91%).
- 247 Six areas recorded a satisfaction level of less than 70%: requesting a new, replacement, or repair to bin (39%), service complaints (51%), dog and litter bins (62%), drainage and flooding (70%), clearing litter (67%) and tree or hedge pruning / removal (67%).
- 248 We have investigated the reasons for these low satisfaction levels:

- **New, replacement or repair to bins:** although supply issues relating to new and replacement bins have now been resolved, we now have issues with the supply of bin lids. Therefore, we are now unable to fulfil requests for lid repairs / replacements. We expect new stock to arrive in June 2022. In addition, throughout the year staffing levels were impacted by COVID-19 so the service prioritised essential activity such as refuse collection over bin repair and replacement activity.
- **Dog and litter bins:** requests at the beginning of the year were impacted by the bin supply issue. Although we have now received stock (prices have increased by 30%) and lead in times have reduced, the time to action requests is longer than we would have like.
- **Drainage and flooding:** A series of storms and heavy rain brought challenges to the service and unprecedented demand, all service requests were prioritised and dealt with in accordance of priority.
- **Service level complaints:** timeliness of both acknowledgement and responses is the biggest driver for dissatisfaction.
- **Clearing litter:** Throughout the year, staffing levels were impacted by COVID. However, our teams are now back to normal working.
- **Tree or hedge pruning/removal:** there three storms between December and February had a significant impact on our works and we are currently catching up with the programme.

249 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 2,466 corporate complaints (68 fewer than the previous year), and of those investigated, 48% were upheld.

250 It is worth noting that the ratio of complaints received during the latest 12 months to service requests was 0.6% or six complaints for every 1,000 service requests. This is the same as the previous year.



- 251 Almost two thirds of service level complaints were completed and responded to within timescale, which is broadly in line with the previous year.
- 252 During quarter four, the following service areas recorded the best performance: 76% of planning complaints were completed and responded to within timescale, 73% of social services complaints and 67% of parking complaints.
- 253 In line with previous reports, the most frequent cause for complaint, representing 15% of all complaints, was missed bin collections. Of those investigated in the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, 78% were upheld.
- 254 However, it is important to note that whilst we received 381 missed bin complaints over this period, we collected 13 million bins, a complaint to delivery ratio of just 0.003%. In addition, a smaller proportion of service requests due to missed collection are progressing to complaints.

| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | change |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------------|
| service requests (SR) | 31,042 | 23,663 | -7,379 (-24%) |
| No. complaints | 578 | 381 | -197 (-34%) |
| % of SRs | 1.9% | 1.6% | |

- 255 During this same period, 128 complainants stated they were dissatisfied with the response to their complaint and asked for it to be escalated to independent investigation by the Customer Feedback Team. Analysis shows that 26% could have been avoided through either timelier or more comprehensive updates from services, and/or completion of the agreed action in the first instance.
- 256 55 complaints were escalated to the independent investigation during quarter four:



*45 investigations were completed during quarter four - 14 were received before quarter four. Nine outcomes were delivered – five related to complaints received before quarter four.

- 257 In addition, the Ombudsman delivered decisions relating to 69 complaints. Of the 22 decisions delivered during the latest quarter, seven (32%) were upheld. Additional information regarding complaints escalated to the Ombudsman is available [here](#).

258 Throughout the reporting period, we also received 770 compliments, 305 fewer (-28%) than the same period the previous year. In line with previous reports, most of the compliments related to satisfaction with service provision – although we did also receive praise due to the actions of specific individuals.

259 In addition to compliments, we collect star ratings from customers who request a service via an online form. The rating helps us understand the customer’s experience when logging their request and identifies opportunities for improvement.

| All Service Request Types 12 months ending 31 March... | Star ratings received | Proportion of star ratings received | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | 5-star | 4-star | 3-star | 2-star | 1-star |
| 2021 | 104,869 | 65% | 17% | 10% | 2% | 5% |
| 2022 | 85,739 | 69% | 17% | 7% | 2% | 5% |

260 86% of respondents rated service request handling as four or five stars during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, up four percentage points on the previous year.

261 We are continuing to drive improvements across customer services and enhance the customer experience through our Integrated Customer Service initiative and Unified Communications Strategy.

262 In February 2022, we implemented a new Video Relay Service within our corporate contact centre. This provides immediate telephony support for customers who wish to communicate via British Sign Language (BSL) over video telephones and similar technologies.

263 This new service will run alongside existing solutions of face-to-face interpreter and text relay. Its aim is to increase the ease and speed of contact for service users at first point of contact.

264 Initial feedback has been positive, and we have put mechanisms in place to gather user feedback over a trial period to support our understanding of further improvement prospects.

265 72% of council services have been fully migrated to ACD system technology. Migrating these lines enables us to see an enhanced view of demand and performance statistics for all telephony contact, and thereby allows us to identify opportunities to improve the customer experience. Migration plans will continue into quarter one of 2022/23.

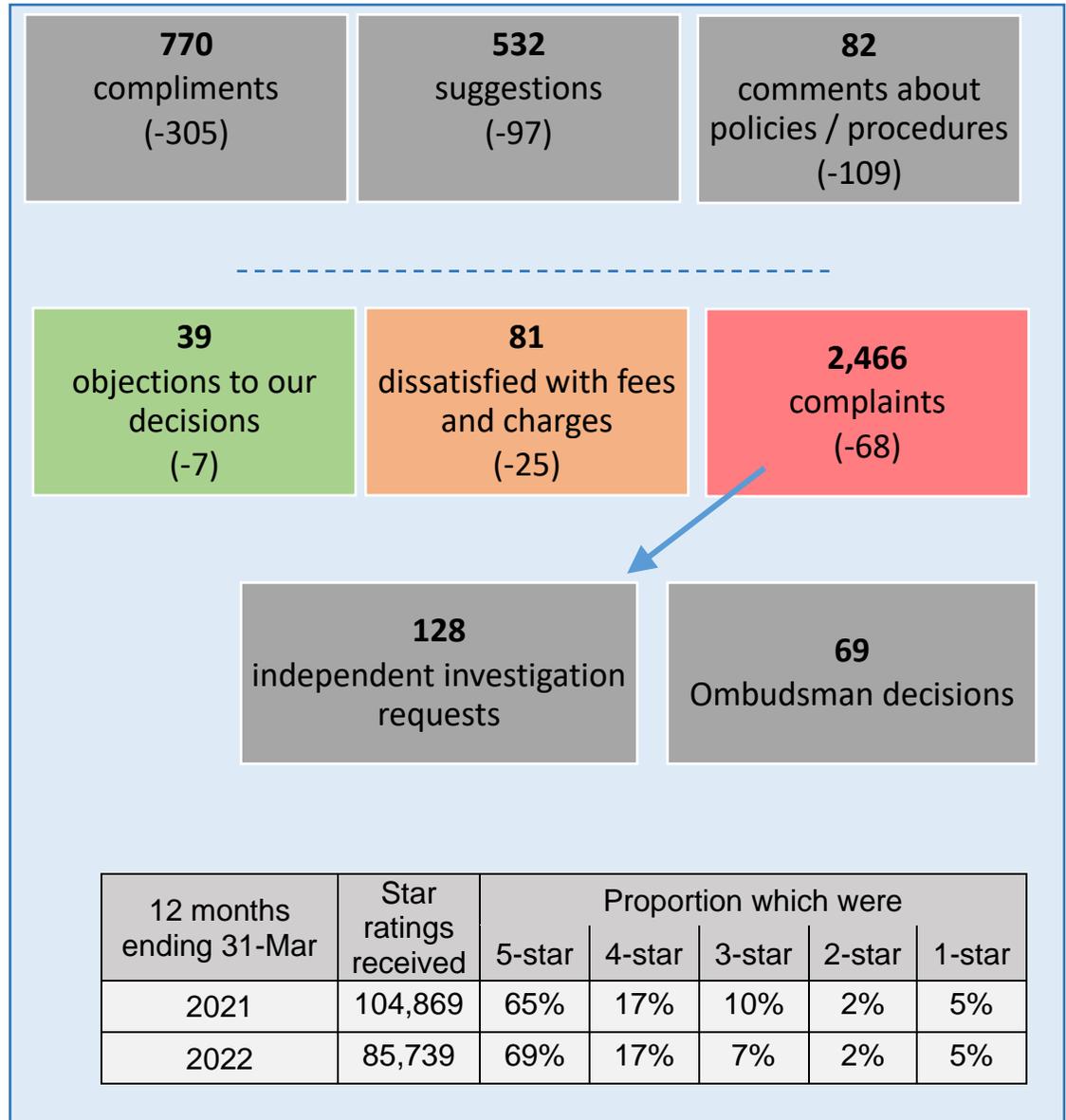
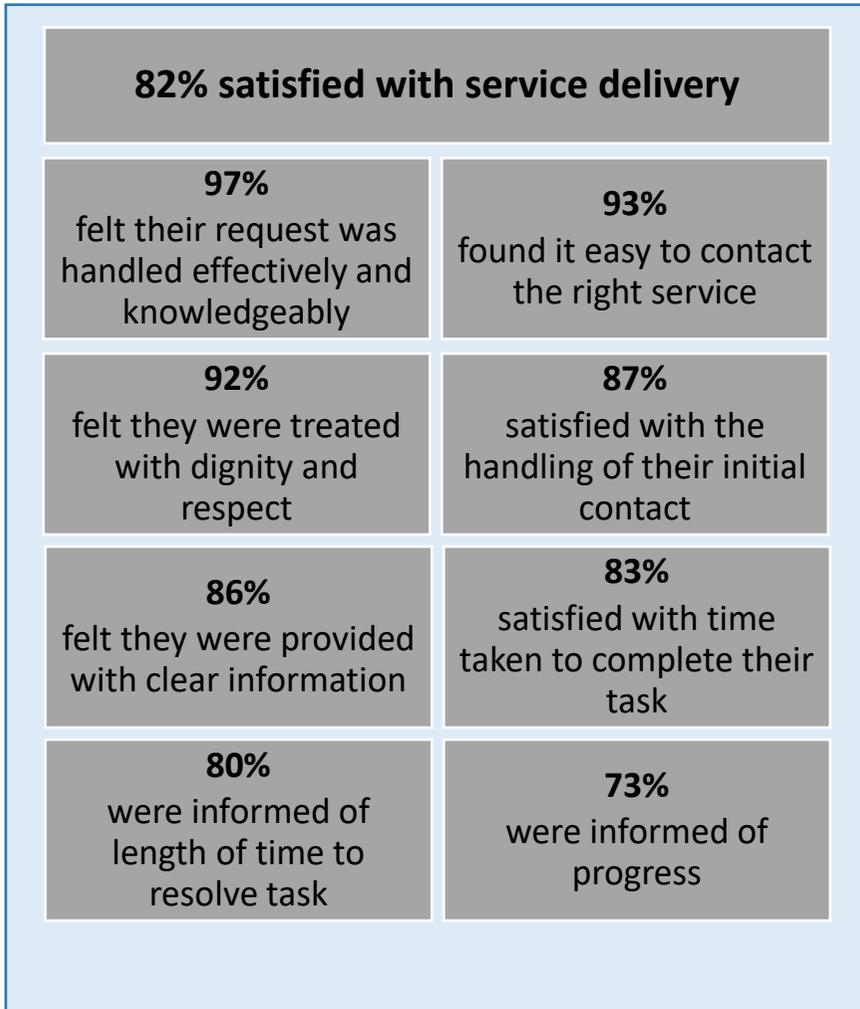
266 During quarter four, the following CRM improvements were delivered in response to customer feedback or as part of service improvement activity:

- improvements to performance standards across multiple processes to better inform customers of service delivery timeframes, and ensure that the performance standards can be monitored and reviewed
- More forms / processes meeting the web content accessibility guidelines.
- Updated all forms to standardise address / location search function to make it easier for customers to find and select an address/incident location.

267 During the latest quarter, we launched the following new online forms and processes: COVID-19 – omicron additional restriction grant form, Alternative Education Directory application form, apply for change of primary school, domestic petroleum storage licence, housing solutions duty to refer, planning enforcement and support, and support to Ukrainian Refugees.

268 We also carried out cyclical updates and improvements to the following processes: Durham Institute of Sport, Beautiful Durham, fun and food programme and licensing fees across all licensing forms.

AN EXCELLENT COUNCIL



Key Performance Indicators – Data Tables

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There are two types of performance indicators throughout this document:

- (a) Key target indicators – targets are set as improvements can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
- (b) Key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set as they are long-term and/or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners.

A guide is available which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources for the 2020/21 corporate indicator set. This is available to view either internally from the intranet or can be requested from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

KEY TO SYMBOLS

| | Direction of travel | Benchmarking | Performance against target |
|-------|--|---|---------------------------------|
| GREEN | Same or better than comparable period | Same or better than comparable group | Meeting or exceeding target |
| AMBER | Worse than comparable period (within 2% tolerance) | Worse than comparable group (within 2% tolerance) | Performance within 2% of target |
| RED | Worse than comparable period (greater than 2%) | Worse than comparable group (greater than 2%) | Performance >2% behind target |

National Benchmarking

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, for example educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

North East Benchmarking

The north east figure is the average performance from the authorities within the north east region, i.e., County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

MORE AND BETTER JOBS

Do residents have good job prospects?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | % of working age population in employment | 71.2 | 2021 | Tracker | 71.4 (amber) | 75.1 (red) | 70.2 (green) | | | Yes |
| 2 | Per capita household disposable income (£) | 16,617 | 2019 | Tracker | 16,315 (green) | 21,978 (red) | 17,096 (red) | | | No |
| 3 | Gross jobs created / safeguarded as a result of Business Durham activity | 507 | Oct-Dec 2021 | Tracker | 361 (green) | | | | | No |
| 4 | % of 16 to 17 year olds in an apprenticeship | 8.5 | as at Feb 2022 | Tracker | 5.1 (green) | 4.3 (green) | 7.1 (green) | 6.5 (green) | | Yes |

Is County Durham a good place to do business?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 5 | Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita in County Durham (£) | 16,925 | 2019 | Tracker | 16,501 (green) | 30,239 (red) | 20,727 (red) | | | No |
| 6 | No. of registered businesses in County Durham | 14,565 | Mar 2021 | Tracker | 14,105 (green) | | | | | No |
| 7 | Value (£ million) of new contracts secured | 8,173,215 | 2020/21 | | 8 (green) | 907,439 (green) | | | | No |
| 8 | Value (£ million) of GVA growth from jobs created | 37,103,456 | Jan-Mar 2022 | | 18,000,000 (green) | 45,880,302 (red) | | | | Yes |
| 9 | No. of Inward Investments secured | 7 | Jan-Mar 2022 | | 6 (green) | 3 (green) | | | | Yes |
| 10 | % of Business Durham business floor space that is occupied | 98.5 | Jan-Mar 2022 | | 85 (green) | 83.0 (green) | | | | Yes |

How well do tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?

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| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 11 | No. visitors to County Durham (million) | 11.39 | 2020 | Tracker | 20.13 (red) | | | | | No |
| 12 | No. jobs supported by the visitor economy | 6,794 | 2020 | Tracker | 12,133 (red) | | | | | No |
| 13 | Amount (£ million) generated by the visitor economy | 506.75 | 2020 | Tracker | 980.72 (red) | | | | | No |

Do our young people have access to good quality education and training?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 14 | Average Attainment 8 score | 50.1 | 2020/21 (academic year) | Tracker | 48.8 (green) | 50.9 (amber) | 49.2 (green) | | | No |
| 15 | Average point score per A level entry of state-funded school students | 41.2 | 2020/21 (academic year) | Tracker | 39.9 (green) | 41.6 (amber) | 40.0 (green) | | | No |
| 16 | % of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (KS2)* | 65 | 2018/19 (academic year) | Tracker | 67 | 65 (green) | 67 (red) | 61 (green) | | No |
| 17 | % of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training | 4.4 | Feb 2022 | Tracker | 5.6 (green) | 2.6 (red) | 4.4 (green) | | | Yes |
| 18 | Gap between average Attainment 8 score of Durham disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally (KS4) | -14.6 | 2020/21 (academic year) | Tracker | -14.4 (amber) | -14.4 (amber) | -16.2 (green) | | | No |
| 19 | % of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development* | 71.8 | 2018/19 (academic year) | | 64 (green) | 72.8 (amber) | 71.8 (green) | 71.8 (green) | | No |
| 20 | Gap between % of disadvantaged pupils and % of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally who achieve expected standard in reading, writing and maths (KS2)* | -19.8 | 2018/19 (academic year) | Tracker | -15.1 (red) | -20 (green) | -18 (red) | | | No |

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 21 | Ofsted % of Primary schools judged good or better | 90 | as at 31 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 89 (green) | 88 (green) | 92 (amber) | | | Yes |
| 22 | Ofsted % of secondary schools judged good or better | 67 | as at 31 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 64 (green) | 77 (red) | 69 (amber) | | | Yes |
| 23 | Exclusion from school of all Durham children - percentage of children with at least one fixed exclusion | 1.88 | 2019/20 (academic year) | Tracker | 2.2 (green) | 1.87 (amber) | 2.22 (green) | 2.39 (green) | | No |

*not reporting for 2020/21 as assessments did not take place

LONG AND INDEPENDENT LIVES

Are children, young people and families in receipt of universal services appropriately supported?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 24 | % of free school meals (FSM) eligible pupils taking FSM | 76.0 | Jan 2021 | Tracker | 75.8 (green) | 82.6 (red) | 82.6 (red) | | | No |
| 25 | Under-18 conception rate per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 17 | 16.5 | 2020 | Tracker | 19.0 (green) | 13.0 (red) | 18.6 (green) | 18.1 (green) | | Yes |
| 26 | % of five year old children free from dental decay | 73.2 | 2019 | Tracker | 74.2 (amber) | 76.6 (red) | 76.7 (red) | 71.7 (green) | | No |
| 27 | Alcohol specific hospital admissions for under 18s (rate per 100,000) | 52.5 | 2018/19-2020/21 | Tracker | 52.8 (green) | 29.3 (red) | 52.0 (amber) | 46.7 (red) | | Yes |
| 28 | Young people aged 10-24 admitted to hospital as a result of self-harm (rate per 100,000) | 450.9 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 361.2 (red) | 421.9 (red) | 542.9 (green) | 619.6 (green) | | Yes |
| 29 | % of children aged 4 to 5 years classified as overweight or obese** | 24.9 | 2019/20 | Tracker | 24.0 (red) | 23.0 (red) | 24.8 (amber) | 25.0 (green) | | No |
| 30 | % of children aged 10 to 11 years classified as overweight or obese** | 37.6 | 2019/20 | Tracker | 37.7 (green) | 35.2 (red) | 37.5 (amber) | 37.2 (amber) | | No |
| 31 | % of Education Health and Care Plans completed in the statutory 20 week time period (excl. exceptions) | 53 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 62 (red) | 58 (red) | 75.9 (red) | 82.0 (red) | 2020 | Yes |

**The National Child Measurement Programme ended in March 2020 when schools closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparisons to North East and Nearest Statistical Neighbours should be treated with caution as not all submitted of their measurements. NCMP data for the academic year 2020/21 has been published, however, local authority data is not available due to a 10% sample in each area being recorded.

Are children, young people and families in receipt of early help services appropriately supported?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 32 | % of successful interventions (families turned around) via the Stronger Families Programme (Phase 4) | 130 ⁹ [986/761] | Jan-Mar 2022 | 761 (green) | | | | | | Yes |
| 33 | % of children aged 0-2 years in the top 30% IMD registered with a Family Centre and having sustained contact | 87.3 | Jan-Mar 2022 | 80 (green) | 88.2 (amber) | | | | | Yes |

Are our services improving the health of our residents?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 34 | % of mothers smoking at time of delivery | 14.0 | Oct-Dec 2021 | 14.7 (green) | 16.6 (green) | 8.8 (red) | 11.6 (red) | 11.2 (red) | | Yes |
| 35 | Four week smoking quitters per 100,000 smoking population | 2,452 [1,830] | 2020/21 | Tracker | 2,945 [2,198] (red) | 1,670 (green) | 2,213 (green) | 2,736 (red) | | No |
| 36 | Male life expectancy at birth (years) | 77.8 | 2018-20 | Tracker | 78.3 (amber) | 79.4 (red) | 77.6 (green) | 77.9 (amber) | | No |
| 37 | Female life expectancy at birth (years) | 81.2 | 2018-20 | Tracker | 81.8 (amber) | 83.1 (red) | 81.5 (amber) | 81.6 (amber) | | No |
| 38 | Female healthy life expectancy at birth (years) | 59.9 | 2018-20 | Tracker | 58.3 (green) | 63.9 (red) | 59.7 (amber) | 60.2 (amber) | | Yes |
| 39 | Male healthy life expectancy at birth (years) | 58.8 | 2018-20 | Tracker | 59.6 (amber) | 63.1 (red) | 59.1 (amber) | 59.9 (amber) | | Yes |
| 40 | Excess weight in adults (Proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese) | 70.8 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 63.4 (red) | 63.5 (red) | 69.7 (amber) | 69.2 (red) | | Yes |

⁹ Annual target of 761

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 41 | Suicide rate (deaths from suicide and injury of undetermined intent) per 100,000 population | 14.3 | 2018-20 | Tracker | 13.4 (red) | 10.4 (red) | 12.4 (red) | 12.6 (red) | | No |
| 42 | Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth (%) | 29.8 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 29.0 (green) | 47.6 (red) | 35.4 (red) | 35.1 (red) | | Yes |
| 43 | Estimated smoking prevalence of persons aged 18 and over* | 14.3 | 2020 | Tracker | 17.0 | 12.1 (red) | 13.6 (red) | 13.5 (red) | | No |
| 44 | Self-reported well-being - people with a low happiness score | 8.8 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 10.9 (green) | 9.2 (green) | 10.1 (green) | 10.3 (green) | | Yes |
| 45 | Participation in Sport and Physical Activity: active | 59% | Nov 2020-Nov 2021 | Tracker | 60.6% (amber) | 61.4% (red) | 58.7% (amber) | | | Yes |
| 46 | Participation in Sport and Physical Activity: inactive | 30.8% | Nov 2020-Nov 2021 | Tracker | 30.1% (amber) | 27.2% (red) | 29.9% (amber) | | | Yes |

*Smoking prevalence data is taken from the Annual Population Survey which, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, was collected via face-to-face interviews. In 2020, due to the impact of the pandemic, this moved to telephone only collection. Data between 2019 and 2020 cannot, therefore, be compared.

Are people needing adult social care supported to live safe, healthy and independent lives?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 47 | Adults aged 65+ per 100,000 population admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care | 513.3 | 2021/22 | N/a | 625.8 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 48 | % of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services | 88.7 | 2021 | N/a | 84.1 (green) | 79.1 (green) | 72.1 (green) | 80.0 (green) | | Yes |
| 49 | % of individuals who achieved their desired outcomes from the adult safeguarding process | 92.2 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 95.0 (red) | 94.8 (red) | 94.9 (red) | 96.0 (red) | | Yes |
| 50 | % of service users receiving an assessment or review within the last 12 months | 65.0 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 89.9 (red) | | | | | Yes |

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 51 | Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support | 69.6 | 2019/20 | Tracker | 67.8 (green) | 64.2 (green) | 67.5 (green) | 66.2* (green) | | No |
| 52 | Overall satisfaction of carers with the support and services they receive (Biennial survey) | 51.2 | 2018/19 | Tracker | 43.3** (green) | 38.6 (green) | 47.2 (green) | 41.8* (green) | | No |
| 53 | Daily delayed transfers of care beds, all, per 100,000 population age 18+ | 2.9 | Feb 2020 | Tracker | 1.5 (red) | 11.0 (green) | 7.0 (green) | 11.0* (green) | | No |
| 54 | % of adult social care service users who report they have enough choice over the care and support services they receive | 77.6 | 2019/20 | Tracker | 75.1 (green) | 66.6 (green) | 73.0 (green) | 69.2* (green) | | No |

*unitary authorities

** results from 2016/17 survey

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SAFER

Are children, young people and families in receipt of social work services appropriately supported and safeguarded?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|--------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 55 | % of statutory referrals received by the First Contact Team or Emergency Duty Team processed within 1 working day | 97 [4,459 / 4,586] | 2021/22 | Tracker | 93 (green) | N/A | N/A | N/A | | Yes |
| 56 | % of statutory children in need referrals occurring within 12 months of a previous referral | 19 [923 / 4,963] | 2021/22 | Tracker | 22 (green) | 23 (green) | 22 (green) | 23 (green) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 57 | % of single assessments completed within 45 working days | 79 [5,103 / 6,482] | 2021/22 | Tracker | 89 (red) | 88 (red) | 87 (red) | 86.9 (red) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 58 | Rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10,000 population aged under 18 | 39.09 [393] | as at Mar 2022 | Tracker | 45 [450] | 41 | 67 | 59 | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 59 | Rate of children in need per 10,000 population (Cases open to Children's Social Care) | 386 [3,881] | as at Mar 2022 | Tracker | 368 [3,717] | 321 | 461 | 421 | 2020/21 | Yes |

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|--------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 60 | Rate of children open to One Point (early help) 10,000 population aged under 18 | 135 [1,381] | as at Mar 2022 | Tracker | 159 [1,625] | | | | | Yes |
| 61 | % of strategy meetings initiated which led to an initial child protection conference being held within 15 working days | 81 [578 of 713] | 2021/22 | Tracker | 87 (red) | 83 (red) | 85 (red) | 87 (red) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 62 | % of Social Workers with fewer than 20 cases | 49 | as at Mar 2022 | Tracker | | | | | | Yes |
| 63 | % of Statutory Case File Audits which are given a scaling score of 6 or above | 85.2 | Jul-Sep 2021 | 80 | | | | | | No |

Are we being a good corporate parent to Children Looked After (CLA)?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|---------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 64 | Rate of CLA per 10,000 population aged under 18 | 96 [982] | as at 28 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 93 [946] | 67 | 108 | 103 | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 65 | % of children adopted from care (as % of total children leaving care) | 18 [65] | 2021/22 | Tracker | 18 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 66 | % of CLA who are fostered incl. friends and family, independent fostering agency, In-house foster care | 73.6 [723] | as at 28 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 73.9 [699] | 71 | 72 | 72 | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 67 | % of external residential placements | 7 [68] | as at 28 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 6 [55] | | | | | Yes |
| 68 | % of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more who had a dental check | 81 | Mar 2022 | Tracker | 41 (green) | 40 (green) | 43 (green) | 41 (green) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 69 | % of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more who have had the required number of health assessments | 88 | Mar 2022 | Tracker | 91 (amber) | 91 (amber) | 94 (red) | 94 (red) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 70 | Emotional and behavioural health of children looked after continuously for | 14 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 13.5 (green) | 13.7 (green) | 13.9 (green) | 13.8 (green) | 2020/21 | No |

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 76 | 12 months or more (score between 0 to 40) | | | | | | | | | |
| 71 | Average Attainment Tracker 8 score of Children Looked After | 20.5 | 2019/20 | Tracker | 25.6 (red) | 21.4 (red) | 21.7 (green) | 22.4 (red) | | No |
| 72 | % of CLA achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (at KS2)** | 55 | 2018/19 | Tracker | 39.5 (green) | 36 (green) | 47 (green) | | | No |
| 73 | % of care leavers aged 17-18 in education, employment or training | 65 | As at 31 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 76 (red) | 65 (green) | 63 (green) | 63 (green) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 74 | % of care leavers aged 19-21 in education, employment or training | 59 | As at 31 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 56 (green) | 52 (green) | 50 (green) | 54 (green) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 75 | % of care leavers aged 17-18 in suitable accommodation | 97 | As at 31 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 95 (green) | 91 (green) | 94 (green) | 93 (green) | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 76 | % of care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation | 92 | As at 31 Mar 2022 | Tracker | 90 (green) | 88 (green) | 91 (green) | 92 (green) | 2020/21 | Yes |

*provisional data **not reporting for 2019/20 as assessments did not take place

How effective are we are tackling crime and disorder?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 77 | First time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10 to 17 (per 100,000 population aged 10 to 17) | 147 | Oct 2020-Sept 2021 | Tracker | 174 (green) | 220 (green) | 303 (green) | 231 (green) | 2019/20 | Yes |
| 78 | Overall crime rate per 1,000 population | 89.6 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 84.5 (red) | 77.0 (red) | | | | Yes |
| 79 | Rate of theft offences per 1,000 population | 20 | 2021 | Tracker | 18.3 (amber) | | | | | Yes |
| 80 | Proportion of all offenders who re-offend in a 12 month period (%) | 30.6 | Apr-Jun 2019 | Tracker | 30.8 (green) | 31.7 (green) | 35.7 (green) | 30.0 (red) | 2016/17 | No |
| 81 | Proven re-offending by young people (who offend) in a 12 month period (%) | 33.5 | 2019/20 | Tracker | 37.8 (green) | 38.4 (green) | 41.8 (green) | | Oct 2017-Sep 2018 | Yes |

How effective are we at tackling anti-social behaviour?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 82 | Satisfaction with the way that the council and police are dealing with local concerns about ASB and crime issues in your area. | 56.4 | Mar 2020 | Tracker | 50.1 (green) | | | 53.7 (green) | Jun 2019 | No |
| 21 | No. police reported incidents of anti-social behaviour | 15,984 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 17,620 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 84 | No. council reported incidents of anti-social behaviour | 14,706 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 15,396 (green) | | | | | Yes |

How well do we reduce misuse of drugs and alcohol?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 85 | % of successful completions of those in alcohol treatment | 37.4 | Mar 2021-Feb 2022 | Tracker | 32.6 (green) | 36.6 (green) | 30.7 (green) | | | Yes |
| 86 | % of successful completions of those in drug treatment - opiates | 6.0 | Mar 2021-Feb 2022 | Tracker | 4.8 (green) | 5.0 (green) | 3.3 (green) | | | Yes |
| 87 | % of successful completions of those in drug treatment - non-opiates | 35.6 | Mar 2021-Feb 2022 | Tracker | 35.3 (green) | 34.7 (green) | 30.0 (green) | | | Yes |
| 88 | % of anti-social behaviour incidents that are alcohol related | 13.0 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 15 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 89 | % of violent crime that is alcohol related | 33.3 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 31.8 (amber) | | | | | Yes |
| 90 | Alcohol seizures | 194** | Apr-Jun 2018 | Tracker | 398 (green) | | | | | No |

**under review

How well do we tackle abuse of vulnerable people, including domestic abuse, child exploitation and radicalisation?

| Page Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-------------|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 91 | Building resilience to terrorism (self-assessment). Score - level 1(low) to 5(high) | 3* | 2017/18 | Tracker | 3 (green) | | | | | No |
| 92 | No of individuals with a referral for 1:1 CSE Support from Supporting Solutions Team** | 388 | 2021/22 | Tracker | new** | | | | | Yes |

*under review ** New definition – includes all children - high/medium/low risk (previously only high-risk referred to Supporting Solutions)

How do we keep our environment safe, including roads and waterways?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 93 | No. of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents - No. of fatalities - No. of seriously injured | 206 16 190 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 168 (red) 16 152 | | | | | Yes |
| 94 | No. of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents - No. of fatalities - No. of seriously injured | 26 1 25 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 18 (red) 1 17 | | | | | Yes |

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

How clean and tidy is my local environment?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 95 | % of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level | 4.74 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 6.4 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 96 | % of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level | 10.07 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 10.68 (green) | | | | | Yes |

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 97 | % of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of dog fouling that fall below an acceptable level | 1.68 | Oct-Dec 2021 | Tracker | 1.35 (red) | | | | | Yes |
| 98 | Number of fly-tipping incidents | n/a | | Tracker | | | | | | No |

Are we reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 99 | % reduction in CO ₂ emissions in County Durham (carbon neutral by 2050) | 54 | 2019 | Tracker | 52 (green) | | | | | No |
| 100 | % reduction in CO ₂ emissions from local authority operations compared to the 2008/09 baseline, 80% by 2030 | 58 | 2020/21 | Tracker | 51 (green) | | | | | No |

How effective and sustainable is our collection and disposal of waste?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 101 | % of municipal waste diverted from landfill | 89.4 | 2021 | 95 (red) | 93 (red) | 92.2 (red) | 92.1 (red) | | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 102 | % of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted | 38 | 2021 | Tracker | 38.1 (red) | 42.3 (red) | 33.5 (green) | | 2020/21 | Yes |

Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 103 | Number of properties improved, adapted or brought back into use | 1,230 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 747 (green) | | | | | Yes |

86 of 98

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 104 | Number of empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention | 37 | Jan-Mar 2022 | 50 (red) | 37 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 105 | Number of net homes completed | 289 | Jan-Mar 2022 | 327 (red) | 437 (red) | | | | | Yes |
| 106 | Number of affordable homes delivered | 466 | 2020/21 | 300 (green) | 628 (red) | | | | | No |
| 107 | Number of households accessing the Housing Solutions Service | 3,594 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 3,366 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 108 | Number of households helped to stay in their home | 386 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 263 (green) | | | | | Yes |
| 109 | Number of households helped to move to alternative accommodation | 239 | Jan-Mar 2022 | Tracker | 219 (green) | | | | | Yes |

Is it easy to travel around the county?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 110 | % of A roads where maintenance is recommended | 3.1 | 2020 | Tracker | 3.0 (red) | 4.0 (green) | 3.0 (red) | | 2020/21 | No |
| 111 | % of B roads where maintenance is recommended | 3.0 | 2020 | Tracker | 3.3 (green) | 6.0 (green) | 4.0 (green) | | 2020/21 | No |
| 112 | % of C roads where maintenance is recommended | 2.6 | 2020 | Tracker | 2.3 (red) | 6.0 (green) | 4.0 (green) | | 2020/21 | No |
| 113 | % of unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended | 22.5 | 2020 | Tracker | 21.3 (red) | 17.0 (red) | 17.0 (red) | | 2020/21 | No |
| 114 | Highways maintenance backlog (£millions) | 171.2 | 2020 | Tracker | 172.6 (green) | | | | | No |
| 115 | Bridge Stock Condition – Principal Roads* | 82.0 | 2020 | Tracker | 81.1 (red) | | | | | No |
| 116 | Bridge Stock Condition – Non-Principal Roads* | 81.0 | 2020 | Tracker | 80.1 (red) | | | | | No |

* Bridge stock condition (>=90 very good condition / >=80 good condition / >=65 fair condition / >=40 poor condition / <40 very poor condition)

EXCELLENT COUNCIL

How well do we look after our people?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 117 | % of performance appraisals completed on current posts in rolling year period (excluding schools)*** | N/a* | N/a | N/a | N/a | | | | | No |
| 118 | Days / shifts lost to sickness absence (all services excluding schools) | 11.59 | 2021/22 | 11.20 (red) | 9.17 (red) | | | | | Yes |
| 119 | % posts with no absence in rolling year (excluding schools) | 58.43 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 71.55 (red) | | | | | Yes |
| 120 | % of sickness absence which is short term | 21.73 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 10.25 | | | | | Yes |
| 121 | % of sickness absence which is medium term | 17.25 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 17.43 | | | | | Yes |
| 122 | % of sickness absence which is long term | 61.02 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 72.3 | | | | | Yes |
| 123 | % of employees having five days or less sickness per 12 month period | 82.64 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 82.57 (red) | | | | | Yes |

*Due to new system introduction

**includes school support staff but excludes teachers. All single/upper tier councils [Local Government Workforce Survey 2017/18](#)

*** Having put all Personal Development Reviews on hold due to COVID-19, we are now reinstating the process, starting with our leaders in October 2021.

Are our resources being managed for the best possible outcomes for residents and customers?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 124 | % of council tax collected in-year | 98.5 | 2021/22 | Not Set | 93.7 (green) | | 94.0 | | 2020/21 | Yes |
| 125 | % of business rates collected in-year | 98.4 | 2021/22 | Not Set | 93.4 (green) | | 94.4 | | 2020/21 | Yes |

How good are our services to customers and the public?

| Ref | Description | Latest data | Period covered | Period target | 12 months earlier | National figure | North East figure | Nearest statistical neighbour | Period covered if different | updated this quarter |
|-----|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 126 | % Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests responded to within 20 working days | 79 | Jan-Mar 2022 | 90 (red) | 83 (red) | | | | | Yes |
| 127 | Customer contacts: telephone* | 1,402,221 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 1,100,242 | | | | | Yes |
| 128 | Customer contacts: face to face | 12,957 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 0** | | | | | Yes |
| 129 | Customer contacts: web forms | 309,153 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 280,526 | | | | | Yes |
| 130 | Customer contacts: emails | 100,974 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 5,127 | | | | | Yes |
| 131 | Customer contacts: social media | 3,563 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 58,235 | | | | | Yes |
| 132 | % of calls answered* | 91 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 95 | | | | | Yes |
| 133 | % of calls answered within 3 minutes* | 84 | 2021/22 | Tracker | 91 | | | | | Yes |

*data is not comparable as new telephony lines continue to be added to ACD ** CAP were closed during the 12 months ending 31 March 2021

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

7 July 2022

**Customer Feedback Report,
Year End update, 2021/22**



Report of Corporate Management Team

Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

**Councillor Susan McDonnell, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Digital and
Customer Services**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To bring together a wide range of information collected from our customers that describe their experiences of using our services. The information relates to the latest 12 months (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022), compared to the same period in the previous year.

Executive summary

- 2 Information relating to our customers, such as their satisfaction / dissatisfaction with, and general experiences of the services and support we provide, is an important aid to improve customer service and align our actions with customer need.
- 3 This report covers the following range of feedback:
 - an overview of contact through our Customer Services team,
 - a summary of customer satisfaction outcomes through completed surveys and compliments received,
 - a selection of customer suggestions and their outcomes,
 - an overview of comments relating to our policies, procedures, and decision-making,
 - our performance in dealing with complaints (both statutory and non-statutory corporate complaints), and
 - recent developments that enhance the customer experience.

- 4 Throughout the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 we received more than 1.8 million contacts through our reported channels – an increase of 26% on the previous year. All channels, except social media, showed increased contact, but the telephone remained the most frequently used channel for contacting us.
- 5 The increased call volume over the last 12 months is due to a combination of transferring lines to the ACD system, and reinstating lines closed due to the pandemic, such as coroners and leisure centres.
- 6 More recently, the £150 energy rebate has driven increased levels of telephone contact (more than 6,400 contacts were received, 3,500 via telephone, the remainder through our digital channels).
- 7 More than 164,000 households now have an online account for requesting services through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. In addition, an increasing number of residents are setting up accounts to access council tax and housing benefit information through the Revenues and Benefits Portal.
- 8 In line with previous reports, around a quarter of all contact led to the creation of a service request in our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. The remaining three quarters were from customers seeking advice, information, wanting to be transferred to another team, book an appointment, or request a progress update.
- 9 Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a steady increase in the number of service requests received. Over the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, although there was a 1% decrease on the previous year (5,538 fewer), the number remains 28% higher than the pre-COVID level (additional 92,226).
- 10 To help monitor delivery timescales of service requests logged within our CRM system, we have applied performance standards within the system where possible.
- 11 At the end of quarter four, a reportable and accurate performance standard had been applied to 58 service requests. Improvement work will continue during 2022/23.
- 12 49% of service requests processed during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, were assessed against a performance standard with the standard met in 72% of cases.
- 13 Our CRM system enables customer satisfaction surveys (CSS) to be automatically sent to the customer when their service request (SR) is closed.

- 14 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 we e-mailed almost 172,000 surveys to our customers and received almost 20,000 responses (11%) which is almost 6,500 more than the previous year (+49%).
- 15 Dissatisfaction continues to be mainly linked to not keeping customers informed of progress, not explaining our decision making, taking too long to complete tasks, and not resolving the issue long-term. It is important to note that the ongoing response to the pandemic and increased demand have led to extended service delivery times over the reporting period.
- 16 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 2,466 corporate complaints – 68 fewer than the previous year. Of those investigated, 48% were upheld.
- 17 During this same period, 128 complainants were dissatisfied with the response to their complaint and asked for it to be escalated to independent investigation by the Customer Feedback Team. Further analysis that 26% could have been avoided through either timelier or more comprehensive updates from services, and/or completion of the agreed action in the first instance.
- 18 As of 31 March 2022, around 19,500 adults and 3,900 children and young people were being supported by Adult and Health Services (AHS) and Children and Young People’s Services (CYPS) respectively. And we continue to monitor our performance for statutory complaints that arise from our duties as a local social services authority.
- 19 AHS received 78 complaints over the reporting period, 4% more than the previous year. Of these, 30% were upheld and 32% partially upheld. This correlates with a 6% increase in adults open to services (19,557 compared to 18,460 last year).
- 20 The most frequent reasons for making a complaint were dissatisfaction with charges (24 complaints), speed of service (20 complaints), and three categories all receiving 12 complaints: the application of service guidance/procedures; lack of communication (other) and lack of explanation/explanation not understood.
- 21 CYPS received 34 complaints over the reporting period, 17% fewer than on the previous year. Of these 9% were upheld and 50% partially upheld.
- 22 Due to the complexity of these complaints, up to three reasons can be recorded for each. During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, the most frequently recorded reasons for making a complaint (14 complaints) was communication and staff behaviour (14 complaints). Nine complaints featured disagreement (with action/ assessment/ decision/ recorded information).

- 23 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, the Ombudsman delivered decisions relating to 69 complaints. Of the 22 decisions delivered during the latest quarter, seven (32%) were upheld.
- 24 In order to ensure that the contents of this report support learning and continuous improvement, the format and data content of the report are currently under review; there will therefore be a refreshed format of the report from Q1 of 2022/23.

Recommendation(s)

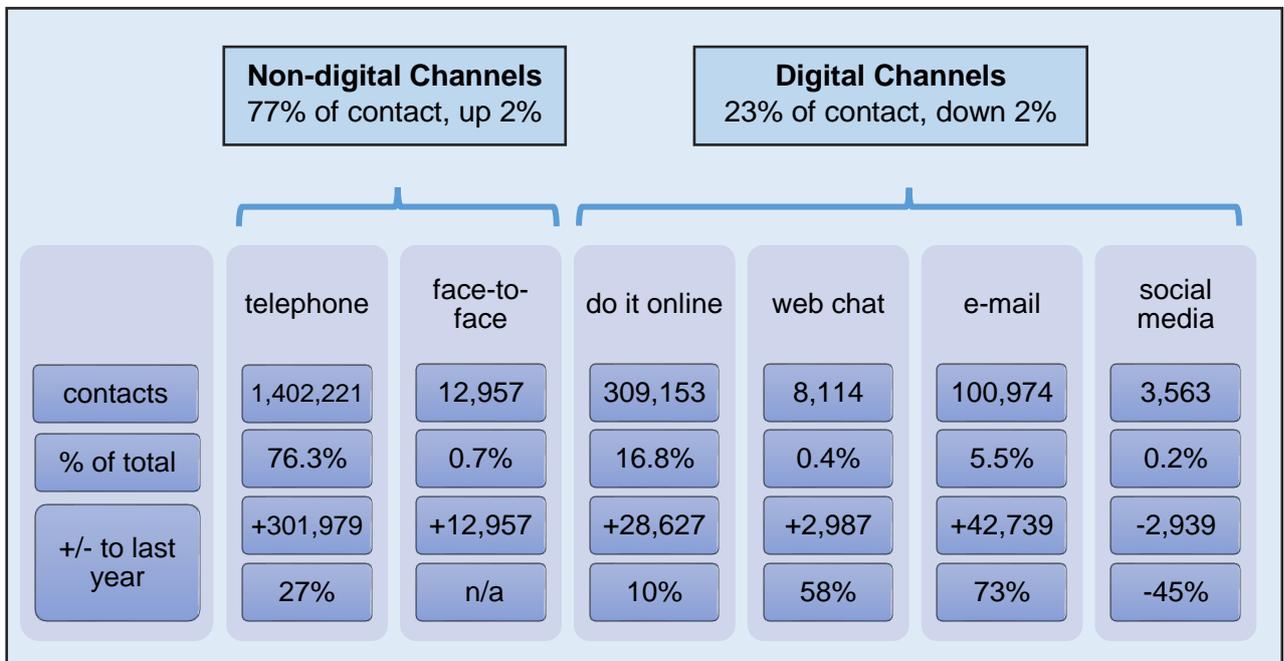
- 25 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is asked to note the contents of the report.

Background

- 26 Successful organisations listen and respond to their customers and one way to gain this valuable insight is by gathering and utilising customer feedback.
- 27 The customer feedback report brings together a wide range of information collected from our customers which describes their experiences of using our services.

Contact through our customer services team

- 28 As summarised in the infographic below, more than 1.8 million contacts were received through our reported channels during 2021/22. Of these, more than half (around one million contacts) were handled by our corporate Customer Services Teams.



- 29 Contacts increased across all channels, except social media, compared to the previous year.

Non-Digital Channels

- 30 In line with previous reports, the telephone remains the most frequently used channel for contacting us.
- 31 Broadly speaking, we receive telephone calls either through our Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) system, which routes calls to groups of agents based on a first-in-first-answered criteria, or directly to a telephone extension (non-ACD).

- 32 Only calls received via our ACD system are included in our telephone statistics so in line with our initiative to develop a customer-focused, one-council approach to service delivery, we are transferring non-ACD lines into the ACD system. This will allow us to see a more holistic view of telephony demand and performance across the council, and to monitor and identify opportunities to improve and enhance the customer experience.
- 33 The increased call volume over the last 12 months is due to a combination of transferring lines to the ACD system, and reinstating lines closed due to the pandemic, such as coroners and leisure centres.
- 34 More recently, the £150 energy rebate has driven increased levels of telephone contact (more than 6,400 contacts were received, 3,500 via telephone, the remainder through our digital channels). Most contact was from customers asking when they would receive the rebate, but we also received a noticeable increase in demand from customers requesting to set up a direct debit to ensure they receive their rebate as soon as possible.
- 35 The increase in face-to-face contact reflects the re-opening of our Customer Access Points (CAPs). Except for helpdesk services at County Hall, which continued throughout the pandemic, the remainder of the CAP estate was open only between 30 September 2021 and 13 December 2021.
- 36 Therefore, the helpdesk at County Hall represents 93% of the face-to-face contact for the 12 months ending 31 March 2022.

Digital Channels

- 37 Although the telephone remains the most popular method overall, more customers are choosing to interact with us via our digital channels.
- 38 More than 164,000 households now have an online account for requesting services through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. In addition, an increasing number of residents are setting up accounts to access council tax and housing benefit information through the Revenues and Benefits Portal.

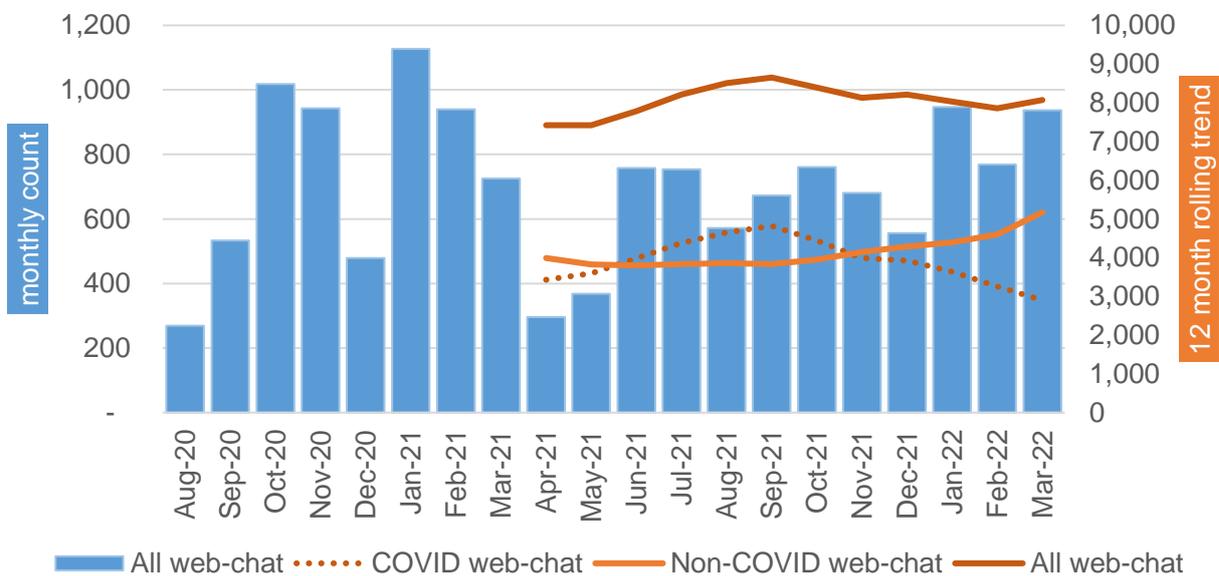
| Account | | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | Change | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|------|
| Do-it-online (CRM) | | 147,425 | 164,617 | +17,192 | +12% |
| Revenues & Benefits | Open Portal | 24,225 | 28,387 | +4,162 | +17% |
| | Council tax e-bills | 31,027 | 32,616 | +1,589 | +5% |

39 The movement from non-digital to digital channels is particularly noticeable across customers logging service requests within our CRM system. The shift from telephone to online can be seen, as per the table below:

| | | proportion of service requests logged by channel – 12 months ending 31 March | |
|-------------|---------------------|--|------------|
| | | 2021 | 2022 |
| Non-digital | Telephone | 30% | 24% |
| | Face-to-face | 0% | 0% |
| | Total | 30% | 24% |
| Digital | Do it online portal | 64% | 71% |
| | Other digital* | 6% | 5% |
| | Total | 70% | 76% |

*social media (Facebook and Twitter), webchat, e-mail, virtual appointments

40 Although webchat is showing a slight declining trend, analysis has shown this is mainly due to decreasing demand for our COVID-19 related services.



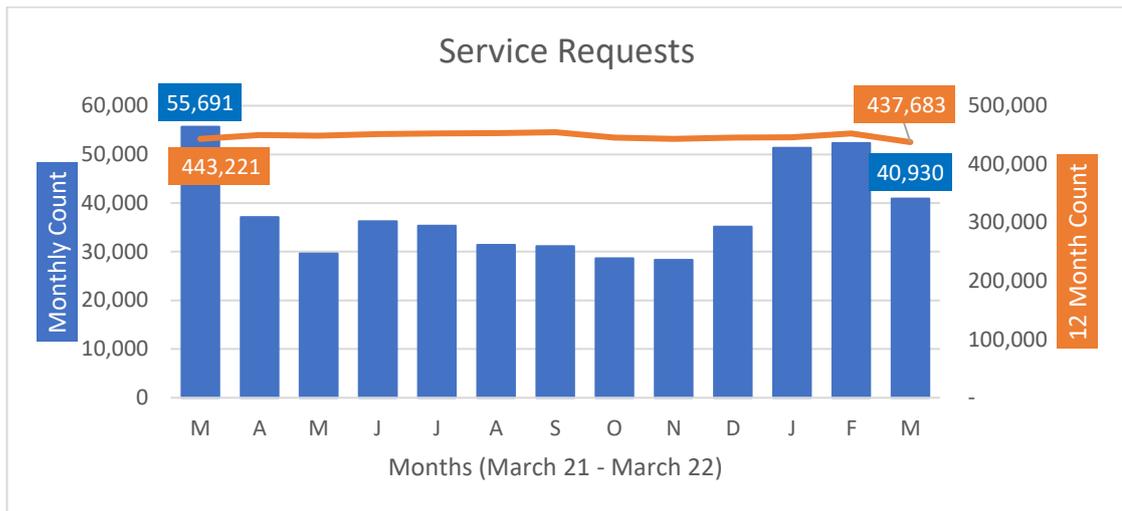
41 The increase in non-COVID related contact is driven by increases across general enquiries (+250, +32%) and council tax (+66, +15%) enquires in the main, driven by queries relating to the £150 council tax rebate.

Service Requests

- 42 Around 25% of customer contact leads to the creation of a service request in our CRM system. The remaining 75% relates to customers seeking advice or more information, wanting to be transferred to another team, booking an appointment, or requesting a progress update.
- 43 Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a steady increase in the number of service requests received. However, latest data shows a decrease on the previous year.



- 44 The increase at the start of the pandemic (2020) was driven by residents contacting us to seek financial help (both personal and business related) or report issues arising from spending more time at home (especially environmental issues such as litter and fly-tipping, and anti-social behaviour issues such as noise complaints), and the need to enforce various COVID-19 restrictions. However, the scale of this initial increase is masked by corresponding decreases across service requests linked to services which were required to temporarily close due to COVID restrictions, most notably waste permits and bulky waste collections.
- 45 By the end of 2021, we were dealing with fewer COVID-related service requests, but the overall total continued to increase. This mainly followed the reinstatement, and increased demand for, those waste services which were temporarily closed.
- 46 Latest data shows around 5,500 fewer service requests were received in the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, a decrease of 1% on the previous year.

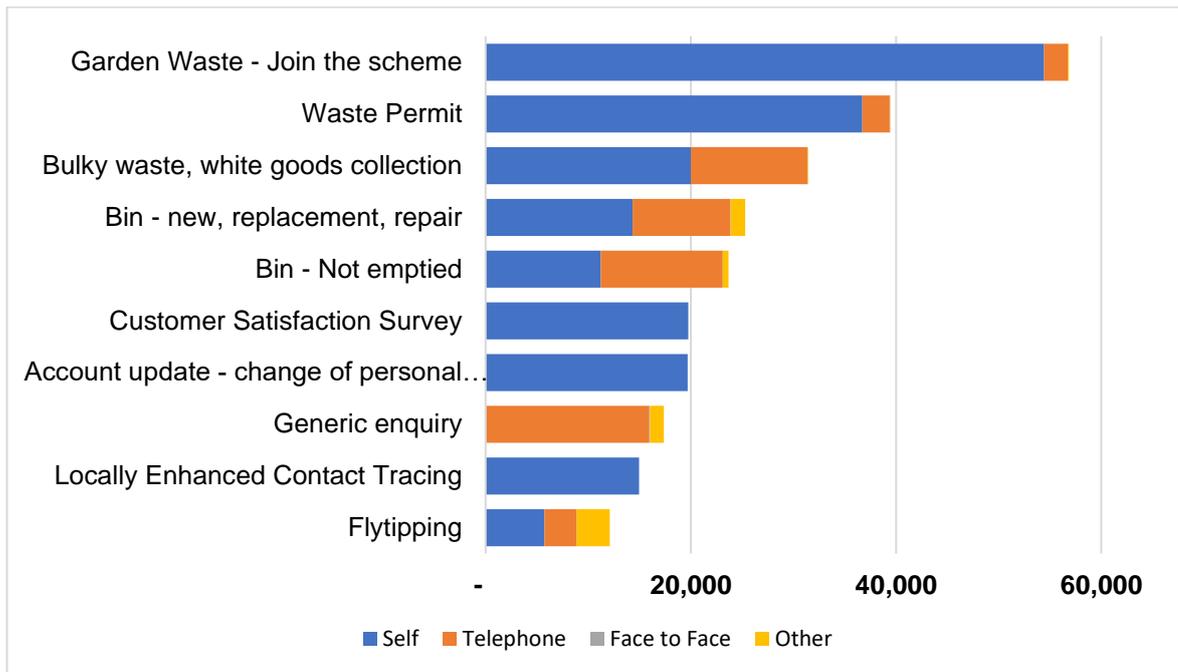


47 Notable changes during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 include:

- 27% reduction in reports of fly-tips (-4,560). This means that the number of reported fly-tips has returned to its pre-COVID number of around 12,000 per year.
- 23% reduction in missed bin collections (-7,379). However, the number of missed collections remains 40% higher than the pre-COVID number of almost 17,000.
- 11% increase in bulky waste collections (+3,108) with more than 31,000 collections requested, 23% higher than the pre-COVID number.
- 17% increase in requests for a waste permit (+5,759) with more than 39,000 requests received, 14% higher than the pre-COVID number.

48 These changes have had a knock-on effect to our customer satisfaction survey, with more surveys distributed and almost 6,500 additional people responding (up 49% to almost 20,000).

49 Over the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, the ten most frequently requested services were:



Performance Standards

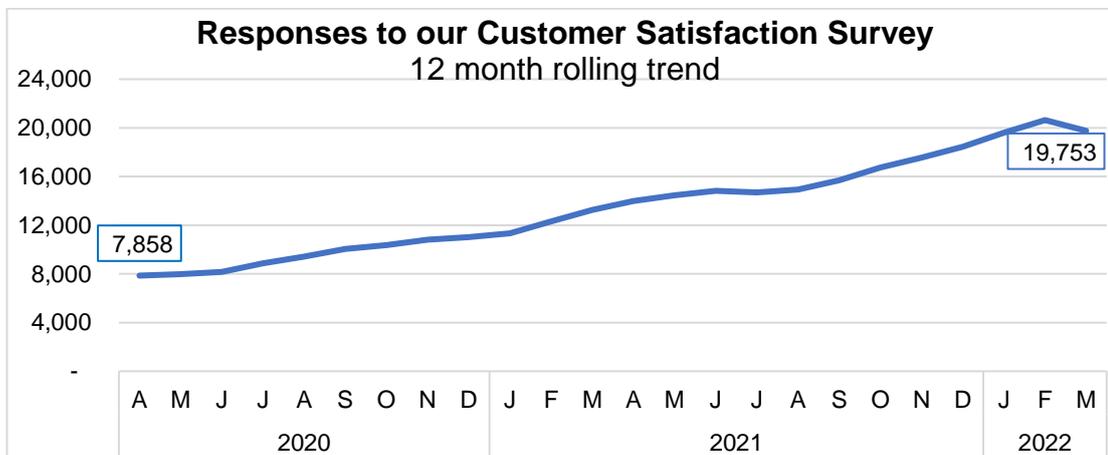
- 50 To enable us to monitor delivery timescales of service requests logged within our CRM system, we have applied performance standards within the system where possible¹.
- 51 At the end of quarter four, a reportable and accurate performance standard had been applied to 58 service requests. We have also identified a further eight processes where we could apply a performance standard and work to implement is continuing.
- 52 However, several outstanding processes are linked to multiple performance standards, so they are more difficult to apply. For example, the performance standard for the removal of graffiti is three working days, unless it is offensive then it changes to within 24 hours of notification. The application of performance standards for service requests linked to multiple performance standards could potentially be addressed through data dashboard development during quarter one 2022/23.
- 53 49% of all service requests processed during 2021/22 were assessed against a performance standard, and of these, the performance standard was met in 72% of cases. This is four percentage points higher than the previous quarter.
- 54 During quarter four, 80% of service requests with a measurable performance standard related to one of six areas:

¹ We do not apply performance standards if the process is not fully managed within the CRM which accounts for 48% of processes. We also did not apply performance standards to many of the COVID-related service requests, partly due to the speed of the set-up, but also due to the complexity and unknown elements of the request which often resulted in required modifications as the pandemic progressed.

| | Performance standard (days) | Service requests received | Completed within timeframe |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Join the garden waste scheme | 1 | 39,464 | 79% |
| Waste permit | 1 | 9,844 | 96% |
| Bin – not emptied | 3 | 4,672 | 32% |
| Street lighting | 10 | 1,905 | 75% |
| Fly-tipping | 3 | 2,925 | 46% |
| Road or footpath | 10 | 1,812 | 50% |

Customer satisfaction - surveys and compliments

- 55 Our CRM system enables customer satisfaction surveys (CSS) to be automatically sent to the customer when their service request (SR) is closed.
- 56 Although our overall survey response rate as a proportion of service requests is low – as seen below – it has improved over the last two years.



- 57 The improved response rate is due to a combination of essential maintenance work which has resolved previous system closure issues, linking the survey to more service requests, and capturing more customer email addresses.
- 58 The table below provides a summary of survey responses; the return rate remains low overall.

| | 12 months ending 31 March... | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | 2021 | 2022 | Change |
| Service Request types | 105 | 127 | 22 |
| Service Requests received | 333,541 | 324,356 | -9,185 (-2.75%) |
| Surveys emailed to customer | 111,547 (33%) | 171,701 (53%) | +60,154 (53.9%) |
| Responses to survey | 13,263 (11.9%) | 19,753 (11.5%) | +6,490 (48.9%) |
| Responses as a % of service requests | 4% | 6.1% | +2.1pp |

- 59 Although the satisfaction survey is linked to 127 service request types, 82% of the survey responses received throughout 2021/22 related to only 21 service request types (see appendix five). Eight service request types, summarised in the table below, made up 60% of total responses.

| | Response Rate | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Surveys returned / total SRs | |
| | 12 months ending 31 March... | |
| | 2021 | 2022 |
| Bin: missed collection | 10.0% 4,327 / 31,042 | 18.2% 4,311 / 23,663 |
| Bulky Waste | 0.1% 21 / 28,351 | 12.1% 3,820 / 31,459 |
| Complaint | 11.8% 552 / 4,692 | 18.6% 794 / 4,257 |
| Council tax – change of payment method | 12% 642 / 5,342 | 5.9% 428 / 7,302 |
| Fly-tipping | 6.1% 1,015 / 16,654 | 6.7% 811 / 12,094 |
| Join the garden waste scheme | 1.0% 576 / 58,205 | 0.7% 401 / 56,835 |
| Road or footpath | 7.6% 568 / 7,488 | 7.4% 507 / 6,852 |
| Street lighting | 12.2% 790 / 6,470 | 10.5% 701 / 6,703 |

- 60 Although overall response rates have increased for four of the eight service request types, there was significant variance for individual service requests, ranging from 0.7% to 18.6%. This variation is linked to both the

volume of requests and the nature of the requests themselves. We are continuing to identify options to reduce this variance and additional ways to capture feedback.

- 61 We have analysed all survey responses received during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 against our nine key measures as per the following infographic.



- 62 Satisfaction rates vary significantly across different service request types.

- 63 Analysis of satisfaction with service delivery shows seven areas attained satisfaction ratings of at least 90%: early help (94%), bulky waste collections (97%), waste permit requests (97%), birth death and marriage certificate requests (98%), joining the garden waste scheme (95%), applying for free school travel (96%), and changing the payment method for council tax (91%).

- 64 Six areas recorded a satisfaction level of less than 70%: requesting a new, replacement, or repair to bin (39%), service complaints (51%), dog and litter bins (62%), drainage and flooding (70%), clearing litter (67%) and tree or hedge pruning / removal (67%).

- 65 We have investigated the reasons for these low satisfaction levels:

- **New, replacement or repair to bins:** although supply issues relating to new and replacement bins have now been resolved, we now have issues with the supply of bin lids. Therefore, we are now unable to fulfil requests for lid repairs / replacements. We expect new stock to arrive

in June 2022. In addition, throughout the year staffing levels were impacted by COVID-19 so the service prioritised essential activity such as refuse collection over bin repair and replacement activity.

- **Dog and litter bins:** requests at the beginning of the year were impacted by the bin supply issue. Although we have now received stock (prices have increased by 30%) and lead in times have reduced, the time to action requests is longer than we would have like.
- **Drainage and flooding:** A series of storms and heavy rain brought challenges to the service and unprecedented demand, all service requests were prioritised and dealt with in accordance of priority.
- **Service level complaints:** timeliness of both acknowledgement and responses is the biggest driver for dissatisfaction.
- **Clearing litter:** Throughout the year, staffing levels were impacted by COVID. However, our teams are now back to normal working.
- **Tree or hedge pruning/removal:** there three storms between December and February had a significant impact on our works and we are currently catching up with the programme.

Customer Compliments and Star Rating Feedback

- 66 Throughout the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 770 compliments, 305 fewer (-28%) than the same period the previous year.
- 67 In line with previous reports, most of the compliments related to satisfaction with service provision – although we did also receive praise due to the actions of specific individuals.
- 68 A small sample of the 188 compliments received during quarter four, 2021/22 is attached at Appendix two.
- 69 In addition to compliments, we collect star ratings from customers who request a service via an online form. The rating helps us understand the customer’s experience when logging their request and identifies opportunities for improvement.

| All Service Request Types 12 months ending 31 March... | Star ratings received | Proportion of star ratings received | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | 5-star | 4-star | 3-star | 2-star | 1-star |
| 2021 | 104,869 | 65% | 17% | 10% | 2% | 5% |
| 2022 | 85,739 | 69% | 17% | 7% | 2% | 5% |

- 70 86% of respondents rated service request handling as four or five stars during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, up four percentage points on the previous year.
- 71 50% of ratings received during the 12 months ending 31 March related to the following five service areas.

| Service Request Type | Star ratings received | Proportion of star ratings received | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | 5-star | 4-star | 3-star | 2-star | 1-star |
| Joining the garden waste scheme | 16,865 | 69% | 19% | 7% | 2% | 3% |
| | | 88% | | | | |
| Customer satisfaction survey | 13,769 | 64% | 18% | 8% | 3% | 8% |
| | | 82% | | | | |
| Waste permit | 6,180 | 84% | 10% | 3% | 1% | 2% |
| | | 94% | | | | |
| Bin – Not emptied | 3,492 | 62% | 15% | 8% | 2% | 14% |
| | | 77% | | | | |
| Bulky waste, white goods collection | 2,949 | 71% | 18% | 7% | 3% | 2% |
| | | 89% | | | | |

Customer suggestions

- 72 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 532 customer suggestions, 97 fewer than the same period last year.
- 73 Whilst we receive and review a considerable number of suggestions, the majority have been addressed previously and/or considered as part of service development.

Comments relating to policies, procedures, decision-making and feed and charges.

- 74 To understand the impact of our policies, procedures and decision making and to support development in these areas we capture and analyse the comments we receive. We then provide feedback to the relevant service areas / teams to support opportunities for improvement and development of policies and procedures.
- 75 The following table summarises the feedback received over the 12 months ending 31 March 2022.

| | |
|---|--|
| 39 objections to our decisions (-7) | Four objections related to operating hours / building closures and three for planning decisions. The remainder were mainly operational decisions, e.g., road closures. |
| 81 dissatisfied with fees and charges (-25) | 24 related to leisure centres, 14 to replacement bins, 2 to garden waste, and 6 to council tax. |
| 82 comments about policies / procedures (-109) | 71% of comments related to policies and procedures linked to waste collection and disposal. - 27% to our Household Waste Recycling Centres (22) - 15% to our Refuse and Recycling Service (12) |

Priority Correspondence

76 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 1,962 items of priority correspondence².

77 All teams are working to a response deadline of 10 working days from receipt of enquiry, except the Resources service grouping which is working to a response deadline of four working days. There is currently a pilot in place looking at Members feedback to support improvements in relation to enquiries received:

| | Enquiries received | Responses on time | | Responses late | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| 1 Oct to 31 Dec 2021 | 385 | 293 | 76% | 92 | 24% |
| 1 Jan to 31 March 2022 | 503 | 328 | 65% | 175 | 35% |

Our performance in dealing with complaints (both statutory and corporate)

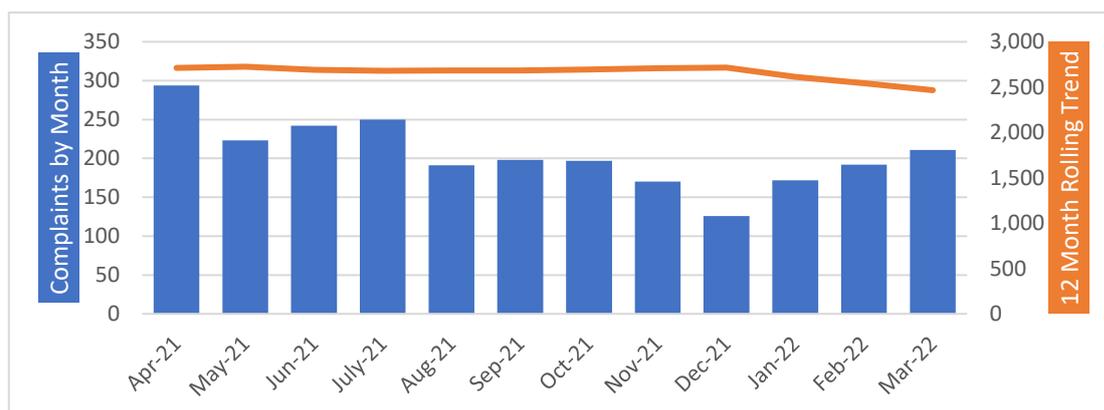
78 Each of the complaint types (statutory complaints that arise from our duties as a local social services authority and corporate complaints that cover all other complaints) is subject to its own processes and policy, so is reported separately.

² Priority correspondence relates to correspondence sent directly to the Chief executive, Member of Parliament or Corporate Directors

Corporate Complaints

79 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, we received 2,466 corporate complaints, 68 fewer (-3%) than the previous year. Of those investigated, 48% were upheld.

80 It is worth noting that the ratio of complaints received during the latest 12 months to service requests was 0.6% or six complaints for every 1,000 service requests. This is the same as the previous year.

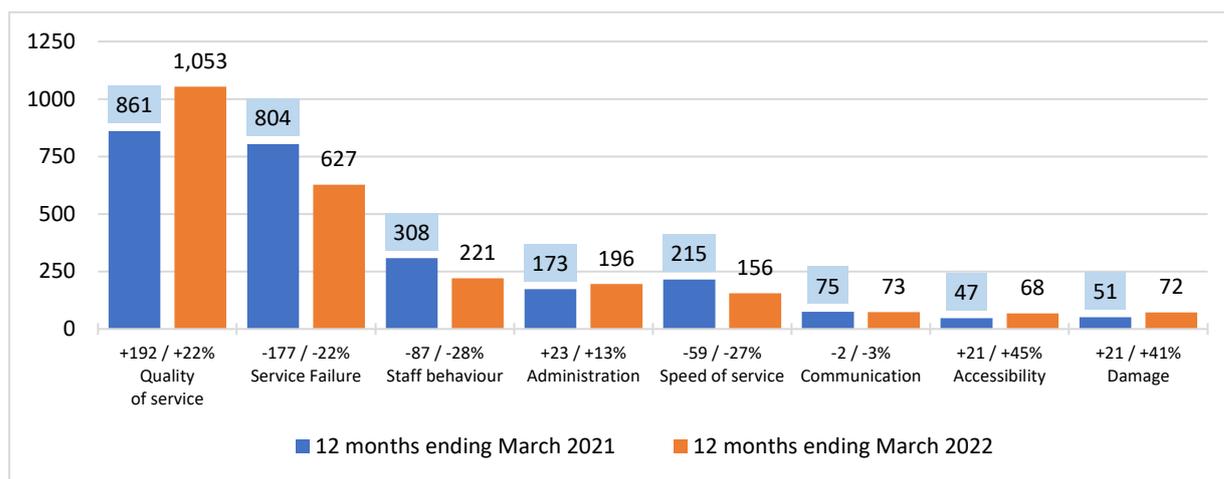


81 Almost two thirds of service level complaints were completed and responded to within timescale, which is broadly in line with the previous year.

82 During quarter four, the following service areas recorded the best performance: 76% of planning complaints were completed and responded to within timescale, 73% of social services complaints and 67% of parking complaints.

83 Broadly speaking, corporate complaints can be categorised across eight specific areas.

| Complaint Area | Complaint Area Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Accessibility | We were inaccessible to the customer |
| 2. Administration | Our administrative processes were poor causing inconvenience to the customer |
| 3. Communication | We did not communicate effectively |
| 4. Staff Behaviour | Our staff behaved badly |
| 5. Service Failure | We did not do what we said we would |
| 6. Speed of Service | We did not provide the service when we said we would |
| 7. Quality of Service | We did not provide the service to the expected standard |
| 8. Damage | We caused damage whilst carrying out our duties |



84 'Quality of Service' (not providing the service to the expected standard) and 'Service Failure' (not doing what we said we would) remain the most frequent causes for complaint.

85 In line with previous reports, the most frequent cause for complaint, representing 15% of all complaints, was missed bin collections. Of those investigated in the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, 78% were upheld.

86 However, it is important to note that whilst we received 381 missed bin complaints over this period, we collected 13 million bins, a complaint to delivery ratio of just 0.003%. In addition, a smaller proportion of service requests due to missed collection are progressing to complaints.

| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | change |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------------|
| service requests (SR) | 31,042 | 23,663 | -7,379 (-24%) |
| No. complaints | 578 | 381 | -197 (-34%) |
| % of SRs | 1.9% | 1.6% | |

Corporate complaints subjected to independent investigation

87 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, 128 complainants were dissatisfied with the response to their complaint and asked for it to be escalated to independent investigation by the Customer Feedback Team.

88 Although 70% of these complaints were responded to within the performance standard, it is slightly lower than the 78% achieved in the previous year. This is due to the increased complexity of complaints resulting in increased time for information to be received from service areas. If we are unable to meet the performance standard, we issue a holding response with an explanation of the delay and an expected response date.

- 89 Analysis of a sample of complaints suggests that 26% could have been avoided if there had been a timelier or more comprehensive update from the service, and/or the agreed action had been completed in the first instance. This is in line with previous quarters.
- 90 55 complaints were escalated to an independent investigation during quarter four:



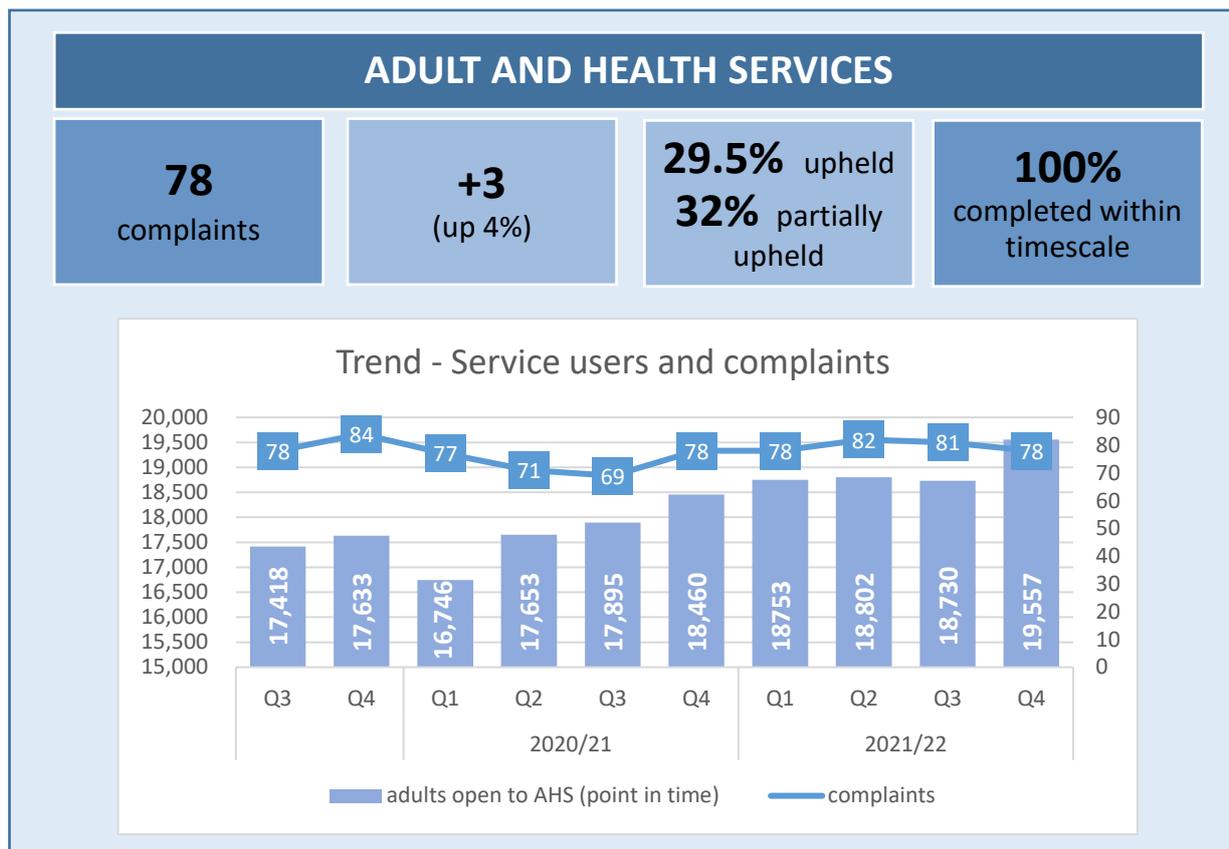
*45 investigations were completed during quarter four - 14 were received before quarter four. Nine outcomes were delivered – five related to complaints received before quarter four.

- 91 Details of complaints upheld by independent investigators during quarter four are included in Appendix three.

Statutory Complaints

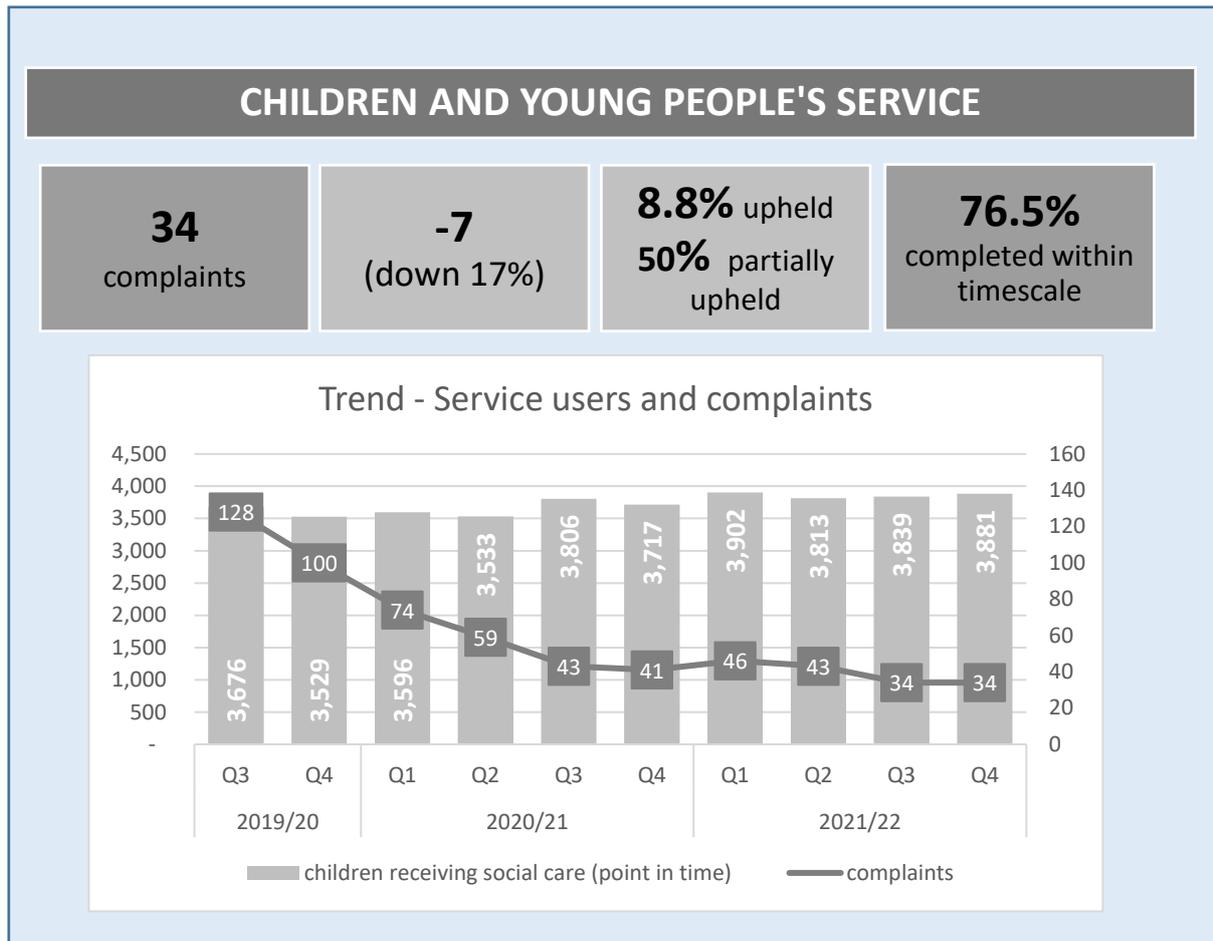
- 92 As of 31 March 2022, around 19,500 adults and 3,900 children and young people were being supported by Adult and Health Services (AHS) and Children and Young People’s Services (CYPS) respectively.
- 93 Each service has its own distinct statutory complaints procedures, so the complaints made under each of these procedures are not directly comparable. Broadly speaking, users of AHS have voluntarily requested access to the service whereas the involvement of CYPS is primarily due to a child or young person being in need or at risk of significant harm.
- 94 Statutory complaints have traditionally been logged and tracked through a clerical system, overseen by a complaints officer who monitors progress, adherence to timescales, quality of response and completion of recommended actions.

Adult Health Services



- 95 Of the 78 statutory AHS complaints received during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022: 36% related to older people/physical disabilities/sensory impairment (28 complaints), 33% to Transactional Services (26 complaints) who deal with financial assessments/charging and 15% to learning disabilities/mental health/substance misuse (12 complaints).
- 96 The most frequent reasons for making a complaint were dissatisfaction with charges (24 complaints), speed of service (20 complaints) with three further categories all receiving 12 complaints: the application of service guidance/procedures; lack of communication (other) and lack of explanation/explanation not understood.
- 97 During quarter four, actions taken in response to complaints included:
- Undertaking a Mental Capacity Act (MCA) assessment.
 - Reminding our Billing Team of the correct way to add temporary and permanent residential placements to the new adult social care computer system.
 - Putting actions in place to ensure service users receive timely updates in relation to any changes in personnel.

Children and Young People's Services



- 98 Of the 34 statutory CYPS complaints received during the 12 months ending 31 March 2022: 70% (24 complaints) related to the Families First teams (responsible for children in need, child protection plans, child, and family assessments (in cases of parental dispute)), 18% (six complaints) related to teams involved with Children Looked After, and 9% (three complaints) related to the Children with Disabilities team.
- 99 Due to the complexity of these complaints, up to three reasons can be recorded for each. During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, the most frequently recorded reason for making a complaint (14 complaints) was communication, and staff behaviour (14). Nine complaints featured disagreement (with action/ assessment/ decision/ recorded information).
- 100 During quarter four, actions taken in response to complaints included:
- Making changes in the Looked After Children teams so that a duty social worker is available for parent or carers to contact when the child's social worker is not immediately available.
 - Ensuring explanation is given to parents about the child protection process and what happens when a child is no longer subject to a

Child Protection Plan (and Core Group Meetings) but becomes a Child in Need and the subject of team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.

Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (the Ombudsman)

- 101 During the 12 months ending 31 March 2022, the Ombudsman delivered decisions relating to 69 complaints. Conclusions were reached based on details supplied by complainants, and in some instances, supplemented with contextual information from council officers.
- 102 Of the 22 decisions delivered during the latest quarter, seven (32%) were upheld. Details are included in Appendix four. Additional information regarding complaints escalated to the Ombudsman is available [here](#).

Recent developments that enhance the customer experience

- 103 We are continuing to drive improvements across customer services and enhance the customer experience through our Integrated Customer Service initiative and Unified Communications Strategy.
- 104 In February 2022, we implemented a new Video Relay Service within our corporate contact centre. This provides immediate telephony support for customers who wish to communicate via British Sign Language (BSL) over video telephones and similar technologies.
- 105 This new service will run alongside existing solutions of face-to-face interpreter and text relay. Its aim is to increase the ease and speed of contact for service users at first point of contact.
- 106 Initial feedback has been positive, and we have put mechanisms in place to gather user feedback over a trial period to support our understanding of further improvement prospects.
- 107 72% of council services have been fully migrated to ACD system technology. Migrating these lines enables us to see an enhanced view of demand and performance statistics for all telephony contact, and thereby allows us to identify opportunities to improve the customer experience. Migration plans will continue into quarter one of 2022/23.
- 108 During quarter four, the following CRM improvements were delivered in response to customer feedback or as part of service improvement activity:
- improvements to performance standards across multiple processes to better inform customers of service delivery timeframes, and ensure that the performance standards can be monitored and reviewed

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Information on financial remedies in relation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is included within the report.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Complaints regarding any equality and diversity aspect are handled in consultation with the Council's Equality Team.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

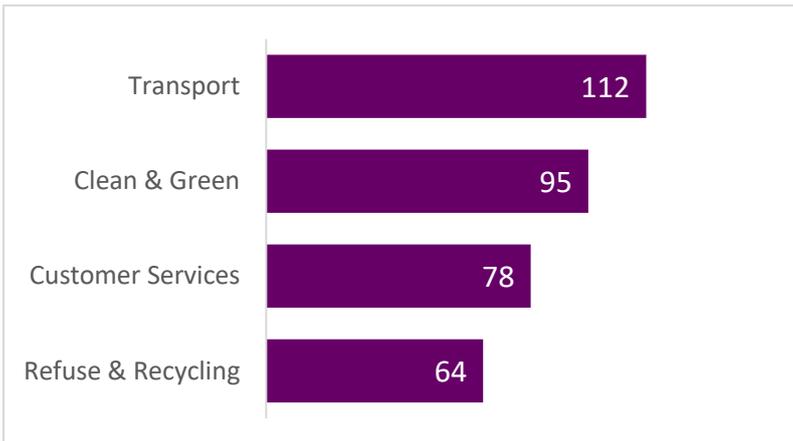
Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

Appendix 2: Sample of compliments received during quarter four, 2021/22



a big thank you to the wardens and the Clean and Green team for the work done in their village. "It has really tidied up the place, thank you."

wanted to pass on thanks to Customer services team in regards to her marriage certificate.

Thanks to Bereavement services for help locating a grave.

thanks to the Housing Solutions team for attending and resolving a blocked drain issue.

wanted to thank the Highways team for helping him obtain a new road sign.

would like to pass on sincere thanks to the Clean and Green team who have been out to cut trees. Customer states that they were very polite and asked how she wanted them cutting. She could not thank them enough.

would like to pass on gratitude to the Assets team for the excellent work that has been put into the Fyndoune work and the Langley Park/PRU negotiations.

Thanks to the Highways team for resurfacing a footpath. The workmen have been friendly and efficient, and the improvement is huge!

would like to thank the clean and green team for the speedy repair of a fence. Really appreciates it since it was a danger to the public.

"The service I have received from yourselves has been superb" (comment relating to the Records Office)

pleased with the quick service and clear response received from the Records Office.

a big thank you to the Welfare Rights team for all the help with their blue badge

pass on thanks to the Culture and Sports team for helping sort out a thrive card for her two daughters. Customer states the employee was very helpful and nice.

It's very refreshing to be able to compliment good service. I have recently started to use your E-library and had a few teething problems that I required help/ support with.

a huge thanks to the driver of the refuse truck today. (Easington Colliery route)
"I'd forgotten to put my bin out, and went outside and mouthed if I could bring it out. He nodded, and when I put it out he give me a thumbs up to confirm it would be emptied. He did, and I'm grateful, if you could please pass on my thanks."

I e-mailed your ebook support 'helpline' and ended up in contact with a lovely employee. The help and advice given was prompt, very well explained and managed to sort out all of the issues I had raised.

I lodged a complaint a few weeks ago about parking at the back of St Leonards school at the end of the school day.

I don't know what measures have been taken but it certainly seems to be working. Thank you for taking the matter seriously as it was becoming very distressing and dangerous. Please keep up the good work.

delighted with the untidy garden request being delt with swiftly by the Neighbourhood Wardens team

wants to compliment the Highways team for quick and efficient repair of pothole.

Appendix 3: Independent investigations by Customer Feedback Team where corporate complaints were upheld

| Complaint upheld | Recommendation |
|--|--|
| Customer reported multiple times that their bins were either not emptied or not returned properly. | Apologise to the customer for our response and for the inconvenience caused to them. |
| Customer is unhappy with the time taken to remedy the customer's initial complaint. | Apologise to the customer for the service provided |

| Complaint partially upheld | Recommendation |
|--|--|
| Customer dissatisfied with the time taken to investigate their complaint regarding street permits. Also unhappy with the level of communication received regarding this matter. | Apologise for the delay in responding. |
| Customer dissatisfied with the outcome of the council's investigations into noise complaint. Also unhappy with time taken by DCC to respond to enquiries. | No issue found with initial complaint however some fault found with delays, therefore apologise for the delay in responding. |
| Customer unhappy with the consultation process relating to planning application. | Acknowledge the time taken in pursuing this matter. |
| Customer unhappy not to receive a garden waste bin within 10 working days of subscribing to the Garden Waste Collection Service. | Apologise for the level of service. |
| Customer is dissatisfied with information relating to how to appeal a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). | Apologise for errors that occurred once the FPN was issued. |

Appendix 4: Complaints upheld by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (the Ombudsman)

| Ombudsman's final decision | Agreed action |
|---|--|
| <p>The complainant was unhappy about the council's handling of their reports of an unpleasant odour emanating from a neighbouring property.</p> <p>There was fault by the council because it prematurely closed the customer's complaint before considering the full scope of its powers.</p> | <p>The fault did not cause customer significant injustice to warrant further pursuit of the matter by, or a remedy from, the Ombudsman.</p> |
| <p>Although the trust clearly communicated a dementia diagnosis, it did not develop a care and support plan.</p> <p>The council's poor communication with the patient's wife, about care and support, leaves her uncertain as to whether her husband would have received different care and support before he died.</p> | <p>Council to apologise and pay £200 in recognition of the uncertainty caused.</p> <p>Council to ensure relevant staff are aware of the importance of effective communication with service users and carers, regarding decisions about their care and support.</p> |
| <p>The complainant felt the council wrongly refused their child free school transport when they moved to a new school.</p> <p>The council is at fault for failing to provide a school transport appeal process for the complainant as set out in statutory guidance.</p> | <p>Council to apologise for the uncertainty caused and review its school transport policy.</p> <p>The council has agreed to provide the complainant's child with free school transport.</p> |
| <p>The complainant felt the council failed to provide suitable home to school transport. Although there was no fault in the council's decision making (it offered the child a door-to-door taxi service, suitable for their needs), there was some fault in the council's complaint handling.</p> | <p>Council will pay a time and trouble payment of £100.</p> |

| Ombudsman's final decision | Agreed action |
|---|--|
| <p>Council failed to offer an appropriate remedy for the identified failings in the care provided to customer's father at residential home.</p> | <p>Council to apologise to the customer and pay £250 to acknowledge the time and trouble spent pursuing the complaint.</p> <p>Council will also pay an additional £250 in recognition of the customer's distress and waive the outstanding care fees.</p> <p>The council is taking action to address the overall standard of care provided by the care home.</p> |
| <p>Found fault in the Council's actions in the way it considered customers application for a discretionary benefit, but this did not lead to an injustice.</p> <p>The council also failed to refer customer to the welfare rights team which caused them uncertainty.</p> | <p>Council to apologise for the uncertainty caused by failing to refer the customer to the welfare rights team.</p> <p>Council to complete the referral for customer for a benefit check</p> <p>Council to remind relevant staff of the importance of consistency in considering expenditure and to follow the procedure for considering universal credit advance payment recovery in financial assessments.</p> |
| <p>Council was at fault for the way it has handled customers Council Tax Reduction (CTR) application.</p> | <p>Council to apologise for the level of communication received by the customer.</p> <p>Council to pay £150 to recognise the distress suffered.</p> <p>Council to remind its staff of its CTR reduction published process and the need to give clear reasons for the decisions they make.</p> |

Appendix 5: Customer Satisfaction Survey: response rates and satisfaction with service delivery

Top 24 by number of survey responses – equates to 82% of responses

| | Response Rate Surveys returned / total SRs | | Satisfaction with service delivery (change is only significant if it is =>2pp) | | Main reason(s) for dissatisfaction |
|--|---|--------------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| | 12 months ending | | 12 months ending | | |
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | |
| Anti-social behaviour | 3.7% 106 / 2,879 | 4.1% 70 / 1,704 | 78% | 81% | The issue has not been resolved long term. |
| Bin: new, replacement or repair | 0.5% 128 / 26,121 | 0.6% 152 / 25,291 | 45% | 39% | Not keeping customers informed of progress. Taking too long to complete task. Not Completing task. |
| Bin: Not emptied | 10.0% 4,327 / 31,042 | 18.2% 4,311 / 23,663 | 76% | 74% | Time taken to return for the bin. Issue has not been resolved long term. |
| Birth, death, or marriage certificate | 9.7% 312 / 3,223 | 11.6% 509 / 4370 | 95% | 98% | Communication Issues |
| Bulky Waste Collection | 0.1% 21 / 28,351 | 12.1% 3,820 / 31,459 | 62% | 97% | Time taken to complete the task. The issue has not been resolved long term. |
| Complaints | 11.8% 552 / 4,692 | 18.6% 794 / 4,257 | 57% | 51% | Not keeping customers informed of progress nor providing them with clear information. Taking too long to complete task. |
| Council tax – change of payment method | 12% 642 / 5,342 | 5.9% 428 / 7,302 | 94% | 91% | Communication issues. |
| Dog bins or litter bins | 7.2% 125 / 1,733 | 7.8% 123 / 1,574 | 69% | 62% | Not explaining our decision when unable to install/ relocate/ renew bin. Not completing task when we agreed |

Appendix 5: Customer Satisfaction Survey: response rates and satisfaction with service delivery

Top 24 by number of survey responses – equates to 82% of responses

| | Response Rate | | Satisfaction with service delivery | | Main reason(s) for dissatisfaction |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| | Surveys returned / total SRs | | (change is only significant if it is =>2pp) | | |
| | 12 months ending | | 12 months ending | | |
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | |
| | | | | | to action in line with our existing schedule. |
| Dog fouling | 8.7% 182 / 2,090 | 9.5% 155 / 1,624 | 70% | 77% | The issue remains unresolved. |
| Drainage and flooding | 7.3% 152 / 2,096 | 10.1% 210 / 2,070 | 78% | 70% | The issue remains unresolved. |
| Early help referral | 9.4% 156 / 1,666 | 5.9% 113 / 1,897 | 97% | 94% | Communication issues. |
| Fly-tipping | 6.1% 1,015 / 16,654 | 6.7% 811 / 12,094 | 86% | 85% | The issue remains unresolved. Time taken to complete task. Communication issues. |
| Free school travel - apply | 13.2% 223 / 1,684 | 12.3% 220 / 1,787 | 100% | 96% | Taking too long to complete task |
| Garden waste – join the scheme | 1.0% 576 / 58,205 | 0.7% 401 / 56,835 | 95% | 95% | The issue remains unresolved. Communications issues. |
| Litter | 5.1% 185 / 3,605 | 6.2% 240 / 3,854 | 68% | 68% | The issue remains unresolved. |
| Move – Start your journey | N/A | 17% 1,325 / 7,790 | N/A | 85% | The issue remains unresolved. Communication issues. |

Appendix 5: Customer Satisfaction Survey: response rates and satisfaction with service delivery

Top 24 by number of survey responses – equates to 82% of responses

| | Response Rate Surveys returned / total SRs | | Satisfaction with service delivery (change is only significant if it is =>2pp) | | Main reason(s) for dissatisfaction |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| | 12 months ending | | 12 months ending | | |
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | |
| Road or footpath | 7.6% 568 / 7,488 | 7.4% 507 / 6,852 | 82% | 77% | The issue remains unresolved. Not keeping customers informed of progress. |
| Rubbish in gardens and yards | 3.7% 185 / 4,254 | 3.6% 159 / 4,409 | 80% | 76% | Not keeping customers informed of progress. The issue remains unresolved. |
| Street lighting | 12.2% 790 / 6,470 | 10.5% 701 / 6,703 | 86% | 79% | The issue remains unresolved. Not keeping customers informed of progress. |
| Tree or hedge pruning, removal | 9.9% 469 / 4,730 | 10.3% 562 / 5,439 | 69% | 67% | The issue remains unresolved. Not keeping customers informed of progress. |
| Warm homes | 10.1% 167 / 1,661 | 14.3% 211 / 1,474 | 74% | 73% | Nobody contacted the customer. The issue remains unresolved. |
| Waste permit | 0.4% 151 / 33,680 | 1.1% 423 / 39,439 | 95% | 97% | The time taken to receive the permit. |

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**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

7 July 2022

County Durham Partnership Update

Ordinary Decision



Report of Corporate Management Team

**Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and
Climate Change**

Councillor Amanda Hopgood, Leader of the Council

**Councillor Elizabeth Scott, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy
and Partnerships**

Electoral division affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to update COSMB on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP). The report also includes updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the county.

Executive summary

- 2 On the 18 March the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport announced that County Durham is one of just four places to be shortlisted for **UK City of Culture 2025** out of the 20 locations that originally applied.
- 3 Although Durham has missed out on the title, the publicity surrounding the Durham 2025 campaign has helped strengthen its reputation as a place where creativity and innovation thrive.
- 4 At the end of January 2022, a wide-ranging consultation exercise, called the '**Big Econ-versation**' to gather views of residents, stakeholders and businesses on the development of a new County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy was launched. A large programme of consultation events took place, and the **Economic Partnership** is supporting this to encourage businesses and partner organisations to contribute their views to the consultation which closed on 22 April 2022.

- 5 During April / May an independent review commenced of the **'Community Engagement' services** offered by DCC, including the AAP structures, governance, and funding processes to ensure it is fit for purpose moving forward. The outcome of the review is expected in the Autumn.
- 6 **All 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs)** have consulted their communities on what their local priorities for the 2022/23 financial year should be via the Countywide 'AAP Priority Survey'.
- 7 Durham's allocation for the **Holiday Activities with Healthy Food** programme for 2022 is **£2,338,740**.
- 8 Durham County Council along with 32 other local authorities across the North East and Yorkshire have been identified as a pilot area by the Home Office and Counter Terrorism Policing for **Publicly Accessible Locations** management in relation to protecting people and places from a terrorist attack. This is a part of the Protect Duty, expected to be enacted in 2023.
- 9 A number of schemes have been developed by the Government to support **Ukrainian Refugees** and the Humanitarian support working group is leading our response.
- 10 The **Advice in County Durham (AiCD) Partnership** is supporting residents to deal with the range of cost of living rises by undertaking a webinar with a range of organisations that can support this.
- 11 Through the work of the AAPs the Council has allocated £59.5 million to **over 10,000 community-based projects**, leveraging in £69.7 million of external matched funding. Resulting in a funding return ratio of £1.29 for every £1 of DCC investment.

Recommendation

- 12 COSMB is recommended to:
 - (a) note the contents of this update.

Background

- 13 The **County Durham Partnership** including the board and forum (which bring together the board and local communities), five partnerships (**Health and Wellbeing Board, Safe Durham Partnership, Economic Partnership, Environment and Climate Change Partnership** and **County Durham Together Partnership**), **Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership** and the **Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership, Better Together VCS Forum** and all **Area Action Partnerships** lead on key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the county.

County Durham Partnership board and forum

- 14 The **County Durham Partnership** Board met in January and March.
- 15 The January meeting focused on the City of Culture bid and the Armed Forces Covenant which promoted the key principles of the covenant across the County Durham Partnership, which are:
- (a) no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen
 - (b) in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.
- 16 The March meeting brought the standard agenda item for the past 18 months of Covid-19 to a close with an update about the work that is taking place on transition and living with Covid-19 at a Northeast level as well as local arrangements.
- 17 The March meeting saw the first of a series of regular updates from Thematic Chairs to focus on a key area of their work for the County Durham Partnership. The first was from the Health and Wellbeing Board and focused on the Integrated Care System including the abolition of Clinical Commissioning Groups and what that means for County Durham.

UK City of Culture 2025

- 18 On the 18 March the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport announced that County Durham is one of just four places to be shortlisted for **UK City of Culture 2025** out of the 20 locations that originally applied.
- 19 Although Durham has missed out on the title, the publicity surrounding the Durham 2025 campaign has helped strengthen its reputation as a place where creativity and innovation thrive.

- 20 Partners in the bid, the council, Durham University and Culture Durham are still committed to deliver on the ambitious plans within the bid, creating a county of culture that attracts tourists from across the UK and beyond, delivers thousands of new jobs and improves wellbeing.
- 21 As well as working with local and international artists and producers to create a spectacular programme, the partners will support communities to bring cultural regeneration to their neighbourhoods. This will ensure the whole county is connected and celebrated through art, sport, food and science.
- 22 Thousands of residents, businesses and creative practitioners were involved in the bid's development, contributing a range of ideas. This spirit of collaboration will also live on, with the bonds forged between cultural organisations during the journey stronger than ever before, and many new connections formed.
- 23 For the first time in the competition, County Durham as a runner up, will receive a grant of £125,000 to support the development of key elements in the bid.

Review of Community Engagement

- 24 An independent review is taking place to review the County Council's community engagement processes. The review will focus on assessing our current structures and governance with a view to ensuring the Council has a community engagement mechanism that provides support for our communities in line with the Council's future vision and priorities and also reflects the needs of the wider County Durham Partnership.
- 25 It is anticipated that the initial review findings will be received in Autumn 2022.

AAP priority survey

- 26 **All 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs)** have consulted their communities on what their local priorities for the 2022/23 financial year should be via the Countywide 'AAP Priority Survey'.
- 27 Residents have been asked if anything has changed for them where they live, work, go to school or even volunteer, and have been asked once again to help steer the AAPs' work. AAPs have additional funding to invest in towns and villages and asked what, if anything, will make life in their town or village better.
- 28 The survey took place with 2,490 responses received, numbers for each AAP are as follows: Teesdale AAP (521), East Durham AAP (226),

Durham AAP (224), Weardale AAP (199), East Durham Rural Corridor AAP (191), Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (190), Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP (142), Stanley AAP (130), Derwent Valley AAP (128), 3 Towns Partnership (114), 4 Together Partnership (112), Chester-le-Street and District AAP (99), Mid Durham (84) Spennymoor (69).

- 29 An electronic survey method was primarily used to capture views; however, individual AAPs used an array of methods to make the survey as accessible as possible. The survey was promoted countywide, by each individual AAP, through their Facebook pages, e-bulletins, and invitations to all existing AAP Forum members. AAP staff delivered paper-based versions of the survey to key local groups and also attended various local events to promote the survey. Key partner organisations and Elected Members were also engaged, on a countywide basis, to help promote the survey. Partners included: Business Durham, Durham Community Action, Countywide Youth Forum and Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services (UTASS).
- 30 Countywide the results of the survey highlighted that:
- (a) 81.5% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed to keep Community Recovery as a priority for AAPs
 - (b) 7.4 % disagreed with keeping Community Recovery as a priority for AAPs
 - (c) 11.1 % % neither agreed nor disagreed with keeping Community Recovery as a priority for AAPs.
- 31 194 people asked to join the forum of their local AAP.

10,000 AAP projects

- 32 Through the work of the AAPs the Council has allocated £59.5 million to over 10,000 community-based projects, leveraging in £69.7 million of external matched funding. Resulting in a funding return ratio of £1.29 for every £1 of DCC investment.

Holiday activities with healthy food countywide programme

- 33 At the end of 2021, the government announced a further investment of over £200m per year over the next three financial years for the holiday activities and food programme (HAF) which follows the successful roll out of the programme across England in 2021.
- 34 Durham's allocation for the **Holiday Activities with Healthy Food** programme for 2022 is **£2,338,740**.

- 35 A delivery plan has been submitted to DfE outlining plans for Durham's Fun and Food programme in 2022, and work continues to further develop Durham's Delivery model.
- 36 During 2021, **381** Fun and Food projects were allocated funding for the Easter (90), Summer (129) and Christmas (162) holidays through the funding from the DfE, **engaging 32,423 Children and Young People including 2355 with additional needs.**
- 37 The DfE funding does not include half term holidays, however additional funding was secured from Durham County Council to provide enriching activities and experiences with healthy food for the May and October 2021 and February 2022 holidays, funding 181 different projects in total.
- 38 A dedicated web page has been set up for the project www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood along with a facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/funandfoodcountydurham/>. Videos of previous activities can be viewed at [Videos of previous activities - Durham County Council](#)

Humanitarian Support

- 39 A number of schemes have been developed by the Government to support Ukrainian Refugees:
- (a) Sponsorship Scheme – Homes for Ukraine Scheme
 - (i) People asked to offer Ukrainians a rent-free space in their home or a separate residence for at least six months. Each household housing a refugee will be offered £350 a month, tax-free, for up to 12 months.
 - (b) Ukrainian Family Visa Scheme
 - (i) Family members of British nationals, UK settled persons and certain others to come to or stay in the UK
 - (c) Supporting UK based Ukrainians to remain in the UK
 - (i) Ukrainians already in the UK with a visa will be able to extend their stay by extending their visa or switching to another immigration route, where eligible, even if their visa does not normally allow them to do so.

- 40 The Humanitarian support working group is tasked with working on key issues as follows:
- (a) Translation services
 - (b) Accommodation inspections
 - (c) Wrap around support
 - (d) Safeguarding
 - (e) Sponsorship connection
 - (f) Benefits
 - (g) Language support
 - (h) Education
 - (i) Health care
 - (j) Communications
- 41 Over 130 people have currently put themselves forward for the sponsorship scheme and work is taking place to support both the sponsor and the refugees coming to County Durham.
- 42 The government has informed all local authority areas, including Durham, that they will be part of a wider dispersal scheme for asylum seekers across the country. To support this scheme the Home Office has committed to undertake a new burdens assessment to better understand the costs associated with asylum dispersal.

Cost of living rises

- 43 The **Advice in County Durham (AiCD) Partnership** is supporting residents to deal with the range of cost of living rises by undertaking a webinar with a range of organisations that can support this.
- 44 Due to the increase in fuel prices and other financial increases to households, the **Advice in County Durham (AiCD) Partnership** hosted a “Cost of Living” webinar for AICD members in April 2022.
- 45 The webinar brought key partners together to demonstrate how collaboratively those providers can support with these increased costs and to give money saving tips to individuals and families who need advice on a range of issues:

- (a) benefits
 - (b) energy bills
 - (c) employment
 - (d) housing
 - (e) debt management
 - (f) support for those who are in fuel poverty
- 46 The partnership has already had a range of successful interventions that have underpinned its work to establish a coordinated referral approach in the county to ensure that there is 'no wrong door' for anyone seeking advice support. These have included the establishment of an online referral portal that supports clients to access services but also brings AiCD members together regularly to share information and best practice, improve the quality of services offered, and undertake training together.
- 47 The Partnership is also in the early stages of commissioning a Network Survey to partners across the County which is being led by Durham Community Action on behalf of the Advice Partnership. This survey will look at:
- (a) Gaps in advice services
 - (b) Digital capacity and provision
 - (c) Training requirements
 - (d) Network expectations and needs
- 48 This piece of work will form the development of the membership survey tool to ensure it provides the right information to enable AiCD to rescope or reshape the support it provides to the advice sector in County Durham and facilitates the response to the economic and social pressures it faces, particularly as we learn to live safely with Covid-19.

Covid-19

- 49 The government published their Living with Covid-19 Guidance in April and moved to a position of managing Covid-19 like other respiratory illnesses.
- 50 The **Health and Wellbeing Board** received an update of the LA7/North East Living with Covid-19 plan which has been developed with key objectives as follows, delivered through five workstreams: settings,

governance, oversight and policy, interdependencies for service response, funding, escalation and surge response.

- (a) Provide strategic level co-ordination of the transitional arrangements for our response as it de-escalates into a 'Living Safely with Covid-19' approach.
- (b) Embed the Covid-19 response into the wider Health Protection System
- (c) Inform wider system planning and response.
- (d) Take with us the principles and goals in the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP)
- (e) Identify lessons learned and retain local expertise, good practice and stronger collaborative relationships.
- (f) Build on the strengthened relationship with regional colleagues UK Health Security Agency Health Protection Team and effective regional processes.
- (g) Align to regional LA7 programme of work to live safely with Covid-19.

51 **Spennymoor AAP** has provided funding to the Saint Pauls Centre to operate the Moving On project. The initiative is designed to support vulnerable people who have been isolating during the Covid-19 pandemic to start attending a range of activities to reduce social isolation and enable more social interaction to improve individuals' mental health and wellbeing. A range of monthly events have been developed to support this objective which include:

- (a) Organising an exhibition of art and photography work.
- (b) Games/Film afternoons which will encourage people away from the support group setting by helping them to move forward into some form of normality, through building their confidence and self-esteem by participating in group activities.
- (c) Bereavement support – Research has shown that people who have suffered a bereavement of a close friend or family member during the pandemic, need additional support. A new group is being established with support from local health practitioners in Spennymoor to provide additional support to individuals who have been affected by a bereavement.
- (d) Supper Club – will bring people together to enjoy a meal and a local speaker will also attend these sessions.

Vision 2035: More and better jobs

52 The **Economic Partnership** has supported a wide-ranging consultation exercise, called the 'Big Econ-versation' to gather views of residents, stakeholders and businesses on the development of a new County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy. Between January and April 2022, a large programme of over 80 consultation events for the public, businesses and partner organisations to contribute their views were attended by over 1,500 people. Survey responses included 443 from young people and 93 from businesses. These will now be analysed and used to inform the next stage of the development of the strategy.



53 A **Faith Focus Group** with representatives of different faith communities took part in a faith focus group as part of the big [Econ-versation](#). They considered the question of what an inclusive economy means and highlighted the importance of ensuring fairness, equality, social justice, and balancing growth with sustainability. A strong case was made for encouraging organisations and businesses to become accredited [real living wage](#) employers to increase job retention and enable employees to contribute more to the local economy thus making it more inclusive and sustainable.

54 Delivery of the **Towns and Villages programme** is currently accelerating with significant activity across all investment themes. Enquiries for support from retail businesses continue to rise with 192 enquiries for retail business support received by the Community Economic Development team during 2021/22. This in turn led to 19 businesses receiving building grant support, returning eight properties into productive use and supporting the creation of 39 FTE jobs. Property reuse applications remain strong, while vulnerable buildings remain a focus across the County with works to demolish the former Trust Building at Horden undertaken during quarter 1 2022/23. b£625,000 has been spent to date on minor improvements to Neighbourhood Retail Parades to date with 38 areas scoped for potential improvements.

55 Repurposing property to meet current and emerging needs continues with three schemes currently being progressed to create new residential accommodation units at Shildon, Coundon Grange and Chester le Street, while work is ongoing with AAPs and Durham Community Action to identify community facilities requiring support in order to alter their

service offer to local communities as part of the Community Resilience project.

- 56 The Towns and Villages programme also continues to address opportunities to improve open spaces through the continuation of Enhanced Environmental Maintenance programmes in settlements including Peterlee, Coundon and Tudhoe. A significant feature of the last consultation round, undertaken through the AAPs, was a focus on creating more walking and cycling opportunities within the County, including establishing links between residential and town centre areas and the established walking and cycling network. As a result, work has now commenced on the design and delivery of a £3.75 million walking and cycling investment programme which will see new routes brought forward, improvements to existing routes and some feasibility work for new stretches of connections.
- 57 At a local level, the allocation of Towns and Villages funding to each AAP has led to the formation of Task and Finish groups under all 14 AAPs with a significant number of new project opportunities being identified. These will be explored for funding not only under the current AAP Towns and Village funding but also through a closer alignment with monies available through s106 planning obligations or as schemes which may fit under other emerging funding opportunities.
- 58 **Chester-le-Street AAP** has funded the Town Centre Marketing Project, designed to support Chester-le-Street town centre retailers as they recover from the pandemic. This project comprises of different elements
- (a) A new town centre map and notice board
 - (b) Further support for the shop Chester-le-Street campaign
 - (c) Further support for the roll out of ROAM (digital tool which can be used by local businesses to promote offers and events)
 - (d) A selfie wall for the town.
- 59 The town map will depict landmarks rather than businesses and will be professionally designed. It will be A2 for display in the notice board and could also be reproduced in smaller sizes to hand out.
- 60 **4 Together AAP** supported REACH (The Cornforth Partnership) to provide opportunities for individuals to access structured mentoring support to aid them to build financial resilience, upskill, re-train and move closer to the employment market. Examples of how individuals have been supported include:



- (a) 4 participants have completed and achieved their Level 2 Working as a Door Supervisor Qualification and received their licences
- (b) 5 participants have gained employment, 3 from completing their Security Industry Authority qualifications and obtaining their licences, and 2 in Amazon Bowburn, one of which has been given a permanent contract.
- (c) 1 participant completed their Level 2 Food Safety Qualification online. She had never used a computer before but with the support from staff managed to complete and achieve this.
- (d) 4 new participants with various support including job search, general information, advice and guidance, housing and benefit advice.
- (e) 1 Participant after helping him with moving after a relationship breakdown has moved into further education in engineering. He was also supported with household items.

61 **Stanley AAP** are supporting STEAM Ahead CIC with funding to deliver a Supporting Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) through a child-centric Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM) activities project. This six-week project, working in conjunction with a local wellbeing charity and chartered child psychologist will support children to improve their mental health and wellbeing, through the delivery of skills-focused activities within the area of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM). The activities support children to become upskilled in considering potential careers within the Science and Technology sector, as well as improving their own skills to be the best version of themselves possible. Once successfully complete, the evidence of impact from the pilot scheme will be used to roll this out across the county into local schools, improving the support offer to children locally.

62 At the **Economic Partnership** meeting in March 2022, the Chair of the **Environment and Climate Change Partnership** attended for a presentation and discussion about how the two partnerships can work together to promote growth of the green economy and business participation in the environmental agenda.



- 63 A number of areas of collaboration were discussed including the development of a practical toolkit for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), opportunities for knowledge transfer from larger businesses to small companies, promotion of the Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP) programme, building of capacity for future 'green' market opportunities and designing in environmental goals to mainstream business support. A small group has been convened to progress this work.
- 64 During February 2022, the Government provided pre-launch guidance for the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**. The guidance confirms that all areas of the UK will receive an allocation via a funding formula rather than a competition, and local authorities will lead the management of the funds in their areas. The guidance outlines a key role for partners and stakeholders to work with local authorities to develop a local Investment Plan which will form the basis for the commissioning of UKSPF activities. The first meeting of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund subgroup took place on the 22 April and membership consisted of Board member organisations', specialists in external funding, and will be used as the technical group to support the **Economic Partnership**. County Durham received £30.8 million from the UKSPF and £2.8 million Multiply which needs to be spent as part of a three-year plan in the following priority areas:
- (a) Communities and place
 - (b) Supporting local businesses
 - (c) People and Skills
- 65 A Local Investment Plan needs to be submitted by between 30 June and the 1 August with an anticipated date for first Investment Plans to be approved in October 2022.
- 66 Previously, County Durham as a Transition Region had a ring-fenced allocation of €156m (£121.7m) for EU funding for the 2014-2020 programme.
- 67 Consultation will be undertaken with key stakeholders and other existing consultation will also be used to help in developing the offers including the Big Econ-versation. Cross border collaboration and opportunities are also to be considered as part of this. The next stages for the group were agreed to form themed technical groups with members that understand funding based on subject matters:
- (a) Community and place
 - (b) Creating jobs and networks

- (c) Innovation
- (d) Town centre footfall and markets
- (e) People and skills

68 Each group will look at investment priorities using an evidenced based approach and take into account funding from elsewhere as well as balancing innovation with what we know already works.

69 In partnership with Spennymoor AAP, **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP** has funded the South Durham Enterprise Agency to deliver Pandemic Business Support Grant for new and existing businesses in the Bishop Auckland and Shildon and Spennymoor areas. The funding will match Community Led Local Development funding which without AAP intervention would have been lost.



Supporting business recovery following the pandemic

70 The project has created a small business Pandemic Recovery/ Restart Grant aimed at SMEs located in, and residents of the Bishop Auckland and Shildon and Spennymoor AAP areas. The grant supports businesses to recover, grow or sustain their operations and will be eligible for capital and revenue purchases. SMEs will be located in (or locating in) the AAP areas and be able to demonstrate a clear adverse effect on their business caused by the pandemic or changes in market behaviour or a clear opportunity to grow, change or pivot as a result of the same.

71 Individuals seeking to start small businesses will be supported with the availability of a capital and revenue grant. Programmes funded elsewhere will support the individual with a business plan and appropriate start-up support, leaving the grant fund to help the individual raise the necessary start-up capital for their venture.

72 The project encourages and supports sustainable businesses and sustainable business ideas. Net zero, sustainability issues and environmental stewardship will be encouraged within the support and the project will be fully committed to net-zero.

- 73 **East Durham AAP** have supported East Durham Business Service to support fledgling businesses that may have struggled as a result of the pandemic or returning to normal function afterwards. A variety of businesses have come forward for this support including a local community radio venture.
- 74 Our **Armed Forces Forum**, which brings together public sector partners with representatives of the military and charities supporting veterans, met in March. They heard from the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) which is the official provider of resettlement to the Ministry of Defence offering a comprehensive package of support to service leavers to help them make the transition into employment. Work is underway to look at how the CTP can develop better links with the council to bolster the success rate of those who apply for jobs using our guaranteed interview scheme for veterans. Links have also been established with Building Heroes to offer veterans work experience taster sessions, apprenticeships, employment support, and links to contractors of major developments across the county for onsite training and potential employment.

People live long and independent lives

- 75 Following the success of the virtual County Durham Care Partnership Executive (CDCPE) Forum on 29 November, the next meetings have been arranged for 20 June 2022, to facilitate discussions ahead of the Integrated Care System (ICS) implementation in July, and 29 November 2022, to facilitate timely discussions around winter planning / preparedness.
- 76 Plans are progressing regionally for the Integrated Care System/Integrated Care Board, and a development session took place on 15 March 2022 with **Health and Wellbeing Board** members, where Dr Neil O'Brien outlined the developing picture and presented the operating framework. Feedback from the session was fed into the ICS programme board's survey to ensure Durham's view is represented and can influence the next stage of development of the ICS at a place based level, with strong views expressed that County Durham is not disadvantaged in the new system, that elected member engagement is extended to the sub-regional level and we ensure the future system takes account of our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The new Chief Executive for the ICB attended the Health and Wellbeing Board on 11 May to discuss her vision for the area as well as answer questions relating specifically to County Durham and our aspirations.
- 77 The **VCS Better Together Forum** which brings together senior leaders of countywide and specialist VCS organisations continue to meet on a

regular basis to share best practice and look for opportunities to collaborate. A key focus is looking at how VCS organisations can play their part in the new Integrated Care System (ICS) and being realistic about expectations for both commissioners and providers.

78 Smoking is the single largest cause of preventable deaths and one of the largest causes of health inequalities, and a range of tobacco control work continues to support the ambition to reduce smoking prevalence across County Durham to 5% or less by 2025 (2030 for pregnant smokers, manual groups and those with mental health issues).

79 The **Health and Wellbeing Board** received a Smoking update in January 2022, which was followed in March by a presentation from FRESH asking ‘can smoking really end’? Ten high impact actions for the local authority were presented, as well as some low-cost policy intervention suggestions to de-normalise smoking. It is felt that smoking can be addressed, however bold action will be needed. On the back of the presentations, the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board wrote to local MPs to lobby for their support for a “tobacco levy” on manufacturers to put back into the health and care system.



80 The current Children and Young People’s Strategy 2019-2022 comes to an end this year and is due for review. Coproduction sessions have taken place with children, young people, parents and carers to develop a new Children and Young People’s Strategy. The “Growing Up in County Durham” Strategy will be based on what is important to those who use and need support from services.

81 **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP** supported a project providing sports packages for teenagers at Trimdon Village Hall, which engaged with teenagers, delivering sports equipment to each household and having access to larger sports equipment so that parents and teenagers could interact with each other more within Trimdon Village and Trimdon Grange. Each child received their own sports and healthy food pack.

82 This project engaged with over 50 individuals, supported 2 community facilities and 4 volunteers were involved in the project.

83 From 1 April 2022 the Leisure Centre discount rates already available to serving personnel and reservists was extended to include veterans of all ages. Our Public Health team are currently carrying out a Health Needs Assessment for Veterans in County Durham. We know from national

research that whilst people in the military are very active it can often be a challenge to maintain physical activity on leaving the armed forces. Extending the discounts to veterans is not only an expression of our **support for the Armed Forces community** but will also encourage healthy lifestyles and thus help reduce health inequalities.

84 **Durham AAP** have supported Durham Action on Single Housing (DASH), a local organisation that help vulnerable people with housing issues. With a grant from the AAP, they have been able to provide practical workshops for their vulnerable women's group. These have proven to be very beneficial giving the young women new experiences and skills.



Enjoying a boxing session with support from DASH

The AAP are also supporting DASH to employ a volunteer coordinator, a new post that will help DASH deliver their vital work.

85 The Health and Wellbeing Board received an update on the **Ageing Well Health Needs Assessment**, which is being undertaken and focuses on people aged 50+, outlining how public health prevention can be used to help people age well in a healthy way. The Health Needs Assessment will make recommendations for this age group, which will be used to inform the Ageing Well Strategy.

86 **Derwent Valley AAP** is working with MHA Communities, a community-based organisation who provide services to enable older people to live well in later life and reduce social isolation. The project will support older people in accessing services through digital inclusion. In partnership with local social enterprise group, Digital Voice, the project will deliver a series of workshops in group settings for residents to work on and each produce a "Digital Lifebook". A Lifebook is a ten-week programme that allows older people to tell their life stories using ipads, music, photographs and memories. The project will enable members to grow in their digital confidence and keep connected through MHA's weekly online activity group, titled 'The Geordie Variety Show', which was born out of the pandemic as a way of keeping connected and providing an array of activities.

87 The project aims to address social isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and improve wellbeing by organising creative, social digital

storytelling workshops around life stories among peers. The project will also boost participants' digital skills to make them more empowered, independent and resilient, and will be an inroad for some to start going online independently.

- 88 **Mid Durham AAP** have funded the Willowburn Hospice Alternative Therapy project to employ a Complementary Therapist two days per week at Willow Burn Hospice for day service clients and in-patients so that they can deliver therapies to enhance and develop the treatment experience for patients. National research by Kings College London found that good pain and symptom control is one of the issues



Staff from the Willowburn Hospice Alternative Therapy Project in their Christmas jumpers

that is most important to patients with an untreatable palliative diagnosis, and this is what they aim to achieve.

- 89 It is well documented by health research organisations (e.g., Mind, Cancer Research UK, Macmillan, Marie Curie etc) that complementary therapies are beneficial in helping with depression, anxiety and stress, all conditions which are associated with living with a life limiting illness. It is also reported by patients, that following complementary therapy, they have seen the intensity of physical symptoms reduced. Willowburn did not provide these services routinely, however, they now have a volunteer reiki therapist and the patients' feedback shows great positivity for this service.
- 90 As well as meeting a need for patients, they have identified a gap in the current nurses and carers' skills. Training for the staff from a complementary therapist would develop their skills and ensure the hospice always has a level of ability to deliver some kind of complementary treatments.

Connected communities

- 91 Anti-social behaviour is a key priority for the **Safe Durham Partnership**. The multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Strategic Group (a subgroup of Safe Durham Partnership) has been reinstated to address the increasing incidents/perceptions of anti-social behaviour across the

County. The group will provide leadership, oversight and co-ordinate the response to anti-social behaviour.

- 92 To support this work, funding has been obtained via the AAPs Countywide funding pot to run the Fearless Social Media campaign which is a branch of Crime Stoppers focussing on engaging young people and encouraging anonymous reporting of crime and criminal activity. Fearless resources have been delivered by Police Community Support Officer's in early February and an invite to schools to attend a virtual workshop to promote the use of the resources in schools and also inform of Fearless Workers funded through AAPs who will be able to support schools deliver workshops to young people.
- 93 Durham County Council along with 32 other local authorities across the North East and Yorkshire have been identified as a pilot area by the Home Office and Counter Terrorism Policing for Publicly Accessible Locations/Zones management in relation to protecting people and places from a terrorist attack, which is a part of the Protect Duty expected to be enacted in 2023.
- 94 The Home Office, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and Counter Terrorism Policing have identified the pilot will start from 1st April and will involve identifying, risk assessing venues and locations and agreeing any actions required in order to stop or mitigate publicly accessing locations across the County from being subject to a terrorist attack.
- 95 Concerns have been expressed to the Home Office about the scale of this work for County Durham without any additional resources however a Protect and Prepare Group will be set up to take forward this work with key partners involved, for example, the police and university.
- 96 The **Horden Together Project** was launched in September 2021 and brings together a range of partners including Durham County Council, Durham Constabulary, County Durham & Darlington Fire Service, Police and Crime Commissioner, Horden Parish Council, East Durham Trust and many others to work together with the community and address the needs of residents of the County Durham village and their priorities. This links into the emerging **County Durham Together** approach to place-based working.
- 97 Over the next three years, the project team, based in a neighbourhood hub, within Horden village will combine efforts to tackle issues such as crime, anti-social behaviour, housing and environmental problems in the village.
- 98 The work of the partnership will complement ongoing regeneration work in the area and support the long-term aspirations of the Horden

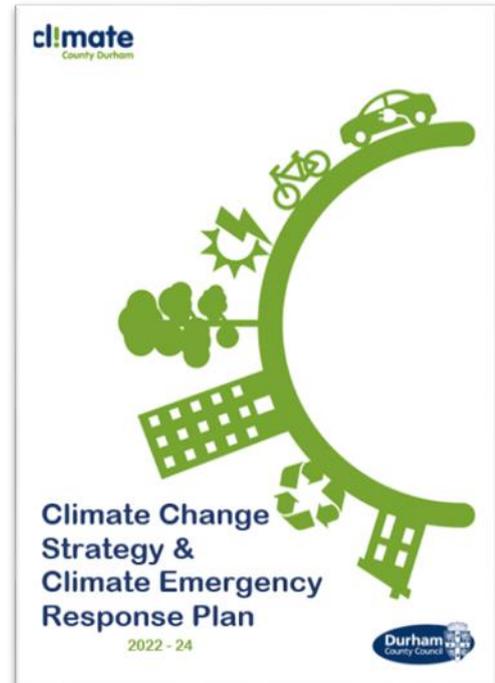
Masterplan. The masterplan, which was created in 2019, looks to address issues with poor housing, the environment and access to amenities in the village, with a particular focus on the part of the village known locally as the 'numbered streets'.

- 99 Since the launch, partners have been actively working with the local community to identify emerging issues and take action to solve the problems that people say most affect their daily lives. This community engagement has resulted in some positive interventions around the locality particularly in relation to the 'Making Every Adult Matter' (MEAM) Initiative where we are experiencing high demand for support services. In the first six months of the project, there have been over 100 referrals as part of the 'Making Every Adult Matter' (MEAM) Initiative which aims to provide support and better access to services for individuals within the area who are facing multiple disadvantages.
- 100 In addition, the Horden Together project has been chosen as a pilot place under the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Partnerships for People and Place programme. £100,000 of funding has been received to further develop 'Theory of Change' proposals which will identify new ways of working across local and central government to deliver innovative, locally led solutions to key challenges that communities face.



101 The **Environment and Climate Change Partnership (ECCP)** adopted the new ECCP Plan 2022-25 at its meeting in March 2022. The plan's strategic objectives are to address the climate change and ecological emergency challenges as they apply to County Durham and promote engagement and activity in our communities to improve sustainability and health and wellbeing across the county. The plan focuses on four strategic priorities:

- (a) Developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for County Durham
- (b) Actioning the partnership elements of the new countywide Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP2)
- (c) Engaging with communities to promote environmental action across County Durham
- (d) Increase cross thematic partnership collaboration with the Economic Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board



102 The **Environment and Climate Change Partnership's** Ecological Emergency workstream has started to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for County Durham. This is a requirement of the Environment Act 2021, which became law in November last year. Whilst waiting for detailed guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) following the evaluation of the results from the five pilot areas, partners have begun to prepare for the development of the strategy. Two subgroups have been set up to:

- (a) Gather data and evidence to support the development of a Local Habitat Map for the LNRS
- (b) Draft material towards the statement of biodiversity priorities.

103 Durham County Council has been accepted by the Environment Secretary as the 'responsible authority' to lead on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

- 104 The Local Councils Working Group discussed the issues Climate Change and Ecology Challenges. The **County Durham Association of Local Councils** has expressed a desire to sign the Climate Change Pledge which was welcomed. This will be arranged for later this year. The County Durham Association of Local Councils is also encouraging its members to consider the sustainable management of green spaces and the group discussed the declaration of an Ecological Emergency in the county which has recently been adopted by Cabinet. Future presentations will be made to the Local Councils Working Group on the countywide Climate Emergency Response Plan and the Ecological Emergency, and it was agreed that these are key areas where both tiers of local authority can work closely together.
- 105 To keep our communities connected and support environmental sustainability for our food, **3 Towns AAP** have supported Sunnyside Community Association to set up a community Pantry for the village of Sunnyside and opening of a community café to provide not only food but also a social opportunity for those in the village. Sunnyside hilltop village does not have a shop, café or take-away and only has a limited bus service, creating challenges for some, particularly older people.
- 106 The community pantry, stocking a wide range of food items has been set up by converting storage space into a food pantry with shelves, freezer and fridge. Sunnyside Community Shop opened on the 10 March 2022.
- 107 The organisation has become a member of Fareshare UK with weekly food deliveries and Fareshare go to Tesco's at Dragonville to collect food surplus 3 times a week, with a similar arrangement with Greggs.
- 108 Local residents are now able to fill a basket with food for a £1 donation and food orders can be delivered to residents who are unable to leave the home.
- 109 The project will save food from landfill, engage, and bring the community together for additional activities, and tackle food poverty whilst providing choice and reducing stigma for the increasing number of local people who now rely on foodbank deliveries to feed themselves and their families.
- 110 The community café has been serving lunches twice a week enabling people of all ages to come together for a nutritious cooked meal, chat, shop at the pantry and engage in other community activities if they wish. The café is an enormous success, and they are now excited to use food collections to maintain the café.

- 111 Funding also paid for a baking/cooking tutor, 3 hours a week and several baking classes have already ran with 3 groups in the community. They now have demand for parent/carer and child baking classes.
- 112 The **Bread-and-Butter Thing** is a food surplus redistribution charity offering an affordable food service which helps to make life more affordable for people on a low income, builds stronger communities and reduces food waste using an innovative and self-sustaining approach to the redistribution of surplus food and non-food items.
- 113 Their long-term aim is to address the premiums that people in poverty pay for everyday essentials simply because of their personal circumstances. They work in collaboration with local partners and national networks to create bespoke packages of support for our local communities - offering advice and practical solutions for dealing with debt, managing utilities, accessing mental health support and available grants and funding.
- 114 Volunteers are at the heart of the operation, with almost 200 volunteers working with them each week. This has been recognised formally by a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.
- 115 **Teesdale AAP**, provided Teesdale Sailing Club with funding along with match funding from the Council's BEEP team which will help the club provide off grid solar power to the Clubhouse. Teesdale Sailing Club is based at Grassholme Reservoir and the Clubhouse is an old stone building which was used by the construction workers of the reservoir dam wall many years ago. The facility is a well-used resource for the Dales with local groups and tourists regularly participating in water sport activities.
- 116 Junction 7 secured funding through **Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP** to complete renovations to their garden area, with essential garden refurbishment works and providing equipment and furniture to make the space more user friendly.
- 117 Enhancing the space has provided a great place for the community to come together, to share and learn new skills, whilst also growing fresh local produce. The garden is helping to provide a multitude of therapeutic and wellbeing benefits to all residents and user groups. Junction 7 have also received support from the local Veterans Hub who made contact and offered support from their members with various skills such as carpentry, joinery and gardening, for some of the 'trickier' jobs in the garden.

- 118 Following the success of the Through Soldiers' Eyes Exhibition held last Autumn which attracted nearly 9,000 visitors, our Community Arts Team have developed an 'Art of Wellbeing' legacy programme with support from both Covid Outbreak Management Fund and the AAPs. The programme provides a range of creative engagement activities to support the transition and integration into civilian life for veterans and their families and provide engagement for family members when partners are deployed. Feedback received has included: "For me it has opened doorways to recovery and a hoped-for better life" and "it gave me a purpose and a new beginning . . . raised my sense of self-worth".
- 119 A number of AAPs have focused on community resilience work, particularly in response to recent storm events. Storm Arwen left a majority of Weardale residents without a permanent electricity supply for 10 days and to compound the lack of electricity to resident homes, communication was affected as mobile phone masts were down, with British Telecom lines and internet where also interrupted.
- 120 To support community resilience, **Weardale AAP** is currently working with four hamlets to work up a localised resilience plan, working with our Civil Contingencies Unit and Environment Agency colleagues. Working holistically and at the pace of the group, a training course has been developed working is also ongoing in engaging Village Hall committees to look at building resilience.

- 121 Partners from the **Environment and Climate Change Partnership's** Place, Health and Community workstream supported DCC to run a non-designated heritage assets project. These heritage assets are buildings, archaeological sites, street furniture, maritime, landscapes, monuments etc. that have heritage value but are not nationally designated. The group encouraged the people of County Durham to identify and tell the council what nationally unrecognised heritage was important to them, needed protecting and which they value most for inclusion on list. DCC has received £60,000 in funding to deliver the project.

EUSTON STATION GATES SHILDON



A non-designated heritage asset in Shildon

- 122 The North East Community Forest Partnership, which works with the **Environment and Climate Change Partnership's** Ecological Emergency workstream has secured £480,000 from Defra's Nature for

Climate Fund. This will enable thousands of trees to be planted across County Durham. A Forest Team, hosted by Newcastle City Council, will deliver the planting working with local partners. In addition, an extra £6,000 of funding from the Trees for Climate fund has been received to support the establishment of 10 hectares of woodland under the Durham Woodland Creation programme to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June.

- 123 A partnership made up of members from the **Environment and Climate Change Partnership's** Ecological Emergency workstream, DCC's Low Carbon Team and Durham Community Action (DCA), along with representatives of the local community in Horden, the East Durham Trust and East Durham Business Services supported a scoping study into the minewater heat at Horden to see if it could be used as a renewable heat source.



The land in Horden being investigated as a site to generate minewater renewable heat

- 124 Working with the help of a specialist consultancy, District Eating, DCA had a brief to see if it was viable to use the heat generated as an energy source for community food growing in greenhouses. They discovered that there is a substantial body of usable heat at Horden, likely to be about 1.36 MW. An action group has been formed to take the work forward.

Conclusion

- 125 As we adapt and learn to live safely with Covid-19 we will protect and enable our communities at greatest risk from Covid-19 and its consequences to live a healthy and fulfilled life. We will continue to work in partnership to enable the recovery and further progress of education, economic activity and social connectivity as well as strengthening system-wide prevention and preparedness for future waves and learn the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic.

126 Our relationships with other agencies and with our communities are built on a robust foundation and will continue to provide a basis for improving outcomes for our local people through this difficult time.

Background papers

- None.

Other useful documents

- None.

Author

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

Area and neighbourhood budgets are utilised and delivered through the 14 AAPs and ensure the Council (and AAPs) receive improved information on the outputs achieved through use of locality budgets.

Consultation

The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners. The recommendations in the report are based on extensive consultation with AAP partners.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The actions set out in this report aim to ensure equality and diversity issues are embedded within the thematic partnerships and the working practice of AAPs.

Climate Change

This is recognised throughout partnership activities.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a statutory duty on local authorities to form a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment and to reduce re-offending. In County Durham, the CSP is the Safe Durham Partnership.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

7 July 2021

**Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report
2021/22**



Report of Corporate Management Team

Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

None

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (COSMB) with the Overview and Scrutiny Annual report 2021/22 for comment and approval prior to submission to the County Council meeting in September 2022. The report is attached at Appendix 2.

Executive summary

In accordance with Article 5 paragraph 5.03 (d) of the Council's Constitution, COSMB is required to report annually to the County Council on its work with recommendations for its future work programme.

Recommendation(s)

- 2 COSMB is recommended to:
 - (a) Comment on the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2021/22.
 - (b) Agree that the report be submitted to the County Council meeting in September 2022.

Background

- 3 Each year the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report is prepared to provide information on activity by both COSMB and the five thematic

Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programmes. This work programme activity includes in-depth and light touch reviews, monitoring of performance management and budgetary reporting.

- 4 This report reflects the work undertaken by all overview and scrutiny committee members throughout 2021/22. A six month update of scrutiny activity will be submitted to the County Council in December.
- 5 The Annual Report also includes detail on the statutory scrutiny roles with health and crime and disorder.

Background papers

- None

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Contact: | Helen Lynch | Tel: 03000 269732 |
| | Clare Luery | Tel: 03000 265978 |

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None

Finance

None

Consultation

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Staffing

None

Accommodation

None

Risk

None

Procurement

None

Appendix 2: Annual report 2021/22 (attached as a separate item)

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/2022

Introduction

With the election of a joint administration in May 2021, the council appointed a cohort of new members into the important positions of chair and vice-chair of our overview and scrutiny committees. Some of our chairs and vice chairs were newly elected to the council and they have risen to the challenge of being a county councillor with the added responsibilities of being a committee chair and vice chair.

It has been my privilege to have been appointed as chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (COSMB) alongside Councillor Chris Lines as my deputy.

The role of COSMB is to be the strategic driver of the overview and scrutiny function by overseeing and co-ordinating the work of its committees. As chair I am passionate about the important role scrutiny can play within the council's decision making structures. I want to ensure that all our overview and scrutiny committees fulfil their potential.

My aim is for scrutiny to be an open and transparent function which is inclusive for all scrutiny members. I hope that through our scrutiny work, we can make a lasting impact on our residents and communities in County Durham. This can only be achieved by working together across the committees and ensuring we represent the views and voices of our communities.

Throughout our first year I have urged all scrutiny committees to get involved in policy development work. By being involved in early discussions around policy areas we can use our influence to help shape policy and improve outcomes for communities and businesses in County Durham.

Councillor Craig Martin

Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Overview and Scrutiny in County Durham

Scrutiny provides a valuable tool to scrutinise how we deliver our services and to drive improvement. We are supported by a dedicated scrutiny team and senior and specialist officers across the council. We have developed a strong scrutiny culture which adds value to the work of the council.

Durham County Council has embedded the four principles of good scrutiny, developed by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, in all our work. These are:

- To provide a constructive critical friend challenge to executive policy-makers and decisions-makers
- To amplify the voice and concerns of the public
- To ensure scrutiny is carried out by independent minded people who lead and own the scrutiny role
- To drive improvement in public services

Overview and scrutiny is a valuable part of local democracy and has important statutory roles in the scrutiny of health and crime and disorder.

DCC appoints members to six overview and scrutiny committees. DCC has 126 members in total and of these over 80 take part in scrutiny activity.



Scrutiny committees decide which areas they wish to examine. This may arise following representations by members of the public about a particular matter; be an issue identified by councillors themselves; or follow on from reports or performance assessment on the council's activities made by the cabinet or outside agencies.

We also promote scrutiny by maintaining an excellent relationship between executive and non-executive members and meet regularly to discuss matters of common interest.

The overview and scrutiny process provides an opportunity for members of the public and local communities to comment upon any service.

Co-optees and engagement

We continue to work with the non-voting co-optees who sit on our scrutiny committees. They bring skills, knowledge and their own expertise and views to scrutiny and provide important external challenge to our work programme.

We have also promoted engagement of local expert and academic researchers in overview and scrutiny where they can add to our work.

This ownership of the work programme and strong organisational culture underpins scrutiny's legitimacy as an effective and strategic function.

Co-opted members appointed to scrutiny committees ensure a strong external representation and help scrutiny to engage with the public.

We value the different perspectives and challenge our co-optees bring to our work. Co-optees

- Act as an independent voice for those who live or work in County Durham.
- Bring specialist knowledge, skills and an element of external challenge to the overview and scrutiny process.
- Take an interest in, attend and contribute to the committees and working groups to which appointed.
- Establish good relations with other members, officers and co-optees.

We undertake a full refresh of our co-opted members every four years and anyone who would like to express an interest is requested to contact the Scrutiny Team.

Overview and Scrutiny Review Activity

Each year the scrutiny work programme is developed to ensure a balanced programme. Alongside considering overview reports and updates, we plan focussed review work throughout the year. These reviews can be light touch or in depth and are usually reported to Cabinet and the appropriate thematic partnership.

Since the pandemic, most in depth scrutiny work has been paused due to the need to hold on-line meetings, a reduced schedule of meetings and the capacity of both members and officers.

In November 2021 Cabinet requested that Overview and Scrutiny establish a working group to investigate the merits and consequences of Durham County Council declaring an Ecological Emergency. The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ESCOSC) considered evidence as to whether an ecological emergency should be declared over two special meetings and considered evidence from Neighbourhoods and Climate Change service grouping and key partners.

ESCOSC unanimously agreed to recommend to Cabinet that DCC declare an ecological emergency and also agreed further additional recommendations in relation to:

- The development of an Ecological Emergency Response Plan
- For the Ecological Emergency Response Plan to be merged with the Climate Emergency Response Plan over the fullness of time.
- The need to ensure the best ecological practice is integrated across all Council services.
- The need to ensure that ESCOSC receives regular updates on the development of the plan and once developed monitors the progress of the plan against the actions and targets in the plan on a regular basis.

The report and its recommendations were agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 6 April 2022.

In June 2021 Cabinet agreed to review options for the potential future use of the former DLI Museum and Art Gallery building and surrounding grounds. Cabinet asked the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (COSMB) to consider whether the former DLI museum could be brought back into use to house the collection and to look at the options to repurpose the building and/or site.

In July 2021 COSMB held a special meeting with key stakeholders invited to submit representations framed around questions outlined by Cabinet on repurposing the building and options for the site. The meeting generated a lot of interest and gave an opportunity for questions to be asked on the

information presented. The outcomes of the meeting formed part of the evidence base for the review by Cabinet.

Planned Overview and Scrutiny in 2022/23

The work programmes for overview and scrutiny focus on the priority areas identified within the Council Plan, the Cabinet's Forward Plan of decisions, the County Durham Vision 2035, partnership plans and strategies, performance and budgetary control data and changes in government legislation.

The process for developing the Council's overview and scrutiny work programmes is consultative and comprehensive. Initial proposals are influenced by legislation, plans and strategies, performance reports and include engagement with the executive, partners and officers. Each overview and scrutiny committee chair ensures there is a clear focus on the committee's role and forward plan of work. Where there are any cross-cutting matters, joint meetings are held to avoid duplication and make the best use of capacity of both members and officers

Work programmes are usually finalised during June and July and are designed to ensure there is flexibility and capacity to take on topics which may arise throughout the year.

A summary of the key issues for the 2022/23 Work Programme is below:

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

- Medium Term Financial Plan and budget setting
- Welfare Reform and Poverty
- Corporate Initiatives
 - Digital Inclusion
 - Digital Solutions
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)
- Performance and budget outturn
- Customer Feedback
- Council Plan
- HQ Review
- The County Durham Pound
- Terms of Reference for Scrutiny
- General Fund and Capital Final Outturn
- Marketing and Communications
- County Durham Partnership Update

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Availability of commercial land and supply across the county
- Key strategic employment sites
- Job creation
- Regeneration of Town and Villages
- Support to business sector
- Housing
- Inclusive Economic Strategy

- Skills development and skills requirements
- Aykley Heads Strategic Employment sites
- Integrated Transport Management
- Visitor/Tourism economy and cultural offer

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Child Poverty
- 0-25 Family Health Services
- Early Years
- Best Start in Life
- Children and Young People Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
- CAMHS – Waiting Times
- Children, Young People and Families Strategy
- Support for Young People not in Education, Employment or Training
- School Funding
- SEND Green Paper
- Sufficiency Strategy
- Autism Strategy
- Reducing Parental Conflict

Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Air Quality in County Durham
- Climate Emergency Response Plan 2
- SUPS monitoring against action plan
- Fly Tipping
- Strategic Waste Management
- Fuel Poverty
- Highway, Footway and Bridge Maintenance
- DCC's Management of Allotments
- Visitor Economy – Tourism and Cultural Offer
- Leisure Transformation Programme
- Physical Activity Strategy
- Transport Policy & Activity – Regionally & Locally
- Woodland Management
- Parks, Nature Reserves and Open Spaces
- Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project

Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Arson and deliberate fires
- Off Road Bikes and Vehicles
- Reducing Re-offending
- Alcohol and Drugs Harm Reduction Strategy
- Youth Justice Plan

- Probation Services
- Counter Terrorism
- Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence
- Road Safety

Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- NHS Statutory Consultations/Legislation plans
- Development of Integrated Care Systems and Partnerships
- Health and Social Care Integration
- Shotley Bridge Community hospital
- Public health funding and services/campaigns
- NHS Foundation Trust performance and Oversight –
 - County Durham and Darlington NHS FT
 - Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS FT
 - North East Ambulance Services NHS FT

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 2021/22



Cllr Craig Martin
Chair



Cllr Chris Lines
Vice chair

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (COSMB) provides a strategic direction for the work of all the overview and scrutiny committees.

Reports and presentations scrutinised during 2021/22 include:

- MTFP (12) 2022/23 to 2025/26 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2022/23
- Review of the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) Collection and Archive
- Regulation of Investigative Powers Act (RIPA) 2000
- Quarterly Performance Management
- Quarterly Budget Outturn reports
- Workplace Transformation: Enabling Smarter Working
- Poverty Issues
- Customer Feedback - Complaints, Compliments & Suggestions
- County Durham Partnership
- Refresh of non-statutory, non-voting overview and scrutiny co-optees
- Annual Statutory Representations 2020/21
- Updates on Petitions
- Notice of Key Decisions

Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/22



Cllr Patricia Jopling
Chair



Cllr Rochelle Charlton-Laine
Vice chair

The Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWH OSC) has a statutory role under the Health and Social Care Act 2001 as amended to scrutinise local health services

Reports and presentations scrutinised during 2021/22 include:

- Overview and Scrutiny Review of Access to GP services in County Durham
- An Overview of Adult Social Care
- An Overview of Public Health Services
- Winter Planning and the work of the Local Accident and Emergency Delivery Board
- Shotley Bridge Community Hospital updates
- Local Outbreak Management Plan updates
- Health Protection Annual Assurance Updates
- Integrated Care Systems
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys Inspection CQC Improvement Plan update
- NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2020/21 responses and 2021/21 priorities for
 - North East Ambulance Service NHS FT
 - County Durham and Darlington NHS FT
 - Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS FT
- NHS Dentistry Services – Availability and Access
- Improving access to Primary Access
- QWELL – Digital Mental Health Services for Adults
- County Durham and Darlington Adult Mental Health Rehabilitation and Recovery Services (Primrose Lodge, Chester-le-Street)
- Director of Public Health Annual Report
- County Durham and Darlington NHS FT – No Not Attempt CPR Policy
- North East Ambulance Service NHS FT – 999/111 services – System processes, demand, capacity and performance
- Quarterly Performance Management
- Quarterly Forecast Revenue and Capital Outturn

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/22



Cllr Chris Hood
Chair



Cllr James Cosslett
Vice chair

Children and Young
People Overview and
Scrutiny Committee
(CYP OSC)

Reports and presentations scrutinised during 2021/22 include:

- Introduction to Children and Young People's Services
- Children, Young People and Families Partnership
- Overview of Child Protection Process
- Relationship Based Social Work Practice
- Developing a new County Durham SEND Strategy
- Children's Adolescent Mental Health Service update
- Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
- Key Findings and Actions from OFSTED's focused visit
- Corporate Parenting Annual Report
- Child Poverty in County Durham
- Free School Meals
- Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse
- Inclusion/Exclusion Update
- Developing a new County Durham Children, Young People and Families Strategy
- Impact of the Education White Paper: Opportunity for all – Strong Schools with Great Teachers
- Quarterly Performance Management
- Quarterly Forecast Revenue and Capital Outturn
- EHE Progress update
- Holiday Activities with Food
- 0-25 Family Health Services
- Young Carers
- Neglect
- Stronger Families Programme
- Reducing Parental Conflict
- Durham Works

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/22



Cllr Bill Moist
Chair



Cllr Andrew Jackson
Vice chair

Economy and
Enterprise Overview
and Scrutiny Committee
(Economy OSC)

Reports and presentations scrutinised during 2021/22 include:

- Introduction to the Regeneration, Economy and Growth Service Grouping
- Strategic job creation plan
- Strategic key employment sites
- County Durham's visitor economy
- Managing change in County Durham's towns and villages
- Investment pipeline
- Support provided to the retail sector by DCC
- Business Durham progress
- Inclusive Economic Strategy
- Housing update
- Transport policy and activity in County Durham and the wider region
- Highways, footways and bridge maintenance
- Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project (SLERP)
- Quarterly Performance Management
- Quarterly Forecast Revenue and Capital Outturn

Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/22



Cllr Bev Coult
Chair



Cllr Jonathan Elmer
Vice chair

Environment and
Sustainable
Communities Overview
and Scrutiny
Committee (Env&Sust
OSC)

Reports and presentations scrutinised during 2021/22 include:

- Overview of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change Service Grouping
- Environment and Climate Change Partnership
- Climate Emergency Response Plan
- Renewable Energy Projects
- Fly-tipping
- Strategic Overview of Resources and Waste Management Services
- Single Use Plastics
- Highways, Footway and Bridge Maintenance
- Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project
- Draft Physical Activity Strategy
- Scope Three Emissions
- Transport Policy and Activity in County Durham
- Quarterly Performance Management
- Quarterly Forecast Revenue and Capital Outturn
- Community Action Team
- Heritage Coast and the Tourism Offer
- Environment and Climate Change Partnership Update
- Winter Maintenance
- EU and Other Funding
- DCC Fleet
- Stockton to Darlington Railway Bicentennial Celebrations
- Theatres
- Air Quality Management in County Durham
- History Centre
- Fuel Poverty
- Bereavement Services
- Libraries

- Lumiere
- Woodland Management
- DCC Allotments
- Flood Risk Management Authorities

Safer & Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021/22



Cllr Joyce Charlton
Chair



Cllr Phil Heaviside
Vice chair

SSC OSC has powers under the Police & Justice Act 2006, as amended, to scrutinise work being undertaken by the statutory crime and disorder reduction partnership - the Safe Durham Partnership

Reports and presentations scrutinised during 2021/22 include:

- Safe Durham Partnership – Overview
- County Durham Youth Justice Service
- Open Water Safety
- Alcohol and Drug Harm Reduction Group
- Arson and Deliberate Fire Setting
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and whole system approach to domestic abuse
- Nuisance motorbikes and quads – Time Limited Action Plan
- Community Protection Service
- Public Protection Service
- Safer Cyber
- Road Safety
- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategic Group
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – Prevent Update
- Probation Service
- Civil contingency planning and Storm Arwen review
- County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue
- Informal Awareness sessions on:
 - Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services
 - Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Counter Terrorism – Prevent Awareness
 - Closed-Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV)

Regional Scrutiny

The North East Regional Employers' Organisation supports a region-wide North East Joint Scrutiny Member/Officer network where all North East local authority scrutiny leads discuss national developments in scrutiny. The network also provides an opportunity to share work programmes and priorities and consider emerging issues that have an impact across local authority boundaries.

Durham County Council have chaired and administered the regional network until recently.

North East Combined Authority scrutiny arrangements

We continue to work with other regional authorities as the North East Combined Authority (NECA) which is comprised of the four councils of Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

NECA has three broad areas of focus:

- Transport
- Employability and Inclusion
- Economic Development and Regeneration

We have representation on the NECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise and challenge decision-making on behalf of our communities. The committee investigates matters of significant importance to residents across the areas covered by the four councils with a view to influencing decisions.

Durham County Council is represented on the NECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Councillors Craig Martin and Chris Lines the Chair and Vice-Chair of COSMB. Councillor Bev Coult the Chair of Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the nominated substitute member.

Transport is of strategic importance to the North East and both NECA and the North of Tyne Combined Authority (Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland councils) work collaboratively to ensure effective decision making takes place across the region. We work with NECA and the North of Tyne Combined Authority on a North East Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee established with representatives from all seven authorities. Councillors Craig Martin and Chris Lines the Chair and Vice-Chair of COSMB represent Durham County Council. With Councillor Bev Coult, Chair of Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the nominated substitute member.

Both scrutiny committees usually meet at varying locations across the NECA area and meetings are open to the public.

Further details on NECA can be found at www.northeastca.gov.uk.

Regional Health Scrutiny

The Council continues to work collaboratively at a regional level to ensure that the impact of changes to health services across local authority boundaries does not adversely impact upon residents of County Durham.

The North East Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee consists of lead Health Scrutiny members from all 12 north east local authorities.

The committee is charged with scrutinising issues around the planning, provision and operation of health services in and across the north east region, comprising for these purposes the areas covered by all constituent authorities.

Sub Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committees

The emergence of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System and associated Integrated Care Partnerships has resulted in the establishment of two Integrated Care System/Integrated Care Partnerships Joint OSCs within the region.

North East and North Cumbria ICS and Northern and Central ICP Joint OSC

This Joint OSC comprises representatives from Durham County Council; Gateshead BC; Newcastle City Council; North Tyneside BC; Northumberland CC; South Tyneside BC and Sunderland City Council.

North East and North Cumbria ICS and Central and Southern ICP Joint OSC

This Joint OSC comprises representatives from Darlington BC; Durham County Council; Hartlepool BC; Middlesbrough BC; Redcar and Cleveland BC; North Yorkshire County Council and Stockton on Tees BC

Durham County Council is the only North East Council with representatives that sit on both ICS/ICP Joint OSCs.

The regional and sub-regional joint scrutiny overview and scrutiny arrangements will be used to scrutinise the development of the ICS/ICPs and any associated proposals for substantial developments or significant variations in services.

Overview and Scrutiny Team

The Overview and Scrutiny team is part of the Resources Directorate.

Helen Lynch, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer.

Michael Turnbull, Interim Democratic Services Manager and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Stephen Gwilym, Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

Diane Close, Jonathan Slee and Ann Whitton - Overview & Scrutiny Officers.
Clare Luery - Scrutiny Support Assistant.

Scrutiny office: 03000 265978

Email: scrutiny@durham.gov.uk

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Economy and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

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Environment and Sustainability Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

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Safer Stronger Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

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