



Voice of the Customer Report

Quarter 4 2023/24

January 2024 – March 2024

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Introduction

This Voice of the Customer report covers the quarter 4 period from January 2024 to March 2024.

It contains information on all customer feedback received including compliments, comments, and complaints, broken down by director service area. Information on upheld complaints is included along with learning and improvement actions that have been identified through customer feedback received, customer satisfaction survey responses and complaint investigations that have taken place.

There is a section that covers complaints that have been referred to, investigated and decided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The report also includes information on customer satisfaction, analysing satisfaction levels and the responses that have been received for customer satisfaction surveys sent out to recent users of the main customer facing services.

There is a section at the end of the report that covers customer demand data across various contact channels including telephone calls received by the customer contact centre, face to face contact, website usage, service requests received, and the number of payments received.

There is always an increase in customer demand during quarter 4, this is due to the green garden waste subscription period starting in January and the issuing of new Council Tax bills in March.

In comparison to 2022/23, during quarter 4 customer demand increased in some areas, including the number of visitors to the Guildhall to access support in person and the number of users visiting the WLDC website. The volume of calls received by the contact centre, eforms and service requests received has decreased.

There has been an increase in positive customer feedback during quarter 4 in comparison to 2022/23 with more compliments being received, the number of complaints and comments received has decreased and a smaller percentage of complaints have been upheld.

Customer satisfaction has increased when compared to the previous quarter 4 period.

For more information or to discuss this report further please contact:

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Please send any customer feedback received to – experience@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Customer Feedback and Demand Overview

	2023/24	2022/23	Difference
Compliments	354	333	▲21
Comments	26	33	▼7
Complaints	49	52	▼3
Upheld Complaints	13 (27%)	17 (33%)	▼4 (6%)
Average response time	5.8 days	6.9 days	▼1.1 days
Customer Satisfaction	82%	81%	▲1%
Telephone Calls (Contact Centre)	23,801	26,557	▼2,756
Website Users	181,725	103,506	▲78,219
Visitors to the Guildhall	11,712	8,676	▲3,036

In [Appendix 1](#) you can find a table that shows a breakdown of customer feedback received by each individual service (Compliments, Comments and Complaints).

Compliments

The number of compliments received has increased by 21 compared to the previous year. The main customer facing services received the highest number of compliments as they deal with a larger number of customers daily (waste services, street cleansing, planning, development, trees and conservation, revenues (council tax) and benefits and customer services).

Compliments have continued to be received during quarter 4 for various services for their assistance and support during and after the flooding that took place in October 2023, for financial support that has been processed by the revenues (council tax) service.

More detail on compliments received by each service is included later in this report.

Complaints

The number of complaints received has decreased by 3 in comparison to the previous year. Waste services received the highest number of complaints, which is to be expected given the number of customers they serve on a weekly basis.

More detail on complaints received by each service is included later in this report.

Average response time for complaints

In quarter 4 the average complaint response time decreased by 1.1 days compared to the previous year from 6.9 days to 5.8 days. The target for response is 21 calendar days.

There were no complaints in quarter 4 that took over 21 days to respond to.

Upheld complaints

Fault was identified in 13 of the 49 complaints that were investigated, 13 complaints were upheld in quarter 4 which is a small decrease compared to the previous year.

Where fault has occurred the issues have been examined to identify if any learning can take place or if any service improvements are required.

More detail on learning and improvement actions for individual services is included later in this report.

Comments

The number of comments received has decreased by 7 compared to the previous year.

Waste services received the highest number of comments, these were mainly in relation to the green garden waste service.

More detail on comments received by each service is included later in this report.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has increased by 1% compared to the previous year from 81% to 82%. Satisfaction has increased since the new CRM system has been used for waste service and street cleansing requests.

More information on customer satisfaction is included later in this report.

Learning and Improvements

Learning and improvements that have been identified and implemented during quarter 4 are detailed in the sections below.

Customer Demand

There has been an increase in customer demand across the website and face to face services compared to the previous year. The number of visitors to the Guildhall has increased dramatically in 2023/24, and although most of the customers that attend in person are accessing services provided by our tenants, there is still an initial interaction with the WLDC Customer Services Team.

The number of service requests received has decreased and online forms and telephone remain the preferred methods of contact for 90% of customers.

There has been a decrease in the number of calls received by the contact centre (customer services, revenues (council tax) and benefits calls) along with a decrease in the number of abandoned calls.

The number of payments received has increased and there has been an increase of 2% in the number of self-service payments compared to last year.

More information can be found in the [Customer Demand](#) section of this report.

Operational & Commercial Services

Ady Selby

	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Upheld Complaints
Arts and Leisure	13	2	1	
Building Control	11	0	0	
Cemetery	0	0	1	1 upheld
Crematorium	1	0	0	
Customer Experience	8	0	0	
Customer Services	57	0	0	
Street Cleansing	20	2	1	1 upheld
Waste Services	102	10	21	9 upheld
Totals	212	14	23	11 upheld

Compliments

Waste Services, Street Cleansing and Customer Services received a high number of compliments in quarter 4 which is to be expected as they are some of the main customer facing services.

Customers have complimented Waste Services on how easy it is to make contact and request a service, over the telephone and via the WLDC website. Customers appreciate when a service is carried out on time and when we do what we say we are going to do. A lot of praise has been received for the bulky collection service, how helpful it is and how well collections are carried out. Waste operatives have been thanked for their assistance and some personal thanks has been received for individual members of the waste team that have gone above and beyond.

Customers have complimented Customer Services officers for the way they have handled their enquiries including how helpful and knowledgeable they are. Compliments include how customers appreciate being able to speak to a human being and how understanding and empathetic officers have been, listening skills and patience levels have been commented on several times. Customers are thankful when customer services have processed their requests quickly and accurately, resulting in efficient service delivery.

The Customer Experience team have been thanked for providing prompt and helpful responses to customer feedback and complaints. Customers are grateful for information that has been provided to them and for the customer experience teams assistance in resolving issues they have been experiencing.

The Trinity Arts Centre received several 5 star google reviews with comments regarding how wonderful the venue is and how polite and friendly the staff are. The pantomime received praise, a customer enjoyed seeing his granddaughter perform in it and another customers granddaughter enjoyed her first ever trip to a pantomime. Visitors from further afield have commented on how impressive TAC is in comparison to other venues.

Building Control have received messages of thanks for their help, advice and information provided, comments have mentioned how quick and efficient the service has been delivered.

The support provided by the team is appreciated and a customer has commented on how the help received had decreased their stress levels.

Compliments for Street Cleansing include thanks and praise for how quickly service requests have been actioned, in particular fly tipping reports, a special mention has been made regarding how clean and tidy operatives leave the area after fly tipping has been removed. Customers appreciate being able to make a report or request a service easily and online out of office hours and have complimented how they have been kept up to date and informed when the job has been completed.

The Crematorium have received a message of thanks for going above and beyond making the process much easier for the family involved.

Complaints

21 complaints were received for Waste Services which included repeated missed bin collection issues, missed sack collections, crew behaviour, delays in bin deliveries, damage to property and collections taking place before 7am. Complaints were also received in relation to the bin collection calendar deliveries and the green garden waste service. 9 of the 21 complaints received were upheld.

3 complaints were upheld in relation to repeated missed bins, these were cases where the missed collections had been reported to the council on several occasions and where the crews had not recorded any issues with the bins (e.g. not presented, contaminated). When arrangements were made to return for the missed bins, they were not collected within the 5 working day period promised.

It was found that these properties were in rural locations and a change in crews led to them being missed as the locations were not obvious. Actions were put in place for the affected properties to ensure that they were not missed again going forward and the customers received an apology for any inconvenience caused.

A complaint was upheld where the waste crew had caused damage to the grass verge at a property, damage was caused, and the crew were spoken to, but the same piece of grass was driven over again 2 weeks later. Arrangements have been made to repair the grass that was damaged, and the customer received an apology.

2 complaints regarding operative behaviour were upheld, the crews were reminded of the standard of behaviour expected when working for and representing the council and the customers received an apology.

A complaint was upheld as it was found that crews were starting their collection rounds prior to 7am, this goes against council policy as residents are advised that they should put their bins out for collection by 7am. The offending crews were spoken to regarding the matter to ensure that starting early did not continue to happen.

A complaint was upheld as the crews had left a new bin collection calendar out in the rain rather than putting it through the resident's letter box, leading to them having to contact the customer services team to request a new copy. The customer received an apology, and a new copy of the calendar was posted to them.

Another complaint was upheld as the crews had attended an incorrect location for a bulky waste collection. The collection was not completed and the photograph that was saved on

the customer's account was not of the garage where the items had been left for collection. The customer received a notification to advise that the items for collection were not present when they were, the crew had made the mistake of going to the wrong location. The customer received an apology, and a crew was sent out to collect the items as soon as possible.

A complaint received for Street Cleansing was upheld as it was found that a report of fly tipped rubbish outside a property was not properly actioned. The rubbish was not removed but the customer received a confirmation to advise that their request had been completed. An error had been made by the crew when they marked it as completed on the CRM system when they should have marked it as being dealt with by another department, the community safety department, as there was evidence that could be followed up in terms of who the perpetrator was. The customer received an explanation and an apology, and the fly tipped rubbish was dealt with as soon as possible.

A complaint received in relation to land that the Council maintains was upheld as the customer's enquiry was not responded to in a timely manner, they had to send several emails requesting an answer. The customer received an apology and a response to their queries following receipt of the complaint.

A complaint received regarding the leisure centre was not upheld, the complaint was regarding a change to the booking system for personal trainer sessions. The customer was unhappy that going forward you would only be able to book sessions via a mobile phone app. When an officer liaised with the centre manager, they found that customers were also able to book and pay for their sessions at the Leisure Centre reception desk. This was communicated back to the customer who was grateful for our assistance.

Comments

2 comments were received for Arts and Leisure, one was in relation to Trinity Arts Centre (TAC) tickets and the option to purchase them in person at the Guildhall offices. The other was regarding the Leisure Centre with suggestions on how the facilities could be improved.

2 comments were received for Street Cleansing, they were both in relation to the frequency of street cleansing in certain areas highlighting how some streets appear not to be cleaned regularly enough as there is often a build up of litter in the area.

10 comments were received for Waste Services, 7 were in relation to the green garden waste service about the cost of the service and a green bin, the duration and frequency of collections and concerns regarding the impact of the recent price increase for the service.

Other comments received for Waste Services included suggestions for the waste disposal A-Z and concerns regarding the tags being used on rejected bins.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction surveys were sent to Waste Services and Street Cleansing customers. 287 responses were received for these services.

Low scores have been received for Waste Services with comments regarding the cost of new bins, repeated missed bin issues, delays in services being received, including bulky collections not being fully completed and late bin collections and deliveries. Comments have

also been received regarding lack of contact and promised action and disappointment that bins were not collected when they should have been.

High scores have been received with praise for how quickly services have been carried out, including on time bulky collections. Comments have been received regarding how easy it was to request a service, how efficiently problems have been resolved, how well customers have been kept informed and praise for how operatives conduct themselves when carrying out their duties, with some operatives being personally named and thanked.

Low scores have been received for Street Cleansing where fly tipping has not been removed in a timely manner, comments have been received regarding lack of communication and response, lack of action, disappointment with the amount of litter in the area and perceived lack of action against perpetrators of fly tipping.

High scores have been received with praise for how quickly actions have taken place, including the removal of fly tipping and the emptying of full litter and dog bins. Comments have been received regarding how easy it is to report issues, how friendly street cleansing operatives are and how customers have been kept up to date, and informed when a request has been completed.

Learning and Improvements

Waste Services

A comment received from a customer regarding their bin being tagged included a photograph of the tag that had been used. On examination it was noticed that the tag said 'Advisory' on it. These 'Advisory' tags should have all been destroyed after the initial roll out of the new recycling system as they were no longer being used due to having incorrect advice printed on them.

The waste service supervisors committed to carrying out an audit of all the tags in stock to ensure that all the 'Advisory' tags had been destroyed and were no longer being used.

Street Cleansing and CRM

An upheld complaint for street cleansing found that the crews were not entering information onto CRM correctly. The crew marked a fly tipping removal as completed on the CRM system when they should have marked it as being dealt with by another department, the community safety department. This led to a confirmation email being sent to the customer that made the report, ending in a formal complaint as the fly tipped rubbish had not actually been removed when the confirmation was received by the customer.

The street cleansing manager and waste services supervisors have been made aware of the need for further training for operatives on how to accurately input and record information on the CRM system. This is particularly important when automatic confirmations are being sent to customers and to ensure that accurate records are being kept.

Planning, Regeneration & Communities

Sally Grindrod-Smith

	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Upheld Complaints
Communities	4	0	0	
Disabled Facilities Grants	3	0	0	
Energy	0	0	0	
Growth and Regeneration	4	1	0	
Home Choices	1	0	5	1 upheld
Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation	72	1	5	
Tourism	0	0	0	
Wellbeing and Health	0	0	0	
Totals	84	2	10	1 upheld

Compliments

Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation received a high number of compliments in quarter 4, officers have been complimented and thanked for their patience, understanding and the quality of information and advice that has been provided.

Compliments have been received regarding how quickly applications have been processed and the professionalism displayed by planning officers. The tree officer has received several compliments thanking them for their advice and quick responses.

The Communities team have received messages of praise for support provided at the church's festival and for broadband work that has taken place to assist businesses and residents across the district. The CCTV team have received messages of thanks for help that they have provided in response to information requests and for welcoming and assisting visitors to the control room.

Businesses have thanked the Growth Team for their involvement in business recovery grant applications, a business breakfast meeting and support to a local business. Their time, advice and support has been appreciated by those who have been assisted.

Home Choices received a compliment for the help they give to homeless people, the customer was thankful that they were given a chance and helped to find a housing solution.

Praise has been received for the DFG service with customers expressing how thankful they are for adaptations that have been made to their homes and highlighting how much their life will now improve.

Complaints

5 complaints were received for Home Choices. 3 of the complaints were in relation to the bidding system, the customers were not happy that they were not being successful when bidding for properties online. They were claiming that they were not being prioritised enough and felt that other people getting properties were less in need than they were.

These complaints were not upheld, when examined the customers were in the correct banding for bidding on properties based on their circumstances so there was no fault identified. The customers received assurance that they were being treated fairly and in line with the Council's Local Lettings Policy.

Another complaint received was in relation to a customer being shortlisted for a property before the property was then withdrawn. The investigation found that the withdrawal of the property was due to errors on the advertisement regarding the qualifying criteria which were made by a third party, not WLDC, therefore the complaint was not upheld.

1 of the 5 complaints received for Home Choices was upheld as it was found that a form requested was not sent to the customer as quickly as it should have been, and the customer did not receive a call back in a timely manner. The service received was not in line with Council's service standards, so the customer received an apology and the assistance they required.

5 complaints were received for Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation, none of them were upheld.

2 of the complaints received were in relation to the same planning application decision, it was claimed that a decision to grant planning permission for a business development in Langworth had contributed to recent flooding that had taken place. The investigation found no fault on behalf of the council and the complaints were not upheld.

2 complaints were received regarding the process followed for two separate planning applications, both claimed that the officer's reports did not fully address all concerns that had been raised and there were issues raised regarding officer impartiality. The investigations found that the correct process had been followed, the officer's reports had set out all relevant considerations and there was no evidence to back up the claims of impartiality. These complaints were not upheld.

A further complaint received was in relation to historical conservation advice that had been provided to a listed building owner's predecessor. Claims were made that the historical advice provided was flawed and that it had led to water ingress issues now being experienced at the listed building. The investigation found no evidence to suggest that this was the case, so the complaint was not upheld.

Comments

A comment was received for Growth and Regeneration with various ideas of how the town could be improved.

A comment received for Planning and Development was in relation to a local development with observations on how it was progressing and issues that they felt should have been considered in the planning application process. The customer received a response with explanations about their observations and issues raised.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction surveys were sent to Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation customers. 31 responses were received in total.

Low scores have been received where customers felt that rules and guidance for listed buildings could be clearer and more concise, and comments were received regarding the timeliness of officer communication and decisions.

High scores have been received with comments received regarding how quickly and efficiently enquiries and applications have been dealt with. Officer guidance, advice and communication has been praised and customers have commented on how they appreciate it when officers have guided and worked with them to achieve a successful application.

Learning and Improvements

No learning and improvement actions were identified in quarter 4.

LGSCO Complaints

1 of the new complaints that were referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in quarter 4, was in relation to Planning and Development.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate the complaints referred to them during quarter 4.

More detail on the complaint can be found in the [LGSCO complaint](#) section of this report.

Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services

Nova Roberts

	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Upheld Complaints
Benefits	6	0	1	
Community Safety	9	0	1	
Environmental Protection	5	0	0	
Food, Health and Safety	0	0	0	
Housing Enforcement	2	0	1	
Licensing	4	0	0	
Local Land Charges	2	0	1	
Planning Enforcement	2	0	2	
Public Health Funerals	0	0	0	
Revenues (Council tax)	15	0	5	1 upheld
System Development	5	0	0	
Totals	50	0	11	1 upheld

Compliments

Revenues (Council Tax) received compliments for help, support and advice that has been provided in what are typically difficult times, in particular several messages of thanks have been received for assistance that has been provided to victims of flooding at the end of 2023, the council tax team have been able to offer financial support to those affected.

Compliments have been received for the Community Safety team that include appreciation for how quickly issues of fly tipping and abandoned vehicles have been dealt with and for the proactive approach of officers. Customers have appreciated being kept up to date and being provided with prompt and accurate advice.

The Benefits team have received messages of thanks for financial assistance that they have been able to provide, customers are very grateful for the support and have commented on how it has helped to improve their overall wellbeing.

Environmental Protection have received 5 star satisfaction across with compliments on the prompt and efficient action that has been taken by officers to assist customers with their concerns.

Licensing have been complimented on how quickly they respond to customer and business enquiries, with a customer stating that WLDC are always the quickest council to respond. The high level of professionalism, politeness and helpfulness has been mentioned on more than one occasion.

Compliments received regarding the WLDC website and how easy it is to request or book a service online have been attributed to the Systems Development team. Customers have comments on how straightforward the online process is, in particular subscribing to the green garden waste service.

Planning and Housing Enforcement services have been thanked for investigations that have been carried out, with customers pleased with the conclusion reached.

Local Land Charges have been congratulated on their good work and thanked for their swift responses to customer enquiries.

Complaints

5 complaints were received for Revenues (Council Tax), 1 was upheld.

The upheld complaint was in relation to an error that was made when a change in circumstances notification was received. It was not correctly entered onto the system and when the customer made contact to query the error, they did not receive a response or an update once it had been rectified. The customer received an apology, and the team were made aware of the error that had been made.

A complaint regarding a deduction of earnings arrangement that had been put in place for outstanding council tax owed was not upheld. A claim was made that the customer had not been made aware of the situation or that the earning deduction was going to be put into place, but the investigation found that two notification letters had been sent to the customers address as per procedure.

A complaint received claiming that council tax arrear reminders had not been received in between the final bill and court summons being issued was not upheld. The investigation found copies of reminder letters that had been sent to the customer, the letters had not been returned to the council, so it was assumed they had been received.

A complaint received regarding council tax charges for empty properties was not upheld, the customer complained that 2 months exemption was not long enough. The complaint was not upheld as this is the Council's policy on charges for empty properties.

A complaint in relation to council tax exemptions was not upheld, a customer was claiming that certain exemptions were discriminatory towards others. The exemption that they were referring to did not exist. The customer was sent a list of the exemptions that do exist, and the complaint was not upheld.

A complaint that was received for Benefits was not upheld. The customer was dissatisfied with the amount of information that was being requested from them, they felt that they were repeatedly being asked for the same information. The investigation found that this was not the case and further information was being requested to clarify previous information provided, this was in line with the Council's process when dealing with new benefit claims.

A complaint received for Community Safety in relation to a CPN that had been served was not upheld. The customer argued the reasons why the CPN had been served and questioned the evidence that had been used against them. No fault was found in the way the way and the reasons why the CPN had been served, the customer was already aware of their right to appeal the CPN via the magistrate's court if they wanted to do so.

A complaint was received for Housing Enforcement from a landlord that was claiming that they were being harassed by being asked to provide safety certificates for rental properties located in the WLDC area, claims were made that the requests for information were discriminative. The investigation found no fault in the actions of the housing enforcement

team, they were following the same process for other relevant properties in the area and there was no evidence of any discrimination taking place. The complaint was not upheld.

A complaint received for Local Land Charges was not upheld, the complaint was regarding information contained within the land search documents provided when a property was purchased.

The complainant had incorrectly assumed that permitted development rights had been removed from their property and complained that the land search document did not mention this. The investigation found that this was not the case, permitted development rights had not been removed, there were existing conditions applied to a historical planning decision in relation to the property, but this did not remove permitted development rights. The land search document outlined the planning application history, so the condition details were referenced within the land search document provided. Although the complaint was not upheld an improvement action was identified, please see below.

The 2 complaints received for Planning Enforcement were in relation to recent flooding in Langworth. Claims were made that a recent development taking place had removed some land from the side of a bank and that this had led to recent flooding that had taken place in the area. The customers were unhappy with the outcome of the enforcement case that had found that there was no evidence to suggest that any breach of planning had taken place and officers found no evidence to suggest that the bank had been altered any more than needed for the works granted permission to take place.

The investigation found that there was no fault in the planning enforcement decision, it had been made in line with the Council's Local Enforcement Policy, the complaints were not upheld.

Comments

No comments were received during quarter 4.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction surveys were sent to Licensing, Planning Enforcement, Housing Enforcement, Community Safety, Environmental Protection and Food Health and Safety customers. 54 responses were received for these services.

Licensing received high scores with comments received regarding how good the service was, how quickly responses were sent, and information was received and how polite and helpful officers were.

Low scores were received for Planning Enforcement with comments where customers felt that their complaint had not been properly considered and where they would have appreciated telephone calls rather than email communication. High scores were received with comments regarding how impressive the service is and how well concerns had been investigated.

A mix of scores were received for Housing Enforcement which included positive comments on how customers were listened to and how quickly and effectively complaints were dealt with.

Low scores were received for Community Safety where customers commented that they would have liked some feedback, more contact and regular updates on their report. High

scores were received with comments regarding how quickly issues had been resolved and how concerns were acknowledged and acted on promptly.

Low scores received for Environmental Protection included comments in relation to perceived lack of impartiality, no contact or updates being received, and promises made that were not actioned. High scores have been received with comments regarding how clear and helpful advice provided was, how quickly responses were received and appreciation that complaints have been taken seriously and acted upon in a timely manner.

Learning and Improvements

Revenues (Council Tax) – updating account information
<p>An investigation into a complaint found that an error had been made when a change in circumstances notification was received. It was not correctly entered onto the system leading to an account being closed and reopened in the landlords name.</p> <p>More due diligence, care and attention is required by officers when making updates to accounts especially during busy periods. The council tax team were made aware of the upheld complaint and the issue identified and they were reminded of the importance of ensuring that updates to accounts are accurate and correct.</p>
Local Land Charges – Land Search Documents
<p>Although the complaint received was not upheld an improvement action was identified when discussions in relation to the complaint were ongoing.</p> <p>Relevant planning application details are currently included on land search documents with the application number being included. Going forward a link to the planning website will also be included for ease of access. Previously the documents said to call the council for more information, providing a direct link to the website planning information may help to reduce telephone calls to the council.</p>

LGSCO Complaints

3 of the new complaints that were referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in quarter 4 were in relation to Planning Enforcement, Housing Enforcement and Community Safety.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate the complaints referred to them during quarter 4.

The LGSCO concluded their outstanding investigation into a complaint in relation to Planning Enforcement and issued their final decision in quarter 4. The complaint was not upheld as no fault was identified.

More detail on the complaint can be found in the [LGSCO complaint](#) section of this report.

Corporate Services

Emma Foy

	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Upheld Complaints
Communications Team	0	1	0	
Electoral Services	0	0	0	
Financial Creditors and Debtors	0	0	0	
HR	0	1	0	
Member and Support Services	1	0	0	
PA and FOI Team	0	0	0	
Property Services	4	1	0	
Totals	5	3	0	

Compliments

Property Services received messages of thanks for their involvement in various projects including the refurbishment of the footbridge in Saxilby, assistance provided to a local business and for out of hours work assisting council meeting set up and preparations.

Member and Support services received praise for their assistance in accommodating a last minute meeting and training session which required a change in working hours and location.

Complaints

No complaints were received during quarter 4.

Comments

A comment was received for Property Services in relation to parking a motorhome in the Council's Market Rasen car park, around information included on the signs in the car park. The comments were shared with the property team.

A comment was received for HR regarding issues with not being able to access the relevant pages on the WLDC website to apply for a job at the council, the page was saying it was temporarily unavailable when the customer tried to access it. This was communicated with HR but the issue had been resolved by the time they were made aware.

The Communications Team received a comment regarding the amount of promotion and advertising that took place for the Illuminate Festival, the customer received a response.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction surveys are not used for these services currently as they are mainly internal customer facing services.

Learning and Improvements

Property Services - Car Parking in Market Rasen for Motorhomes

A comment received regarding parking a motorhome in the Council's Market Rasen car park. The customer claimed that the signs were not clear on whether they were able to park there.

The parking FAQ's on the website had previously been updated to explain that that as long as the motorhome can fit into the width of the parking bay, it is allowed to overhang, and they will not get a PCN. This was going to be made more prominent.

Information was also going to be added to the website explaining that parking payments were cash only (no card payments) or via the RingGo phone app.

Work is currently ongoing on the current parking strategy to improve the car park offering in the area, with a view to introduce bays for motor home parking.

Chief Executive Ian Knowles

	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Upheld Complaints
Internal Confidential Issues	0	0	0	
Management Team	0	0	0	
WLDC Council in General	3	4	0	
Totals	3	4	0	

Compliments

Compliments that have been attributed to WLDC in general are regarding the work taking place in regard to RAF Scampton as many different officers from various departments are involved.

Praise for the action being taken regarding RAF Scampton has been received along with wishes of good luck for the next stages from residents that appreciate the effort that is going into the work taking place.

Complaints

No complaints were received during quarter 4.

Comments

4 comments were received for the Council in general, there were all in relation to RAF Scampton. Comments were received regarding concerns with the decision that had been made to go through the court process again, these comments received a response. A further comment was received regarding what a local Parish Council would like to see on site when the future regeneration work takes place.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction surveys are not used for these services currently as they are not customer facing services.

Learning and Improvements

No learning or improvement actions were identified in quarter 4.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Complaints

Complaints referred to the LGSCO during Qu4	4
Complaints investigated by the LGSCO during Qu4	0
Complaints not investigated by the LGSCO during Qu4	4
Complaints decided by the LGSCO during Qu4	1

During quarter 4, 4 new complaints were referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The 4 complaints were in relation to Planning Enforcement, Planning and Development, Housing Enforcement and Community Safety.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate any of the complaints referred to them during quarter 4, the reasons why are explained below.

The Planning Enforcement complaint was in relation to recent flooding in Langworth. The customer was unhappy with the council's decision to grant planning permission in 2021 to a development in the area and the outcome of a recent enforcement case that had found that there was no evidence to suggest that any breach of planning had taken place.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate this complaint as there was insufficient evidence of fault which would warrant an investigation.

The Planning and Development complaint was in relation to the granting of permission for a neighbours outbuilding. The complainant claimed that the decision to grant permission had been flawed and that full and proper considerations hadn't taken place.

The LGSCO decided not to investigate this complaint because there was not enough evidence to show any fault wrongly affected the Council's decision to grant planning permission or caused the complainant significant injustice.

The Housing Enforcement complaint was in relation to civil penalties that had been served for breaches of improvement notices and failing to licence properties in 2019.

The LGSCO decided not to exercise discretion and investigate the complaint because the complaint was received outside the normal 12-month period for investigating complaints and there was no evidence to suggest that the complainant could not have complained to them sooner. Housing Act notices carry a right of appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal Property chamber, and it was reasonable for them to use this remedy in 2019.

The Community Safety complaint was in relation to high hedge notices that had been issued to the complainant by the Council. The LGSCO would not investigate the complaint as the complainant had already made a formal appeal which meant the matters raised were now outside of their legal remit.

The LGSCO concluded their outstanding investigation into a complaint in relation to Planning Enforcement and issued their final decision in quarter 4. The complaint was not upheld as no fault was identified.

This Planning Enforcement complaint was about a recent investigation into the height of buildings on a new development site. The Council's investigation concluded that no breach had taken place that would justify further action being considered, the complainant was not satisfied with this outcome.

This is the LGSCO's conclusion:

"XX complains the Council failed to take sufficient action over breaches of planning approval on a neighbouring development."

"Our view is the Council did respond as the law expects it to. In the absence of any administrative fault, the merits of the decisions the Council made about enforcement are not something we can criticise. So we do not uphold the complaint."

Customer Satisfaction

Quarter 4	Surveys Sent	Responses received	Satisfaction Score
January 2024	729	117	85%
February 2024	722	138	81%
March 2024	682	115	79%
Totals	2133	372	82%

There has been an increase in customer satisfaction compared to the previous quarter 2 period, satisfaction has increased by 8% from 74% to 82%.

More detail on comments received through customer satisfaction surveys for each service is included in the sections above.

During quarter 4 satisfaction surveys were sent to customers that had received a service from these departments: Waste Services, Street Cleansing, Licensing, Environmental Protection, Planning Enforcement and Planning and Development, Food Health and Safety, Housing Enforcement and Community Safety.

The 375 responses received in quarter 4 were made up of responses from these services:

Anti-Social Behaviour	13
Housing Enforcement	6
Licensing	6
Planning and Development	31
Planning Enforcement	9
Public Protection	20
Street Cleansing	53
Waste Services	234

The table below shows the number of 1 to 5 star ratings that were received. 4 and 5 star ratings are used to calculate the overall satisfaction score %.

Customers are asked to rate the service received from 1 Star (Poor) to 5 Stars (Excellent)

Number of 1 star ratings	32
Number of 2 star ratings	15
Number of 3 star ratings	20
Number of 4 star ratings	43
Number of 5 star ratings	262

If a customer rates the service received as 1-3 stars, they are asked how their experience could have been improved, if a customer rates the service received as 4-5 stars, they are asked what we did well.

Customer Demand



- 3465 **service requests** were received in total
- This is a decrease of 44 compared to last year
- Online forms and telephone were the preferred methods of contact for 90% of customers



- 11,712 customers attended the Guildhall for a **face to face service**
- 1,909 of these were WLDC customers, 9,803 were not, but WLDC officers are still involved in the initial interaction with all guildhall visitors
- This is an increase overall of over 3000 customers compared to last year
- The increase has occurred from DWP seeing more customers on a face to face appointment basis.



- 23,801 **telephone calls** were received by the contact centre which includes customer services, revenues (council tax) and benefits
- 84% of them were answered, 16% were abandoned
- This is a decrease of 2,756 calls compared to last year when 26,557 calls were received by the contact centre



- The **WLDC website** had 181,725 users
- This is a big increase of 78,219 users compared to last year
- The main pages visited were Planning and Development, Waste, Council News and how to contact the Council
- This information is sourced from Google analytic reports



- 31,553 **Eforms** were submitted in total
- This is a decrease of 553 compared to last year
- 79% were completed by the customer themselves online
- The main services requested via Eforms were Waste (green garden waste subscriptions), Revenues (Council Tax) and Customer Services



- 74,938 **payments** were taken in total
- This is an increase of 795 compared to last year
- After direct debits have been deducted it is calculated that 75% of the payments were made using self-service, 17% were processed by staff and 8% were automated payments
- Self-service payments have increased by 2% compared to last year

Appendix 1 – Customer Feedback by Service

Quarter 4 2023/24	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Upheld Complaints
Arts and Leisure	13	2	1	
Benefits	6	0	1	
Building Control	11	0	0	
Cemetery	0	0	1	1 upheld
Communications Team	0	1	0	
Communities	4	0	0	
Community Safety	9	0	1	
Crematorium	1	0	0	
Customer Experience	8	0	0	
Customer Services	57	0	0	
Disabled Facilities Grants	3	0	0	
Electoral Services	0	0	0	
Energy	0	0	0	
Environmental Protection	5	0	0	
Financial Creditors and Debtors	0	0	0	
Food, Health and Safety	0	0	0	
Growth and Regeneration	4	1	0	
Home Choices	1	0	5	1 upheld
Housing Enforcement	2	0	1	
HR	0	1	0	
Internal Confidential Issues	0	0	0	
Licensing	4	0	0	
Local Land Charges	2	0	1	
Management Team	0	0	0	
Member and Support Services	1	0	0	
PA and FOI Team	0	0	0	
Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation	72	1	5	
Planning Enforcement	2	0	2	
Property Services	4	1	0	
Public Health Funerals	0	0	0	
Revenues (Council tax)	15	0	5	1 upheld
Street Cleansing	20	2	1	1 upheld
System Development	5	0	0	
Tourism	0	0	0	
Waste Services	102	10	21	9 upheld
Wellbeing and Health	0	0	0	
WLDC Council in General	3	4	0	
Out of Scope	0	3	4	
Totals	354	26	49	13 upheld