



**THRIVING COUNCIL
COMMITTEE**

Thursday 30th July 2026

Annual Voice of the Customer Report 2025/26

Report by:

Director of Corporate Services

Contact Officer:

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Executive Summary:

This report summarises customer feedback received during the year 2025/26, including customer satisfaction levels, and it analyses customer contact demand data to provide a clear view of the voice of the customer.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Members receive the contents of the Annual Voice of the Customer Report for 2025/26 and note the progress that has been made by the Council in improving the customer experience over the last 12 months.



2025/26 Annual Voice of the Customer Report

April 2025 – March 2026

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Executive Summary

The 2025/26 Annual Voice of the Customer Report brings together information on customer feedback, customer satisfaction and customer demand across the Council's main access channels. It provides an evidence base for understanding how customers are interacting with the Council, how services are being experienced, and where improvement activity should be focused.

The overall picture for 2025/26 is mixed. Complaints increased slightly to 164, compliments reduced marginally to 1,535 and comments increased to 78. Customer satisfaction also decreased to 83% from 87% in the previous year. However, complaint handling performance remained strong, with an average response time of 6.3 days and 96% of complaints responded to within the required timeframe.

During 2025/26, WLDC were made aware of 8 complaints referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, (LGSCO) with only 1 being investigated further. This complaint related to the home choices service and the LGSCO upheld it, identifying fault in the use of prolonged hotel accommodation for a family at risk of homelessness.

Customer demand remained high across the Council's access channels. A total of 41,919 recorded service requests were received during 2025/26. Online forms and telephone continued to be the main contact routes, accounting for over 96% of all recorded service requests, reinforcing the importance of maintaining accessible digital services and responsive contact centre support.

Face to face demand at the Guildhall reduced during 2025/26, with 39,242 visitors recorded compared to 45,403 in the previous year. Of these, 8,240 customers were accessing WLDC services and 31,002 were accessing services provided by tenants, including Job Centre Plus.

The continued use of the CRM system, alongside wider service redesign and digital development, has supported improvements in how the Council communicates with customers and manages expectations. In particular, customers of services such as waste now receive updates, reminders and service notifications that help provide a clearer, more consistent customer experience and reduce demand on progress chasing.

The findings in this report provide an important evidence base for the Customer Experience Strategy and the Council's wider digital vision. They help identify trends, highlight emerging issues and support informed decisions about where improvement activity will have the greatest impact on the customer experience.

The implementation and continuous development of the new contact centre technology provides wider opportunities for understanding customer demand and improving the way the Council interacts with its customers. Enhanced reporting and insight from this system will support more proactive management of demand, help identify further opportunities for improvement, and contribute to the continued development of a modern and customer-focused service offer.

Waste services remained the area of highest customer contact and feedback during 2025/26. They received the highest number of compliments and complaints, accounted for or is it accounting for 32% of all complaints received.

1. Introduction

What is the Voice of the Customer?

- 1.1 This report brings together information on customer feedback received across the Council, customer satisfaction levels and customer demand data across the main customer contact channels. It provides an overview of how customers are interacting with the Council and how services are being experienced.
- 1.2 The information included within this report is drawn from a range of sources, including day to day customer interactions, compliments, comments and complaints received by the Customer Experience Manager, customer satisfaction survey responses, and demand data from the Council's main access channels.
- 1.3 Its purpose is to use this evidence and insight to better understand customer behaviour, identify trends and areas of concern, and support informed decisions about where services can be improved to enhance the overall customer experience.
- 1.4 This work supports the Council's wider strategic priorities, including the Corporate Plan, and the Customer Experience Strategy. Measures such as complaints received, complaint response times, upheld complaints and customer satisfaction levels are also reported through the Council's Performance Reporting framework.
- 1.5 A key aim of this work is to support continuous learning and improvement across Council services. The findings within this report help to inform ongoing service redesign activity, improvements to processes and procedures, and the development of services that are easier for customers to access and use.
- 1.6 Throughout the year, quarterly reports are produced to provide detailed information on customer feedback, customer satisfaction and customer demand during each reporting period.
- 1.7 This report draws together and analyses the information contained within the four quarterly reports published during 2025/26. Collectively, these reports provide an evidence base for understanding customer experience over the full year and for identifying priorities for future improvement. These reports can be viewed on the West Lindsey District Council website via this link: <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/voice-customer-reports>

2. Customer Feedback

Customer Experience Policy and Customer Feedback

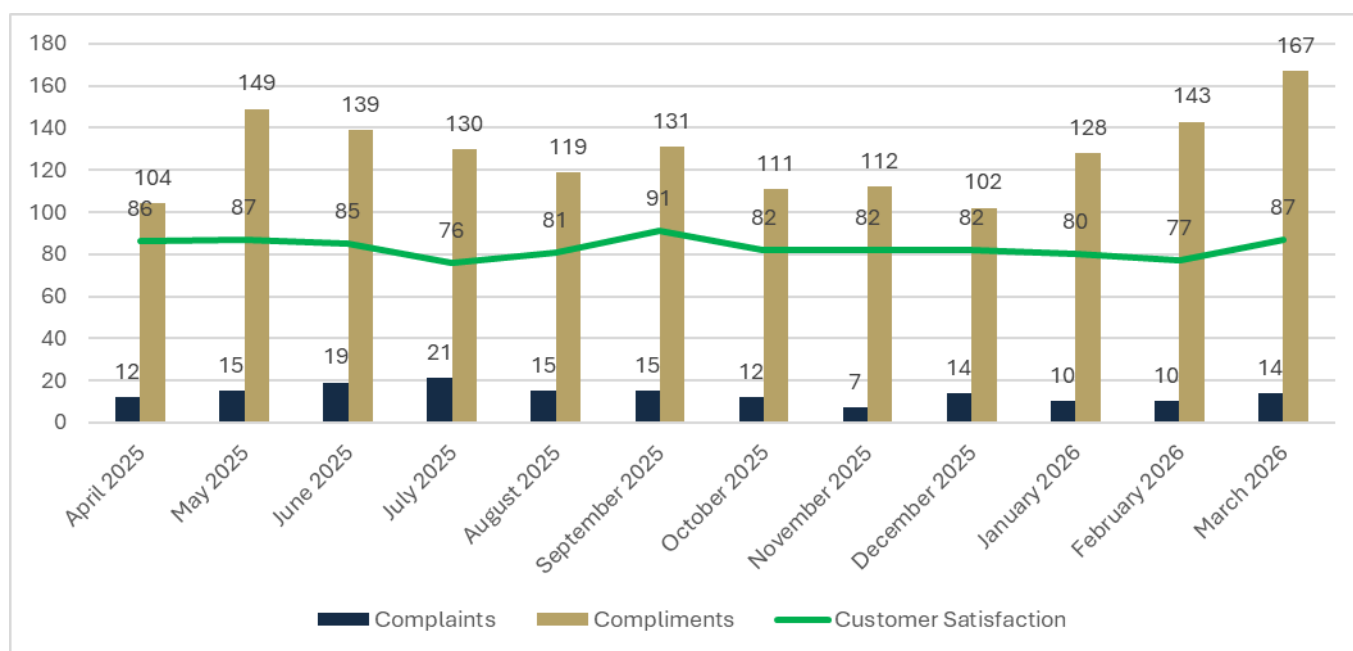
- 2.1 All customer feedback received is processed in line with the West Lindsey District Council Customer Feedback Policy, which sets out the Council's formal complaint process. Complaints are investigated where required and are responded to by the Customer Experience Manager.
- 2.2 Customer feedback is broken down into three categories: Compliments, Comments and Complaints.
- 2.3 All customer feedback received is recorded on a central system allowing for easier and more specific reporting, so that meaningful comparison can take place. Customer feedback is logged by service and specific subjects or issues can be reported on making it easier to identify and examine issues, trends and areas where improvement is required.
- 2.4 A further method used to gather feedback from customers is via customer satisfaction surveys that are sent out on a weekly basis to customers that received a service during the previous week. These surveys are sent to customers of the main customer facing services which include Community Safety, Food Health and Safety, Environmental Protection, Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation, Planning Enforcement, Housing Enforcement, Licensing, Waste Services and Street Cleansing.

Overall Customer Feedback Statistics 2025/26

- 2.5 The table below shows the overall figures for all customer feedback received in 2025/26 compared to previous years including complaints received, complaint response time and the number of upheld complaints:

			Totals/Averages				
	Direction of Travel compared to previous year	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Complaints	▲	164	159	176	210	155	178
Compliments	▼	1535	1602	1333	1133	1117	784
Comments	▲	78	62	87	104	155	64
Average number of days to respond	▼	6.3 days	6.9 days	6.8 days	6.5 days	8.3 days	8.2 days
% of complaints responded to within the required timeframe	▼	96%	97%	98%	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded
WLDC at Fault	▲	37	31	46	51	46	50
WLDC at Fault %	▲	23%	20%	26%	24%	30%	28%
Customer Satisfaction Score	▼	83%	87%	82%	73%	74%	76%

- 2.6 The graph below shows how many compliments and complaints were received each month as well as monthly customer satisfaction levels:



2.7 Monthly customer satisfaction scores ranged between 76% to 91% throughout the year. This is a small decrease when compared to the previous year when they ranged from 83% to 94%.

2.8 Throughout the year the number of compliments and complaints received has remained consistent, but customer satisfaction levels dipped when the new food waste collection service started to be communicated and rolled out to residents from February 2026.

Compliments

2.9 When compliments are received it allows us to identify what is working well and which aspects of our services our customers appreciate the most. All compliments received are shared with teams and relevant officers, they encourage our officers to be the best they can and provide the highest standard of service possible. Compliments are used to embed good practise across all Council services.

2.10 A total of 1535 compliments were received between April 2025 and March 2026; this is a decrease compared to the previous year when 1602 compliments were recorded.

2.11 The services that receive the highest number of compliments are the main customer facing services which includes waste services, customer services, planning and development, trees and conservation, licensing, revenues (council tax) and street cleansing.

2.12 The table in [APPENDIX A](#) shows how many compliments were received for each service in 2025/26. It should be noted that positive 5 star customer satisfaction survey comments are recorded as compliments so in some cases, for services that are surveyed a wider number of customers have been asked for their views on their experience with that service (waste services for example).

2.13 Compliments often reflect customers views on the quality, timeliness, and effectiveness of the service they receive. Customers value it when we do what we say we will and deliver within the timescales provided. They also appreciate being kept informed throughout the process, particularly when delays are expected, as this helps manage expectations. Over the past 12 months, officers across all teams have received many heartfelt messages of thanks

recognising their support and assistance during what can be very challenging circumstances for customers experiencing financial hardship or housing difficulties.

- 2.14 Compliments have also been received regarding officer conduct, highlighting their empathy, professionalism, politeness, knowledge, understanding, and willingness to help. Even when we occasionally fail, if we identify the issue, acknowledge it, and rectify it promptly, customers often still provide positive feedback about the service received and how the matter was handled. Many positive messages have been received from customers where their bin has been missed but when reported we have returned in a timely manner to collect it.

Comments

- 2.15 Whilst some feedback may not be particularly praising our services or raising a complaint or feeling of dissatisfaction comments are still classed as important feedback as they can provide useful insight and suggestions that may help to improve the service and customer experience that we provide.
- 2.16 Between April 2025 and March 2026 a total of 78 comments were received, this is an increase when compared to the previous year when 62 comments were recorded. The table in [APPENDIX B](#) shows how many comments were received for each service in 2025/26.
- 2.17 Half of the comments received were in relation to waste services (39 (50%)), these comments included several suggestions on the garden waste service, including thoughts on the charge for the service, the recent price increase, the frequency of collections and the start and end times of the collection period. Other comments received for waste services included thoughts on various waste policies including the cost for new bins, sack collections, the provision of wheeled bins and changes to the sack collection recycling policy. Comments have also been received in relation to the waste collection calendars that were sent out, the quality of wheeled bins that have been delivered, bin lids and repairs, bins not being returned to the boundary, amongst many other issues. Towards the end of 2025/26 the new food waste service was being communicated to residents and food caddies started to be delivered, many comments were received regarding the new food waste service.
- 2.18 Comments received for other services include thoughts on the recent regeneration activities taking place, problems identified with forms to request a service and with the council tax payments system, comments in relation to the differences in charges for services compared to other nearby local authorities and comments regarding the public toilet facilities amongst many other matters.
- 2.19 Where appropriate and if not able to be implemented immediately, suggestions for service improvements are shared with the relevant service manager for consideration when future service reviews take place.

Complaints

- 2.20 Whilst complaints may be perceived as negative feedback the Council still encourages and welcomes them as all feedback is valuable and can potentially help to improve our services and the customer experience. Across all sectors, complaints are on the increase as there are rising customer expectations, more hardship since the cost-of-living crisis hit and customers expect ease of access and high levels of service no matter what organisation they are dealing with.

- 2.21 Complaints do not necessarily indicate a decrease in service quality, but they can provide an early warning signal that something has or could go wrong, and they can be a useful way of stimulating innovation and are a powerful form of knowledge.
- 2.22 A total of 164 complaints were received between April 2025 and March 2026, which is an increase when compared to the previous year when 159 complaints were recorded. The table in [APPENDIX C](#) shows how many complaints were received for each service in 2025/26 compared to previous years.
- 2.23 The target response time for complaints was reduced from 21 calendar days to 14 calendar days in 2024/25. The 14 day target is measured in calendar days rather than working days, as the current system cannot distinguish between the two. This is in line with guidance suggesting that complaints should be responded to within 10 working days.
- 2.24 The average response time for complaints in 2025/26 was 6.3 days, this is similar to the previous year (6.9 days) and is well below the 14 day target. Complaint response times can vary; often waste service complaints can be resolved the same day whereas more complicated complaints that relate to planning or enforcement matters for instance can take several weeks to investigate and respond to.
- 2.25 During 2025/26, 96% of complaints were responded to within the 14 day target. Seven complaints took longer than 14 days to investigate and respond to, due to the nature and number of issues raised, particularly where they related to planning, planning enforcement and revenues (council tax). Response times were affected by factors including the complexity of the issues, officer availability and the number of parties involved. Complainants were kept informed of delays during the investigation process.
- 2.26 The 5 services to receive to highest number of complaints were waste services, revenues (council tax), planning and development, customer services and home choices. Further and more detailed information on the complaints received throughout the year can be found in the previously published Quarterly Reports for 2025/26.
- 2.27 Waste services have historically always received the highest number of complaints; this is to be expected and is relative to the volume of service requests they receive as this service has contact with the largest number of households and customers across the district on a regular basis. It is pleasing to note that waste services also receive the most positive feedback in the form of compliments and 5 star customer satisfaction scores received.
- 2.28 32% (52) of all the complaints received related to waste services, this is an increase compared to the previous year when 45 complaints were received for waste services.
- 2.29 It should be noted that a single occurrence of a missed bin collection would not be classed as a formal complaint, the only time missed bins are treated as formal complaints is when there has been a repeated issue of missed bins, normally 3 occurrences in a row or where we have failed on an assisted collection or failed to return for a missed bin within the 5 days promised. In these instances, further investigation into the reasons why it keeps occurring is required and it may not always be the waste crews that are at fault.
- 2.30 54% of the complaints received for waste services were about the quality of service received which is a similar number to the previous year, and 21% were in relation to staff behaviour, which is an increase of 10% when compared to the previous year.
- 2.31 17% (28) of the complaints received in 2025/26 were classed as out of scope, these complaints related to various issues including the household waste recycling centres,

potholes, blocked drains, roadworks and highways amongst many other things that WLDC are not responsible for. These complainants were signposted to the most appropriate authority or agency to assist with their concerns. Information included on the WLDC website regarding what WLDC are responsible for and what LCC oversee has been further improved and made more prominent to try and reduce the amount of out of scope customer feedback received.

2.32 13% (21) of the complaints received were for revenues (council tax), this is a significant increase in complaints when compared to previous years. Many complaints received were regarding the quality of service received, the decision made or in relation to action being taken to recover arrears owed for unpaid Council Tax.

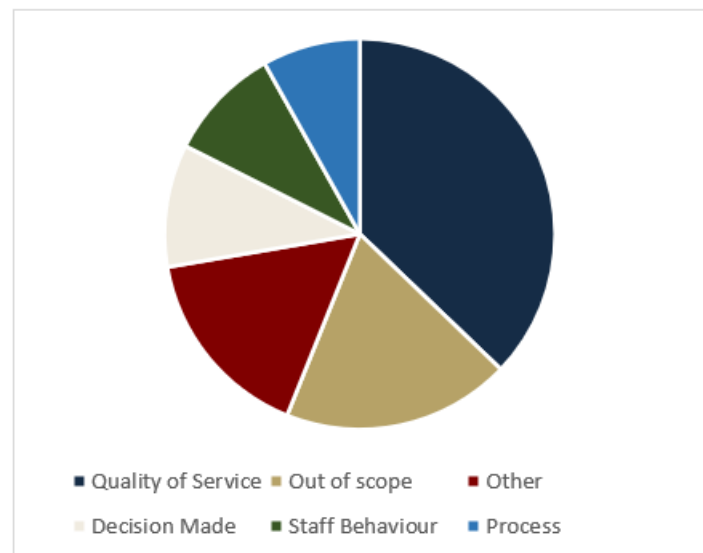
2.33 7% (11) of the complaints received were for planning and development, trees and conservation, this is a decrease in complaints when compared to previous years. Most (82%) received were in relation to a decision that had been made or the process that had been followed including how residents had been notified or how comments and objections had been taken into account when decisions were made.

2.34 5% (9) of the complaints received were for customer services, this is a small increase in complaints when compared to previous years. Many of the complaints received were in relation to the lack of or quality of information provided to the customer.

2.35 5% (8) of the complaints received were for home choices, this is a small increase in complaints when compared to previous years. Most of the complaints received were in relation to the quality of service received. These complaints included issues in relation how long it was taking to find long term suitable accommodation, the standard of accommodation being offered and how housing need cases had been handled.

2.36 On examining the reasons for complaints received it is found that over 90% of the complaints received that related to services provided by WLDC (excluding out of scope complaints) fall into 5 main reason categories:

Quality of Service	55
Out of scope	28
Other	24
Decision Made	15
Staff Behaviour	14
Process	12
Quality of Information Provided	4
Breach of Confidentiality	3
Lack of contact/communication	3
Staff Communication	3
Missed Bin Collection	2
Incorrect Information provided	1
	164



Upheld Complaints

2.37 Of the 164 complaints received, 37 (23%) were upheld with the Council deemed to be at fault by the independent investigating officer (the Customer Experience Manager).

2.38 This is an increase in upheld complaints in comparison to the previous year when 31 (20%) complaints were upheld.

- 2.39 Waste services complaints have an impact on the overall number of upheld complaints, in 2025/26 21 of the 52 complaints received for waste services were upheld, which equates to over 56% of the full total of upheld complaints for the year.
- 2.40 The table in [APPENDIX D](#) shows how many complaints were upheld for each service in 2025/26 and further information on upheld complaints for each service can be found in the four quarterly reports that were published during 2025/26. These reports can be viewed on the West Lindsey District Council website via this link: <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/voice-customer-reports>
- 2.41 Complaints in 2025/26 were upheld for various reasons, including service failures, inappropriate staff behaviour, delays in a service being delivered, lack of contact, communication or response, errors being made in regard to customer account information, incorrect information, advice or timescales being provided and policies not being clear enough amongst many other faults identified.
- 2.42 When a complaint is upheld learning and improvement actions are recorded where relevant.
- 2.43 Complaints received can vary in nature, often they can be justified but there is little within the authorities control that can be done to resolve them. When they are justified and fault on behalf of the council is identified then appropriate resolutions and recommendations are put into place, this could involve an apology to the customer, ensuring that the customer receives the answer or advice they require or a change in policy or process amongst other things.

3. Insights into Action – Learning and Improvement Actions

- 3.1 Gathering feedback from customers enables the Council to use these insights to shape the way it improves and develops. Customer insights relating to services are shared with the relevant Heads of Service stating the actions required and a deadline implementation date, this is escalated to the Leadership Team if failing to implement within the set timescale. The Customer Experience Manager will assist with implementing the improvements where possible. Over time all suggested improvements are gathered into reports which are prioritised and fed into relevant projects and service redesign work.
- 3.2 When feedback is received it is considered and when complaints are investigated the outcome is examined to identify any learning opportunities that can be gained from the issues raised or faults identified.
- 3.3 During the 2025/26 period many improvement actions have been implemented including changes in policies and processes, procedure reviews, updates to the website, external systems and the continued training of staff.
- 3.4 Full details of all the learning and improvement actions that have been identified during the 2025/26 period can be found in [APPENDIX E](#).

4. Customer Feedback Governance and Reporting

- 4.1 Customer Feedback is governed by a set of regular reports:

- Monthly Progress and Delivery reports monitor customer feedback levels including feedback received, days to respond to complaints and information on how many complaints are upheld in each period as well as customer satisfaction levels.
- Monthly reports on feedback received are shared with each service.
- Quarterly customer feedback and demand reports are produced for the Leadership Team and Heads of Services and are published on the WLDC website.
- Quarterly Reports are included in the Members newsletter.
- Regular reports are submitted to the Leadership Team and regular 'emerging issues' meetings are held with the Head of Customer Services and relevant Directors.
- The Quality Monitoring Board (QMB) meets on a regular basis to discuss emerging issues and oversee decisions on complex and sensitive complaints where high risk or reputational issues are involved. The QMB will agree any resolution or action required and will ensure that appropriate improvement actions are implemented where necessary.
- This Report is presented to the Leadership Team, Thriving Council Committee and the Wider Leadership Team.

5. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman complaints (LGSCO)

- 5.1 If a customer is dissatisfied with the outcome once they have completed the Council's formal complaints process, they can refer their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for consideration. There is no cost to the Council.
- 5.2 Between April 2025 and March 2026 the LGSCO contacted WLDC regarding a total of 8 complaint referrals that had been made to them, however the Annual Ombudsman letter shows that 18 complaints were referred to them, and 12 were decided by them.

NOTE: The LGSCO is behind on dealing with complaints referred to them and they have not yet contacted WLDC about several of the complaints they received in 2025/26 The Annual LGSCO Report reflects the figures that the Ombudsman have issued to WLDC.

- 5.3 When a complaint is referred to the LGSCO, they make initial enquiries and then decide whether or not to investigate further. The table below shows the outcome of complaints referred to them compared to previous years, (please note this table only includes complaints that the LGSCO contacted WLDC about):

LGSCO Outcome	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Number of complaints referred	8	13	8	13	10	13
Complaints not investigated	7	11	7	9	3	9
Complaints investigated	1	2	1	4	7	4
Complaints upheld	1	1	0	1	2	2
Complaints not upheld	0	1	1	3	5	2

- 5.4 The number of complaints referred to, not investigated, and investigated by the LGSCO (that WLDC is aware of) has decreased slightly in comparison to previous years.
- 5.5 The LGSCO decided not to investigate many of the complaints that were referred to them during 2025/26. The reasons given were that there was insufficient evidence of fault on behalf of the Council to warrant an investigation, the complainants had already submitted appeals to the Planning Inspector and the LGSCO was unlikely to find fault in the other matters raised or the injustice caused was not significant enough to warrant further investigation. The LGSCO also decided not to investigate some complaints further as the desired outcome could not be achieved for the complainant.
- 5.6 The complaints that the LGSCO did not investigate were in relation to Planning and Development (3), Revenues and Benefits (2) and Waste (2).
- 5.7 The LGSCO investigated one of the complaints that were referred to them, this was in relation to the Home Choices service and was regarding the Council's actions when a family became at risk of homelessness.
- 5.8 The complaint was upheld by the LGSCO as they identified some fault in how the case had been handled. They found no fault in the Council's actions leading up to the family's eviction, nor in its actions in trying to secure suitable temporary accommodation. However, they did find fault in the family being placed in hotel accommodation for a prolonged period.
- 5.9 The LGSCO recommended that the Council apologise to the family and make a payment to them to recognise the unsuitable hotel accommodation the family were placed in. More detailed information regarding this complaint is included in the Annual LGSCO Report 2025/26.
- 5.10 The Annual LGSCO Report 2025/26 reflects the figures that the LGSCO have issued to WLDC, these differ from the figures above as the LGSCO received several complaints in 2025/26 that they have not yet contacted WLDC about. This report also includes benchmarking data to illustrate how we compare to other similar authorities in terms of the number of complaint referrals and instances where councils are found to be at fault.

6. Customer Satisfaction Measurement

- 6.1 The Council has been using an e-survey platform over the last few years which enables the sending and analysis of customer satisfaction surveys from one place with real time results, this platform is called Qualtrics.
- 6.2 Surveys are sent on a weekly basis to customers that have contacted the Council or have received a Council service during the previous week, including planning application decisions.
- 6.3 Currently surveys are only being sent via email, but other methods are currently being considered during the implementation of the new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System and the new Customer Contact Centre.
- 6.4 The insights gained from survey responses received feed into the customer feedback system to collate all feedback in one central place. By identifying issues that customers raise in their survey response comments we can act on and solve issues before they potentially escalate into a formal complaint.

6.5 Satisfaction surveys are sent to customers of the main customer facing services. During 2025/26 the services that have been surveyed are Community Safety, Food Health and Safety, Environmental Protection, Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation, Planning Enforcement, Housing Enforcement, Licensing, Waste Services and Street Cleansing.

Satisfaction Levels

6.6 During the 2025/26 period from April 2025 to March 2026 a total of 9754 satisfaction surveys were sent out and 1527 responses were received. This is a decrease in responses in comparison to the previous year when 1723 responses were received.

6.7 71% of the surveys completed are from Waste Services customers as they process the highest number of service requests daily.

6.8 The table below shows how many responses were received for each service in 2025/26:

Anti-Social Behaviour	43	3%
Food Health and Safety	5	0%
Housing Enforcement	11	1%
Licensing	44	3%
Planning and Development	74	5%
Planning Enforcement	20	1%
Public Protection	46	3%
Street Cleansing	199	13%
Waste Services	1085	71%

6.9 Customers are asked to rate the service they received from 1 to 5 stars, if they choose 1 to 3 stars they are asked what could have been done to improve their experience and if they choose 4 or 5 stars they are asked what was done well. Ratings of 4 and 5 stars are used to calculate the overall satisfaction score.

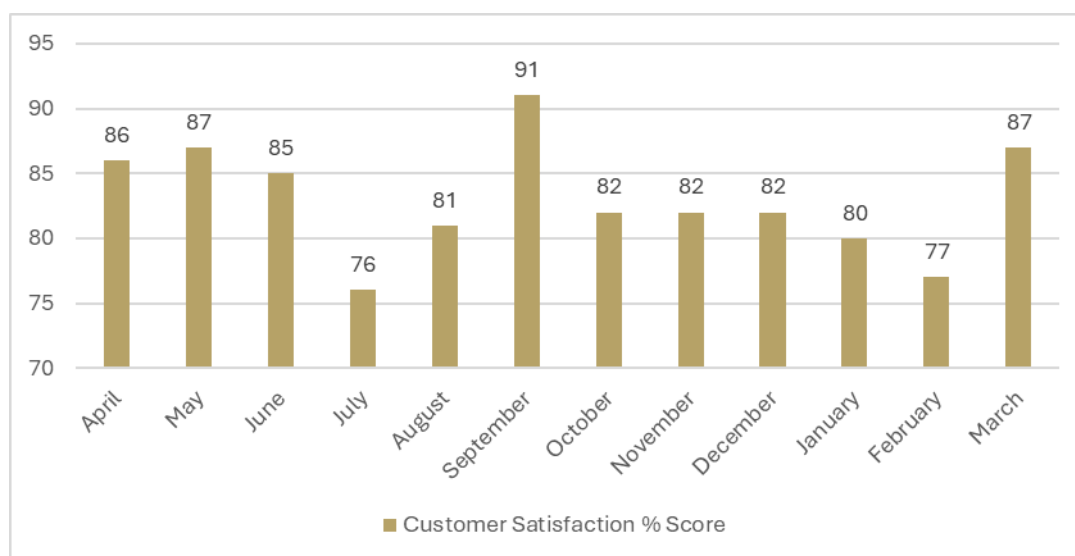
6.10 The table below shows how many customers rated the service they received as 1 to 5 stars in 2025/26:

Number of 1 star ratings	113	7%
Number of 2 star ratings	42	3%
Number of 3 star ratings	114	7%
Number of 4 star ratings	190	13%
Number of 5 star ratings	1068	70%

6.11 The overall satisfaction score for 2025/26 was 83% which is a decrease when compared to the previous year. The overall satisfaction score for the previous year was 87%.

2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
83%	87%	82%	73%	74%	76%

6.12 The chart below shows the satisfaction scores for each month during 2025/26 which were ranged between 76% to 91%:



- 6.13 The comments that customers submit when they complete a satisfaction survey are analysed and are fed into the customer feedback system. If required, comments are followed up with the customer that has responded and if they highlight a learning or improvement opportunity, they are recorded and followed up as an action that needs attention.
- 6.14 Customers who submitted high satisfaction ratings highlighted several positive aspects of the service they received. They valued that we delivered on our commitments and met the timescales we had set out. Keeping customers informed at each stage, particularly when a request had been received, was being progressed and had been completed, was also seen as important. Since the introduction of the new CRM system for waste services, satisfaction has improved because customers now receive confirmation when fly-tipping reports have been resolved and reminders ahead of bulky waste collections. Over the course of the year, customers regularly commended officers for their communication, the advice and support provided, their helpful and understanding approach, and the professionalism shown by our customer facing officers.
- 6.15 Feedback from customers who gave lower satisfaction ratings identified several areas where the service could be improved. Recurring themes included the timeliness of service delivery, dissatisfaction with outcomes or decisions, and a perceived lack of response or communication. Some customers also highlighted the need for stronger coordination between services and more effective communication, while others reported difficulties in contacting the Council quickly and easily.
- 6.16 To increase customer satisfaction going forward all services need to ensure that they are dealing with their customers in a timely manner, keeping them up to date and managing their expectations in terms of what will happen, when, and what they should expect. The updated Corporate Plan, the Customer Experience Strategy and continuous improvements being made to the CRM and Contact Centre technologies will assist with this as these will ensure that appropriate acknowledgements and response times are being utilised by all Council services.
- 6.17 Further and more detailed information on customer satisfaction including comments that have been received for individual services can be found in the previously published Quarterly Voice of the Customer Reports for 2025/26.

7. Customer Demand Analysis

- 7.1 The demand analysis part of this report focuses on the data available surrounding customer contact points. This includes data collected around telephony, face to face interactions, the website, payments and how service requests are received. Analysing this information can show how customers are choosing to interact with the council and through which channels. You can see how many interactions have taken place across different council services during 2025/26 in the diagram below:



Service Requests and Customer Contact Methods

- 7.2 Service requests can be made by customers through various channels. For example, telephone, online forms, at the Guildhall and via email. It is important to understand how customers are making requests so the receipt of these can be resourced adequately and appropriately.
- 7.3 Currently the method of receipt of service requests are only recorded by the following teams: Anti-Social Behaviour, Planning Enforcement, Housing Enforcement, Food Health and Safety, Public and Environmental Protection, Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) and Waste Services. Future investments in technology will allow for improved handling and recording of future service request enabling a better understanding of our demands in this area.
- 7.4 The number of service requests received recorded on the Flare and CRM system for 2025/26 was 41,919 which is an increase compared to the previous year where 40,970 were recorded. Note: these figures include Garden Waste (GW) subscription requests. There were just over 24,000 GW subscriptions in total in 2025/26. 83% of GW subscriptions were completed online and 16% were completed over the telephone
- 7.5 Although customer demand has decreased in terms of the number of people contacting the Council, a higher number of service requests and online forms have been submitted when

compared to the previous year. This indicates that customers are now able to do more online and through automated services, meaning that when they do interact with officers, those interactions are often more meaningful and more likely to result in a service request being logged.

- 7.6 The table below illustrates the full breakdown of all contact channels used in 2025/26 by customers to request a service compared with the previous two years:

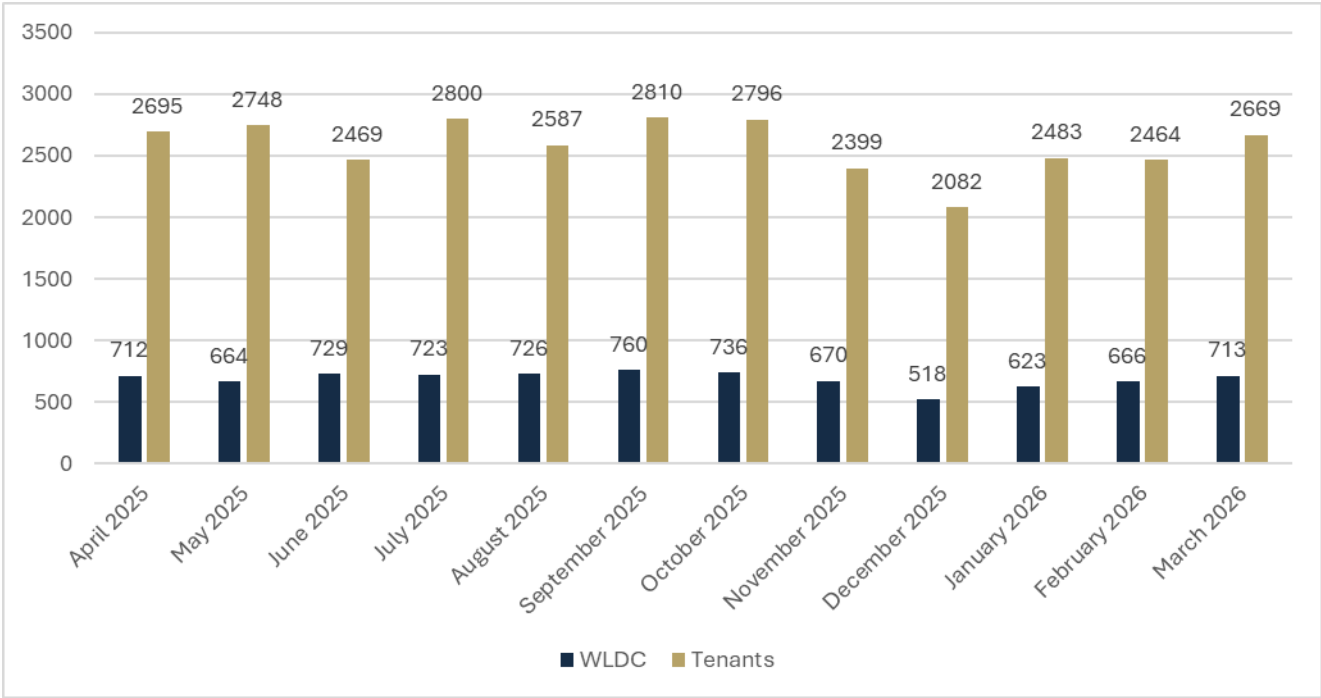
Contact Method		2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
Online Forms	▲	73.88% (30,917)	73.29% (30,027)	71.87% (28,174)
Email	▼	1.64% (686)	2.39% (978)	2.45% (960)
Telephone	▲	22.47% (9,418)	20.89% (8,557)	23.24% (9,111)
Face to Face	▼	1.46% (614)	1.56% (640)	1.24% (487)
Letter	▼	0.14% (59)	1.00% (409)	0.07% (26)
Internal Referrals	▼	0.41% (171)	0.88% (359)	1.13% (443)
Total number of service requests received	▲	41,919	40,970	39,201

- 7.7 Along with the overall number of service requests recorded on Flare and CRM increasing the use of online forms to request a service has increased in comparison to previous years, this is a result of improved digital options available to our customers. As with previous years many customers requesting a specific service (over 96% in 2025/26) contacted us via the phone and online forms.

Face to Face (in person) Demand

- 7.8 Historically the number of customers that choose to visit the Council's reception at the Guildhall is relatively low as many customers now opt to request services via other means, as you can see from the information included in the section above. During the 2025/26 period face to face contact decreased compared to previous years, for both Council services, and for services provided by our tenants including Job Centre Plus (JCP).
- 7.9 Although face to face demand for WLDC services is relatively low it is recognised that a face to face service will always be required as customers need the choice available, however, a higher number of customers may choose to use online services now they are confident in doing so rather than visiting the Guildhall for a face to face service.
- 7.10 It should also be noted that many of the face to face customers regardless of which services they are accessing are vulnerable and as a result take up more officer time, which can in extreme situations result in officers spending hours dealing with a particular vulnerable customer
- 7.11 As well as customers for WLDC services, WLDC visitors and customers for our tenants are also dealt with via the main Guildhall reception. A big majority of the customers that come into the Guildhall are attending JCP appointments. It should be noted that although a customer may not require services from WLDC it is a Council officer that has the first interaction with each person that walks through the door.
- 7.12 During 2025/26 a total of 39,242 customers visited the Guildhall for a face to face service, this is a decrease of over 6000 compared to the previous year when 45,403 customers visited. 8,240 (21%) of these customers were accessing a WLDC service, 31,002 (79%) were accessing services provided by our tenants.

7.13 The graph below shows how many customers visited the Guildhall building each month during 2025/26 and the number of customers that were accessing WLDC or tenant services each month:



7.14 These visitor numbers along with data relating to the specific reasons why customers attend the Guildhall are analysed and used in the plans for the future design of how the reception area will work in terms of face to face contact and how services will operate going forward.

Telephone Calls

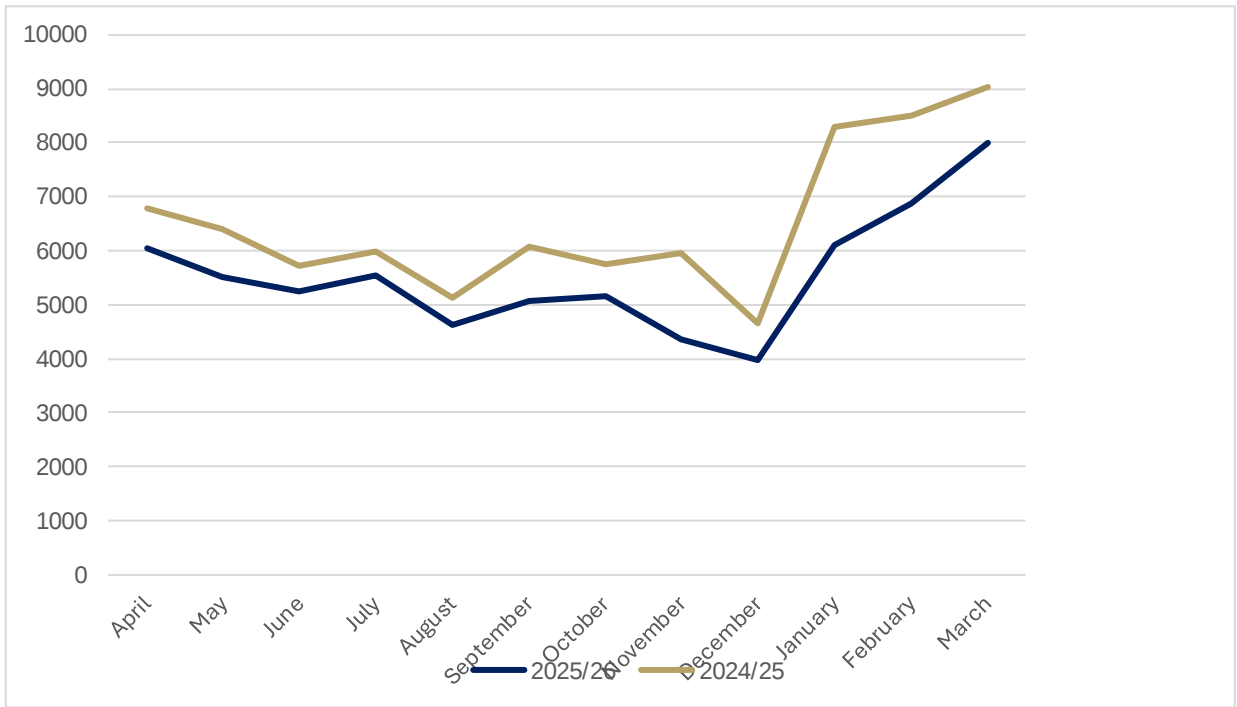
7.15 Telephone calls received through the council's current contact centre are reported on for inclusion in this report, which includes calls received by customer services, revenues (council tax) and benefits. The contact centre records all calls that are made to the council's main telephone number (01427 676676).

7.16 On the 12th November 2024 a new contact centre system was implemented for telephone calls received by the Council. Anyone calling the 01427 676676 number is now transferred through the new contact centre in the first instance.

7.17 The new system introduced a variety of improvements including a voice response system seeking to understand the intent of the customer when contacting us. The way in which the system interprets customer intent is important to continuous improvement efforts. The new system allows better reporting and more informative reporting that will enable us to easily identify ways the service can be improved.

7.18 Overall telephone demand decreased every month during 2025/26 compared to the previous year, 66,460 calls were received into the contact centre (which includes customer services, revenues (council tax) and benefits) in 2025/26, whereas 78,239 were received in 2024/25, this is a decrease of over 11,500 calls in total.

- 7.19 The new contact centre and improvements that have been made to better direct calls and provide an automated service for some requests has contributed to the decrease in the number of calls received.
- 7.20 Call volumes expectedly increase from January to March due to the garden waste subscription period starting in January each year.
- 7.21 On average 95% of all calls received into the contact centre were answered and handled during 2025/26, this is an 8% increase compared to the previous year where 87% of all calls were answered and handled on first contact. It should be noted that although a call may go unanswered, customers can opt to receive a call back once the officer is available. (unanswered call figures include calls which go through to voicemail services).
- 7.22 The graph below illustrates telephone demand via the contact centre each month for 2025/26 compared to the previous year:



Customer Service Call Volumes 2025/26

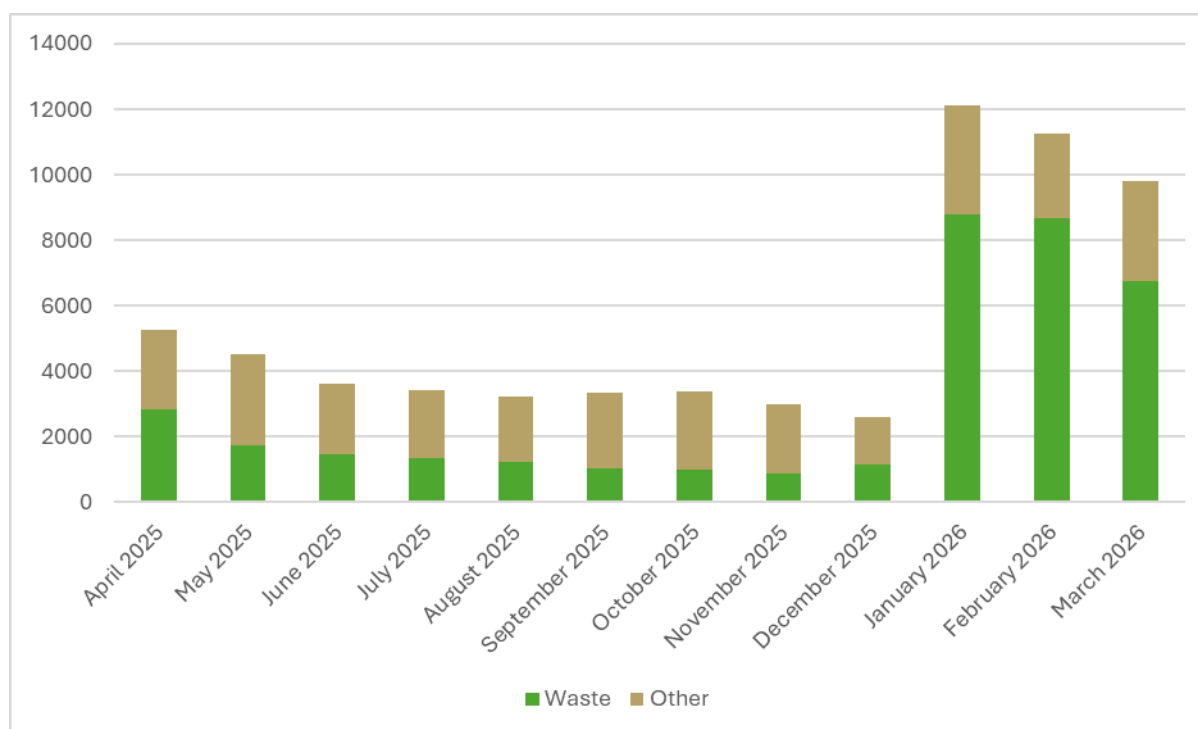
- 7.23 This section of the report examines calls received and recorded by the customer services department specifically. During 2025/26 a total of 37,180 calls were received by the customer services department, which is a decrease of just under 12,000 compared to 2024/25. 30,509 of these calls met the requirements for being recorded on the Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- 7.24 Some of the calls received were resolved on the first point of contact by the customer services department and other calls were either signposted to other external agencies or passed on for further involvement by another council department. This could involve a service request report, a paid service request, a call back request or a request for further information or advice from a specific department. Work around deflecting calls not for WLDC services commenced in November 2024 and has enabled us to deal with more calls for WLDC services.

- 7.25 Calls that meet the requirements for being recorded are logged on the council's CRM system and the officer handling the call will record what council department or external agency the call was in relation to.
- 7.26 During 2025/26 30,509 calls handled by customer services were recorded against 35 Council departments and 5 external agencies.
- 7.27 95% (28,807) of the 30,509 calls recorded were for 13 council departments and 2 external agencies. 46% (13,924) of the calls recorded were in relation to operational services (waste services) which included missed bin reports, bulky waste collections, fly tipping reports, new bin requests, big bin clear out requests amongst many other waste issues. The table below shows the top 15 reasons for calls recorded by the customer services department during 2025/26.

WLDC Service or External Agency Required	Number of calls recorded	% of calls recorded
Operational Services	13924	45.64%
Home Choices	3091	10.13%
Planning	2882	9.45%
Revenues	2274	7.45%
Customer Services	1130	3.70%
Housing and Enforcement	808	2.65%
Environmental Protection	803	2.63%
Lincolnshire County Council	780	2.56%
Trinity Arts Centre and Leisure	682	2.24%
Licensing	560	1.84%
Assets and Property	511	1.67%
Benefits	436	1.43%
External	381	1.25%
Communities	330	1.08%
Building Control	278	0.91%

Online Service Requests – Eforms

- 7.28 Customers can request or subscribe to a service via the Council website. The most visited pages on the website include the general waste and garden waste service pages during the subscription period and the second most popular pages are relating to planning and development, with revenues (council tax) and benefits coming in as third most popular.
- 7.29 Compared to the previous year, there was a small decrease in the number of service requests made via online forms during 2025/26. In total, 64,760 online requests were received, compared to 65,474 in 2024/25.
- 7.30 The main services requested via e-forms in 2025/26 were waste services (including garden waste subscriptions and bulky waste collections), revenues (council tax) and customer services. A significant proportion of all e-forms completed related to waste services.
- 7.31 The graph below illustrates how many online requests were received each month during 2025/26 broken down by waste requests and other requests. The increases in January, February and March are due to garden waste subscriptions:



Payments

- 7.32 Various services across the council accept payments from customers. The methods in which customers make payments to the Council can be classified into three categories; Self-Serve, Staff Assisted Payments and External Payments.
- 7.33 Self-Serve payments include payments taken over the website, the kiosk in reception and the automated telephone payment line. Staff Assisted payments include payments over the phone, postal cheques and small amounts of cash taken face to face. External Payments include bank account payments (but not direct debit payments), Post Office payments and PayPal.
- 7.34 In 2025/26, 84,932 payments were taken (including direct debit payments), which is an increase compared to the previous year. The breakdown of how these payments were made is illustrated in the table below.

	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Self Service Payments	69.01%	68.70%	66.39%	63.50%
Staff Assisted Payments	11.36%	12.91%	13.36%	15.19%
External Payments	19.63%	18.38%	19.94%	21.31%
Total number of Payments (including direct debits)	84,932	76,696	75,761	77,108

- 7.35 The payments received in 2025/26 consisted of 69% self-serve payments; this is the same as last year and is due to frequent use of the automated payment facility. 11% of payments were staff-assisted, this has decreased slightly compared to the previous year and this involves customers paying over the telephone with an officer. The volume of external payments has increased by 1% compared to the previous year.

8. Conclusion

The 2025/26 year presented a mixed picture for customer experience and customer feedback and demand. Overall complaint volumes increased slightly to 164, whilst compliments reduced marginally to 1,535 and comments increased to 78. Customer satisfaction also decreased to 83% from 87% in the previous year. However, complaint handling remained strong, with an average response time of 6.3 days and 96% of complaints responded to within the required timeframe.

The continued use of the CRM system and the improvements implemented through service redesign and digital development have supported a more efficient customer experience, particularly in areas such as waste services where customers receive timely reminders, updates and service notifications. These developments continue to improve how the Council communicates with customers and manages expectations.

Self-service online and telephone contact continue to be the main methods used by customers to interact with the Council. In 2025/26, over 96% of recorded service requests were made through online forms and telephone contact. This continued preference for digital and telephone access reinforces the importance of ensuring that online information is accurate, accessible and easy to understand, and that contact centre services remain responsive and effective.

As customers live, work and do business within the district over a sustained period of time, it is important that the Council continues to build positive and effective long-term relationships with them. Providing services that are straightforward to access, available through a range of channels, and designed around customer need remains essential to delivering a high-quality customer experience.

The information contained within this report provides an important evidence base for the delivery of the Customer Experience Strategy, ongoing service improvements and the wider digital vision for the Council. It enables the Council to examine services from the customer's perspective, identify emerging trends and areas of concern, and target improvement activity where it will have the greatest impact.

Work is also continuing through service improvement activity, with the data in this report helping to inform how individual services operate, how processes and procedures can be improved, and how customers make contact with the Council. This ensures that customer insight is not considered in isolation but is used practically to shape service delivery and future planning.

Customers want services that are easy to access, simple to understand and delivered with as little effort on their part as possible. The insight contained in this report helps the Council better understand customer behaviour, identify where barriers exist in the customer journey, and make informed decisions about how services can be improved to deliver a better overall experience.

Taken together, the findings in this report will support the Council to deliver customer facing services that are efficient, effective and responsive, while ensuring that resources are used in the best possible way to provide services that are right first time wherever possible.

Appendices

Appendix A – Compliments received 2025/26 by Service

	Compliments
Waste Services	642
Customer Services	266
Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation	172
Street Cleansing	84
Licensing	58
Revenues (Council tax)	49
Arts and Leisure	48
Home Choices	42
Community Safety	25
Environmental Protection	25
Benefits	21
Communities	17
Building Control	11
Growth and Regeneration	11
Housing Enforcement	9
Crematorium	8
Customer Experience	8
Disabled Facilities Grants	8
Local Land Charges	7
Food, Health and Safety	5
Property Services	5
Member and Support Services	4
WLDC Council in General	3
System Development	2
Cemetery	1
Communications Team	1
Electoral Services	1
HR	1
Planning Enforcement	1
Total	1535

Appendix B - Comments received 2025/26 by Service

	Comments
Waste Services	39
Out of Scope	13
Revenues (Council tax)	5
Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation	3
Property Services	3
Communities	2
Growth and Regeneration	2
Home Choices	2
Arts and Leisure	1
Cemetery	1
Community Safety	1
Customer Services	1
Electoral Services	1
Housing Enforcement	1
Licensing	1
Street Cleansing	1
System Development	1
Total	78

Appendix C – Complaints received 2025/26 by Service

COMPLAINTS	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Waste Services	52	45	65	107	38	45
Out of Scope	28	30	23	9	18	20
Revenues (Council tax)	21	8	11	17	14	9
Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation	11	15	14	17	21	44
Customer Services	9	8	3	11	4	4
Home Choices	8	6	14	7	7	2
Planning Enforcement	7	8	11	9	14	14
Licensing	5	3	3	1	0	1
Street Cleansing	5	4	2	5	5	4
Community Safety	4	3	5	1	7	5
Food, Health and Safety	3	2	0	1	2	2
Disabled Facilities Grants	2	1	1	1	4	3
Electoral Services	2	3	1	0	1	0
Environmental Protection	2	5	6	4	3	9
Arts and Leisure	1	1	2	3	3	1
Benefits	1	3	2	2	4	3
Building Control	1	0	1	0	0	1
Crematorium	1	0	0	0	0	0
Property Services	1	8	1	5	2	2
Cemetery	0	0	1	0	0	0
Communications Team	0	0	0	1	1	0
Communities	0	0	2	0	0	0
Customer Experience	0	0	0	0	0	0
Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial Creditors and Debtors	0	0	1	2	0	0
Growth and Regeneration	0	0	1	0	0	1
Housing Enforcement	0	4	2	2	2	2
HR	0	0	0	1	0	0
Internal Confidential Issues	0	0	1	1	0	0
Local Land Charges	0	0	1	0	2	0
Management Team	0	0	0	1	1	0
Member and Support Services	0	0	1	0	1	2
PA and FOI Team	0	1	0	0	0	0
Public Health Funerals	0	0	0	0	0	0
System Development	0	1	0	2	1	2
Tourism	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wellbeing and Health	0	0	0	0	0	0
WLDC Council in General	0	0	1	0	1	2
Totals	164	159	176	210	155	178

Appendix D – Upheld complaints 2025/26 by Service

	Complaints received	Upheld Complaints
Waste Services	52	21
Revenues (Council tax)	21	4
Planning and Development, Trees and Conservation	11	1
Customer Services	9	6
Home Choices	8	0
Planning Enforcement	7	0
Licensing	5	0
Street Cleansing	5	3
Community Safety	4	0
Food, Health and Safety	3	0
Disabled Facilities Grants	2	0
Electoral Services	2	0
Environmental Protection	2	0
Arts and Leisure	1	0
Benefits	1	0
Building Control	1	1
Crematorium	1	1
Property Services	1	0
Totals	136	37

* Out of scope complaints are excluded from this table

Appendix E – Learning and Improvement Actions Identified

Waste Services	14	<u>Waste Services – Bin presentation times on collection days</u> Feedback was received from a customer who had missed their bin collection, that day it happened just after 7am however, this customer only put their bins out at 7:30am as they usually get collected late morning time. There was no fault on the Councils behalf, but the comms team were asked to put some reminders out on social media regarding bins being presented by 7am on collection day and the fact that collections will not always necessarily take place at the same time every week. <u>Waste Services/Street Cleansing - What3Words</u> Various feedback received could have been avoided if more accurate locations had been recorded for location based waste service requests such as fly tipping reports and bulky waste collections. Customer Service officers have been advised to use What3words when taking reports and requests from customers so that it can be added to the note system, but further work is required on how to integrate this into the CRM system if possible. <u>Waste Services – Big Bin Clear Out</u> Complaints have been received regarding the standard of big bins that have been delivered for the Big Bin Clear Out service. Customers have received bins with waste already inside them and on one occasion there was dirty water inside the bin on receipt. All big bins need to be cleaned and checked prior to being delivered to the next customer. Waste services supervisors have reminded all crews that this needs to take place in the future when big bins are delivered to customers. <u>Waste Services – Late bin deliveries</u> A complaint was received regarding delayed bin deliveries; a customer was waiting 16+ days for delivery which led to further calls being made to the customer services department. The customer was not kept up to date or given an exact date for delivery when they called to chase on 2 occasions. If waste services know that bin deliveries will be delayed, they need to inform customer services so that customers can be contacted and informed to reduce calls and to manage customer expectations. Customers should also be offered an alternative means of collection in the meantime - sacks to be collected if needed.
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Waste Services/Street Cleansing – Changes in process – sack collections

A complaint was received regarding waste sacks not being taken. The investigation found that changes had been made to how sack collections were operating, clear sacks were no longer being collected on a general waste collection day. When a change is made to how we do things, this should be communicated to those affected as there will be an impact on resources for customer services when people start to call to question why their sacks have not been collected. Going forward it is recommended that residents affected by any change are written to, and customer services must be made aware so the impact of potential extra customer contact can be planned for.

Waste Services – crew procedure when emptying bins

A complaint was received regarding waste operatives tipping the contents of a bin into another bin before taking it to the vehicle to be emptied. This is not the procedure that should be followed. Crews should not be tipping bins into other bins; there is also a health and safety issue here. All waste crews have been reminded of the correct process and have been advised not to tip bins into other bins going forward.

Waste Services – tagging contaminated bins

Some customers bins have been rejected for contamination, but the operatives did not put a tag on the bin to inform the residents why it had not been emptied - the resident argued that policy had not been followed. Although a tag had not been used, the crew had added photographs and information on what the incorrect items were onto the customers CRM accounts. All crews need to use tags on bins when they are rejecting them for incorrect items to ensure that the policy is always followed. Also, if a tag is used then this may stop the customer from calling us unnecessarily. The waste services team leader is ensuring that all crews have ample supplies of tags and that they always use them when rejecting a bin in the future.

Waste Services – policy wording/update in relation to personal goods

A customer put some personal belongings into their blue recycling bin when they were in a hurry, the bin was not presented for collection. The crew came along and pulled the bin out to empty it, they thought the resident had forgotten to put it out, they did not check inside the bin, and the personal items were taken and

	tipped into the recycling vehicle. Crews need to be more careful - do not pull bins out if not presented and ensure that all bins are thoroughly checked for incorrect items. This bin should not have been emptied, and it is recommended that the waste policy is updated to explain to residents that all bins are WLDC property and they should not be used for storage of personal items, and that WLDC will not be held responsible for any personal items left in a WLDC bin. <u>Waste Services - CRM reminders for waste</u> Customer Satisfaction Survey Feedback. A comment was received regarding how late the email reminder was sent for a sharps collection taking place the following day, it was received at 11pm the night before. IT have now reviewed the CRM reminders that are sent out, the time appeared to have slipped later since the clocks went back in time. This was altered so that all reminders are sent at a reasonable time of the day to give customers plenty of notice the day before the service is due to take place. <u>Do Not Reply emails</u> An investigation into a complaint received where a customer did not receive a response to a garden waste enquiry found that they had replied to a confirmation email that was from a do not reply email address. All waste confirmation emails from CRM go from a do not reply email address. Additional wording has been added to these emails to make it clear that it is a do not reply email address to encourage customers not to reply. <u>Missed Bin Reports – Garden Waste</u> An upheld complaint discovered that a missed garden waste collection had not been reported on the correct form, so it was not tracked through the system. All missed bins should be logged onto a missed bin form - this allows accurate recording, reporting, monitoring and follow up as it is tracked on the system. If this had been done in this instance the customer's expectations would have been managed, as they would have been told that we would return in 5 working days, and the customer would not have had to call 5 times to enquire why their missed garden bin had not been collected. <u>Garden Waste – Paypal Payments</u> Paypal payments have led to issues with garden waste subscription forms being processed correctly and garden waste subscriptions have not been registered correctly. A pause was put on Paypal payments until a system resolution was identified.
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		<u>Garden Waste – Email Reminders</u> The wording of the reminders that were sent out via email confused customers, leading to an increase in unnecessary contact including calls and emails from people checking if they had paid as they received the reminder when they paid months ago. Going forward we need to ensure that the wording used on reminders is improved or put a system in place to stop reminders being sent to customers that have already subscribed to the service. <u>Food Waste</u> Teething problems are to be expected when a new service is introduced and many issues have been reported including caddys not being delivered, parts missing or broken lids and then increased customer contact as first collections were missed. We need to be mindful of this when a new service is implemented in the future and learn from food waste to improve next time to decrease the impact on the customer service and customer experience departments.
Revenues (Council Tax)	3	<u>Council Tax – legal challenges against being liable for Council Tax</u> Following an increase in the number of customers submitting legal challenges against being liable for Council Tax, it is suggested that some comms messages are put out via social media channels regarding Council Tax legislation. To explain what Council Tax is and who has to pay etc., with links to the WLDC website where more information can be found regarding legal challenges to pay and what will happen if Council Tax is not paid in order to educate residents. <u>Council Tax – amendments to Customer Council Tax Accounts</u> Officers in correspondence with customers in relation to Council Tax need to be more aware of opportunities to add notes to accounts and put holds on to suppress and delay reminders and summons being issued where accounts are in dispute, or where ongoing actions are taking place - for instance where a benefit decision is due or where payments allocations haven't been made correctly onto council tax accounts. And officers also need to pay extra care and attention when inputting information in relation to Council Tax accounts to ensure that all details are being inputted accurately. <u>Council Tax – ensuring thorough checks are carried out when linking account information</u> Following an upheld complaint, all Council Tax staff have been reminded to ensure that thorough checks

		are carried out when identifying and linking account addresses. This will ensure that correspondence is sent to the correct person, allowing them the opportunity to pay for what is owed prior to further action being taken.
Street Cleansing	3	<u>Street Cleansing – CRM fly tipping reports</u> "Customer Satisfaction Survey Feedback about CRM emails for fly tipping requests that are not on WLDC land. When a fly tipping report goes through CRM and it is marked as unable to collect as not on our land the customer that made the report receives this email: Thank you for recently reporting fly tipping case to West Lindsey District Council. In this instance we have been unable to clear the site due to it being located on land not under our ownership. If we are able to identify the correct landowners, we will be in touch to share this information with you. Should you have any further queries regarding this case please contact our customer services team on 01427 676676 and select option 5 for waste enquiries. Many thanks Operational Services Team (WLDC) It has been established that no one then attempts to identify the correct landowner to let the customer know, so this email is inaccurate and unhelpful. The line highlighted in bold above will be removed from these emails." <u>Street Cleansing – procedure when emptying public litter bins</u> A complaint was received regarding a street cleansing operative parking on the path near to a school to empty a public litter bin. It was established that this litter bin is not usually emptied at school times when pedestrians are passing and crews do not usually park on the path. The litter bin will now be moved so that it is easier for crews to empty without causing a hazard. <u>Street Cleaning – public litter bins (Caistor)</u> A complaint was received in relation to the public bins in Caistor town centre, although they had been emptied recently, they were already full and overflowing. The Street Cleaning manager met with the complainants, and it was established that more bins and larger bins would improve the situation, along

		with more frequent visits by a street cleansing operative. It was agreed that going forward an operative would visit 3 times a week on Mon, Weds and Fri to empty the bins. More bins will be provided (subject to funding) and larger bins will be provided (to increase capacity for public waste).
Planning and Development	3	Planning and Development – Site Notices (neighbour notification) A complaint regarding how planning applications are publicised was not upheld but it was identified that an improved process for site notices could be implemented. For a non-major development, we are required to give notice either by site notice on display on or near to the land; or, by serving notice on any adjoining owner or occupier. - if we are not sending neighbour letters then we need to ensure that a planning officer puts the site notice up and takes a photo for evidence - otherwise it could be classed as a non lawful application - officers are not to rely on a third party or the applicant/agent to put a site notice up they must oversee this task. Planning and CiL Suggestions received via customer comments that are being considered by relevant officers; on planning approvals, can we include whether CiL applies, other authorities include this information, and it may save customer and officer time in the long run. Some forms required at the validation stage duplicate other information provided, for example you have to complete a biodiversity questionnaire even if you are exempt from that requirement. Planning and Development – Proforma for Building Control comments Following on from a planning complaint that received in quarter 1 an improvement action has been identified in relation to how planning and building control work together on planning applications. A proforma is in progress to ensure that when building control provides comments on an application they are clearly set out and that all matters are noted and then thoroughly considered by the case officer dealing with the application.
Arts and Leisure	3	<u>Trinity Arts Centre – New grab rails</u> A suggestion has been received for installing more grab rails at the end of the rows on the side of seats in order to assist those with restricted mobility. The property and assets team are considering the suggestion and logistics etc. to establish if any extra

		rails can be installed. <u>Arts and Leisure – Event suggestion</u> A complaint was received regarding restrictions in place during a recent festival in the town centre, WLDC did put a notice up in the town centre prior to the event but a resident felt that this wasn't enough and that communication could improve in the future. The resident suggested that in the future, residents should be communicated with earlier and they suggested that they are all written to if it is going to directly affect them. <u>Website information re Market Rasen Tuesday market</u> A customer comment was received regarding the information published on the WLDC website advising that the website for the Market Rasen Market is now incorrect. https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/events/market-rasen-market The website has now been updated by the systems development team.
Property Services	1	<u>Property Services – Public Toilets</u> Feedback was received via a complaint about the cleanliness of Roseway toilets in Gainsborough. The customer suggested a QR code to scan in the toilet if an issue is identified so that the report can be completed with little effort and so that officers are made aware quickly. The property services department will investigate the feasibility of this once the toilets have been refurbished next year.
Crematorium	1	<u>Lea Fields Crematorium – Grounds Maintenance</u> Feedback received in relation to the standard of upkeep and grounds maintenance at the crematorium has led to examination of the ground maintenance contract. A full list of concerns is being examined and the issues highlighted will be targeted as soon as practicably possible. This will include the removal and replacement of dead trees, shrubs and hedging. The quality of the grassed areas will be improved, and fresh bark and flower beds will be procured. Once the grounds have been brought up to an acceptable standard officers will ensure that a maintenance agreement is in place to guarantee that the grounds are maintained and kept to the standard of quality expected.
Environmental Protection/Community Safety	1	<u>Information Sharing – Environmental Protection/Community Safety</u> Although the complaint was not upheld - On review of a recent formal complaint, the process on handling complaints, and sharing information between different

		departments has been examined, and the cross over between ASB and EP. Whilst it is recognised that each team has an informal understanding of how complaints are received, given this complaint a more structured approach is needed. An email has been sent from the EP to the ASB team setting out the process that should be followed and hopefully this will improve the process and experience for the customer.
WLDC all Services – Subject Access Requests	1	<u>All Council Services – Information that can be released under SAR</u> All Council services and officers need to be reminded about what information and records will be released to a customer if they were to make a Subject Access Request (SAR). Officers should ensure that all written records and correspondence, including emails and teams messages, are relevant and professional and that personal opinions are not included as these may be released to the customer at a later date.

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

None arising directly from this report.

Financial: FIN/52/27/TC/SL

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Staffing:

None arising directly from this report.

LGR implications:

No LGR implications

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

By understanding how customers interact with the Council in more detail, means that we will be able to identify and address issues that are preventing them from accessing services in an equal manner.

Data Protection Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

None arising directly from this report.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None arising directly from this report.

Health Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Risk Assessment:

Not Applicable

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- West Lindsey District Council Customer Feedback Policy
- 2025/26 Quarterly Voice of the Customer Reports x 4

Available on the West Lindsey District Council website via this link:

<https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/voice-customer-reports>

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Key Decision:

Yes

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No

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