

Bolton Council

Report to: Executive Cabinet Member
Environmental Services

Date: 12 December 2016

Report of: Director of Place

Report No: ECMES/26/16b

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Report Title: **Departmental Performance Update – Quarter 2 2016/17**

Confidential / Non Confidential:
(delete as approp)

(**Non-Confidential**) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

This report provides the Environmental Services Executive Cabinet Member with an update on Quarter 2, 2016/17 performance for the Environmental Services' elements of the Place Department. Additionally, it incorporates Housing Services as part of the portfolio. It also includes the internal departmental position.

Recommendations:

The Executive Cabinet Member is asked to comment upon the performance update set out in this report.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

Signed:

Leader / Executive Cabinet Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises Quarter 2, 2016/17 performance for the Environmental Services' elements of the Place Department. Additionally, it incorporates Housing Services as part of the portfolio.
- 1.2 Progress is reported against:
- Major strategic priorities.
 - The Department's operational priorities as the provider of a number of large front line and support services.
- 1.3 The divisions included in this report remain on track to deliver their strategic and operational priorities for the Council. Highlights of the report are:
- The introducing of slimmer grey bins has avoided costs of £452,000 at the end of Quarter 2 and the service is currently on track to achieve the waste disposal saving target of £1.25million per year.
 - Cumulative domestic (grey bin) waste tonnages for Quarters 1 and 2 have decreased by 1,402.73 tonnes when compared with Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16.
 - Cumulative recycling tonnages for Quarters 1 and 2 have increased by 1,801 tonnes when compared with Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16.
 - The Heritage Lottery Project at Queens Park has been completed and gained a Green Flag Award in July 2016.
 - The Food and Drink Festival 2016 took place with approximately 160 traders attending and 263,000 visitors - a 30% increase when compared to 2015 (201,911).
 - The school meals service was shortlisted for 3 awards.
 - The resurfacing of St Peters Way - the biggest single Highways capital scheme of 2016/17 - was completed 3 weeks earlier than expected.
 - Bolton took part in 'Exercise Triton II', the largest live civil contingencies exercise ever held in Greater Manchester (GM) using the Strategic, Tactical and Operational levels of command.

2.0 Supporting the Council to deliver its strategic priorities

- 2.1 At a strategic level, the Department supports the Cleaner and Greener Partnership, the BSafe Partnership and the Town Centre Regeneration Programme, as part of the delivery of the Community Strategy. Key progress on strategic priorities is highlighted below.

2.2 Waste, Recycling & Fleet Management

2.2.1 Waste, Recycling

The introduction of managed weekly waste collections in 2013 was part of a strategic waste diversion programme where the primary aim was to divert waste away from the residual waste stream and increase recycling rates. Further diversion was required to avoid increasing waste disposal costs and in July 2015 the proposal was approved to **exchange all grey 240 litre wheeled bins for 140 litre wheeled bins** (slim bins), with the continuation of the same frequency of collections. The roll out of the slim bins began on 20 June 2016 and will be completed in November 2016.

At the end of Quarter 2:

- **Slim bins** have been delivered to 77,542 properties, which equates to 70% of the exchange – 93% of the 240 litre bins have been captured for recycling, with the plastic being used in the manufacture of the 140 litre bins.
- The introducing of slim bins had **avoided costs** of £452,000 and the service is currently **on track** to achieve the waste disposal saving target of £1.25million per year.
- 224.88kg **household waste** was collected per household – a 10.77kg per household decrease when compared with cumulative totals at Quarter 2, 2015/16 (235.68kg).
- Cumulative **domestic (grey bin) waste tonnages** for Quarters 1 and 2 have decreased by 1,402.73 tonnes when compared with Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16.
- The **recycling rate** was 44.7% - a 3.1 percentage point increase when compared with Quarter 2, 2015/16.
- Cumulative **recycling tonnages** for Quarters 1 and 2 have increased by 1,801 tonnes when compared with Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16. When compared with the cumulative tonnages for Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16, the service collected:
 - 995.28 tonnes more food and garden waste.
 - 480.24 tonnes more glass, cans and plastic bottles.
 - 325.14 tonnes more pulpables.

Also in Quarter 2:

- Information on **food waste recycling** (using a Halloween theme) was placed in Bolton Scene's Autumn edition.
- 28 primary schools took part in the **schools' recycling campaign** focussing on reducing contamination in burgundy bins.
- 1,459 **waste audits** carried out:
 - 0 extra 240 litre grey bins were approved.
 - 16 extra 140 litre grey bins were approved.
 - 663 households were approved to keep the 240 litre grey bin.
 - 262 households were awaiting a second visit.
 - 518 households were given recycling advice.
- 1,515 (cumulative Quarters 1 and 2) **bulky waste collections** with 33.2% of waste recycled or re-used.
- 7 **roadshows and events** took place (12 in 2016/17).
- 4,861 **missed collections** reported – equating to 0.07% of all collections.
- 14,071 (cumulative Quarters 1 and 2) **recycling bins ordered** – as compared with 8,164 for the same period, 2015/16.
- 1,115 **food waste containers ordered** – remaining static when compared with the same period, 2015/16.

In Quarter 2, the number of **commercial waste contracts** held by the council increased by 63 and the value of contract increased by £15,557.

Table 1: Commercial Waste Contracts						
Quarter 2	Number of Contracts lost	Value lost (£)	New Contracts	Value of new contracts (£)	Contracts increased	Income generated (£)
July	8	5,738.00	30	10,418.00	22	4,680.00
August	2	1,972.00	17	3,887.00	15	1,915.00
September	7	6,649.00	33	15,611.00	26	8,962.00
Total	17	14,359.00	80	29,916.00	63	15,557.00

2.2.2 Fleet Management

Co² emissions for the Council's fleet have been monitored in these reports since Quarter 1, 2015/16 with the aim of reducing emissions over time. In Quarter 2, there was an 11.8 tonnes reduction when compared with Quarter 2, 2015/16.

2.3 Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services

2.3.1 Neighbourhood Management and Area Working

The service supports the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives of narrowing the gap between the most and least well off in Bolton and ensuring economic prosperity. The service also supports, where possible, other strategic priorities of the Council such as reducing litter and waste and improving recycling rates through the commissioning and delivery of local projects:

Area Forums started again with just under 40% taking place in Quarter 2. There was an increase in attendance of 22% (from 111 to 141). Themes related to local issues and the impact of new initiatives being introduced by the Council and its partners, for example, at 2 Towns there was a presentation on integrated health and social care and Halliwell's meeting was in conjunction with its annual Open Day at the UCAN.

Halliwell UCAN serves the Crompton and Halliwell Community. In Quarter 2:

- 6,919 people visited UCAN/ facilities.
- 256 attendees at Halliwell UCAN open day.
- 9 people helped back into work.
- 11 community groups/services have provided activities /and advice.

In **Farnworth**:

- The '**Men in Sheds**' project aimed at older men who are at risk of becoming isolated, affecting well-being saw a substantial growth in the number of local older men attending the project, with a retention rate of 91% in Quarter 2. Members have already reported an increase in self-confidence and self-belief and an improvement in health and well-being.
- **Farnworth Foodbank** has issued 322 vouchers, feeding 874 people – an increase of approximately 25% when compared with Quarter 1.

2.3.2 Greener Bolton

The Heritage Lottery Project at **Queens Park** has been completed. A plaque was unveiled in September 2016 to celebrate and to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Park's opening in

1866. A bid for a Green Flag Award for the park was successful in July 2016 and the park continues to be popular with visitors.

The **Greenspace Investment Programme** continues with work to complete the facilities at Hulton Lane - changing rooms have been delayed due to the appointed contractor ceasing trading, delivery now anticipated in Quarter 3. Drainage work has started on the playing fields at Green Lane, Horwich and will be completed in 2017/18. Work has been completed on the **Multi-Use Games Area** for Haslam Park and is progressing on the **Outdoor Gym** at Tonge Park. Work is on-going on the 2016/17 play area refurbishment and refresh programme with a target of 4 in 2016/17 - work has been completed at Nugent Road, Great Lever and is on-going at Tonge Park.

2.3.3 Cleaner Bolton and Behaviour Change

The council and partners took the decision in 2010 to fundamentally shift away from just cleaning up after communities to introducing a **behaviour change approach** aimed at tackling the root cause of environmental issues.

Additional resources of £1.3million revenue were allocated from April 2015 over 2 years (2015/16 and 2016/17), in addition to £200,000 capital for environmental improvements. As a result of the behaviour change strategy, the **operational behaviour change teams and enforcement officers** in the period April 2015 to September 2016 have:

- Leafleted 241 streets, with 2,056 residents spoken to/given educational leaflets.
- Dealt with 3,032 instances of back street waste (bags/furniture/white goods/rubble) – 53% moved by the public, the estimated cost for the council to remove, £175,203¹.
- Carried out enforcement activity ² (4,326 cases) with:
 - 59 cases taken to Court resulting in £19,086 of fines/costs.
 - 419 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) generating £17,605.

In the period April 2015 to September 2016, the **Trade Waste Officers** have:

- Inspected 830 businesses.
- Served 45 S34 notices which will generate £13,500.

Following visits, 104 new commercial waste contracts have been taken out with the council at a value of £24,272.

Volunteer Community Co-ordinator - During the past 12 months:

- 119 groups have been registered.
- There have been 2,419 volunteer 'occasions' at litter picking ('occasions' represents one volunteer at one event).
- 2 large events took place to draw attention primarily to the issue of litter - Clean for the Queen (March 2016) and Love Bolton (July 2016).
- An on-going social media engagement project implemented with the aim of effecting behaviour change.

As a result of this work, a **new umbrella community group** (called Green Umbrella) has been developing to encourage people to take ownership of local environmental issues and to work in partnership with the council.

¹ based on figures provided by WasteDataFlow

² Figures relate to enforcement activity funded by the additional resources, not core activity

Successful **pilot projects** have also been undertaken - the Rumworth Pilot Project and Madrasa pilot project with Bolton Council of Mosques.

2.3.4 Regulatory Services

In Quarter 2:

A new **Generic Technical Officer role** (1.5FTE) was established to provide technical support to the Trading Standards, Pollution and Licensing teams of Regulatory Services. Once training has been completed it is anticipated that this role will be pivotal, working across the breadth of Regulatory Services.

Trading Standards

- 1 successful prosecution was brought for supplying illicit tobacco.
- Hearing dates were set in relation to 3 further premises found to be supplying illicit tobacco.
- Planning commenced for multi-agency activities around Halloween and Bonfire night (Operation Treacle).

Licensing

- Gambling Act Statement of Principles was adopted.
- Successful relocation of offices from Castle Hill to the Town Hall.
- Completion of first 6 months of the new 12 month vehicle licences and roll out of livery.
- DVLA audit passed.
- 6 private hire driver licences revoked.
- 3 Private hire driver applications refused.
- 7 private hire driver licences suspended.
- 1 licensing Act Hearing – refused.

The **Food and Health and Safety team** brought 1 successful prosecution in relation to food hygiene offences.

2.3.5 Community Safety

Quarter 2 saw an increase in all crime of 2% when compared with Quarter 2, 2015/16. Greater Manchester (GM) as a whole saw an increase of 7%.

When comparing Quarter 2, 2016/17 to Quarter 2, 2015/16, there was an increase in violent offences recorded in Bolton, but this was not to the extent experienced across GM as a whole (an increase of 16% and 33% respectively). However, an increase of 14% in sexual offences in Bolton compared to just a 4% increase across GM.

Quarter 2 saw a marked decrease in recorded instances of burglary in an dwelling (-17%), but a 16% increase in robbery offences. Anti-social behaviour has shown an increase in Quarter 2 compared to consistent decreases in previous periods.

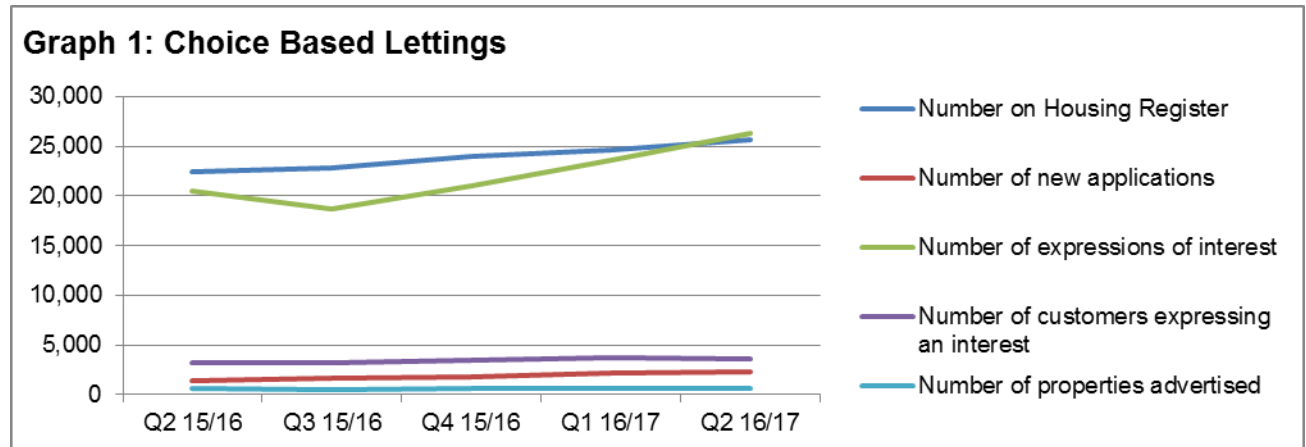
Evaluation of these crimes, and reasons for increases and decreases, is undertaken by GM Police – any relevant issues can be reported in future performance reports once evaluation has taken place.

2.4 Housing Services

2.4.1 To provide housing that is affordable and offers choice whilst meeting the needs and demands of the future.

Need and Demand for Housing

Affordable housing continues to be in high demand.



Graph 1 shows the trends in activity for **choice based lettings** from July 2015. In Quarter 2:

- The number of properties advertised decreased from 581, Quarter 1 to 576.
- Expressions of interest rose from 23,065, Quarter 1 to 26,323.
- Number of customers expressing interest decreased from 3,705, Quarter 1 to 3,563.
- Some properties have received a high number of expressions, for example a 3 bedroomed house in Great Lever received 202 bids and a 4 bedroomed house received 164 bids - indicating the high demand for family homes.
- The average number of expressions per property is 46 in Quarter 2 as compared with 39 per property, Quarter 2 2015/16.
- Applications received have increased slightly from 2,206, Quarter 1 to 2,361.

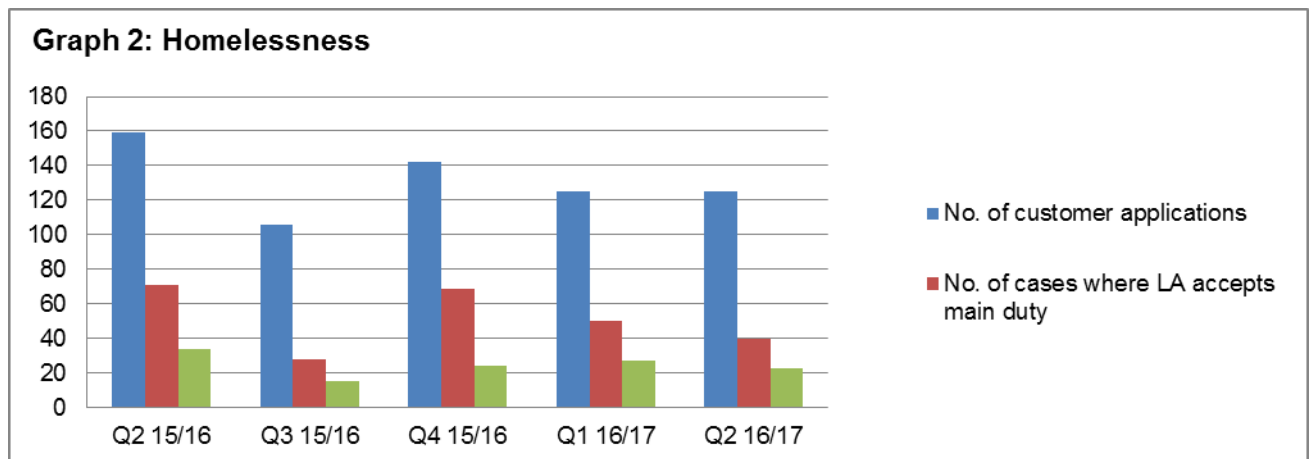
Delivery of affordable housing

Pipeline figures for 2013/17 & 2015/18 **Affordable Housing Grant** and **Affordable Housing Programme** funding streams will see a further 304 affordable homes built across 12 sites (including 25 former right to buy backs). So far, 4 schemes have been completed, 1 has secured planning, 6 are expected to start on site and 2 are waiting for a planning decision.

Right to Buy applications received by Bolton at Home are still relatively high and remain consistent. There have been a lower number of completions in Quarter 2 (29) than in Quarter 1 (40). However, it is anticipated that completions in 2016/17 will exceed completions for 2015/16 (111).

2.4.2 To create and promote communities that are sustainable and inclusive

Graph 2 shows the trends in **homeless cases** from July 2015.



In Quarter 2:

- There were 125 **statutory homeless cases**, the same number as during Quarter 1, with a reduction in the number of acceptances under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.

This evidences that bringing homeless welfare and housing advice together is having a positive effect as interventions to prevent homelessness and sustain tenancies are aligned; thus ensuring that a case only becomes a statutory homeless case when all options have been exhausted.

- Cases presenting and accepted as owed a main duty due to **domestic abuse** has decreased from 27, Quarter 1 to 23 - a large number of these cases being provided with temporary accommodation.

The use of **temporary accommodation** has continued to rise slightly, due to the number of Domestic Abuse cases and the number of single homeless people presenting with more complex needs. The service continues to work closely with a wide range of supported accommodation services to ensure placements in appropriate accommodation so that households can access the support necessary to sustain accommodation thus preventing representation of these cases.

During Quarter 2, **Benjamin Court** flats and communal areas have been re-painted. The voids rates have decreased due to accommodation demand and have averaged at 10.7%. Void times are kept to a minimum but factors such as repairs, safety checks and of course the painting programme, keep the properties 'off- line' a little longer. The Universal Credit roll out determines placement of clients and can affect the number of voids. There is a slow but steady increase in the number of clients presenting who claim Universal Credit.

Bed and Breakfast and hotel accommodation are utilised to ensure the Council is able to fulfil its duty to provide accommodation to statutory cases. In Quarter 2, it was used 45 times, with an average stay of 4.64 days per case.

24 cases received **out of hours support**, helping the duty social work team and police with homeless presentations averaging 1 every 4 days. These cases are then referred to the homeless team on the next available working day for a full homeless interview and support.

2.4.3 To improve the quality of private sector housing

The **Safe, Warm and Dry** approach was introduced in June 2013, and it involves targeting private sector properties that have been identified by the BRE stock condition model as at risk of failing

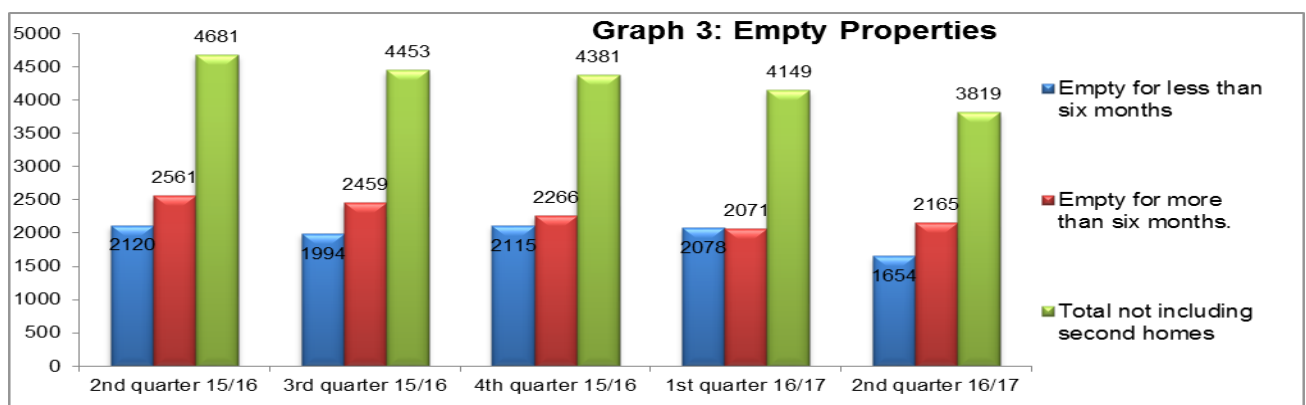
decency standards. The approach is also targeted at those properties that are lived in by a vulnerable person. In Quarter 2:

- 32 customers have work on-going or are waiting for work to begin, which is a decrease from Quarter 1 (42).
- 11 cases have been completed - an increase from Quarter 1 (10).
- 100% of works have been completed by Bolton contractors.

Tackling poor property conditions and management of the private rented sector is becoming increasingly important as the sector continues to expand and house more vulnerable people. The following work has been undertaken by **Housing Standards** in Quarter 2:

- 1,294 service requests were received - a significant increase due to work being undertaken for Bolton at Home under the gas safety work agreement.
- 76 housing, health and safety inspections were completed resulting in 58 category 1 hazards and 234 category 2 hazards being identified.
- 61 owners were made aware of hazards in their properties via a hazard awareness notice.
- Out of the 76 inspections completed, 56 hazards were identified relating to excess cold and damp and mould growth. Works have been requested in these properties to reduce the risk these issues pose to tenants.
- 8 owners had notices served on them, continuing the trend from Quarter 1 - with 2 suspended improvement notices and 6 improvement notices being served.

Bringing empty properties back into use remains a priority for the Council as it not only increases the number of available homes in the Borough but also provides revenue through Council Tax and New Homes Bonus.



Graph 3 shows the trends in empty homes in Bolton since July 2015. In Quarter 2:

- 4,463 properties are registered with the council as being empty - a decrease of 308 properties since Quarter 1. The reduction is possibly due to the large mail-outs conducted which has highlighted a number of properties that were in use but recorded as empty due to details not being provided to the council.
- 181 empty properties have been brought back into use through the council pro-actively working with the owners of empty properties.
- Excluding second homes, 3,819 properties remain empty and of these 1,654 have been left empty for less than 6 months and 2,165 for more than 6 months. 438 have been empty for over 2 years and will be paying premium council tax at 150%.

2.4.4 To promote health, well-being and quality of life

In Quarter 2, **Disabled Facilities Grants** (DFGs) cases passed to Bolton at Home for processing decreased from 119, Quarter 1 to 93. This may be due to changes within the Independent Living Service as they process the initial enquiries and assessments. However, completed cases increased from 48, Quarter 1 to 58. Overall waiting times increased slightly to 290 days compared to 280 days, Quarter 1. Waiting times continue to be monitored - Bolton at Home is in the process of increasing capacity to ensure waiting times continue to reduce. At the end of Quarter 2, Bolton at Home had committed £1.7m of the £3.5m DFG budget.

3.0 Departmental Strategic Priorities

3.1 Community Services

Tenders were returned and evaluated in **Social Needs Transport** (SNT) for external private hire and minibus operators wishing to be included on the Home to School and College Transport Framework Agreement for children with special educational needs. Successful applicants were subsequently notified and a similar process took place for primary school swimming contracts.

The occupancy rate at **Bolton Market** was 97% at the end of Quarter 2. The market held its first Summer Fun Day in June 2016, which was well received by public and traders with sporting activities, face painting, cupcake making and a magic show. The sale of **Westhoughton Market** is progressing.

The **Food and Drink Festival 2016** took place in August 2016 with approximately 160 traders attending and 263,000 visitors - a 30% increase when compared to 2015 (201,911).

The **Albert Halls** refurbishment programme is nearing completion and the building will be handed back to the Council, 5 December 2016. Options and management arrangements continue to be developed for the future use, management and opening in 2017.

Preparations have been completed in **Security and Response** for the upgrade of NSI (National Security Inspectorate) accreditation for BS7984 (key holding and response services) from the 2008 to the 2016 standard. This upgrade will be audited by the NSI, December 2016. Preparations are also on-going for the upgrade of accreditation from ISO 9001 quality assurance from 2008 to the 2015 standard - this change will be audited by the NSI in 2017.

In **Bereavement Services** the burial and cremation figures are slightly up on the same period in the last financial year. Major road and drainage improvements are underway in Heaton Cemetery and scheduled for completion by December 2016. The Probation Service Community Payback Scheme for grounds maintenance in Westhoughton Cemetery was once again successfully commissioned for the period April 2016 to October 2016.

3.2 Services to Schools

Quarter 2 incorporates the summer school holidays, therefore a closure for the school meals' service and around 70% less cleaning in schools.

School Meals

Table 1: School Meals		
Type of Meals Uptake %	Quarter 2, 2016/17	Quarter 2, 2015/16
Statutory Free	81.25% of eligible	80% of eligible
UIFSM – KS1	88% of possible	86.7% of possible
Paid - KS2 *Disc £1.25	61.5% of possible	67.5% of possible
Whole School	74.7% of total school roll	72.4% of total school roll
Average meals served	18,493 average daily meals served	18,324 average daily meals served

Table 1 ³ shows the trends in **primary school meals uptake** for Quarters 1 and 2, 2016/17 as compared with the same period of 2015/16:

- Uptake of Statutory Free meals has increased by 1.25 percentage points.
- Uptake of UIFSM (Universal Infant Free School Meals) in Key Stage 1 (KS1) has increased by 1.3 percentage points.
- Uptake of Paid Key Stage 2 (KS2) meals has decreased by 6 percentage points, despite being discounted to £1.25 (the second cheapest priced in the UK). Uptake may be being affected by the requirement to start paying for a school meal on entry to KS2. However, the parent school meals survey completed in June 2016 indicated that 66% of Year 2 pupils having a free meal in July 2016 would pay for a meal on entry to KS2 in September. Further analysis may therefore be required.

The service has been **shortlisted** for 3 awards:

- Best Performer (based on benchmarking data) - Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE), to be announced in December.
- A finalist for 'Digital Dinner Ladies' - Educatering magazine.
- 'Digital Dinner Ladies' - Bolton's Best Innovation, Improvement and Sustainability category.

Building Cleaning

At the end of Quarter 2, 1 new cleaning **Service Level Agreement** (SLA) for 2 centres has been confirmed, the Bolton at Home contract has been retained and 1 SLA is awaiting completion. Work to provide a Relief Caretaking service is underway. A post to recruit a full time relief caretaker has been completed and school trials underway.

Technology and efficiencies

Cypad continues with further developments and opportunities to bring more administration activity in an e-format. Suppliers to the schools meals service are almost all on-line. Trials of pre-ordering systems are underway with one school. Service monitoring is also underway for both catering and cleaning. Negotiations with Information Management continue with a view to reducing administration for staff time records and variances.

³ Adjusted for feeding days

3.3 Highways, Engineering and Parking Division and Town Centre Public Realm

Resurfacing of St Peters Way – the biggest single Highways capital scheme of 2016/17, using a number of different contractors - was completed 3 weeks earlier than expected with minimum disruption.

Work commenced to lay the drainage channels on the eastern side of **Newport Street** as part of the Public Realm Improvement Programme. Access to businesses will be maintained during this work and all businesses affected by the work have received a programme. This will be followed by paving work in Quarter 3.

Progress continued to be made with the **LED street-lighting programme**. Across Bolton, approximately 26,000 street lamps on residential streets and main roads are being replaced with lower carbon LED lanterns over the next three years. The street lighting programme, which is costing £10m, should save the council £14m over 20 years and reduce energy use by around 50%. Replacement work continues throughout the borough and, at mid November 2016, almost 18,741 lights in 3,060 streets have been upgraded, since the rollout began in April 2015. Work is on target to finish in 2018. The District of Turton will be the next to be LED retro-fitted which covers Egerton, Bromley Cross and Harwood.

3.4 Civil Contingencies

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the council has a statutory duty to have contingency plans in place to ensure the borough is equipped to deal with a crisis situation effectively, while continuing to provide the usual day-to-day services of the council. Response and intervention relies on effective **partnership working**.

In Quarter 2, Bolton took part in '**Exercise Triton II**', focussing on the failure of a top tier reservoir. It was the largest live exercise ever held in Greater Manchester (GM) using the Strategic, Tactical and Operational levels of command. All 10 GM local authorities participated in the exercise, using the opportunity to test their own procedures and plans. Approximately 36 partner agencies took part including emergency services, military, utility companies and government departments. Most of the live play took place at Dovestones reservoir in Oldham and Hollingworth Lake in Rochdale so although in the scenario, Bolton would not have been directly impacted by the flow of water from the reservoirs it included widespread flooding across GM. A specific scenario for Bolton was also developed which included issues which arose from the Boxing Day floods in 2015, which resulted in the test activation of the Emergency Control Centre (ECC) and a Rest Centre.

4.0 Supporting the Council to deliver its operational priorities

This section gives an update on some of the major operational priorities.

4.1 Managing the Department's Budget

Revenue expenditure for Environmental Services and Housing Services is projected to underspend against the budget by £86,000 after planned reserve movements. Capital expenditure at Quarter 2 was £13.371m against a revised budget at Quarter 2 of £35.828m. The budgeted efficiency savings for 2016/17 for Environmental and Housing Services of £2,146,000 are all planned to be achieved.

4.2 Health and Safety

The department is continuing to deliver a programme of training and site assessments to ensure that all services operate in a safe environment. In Quarter 2 the number of staff related incidents (excluding Housing Services) were 55 – 20 more than Quarter 1. Management will continue to

monitor the number of incidents within the department and deliver important health and safety training to all staff.

4.3 Managing Sickness

Staff absence within the whole Place Department, Quarter 2 is 2.7 days per FTE. Cumulative absence is 5.5 days, compared to 6.7 days, Quarter 2 2015/16.

All divisions within the Place Department have seen a decrease in sickness absence when compared to Quarter 2, 2015/16 (see Table 1).

At present there are 45 on-going long term absence cases in the Place Department, the principal causes of which are stress-related, musculoskeletal / neck or back problems and post-operative recovery. 32 of these are front line operational roles mostly within the Community Services Division. The Department has undertaken significant management action on attendance during Quarter 2:

- 68 informal counselling meetings.
- 38 OH referrals.
- 4 warnings were issued.
- 1 Medical Incapacity dismissal.
- 2 Ill Health Retirements.

All current cases, both long and short term are managed in accordance with the Managing Sickness Absence Framework.

Table 1: Average Days Sickness Per FTE in 2016/17 By Division							
Division	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Cumulative 2015/16	Cumulative 2016/17⁴	Projected Days Sickness per FTE
Community Services	3.0	2.2			5.4	5.1	10.2
Highways and Engineering	3.4	3.0			8.2	6.5	13.0
Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services	2.7	3.3			6.9	5.9	11.8
Waste and Fleet Management	3.2	3.7			9.3	6.9	13.8

4.4 Requests for Information

Information requests are answered under the **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000**, the **Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004** or the **Data Protection Act 1998**. The Council is required to respond to requests within 20 working days and Subject Access Requests within 40 days.

- 112 requests were received during Quarter 2 - 109 of these were for the department alone and 3 were cross cutting across the council. The largest proportion of requests received by the department was for Regulatory Services who received 38 requests.
- 100% of requests were answered on time.

⁴ Please note that cumulative figures are based on averages which are rounded up and down, therefore slight discrepancies may be seen when adding quarterly totals together.

Working on an average of 4.3 officer hours per request, the department allocated 482 hours of officer time on information requests during Quarter 2.

4.5 Managing Customer Care

The number of **complaints** received by the divisions of the department covered by this report are monitored and compared with 2015/16 data (which excluded Community Housing data). Complaints are answered within twenty working days 'standard' – a timescale set locally to Bolton. 124 complaints were received for Quarter 2, 2016/17:

- 2 less complaints were received than in Quarter 2, 2015/16 (126). It should be noted that Community Housing received 5 complaints – and they were out of scope for this report at Quarter 2, 2015/16.
- 114 complaints were answered in 'standard' (92%) and 10 were answered out of 'standard'.

Further analysis of the 124 complaints shows that:

- The main reason that complainants identified for making their complaints was 'unsatisfactory/sub-standard level of service', of which there were 85 (68%).
- 4 complaints were upheld (i.e. the Department found in the customer's favour); 3 were partially upheld (i.e. the Department found partially in the customer's favour); 2 were deferred and 115 (93%) were not upheld.

1 cross-cutting complaint was received which was not upheld.

Community Housing received 5 complaints; 4 of which were not upheld and 1 which was partially upheld because of delays caused by an error in the complaints' administration process.

Community Services received 67 complaints, 65 of which were not upheld, 1 which was deferred due to legal proceedings and 1 which was partially upheld because of a delay in delivering a green bin.

Highways and Engineering Division received 21 complaints; 20 of which were not upheld and 1 which was deferred pending further information.

Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services received 30 complaints; 24 of which were not upheld, 2 which were partially upheld and 4 which were upheld.

The 4 were upheld because of:

- The way a member of staff handled a telephone call.
- A process not being followed.
- Customer unable to contact staff in office hours.
- An enquiry not being responded to.

The 2 complaints were partially upheld because of:

- Delays in response to an original enquiry and
- Information originally relayed to a customer which later had to be corrected.

Recording of **compliments** is also an important indicator within customer care. 48 compliments were logged in Quarter 2.

- 1 for Community Housing.
- 9 for Community Services.

- 31 for Highways and Engineering.
- 7 for Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services.

5. Conclusions

5.1 This report summarises Quarter 2, 2016/17 performance for the Environmental Services' elements of the Place Department. Additionally, it incorporates Housing Services as part of the portfolio. The services remain on track to deliver their strategic and operational priorities for the council. Highlights of the report are:

- The introducing of slimmer grey bins has avoided costs of £452,000 at the end of Quarter 2 and the service is currently on track to achieve the waste disposal saving target of £1.25million per year.
- Cumulative domestic (grey bin) waste tonnages for Quarters 1 and 2 have decreased by 1,402.73 tonnes when compared with Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16.
- Cumulative recycling tonnages for Quarters 1 and 2 have increased by 1,801 tonnes when compared with Quarters 1 and 2, 2015/16.
- The Heritage Lottery Project at Queens Park has been completed and gained a Green Flag Award in July 2016.
- The Food and Drink Festival 2016 took place with approximately 160 traders attending and 263,000 visitors - a 30% increase when compared to 2015 (201,911).
- The school meals service was shortlisted for 3 awards.
- The resurfacing of St Peters Way - the biggest single Highways capital scheme of 2016/17 - was completed 3 weeks earlier than expected.
- Bolton took part in 'Exercise Triton II', the largest live civil contingencies exercise ever held in Greater Manchester (GM) using the Strategic, Tactical and Operational levels of command.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Cabinet Member is asked to comment upon the performance update set out in this report.