Minutes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 26 May 2026 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

B Alcock (Chairman)
M D Booth (Vice-Chairman)

L J Eldridge	J L Reynolds	P Barnes
M Geaney	A R Woolf	

In Attendance: The Executive Director - Communities, the Service Director – Strategic Growth and Development, the Business Intelligence and Change Manager, the Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead and the Democratic Services Team Leader

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors C J T H Brewis, S Hutchinson, I Sheard and D J Wilkinson. Councillor P Barnes acted as substitute for Councillor C Brewis for this meeting only.

1 MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the 10 March 2026 Performance Monitoring Panel meeting

AGREED:

That the minutes of the 10 March 2026 Performance Monitoring Panel be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2 ACTIONS

Members considered the responses to actions that arose from the 10 March 2026 Performance Monitoring Panel meeting and the tracking of outstanding responses, and made the following comments:

Action 71 (a):

- Members referred to the written response provided by the Information Manager and Data Protection Officer (appended to the minutes) which was circulated at the meeting, and requested that the action remain open and that a further update be provided with the next agenda to allow sufficient time for consideration and for any follow-up questions to be raised.

Action 71 (g):

- Members referred to the response regarding the framing of questions within the Workforce Survey and queried whether any further feedback had been received. The Business Intelligence and Change Manager would enquire and provide a response after the meeting .

Action 71 (h):

- Members queried whether there were any measures that could be put in place to prevent a recurrence of automated website traffic affecting the reported website analytics. Concerns were also raised as to whether, if the matter had not been identified by the Panel, it would have been detected internally
    - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager advised that input was awaited from ICT on whether preventative measures could be implemented. He confirmed that monitoring takes place through the Communications Team, and that processes would be reinforced to ensure more regular oversight. In the future, performance measures would exclude statistics from outside of the UK and consideration would be given to excluding bot activity.

Action 57 (c):

- A further response from Anglian Water had not been forthcoming and therefore members asked for this action to be elevated.

Action 40 (a):

Members discussed the update relating to planning appeals and raised concerns regarding the lack of clarity around the cost implications of appeals to the Council. Points raised included:

- Frustration that, despite repeated requests, it had not been possible to obtain even an indicative cost for planning appeals;
- The view that, given officers routinely advise that appeals can be costly, there should be some evidential basis or guidance to support this;
- Suggestions that tracking officer time or using indicative cost ranges (similar to legal fee structures) could provide a reasonable estimate;
- The counterpoint that requiring officers to undertake time and motion-style recording could place an unnecessary burden on the service; and
- A request for general data, including the number of appeals in 2025/26, noting that while reports existed, they were not easily digestible in this regard.
    - The Service Director – Strategic Growth and Development clarified that the original question related specifically to the cost of appeals to the authority, rather than officer time alone. It was acknowledged that while the issue of cost is referenced in advice to committees, precise figures are not currently available. He confirmed that the matter had not been fully explored in a wider context and suggested that the Executive may wish to consider how such information could be captured or presented in future. It was also

confirmed that further discussions would take place with relevant officers to explore this matter.

AGREED:

That the update to actions be noted.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were none

4 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were none.

5 TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

6 ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL.

There were none.

7 KEY DECISION PLAN

Members considered the Key Decision Plan and did not make any comments.

AGREED:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

8 Q4 PERFORMANCE REPORT 25-26

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Director – Corporate which provided an update on how the Council was performing for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026.

The Business Intelligence and Change Manager provided members with the following summary update:

- Overall performance remained strong, with 87% of indicators meeting or exceeding target, 8% slightly below target, and 5% significantly below target. The Panel's attention was drawn to the following two areas of underperformance:

Homelessness prevention (successful outcomes)

- Performance was reported at 46.67% against a target of 50%, representing a slight decrease from Quarter 3. This measure related to outcomes achieved rather than a reduction in early intervention activity. Members were advised of a significant increase in cases at the

prevention stage during the quarter, with a number of cases closed due to loss of contact, withdrawal, refusal of suitable offers, or ineligibility. In addition, some households were only supported to remain in their homes for less than six months and therefore could not be counted as successful preventions for the purposes of the measure. The reduction in performance was therefore largely attributable to how outcomes were defined and recorded, rather than a reduction in preventative work; and

- Responses were also provided to questions raised in advance of the meeting. It was confirmed that the homelessness service was considered sufficiently resourced to manage anticipated increases in demand, including those arising from the Renters Reform legislation, supported by additional funding and a service restructure undertaken in August 2025 to improve resilience and capacity. Members were advised that the most common causes of homelessness presentations were the ending of private rented tenancies and being asked to leave by family members, followed by domestic abuse, rough sleeping and relationship breakdown.

Corporate complaints

- Quarter 4 performance was reported at 76.9% against a target of 95%. The following improvement measures introduced during the quarter were outlined: the establishment of a complaints “clinic” to monitor and escalate overdue cases; the introduction of a new shared complaints system providing greater visibility for managers; and an updated contact directory for service areas to improve routing and timeliness of responses. It was noted that a high volume of complaints, including cases submitted as complaints where alternative reporting routes may have been more appropriate (such as missed bin collections), had contributed to performance pressures. The improvements implemented were expected to positively impact performance in Quarter 1 of 2026/27.

Members considered the update and raised the following points:

- Members referred to the performance indicator ‘corporate complaints responded to within corporately set timescales’ and queried the actual activity being measured. Clarification was sought on the distinction between an acknowledgement of a complaint and a substantive response or resolution. Members suggested that the terminology be reviewed to provide greater clarity, which may be more effectively addressed through the introduction of two separate performance indicators, distinguishing between the timeliness of initial acknowledgement and the issue of a full response. Members also sought clarification on references within the narrative to ’pain points’ and improvement activity.
    - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager confirmed that:
        - The measure related to the formal response to the complaint within the 15 working day timescale, not the

initial acknowledgement, which was issued separately;
- The wording would be reviewed to avoid confusion;
- Complaints could still be escalated beyond this stage, and therefore the term ‘conclusion’ required careful use within the complaints framework; and
- The Transformation and Organisational Development teams had worked with services to map the complaints process and identify bottlenecks where cases were delayed. Issues identified included system usability, duplication of processes, and outdated contact information. Actions had been implemented to address these issues, including improved systems and updated service contact lists.

- Members observed the high volume of complaints and queried whether alternative approaches could be taken where the issue could be deemed a service request, such as a missed bin collection.
    - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager responded that where a complaint was submitted, it had to be processed as such in accordance with the Council’s procedures, even if it related to a service request. He committed to explore whether any website clarifications or changes could be made to improve routing and reduce unnecessary complaints, while remaining compliant with complaints handling requirements.

- A member highlighted an example where correspondence had been directed to an officer who no longer worked for the Council.
    - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager acknowledged the issue and advised that work was ongoing to ensure contact information remained up to date. It was noted that staff turnover presented an ongoing challenge, and that improvements to systems and processes were being implemented to minimise such occurrences. It was also confirmed that automatic email responses should be in place where staff had left, and this would be checked.

- Members observed that, whilst the reported Planning performance was strong, the measures themselves may not fully reflect the complexity and practical realities of determining planning applications. Concerns were raised that the use of agreed extensions of time could result in performance figures appearing more positive than the underlying service experience.

- Regarding ‘homelessness prevention’, members noted a downward trend in performance across recent quarters and observed a perceived inconsistency between the reported trend and assurances regarding resourcing. The need for greater context to understand the causes of performance changes was called for.

- The Business Intelligence and Change Manager acknowledged the trend and reiterated that many outcomes were influenced by factors outside the Council's control. It was suggested that introducing additional or supplementary metrics, providing a breakdown of reasons for unsuccessful outcomes, would give better context and support more informed interpretation of performance.

- Members raised queries regarding aspects of the data presentation including: lack of clarity regarding certain fields such as 'request type', the meaning of categories such as 'partially justified', and apparent inconsistencies or gaps in figures within the tables.
  - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager acknowledged that further clarification was required and agreed to review the data and provide a clearer explanation at a future meeting.

- Members raised concerns regarding missing data within environmental performance indicators, particularly in relation to recycling contamination figures.
  - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager advised that the data was dependent on information provided by Lincolnshire County Council via the Waste Data Flow system, which had historically been subject to delays. It was confirmed that the issue was being pursued and that an update would be provided following further review.

- Members expressed concern regarding the Housing performance indicator in respect of gaining access to Council properties for safety checks, stating that all necessary steps should be taken to resolve these cases.
  - The Executive Director – Communities explained that tenants with secure tenancies had legal rights of occupation, meaning access could only be gained via prescribed legal routes, including injunctions or possession proceedings where necessary. It was confirmed that most cases were resolved through engagement, with escalation used as a last resort. The position had improved since the period of the report, with only one outstanding case which was progressing through legal action. Regarding safety checks, it was also noted that alternative compliance measures, such as capping gas supplies, could be implemented where required to ensure safety.

- Members reiterated the need for supporting numerical data alongside percentage indicators throughout the report.
  - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager agreed that providing additional context would be beneficial and undertook to include supporting figures in future reports where available.

- Members identified apparent anomalies in reported data, including a significant increase in gym membership figures.
    - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager acknowledged that this appeared to be an error and confirmed that it would be investigated and corrected as necessary.

- Members noted a particularly strong performance in Quarter 2 for 'procurement savings/benefits achieved' and queried whether this was typical.
    - The Business Intelligence and Change Manager advised that this was likely attributable to a specific piece of work or individual case during that period and agreed to review and provide further detail.

AGREED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

9 HOUSING ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT REPORT AND SELF-ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN CODE

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Director – Housing, which updated members on performance of SHDC's Complaints Service 2025/26 against the Housing Ombudsman Code.

The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead introduced the report and highlighted the following main areas:

- The document reported an improvement in performance, with a reduction in complaint volumes compared to the previous year and continued strong compliance with response timescales: 189 Stage 1 and 12 Stage 2 complaints had been received, with approximately 92% of Stage 1 complaints responded to within 10 working days and 100% of Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days;
- The most common causes of complaints related to delays in service delivery and communication with tenants, particularly within property services and repairs. Nonetheless, overall complaint levels remained low in relation to service activity, and targeted improvements such as the insourcing of damp, condensation and mould works, had contributed to a reduction in related complaints;
- Complaint handling and oversight were well embedded across the organisation, supported by regular monitoring and tenant involvement;
- The annual self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Code identified a number of areas for further improvement, including strengthening capacity, refining processes, and enhancing accessibility and oversight; and
- Looking ahead, the service would focus on further improving customer

experience, including enhanced follow-up with tenants, strengthened audit processes, and improved engagement and communication.

Members considered the update and made the following comments:

- Members sought clarification on the reported 47% reduction in complaints following the insourcing of damp, condensation and mould works.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead confirmed that the reduction reflected both improved timeliness of works and an improved standard of delivery.

- Members noted the level of complaints relating to contractors and queried whether further breakdowns were available to identify specific areas of concern.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead advised that further detail was available within the report, including identification of contractors generating higher levels of complaints. It was noted that strengthened contract management arrangements were being implemented through the Capital Programme governance processes.

- Members commented on the presentation of complaint data, noting that some tables were difficult to interpret and would benefit from clearer formatting.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead acknowledged this observation and agreed to amend the presentation of the data for Cabinet, including splitting quarterly figures for improved clarity in future reports.

- Members highlighted that delays in repairs and a lack of communication with tenants appeared to be a key recurring issue.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead confirmed that delays and communication were both contributing factors. It was emphasised that tenants were generally more accepting of delays where clear communication was provided. Work was ongoing to improve communication, including engagement with internal teams, customer contact teams, and contractors to reinforce expectations around keeping tenants informed

- Members queried trends in complaint demographics, including a higher proportion of complaints recorded from female tenants and younger age groups.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead advised that, in practice, complaints were often submitted by one member of a household on behalf of others. It was also noted that younger tenants appeared more likely to submit complaints, despite generally being harder to engage through other participation

methods. This trend would be explored further to inform engagement approaches.

- Members questioned whether repeat complaints from the same households indicated a need for earlier or additional intervention.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead confirmed that checks were undertaken to identify repeat complaints within a 12-month period and to ensure appropriate escalation where required. Whilst repeat complaints were relatively limited, where patterns were identified, tenants were signposted to additional support services, including Independent Living Officers or Tenancy Support Officers, to address underlying issues.

- Members raised concerns regarding the reliance on processes, training, and key personnel, and queried whether sufficient resilience was in place to cover staff absence.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead explained that complaints handling responsibilities were shared across team leaders, service managers, and senior officers, with escalation routes in place where required. All officers had received complaints handling training to ensure consistency and resilience across the service.

- Members queried arrangements for compensation payments, particularly where complaints related to contractor performance.
    - The Tenant Engagement and Influence Lead confirmed that contractor agreements included provisions requiring contractors to meet the cost of compensation payments where they were responsible. This approach was being embedded within contractual arrangements and applied consistently across services.

AGREED:

1) That, prior to consideration of the report by Cabinet, the comments of the Performance Monitoring Panel be noted;

2) That the draft response to the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report, on slide 4 of the Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report at Appendix 1, be supported.

10 GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION ROUNDS

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director – Communities which provided an update on the current performance of the garden waste collection.

The Executive Director – Communities introduced the report which provided an interim update following the implementation of revised garden waste collection rounds,and the following main points were highlighted:

- Concerns had been raised regarding the accuracy of collection information and the accessibility of reporting systems, affecting approximately 2,500 garden waste subscribers;
- The report outlined the challenges encountered during implementation, the actions taken to address these issues, and the current position of the service. It was confirmed that, following initial difficulties, the revised collection rounds were now operating effectively and had enabled district-wide access to the service.
- Work was ongoing to establish the root causes of the issues experienced, including the commissioning of an independent review, with a view to identifying lessons learned and ensuring these were applied to future service changes. A more detailed report on the findings of the review would be presented to a future meeting.

Members considered the report and made the following comments:

- Members noted that similar systems had been in use by the Council for many years and expressed concerned of the issues caused on this occasion, requesting a deeper understanding of the reasons and causes.
    - The Executive Director – Communities responded that:
        - In terms of day-to-day operations, the core system, including the in-cab Bartec technology, was operating effectively, and collections were now functioning as intended following resolution of the initial issues;
        - Problems had arisen as a result of system configuration changes made in conjunction with IT to introduce revised collection rounds. The original system had been designed for a more limited garden waste scheme, and when new rounds were introduced, this effectively overlaid new data onto the existing configuration. This resulted in conflicting information within the system, which caused the issues experienced. It was acknowledged that the issue should have been identified during system testing prior to implementation, and understanding why this was not detected would form a key element of the independent review;
        - Assurance was given that the configuration approach used in this instance would not be replicated and future rounds would instead be developed using the Routeware system, which is used by other authorities, with routes then integrated directly into the Bartec system. This approach was expected to provide a more robust solution. In conclusion, the issue was attributed to the way in which changes had been applied to the system,

rather than a failure of the core operational technology.

- Members expressed disappointment that issues had occurred following a significant lead-in period for implementation.
    - The Executive Director – Communities acknowledged this concern and accepted that the outcome had not met expectations. It was confirmed that lessons learned, including system configuration and testing processes, would be incorporated into future service changes.

- Members queried whether the system would be capable of managing different collection methods, including both bins and bags, and identifying property-level requirements.
    - The Executive Director – Communities confirmed that the system would hold property-level data, including collection requirements, and would support service delivery across different collection methods.

- Members raised concerns regarding the clarity, consistency, and accuracy of communications issued to residents, stating the following issues: conflicting information within correspondence, inconsistencies regarding subscription extensions and expiry dates, lack of clarity regarding ownership of garden waste bins and collection arrangements, and a data breach where email correspondence had been incorrectly circulated to multiple recipients. There was a need to ensure communications relating to future waste service changes were clear and consistent.
    - The Executive Director – Communities agreed that a review of communications would be beneficial and confirmed that an end-to-end review of all related communications would be included as part of the wider investigation. This would aim to ensure that future communications were clear, accurate, and consistent across all channels. The data breach matter had been investigated and reported appropriately, including referral to the Information Commissioner's Office. Internal actions had been identified and implemented to prevent recurrence.

- Members queried whether operational staff knowledge would be incorporated into future route planning.
    - The Executive Director – Communities confirmed that route development would include several stages, including the use of specialist software and subsequent review by operational teams to ensure routes were practical and reflected local knowledge.

- Members noted good collection and overall service performance figures and requested additional context to understand the impact of the recent issues. Members requested comparative performance data for the period 1 April 2026 to 1 May 2026, to be presented alongside

the 2025/26 year-end performance, in order to better illustrate the scale and impact of the issues experienced following implementation of the revised rounds.

- The Executive Director – Communities agreed that comparative data would be useful and confirmed that this information would be included within the follow-up report.

- Members raised concerns regarding how operational challenges, such as road closures, would be managed under the new arrangements.
  - The Executive Director – Communities advised that operational planning was being developed and confirmed that further detail would be provided within a future report.

- Members requested clearer information in respect of ownership and disposal of garden waste bins, particularly where residents chose not to renew subscriptions.
  - The Executive Director – Communities acknowledged that this required further clarification and agreed to include a detailed explanation of the policy position within a future report, enabling members to fully understand and scrutinise the approach.

- Members questioned the approach taken to compensate residents affected by missed collections, particularly the provision of additional collections at a later date when seasonal demand for use may be low.
  - The Executive Director – Communities explained that the intention had been to ensure that subscribers received the number of collections paid for, with the additional collections effectively extending the service period and therefore adjusting the renewal date accordingly.

- Members queried how residents would be informed of future changes and what role members would play in supporting communication.
  - The Executive Director – Communities confirmed that further communications and engagement activity were planned, including a member briefing scheduled for 9 June 2026, which would provide an update on progress, proposals, and the intended approach to resident engagement. It was acknowledged that communication materials would need to be clear, detailed and accessible to ensure members were able to support residents effectively.

AGREED:

1) That the content of the report be noted; and

2) The Panel noted that a more detailed report would follow pending the outcome of a review of what had occurred in relation to the garden waste collection rounds and any matters requiring

consideration ahead of the wider waste collection round changes planned for later this year.

11 CASTLE SPORTS SWIMMING POOL PUMP UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director – Programme Delivery which provided an update on the Castle Sports Swimming Pool Pump, as requested by members at the last meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel.

The Strategic and Operational Property Manager introduced the report and highlighted the follow points:

- The issue related specifically to the diving pool pump, rather than the main swimming pool;
- The pump was manufactured by a supplier based in Italy, with no UK manufacturing presence. As a result, all replacement parts and specialist repairs were required to be sourced from overseas, contributing to delays in resolution. Whilst the manufacturer was widely used and well regarded, consideration may be given in future to alternative suppliers with a more local presence; and
- In order to mitigate future disruption, the current approach had been to repair the existing pump while also installing a replacement unit, thereby ensuring that a standby pump would be available and reducing downtime in the event of further issues.

Members considered the report and made the following comments:

- Members expressed concern regarding the length of time taken to resolve the pump failure.
    - The Strategic and Operational Property Manager advised that the pump had only been installed in July of the previous year and would ordinarily be expected to last between four and five years. However, faults began to arise within six to seven months and a number of stages had been involved in diagnosing and resolving the issue, including investigations by the leisure operator and contractors, identification and replacement of faulty components, and subsequent faults requiring further specialist input. Reliance on the manufacturer and specialist engineers, including those based overseas, had contributed to delays, and that timescales were often dependent on contractor availability and scheduling.

- Members noted that the written report had only recently been received and advised that any further comments would be provided following more detailed consideration.

AGREED:

That the report be noted with any further comments to be provided following detailed consideration.

12 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Director – Legal and Governance which set out the Work Programme of the Performance Monitoring Panel.

The Democratic Services Team Leader introduced the report:

- Appendix 1 listed the scheduled meeting dates and expected items to each meeting. Members were advised that the Long Sutton Youth Shed item had been deferred to the 9 September 2026 meeting and that this item would be presented alongside a related report concerning the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF); and
- Appendix 2 listed the Panel's Task Group details. In light of changes to CCTV responsibilities and arrangements, members agreed that the CCTV Task Group be removed.

AGREED:

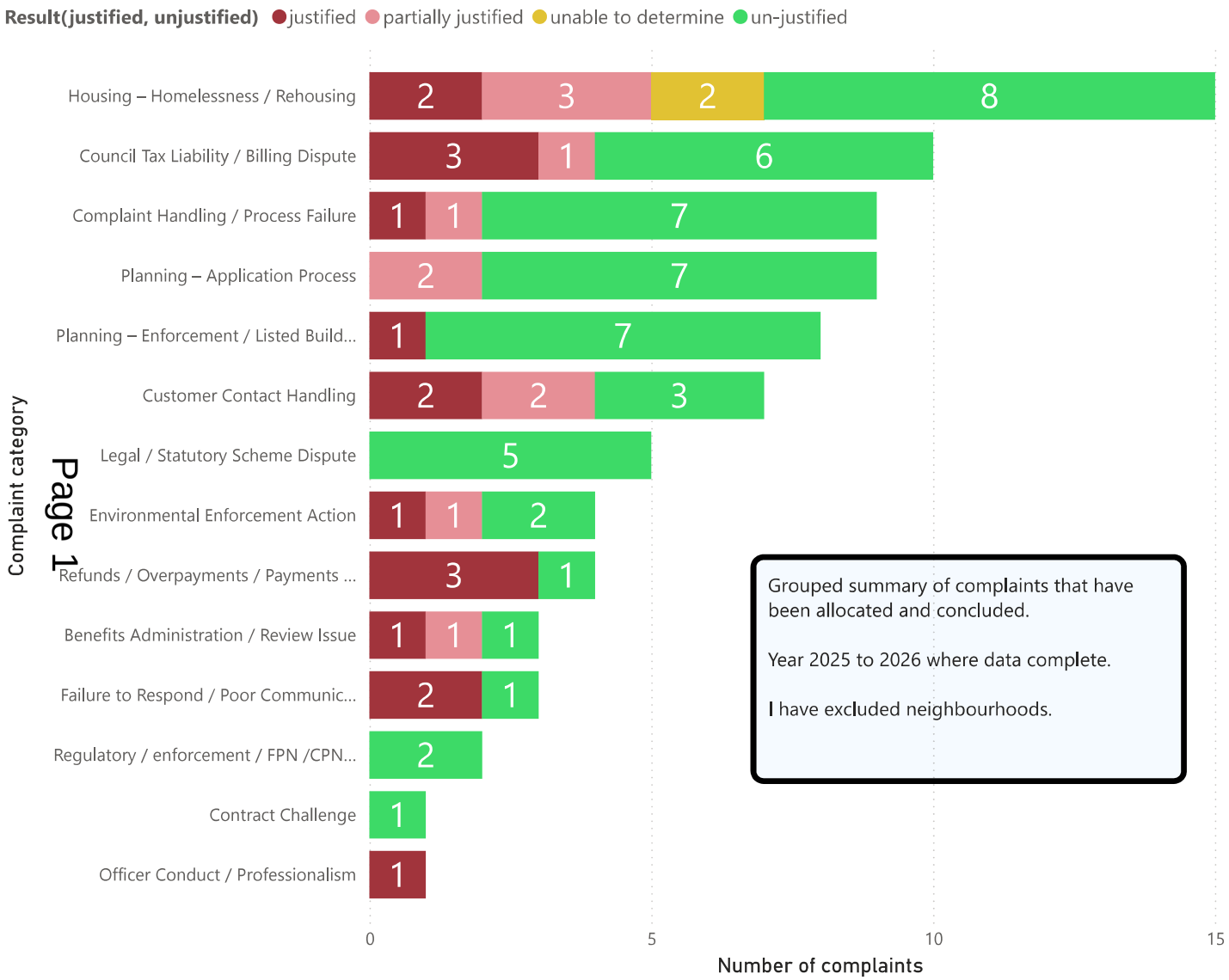
That the report be noted.

13 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 8.08 pm)

(End of minutes)



Grouped summary of complaints that have been allocated and concluded.

Year 2025 to 2026 where data complete.

I have excluded neighbourhoods.

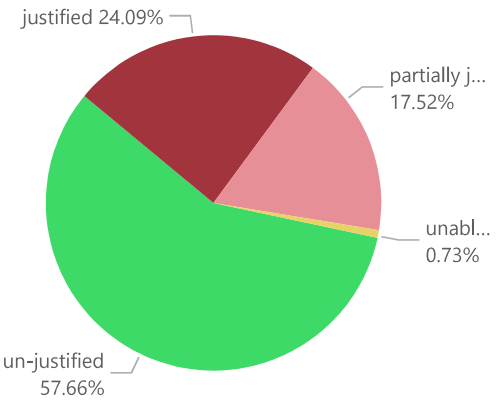
Request Type

other

Stage 1

Stage 2

UB Appeal



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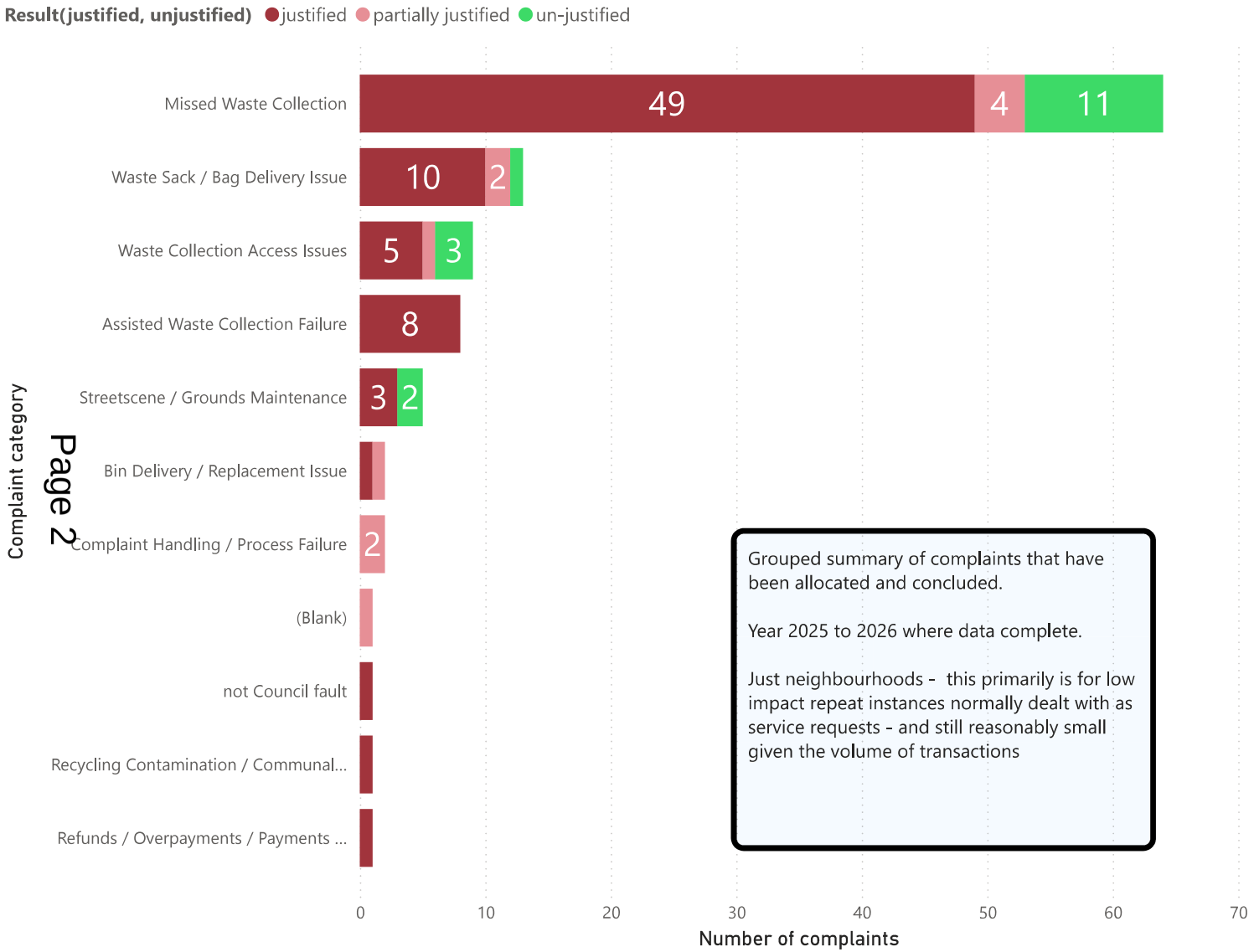
Minute Item 8



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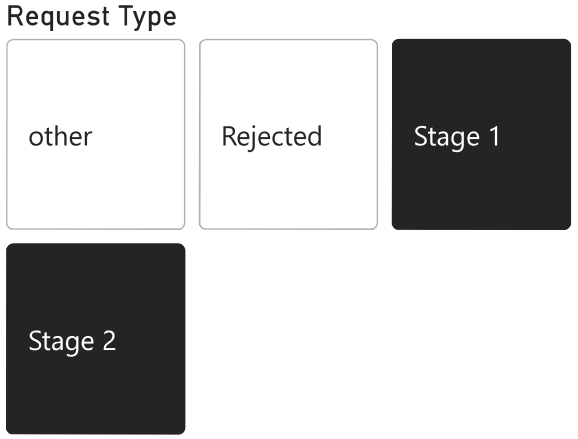
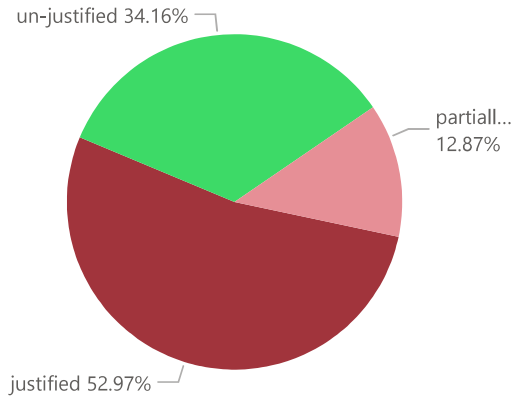
Grouped summary of complaints that have been allocated and concluded.

Year 2025 to 2026 where data complete.

Just neighbourhoods - this primarily is for low impact repeat instances normally dealt with as service requests - and still reasonably small given the volume of transactions