

Report to Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: 19 September 2023

ICT update

1. Introduction

This report provides the committee with a further update on the joint work of the Digital and ICT service and relevant teams within Children's Services to ensure that employees in Children's Directorate have the right ICT tools and skills to perform their roles well. It follows on from the updates provided in January and May 2023. It includes ICT service performance reporting specific to the Children's Directorate and feedback from the ICT user survey which took place earlier this year.

2. Update regarding the actions within the Children's Improvement Plan

The actions reported as complete at the last meeting have been removed. An update on other actions is provided below.

Key Actions, Owners, and Timescale			
Key Actions	Owners	Revised Dates (as at May meeting)	Update as of September 2023
<p>Deliver corporate ICT plan to increase ICT system stability and access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roll-out Microsoft office 365• Network improvement to GCC buildings (Shire Hall and locality office)• Move e-mails and calendar to cloud.• Mobile phones updated to new corporately managed solution.• New BT connection for Home Working	<p>Assistant Director of Digital & ICT</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<p>Satisfactory progress with acknowledged positive impact. Some projects slipped from the planned milestones, however for managed reasons.</p> <p>Since the last update, Exchange Online has been completed as has the work on the GCC network.</p> <p>All of Children's Social Care teams have been migrated to new mobile solution, providing access to emails, Teams, and files on up-to-date mobile phones. The oldest laptops are being replaced.</p> <p>Staff with any specific ICT issues are being actively targeted to ensure issues resolved in a timely manner.</p> <p>We are now moving on to the second phase of the network programme which includes an assessment of the Wi-Fi and network performance in Shire Hall and locality buildings to deliver any necessary remediation by March 2024.</p> <p>The one area of this work not yet complete is the new BT connection for Home Working planned for July 2023. The software required a further update, and it was a conscious decision not to prioritise this amongst the many other changes impacting users. The roll out has been replanned for Nov 2023.</p>

<p>Implement LL enhancements/ amendments programme</p>	<p>LL / GCC Project Manager</p>	<p>End July 2023</p>	<p>Improvements and upgrades to Liquidlogic for Children's, Adults, Early Help and ContrOCC (which is the finance module) are now managed in a single, joined programme of work. The programme includes officers from the social care teams as well as ICT and performance colleagues.</p> <p>The modules are now maintained on the latest versions. There is more detail below in section 4 regarding the roadmap of improvement.</p> <p>The migration of Liquidlogic and ContrOCC from our internal infrastructure to Liquidlogic's hosted service was due to be live by the end of July. Positive progress has been made; the technical set-up is in place and has been tested by social workers and ICT. However, we did agree a delayed migration with Liquidlogic. This was primarily due to concerns about transferring reporting data from the hosted environment to our reporting systems. These issues have now been resolved and we have agreed a new migration date of w/c 2 October.</p>
<p>Support completion of options appraisal for the software/hardware necessary to support agile, direct work with children and families – PDAs, portable printers electronic memory box etc.</p>	<p>Children's Business Manager/ Assistant Director of Digital & ICT</p>	<p>Now ongoing with hardware refresh and mobile conferencing pilot through 2023 and beyond.</p>	<p>To enable social workers to print pictures in family homes, portable printers have been ordered and delivered. The pilot roll-out commenced in June 23. This has coincided with the upgrading of mobile phones to ensure compatibility with the new printers. These are being used in teams with positive feedback and regular reporting on usage which is informing the expansion of the pilot as the modern technology embeds into team practice.</p> <p>ICT have commenced the laptop refresh programme with a total of 400 laptops replaced to date of which 50 were within children's services. This is 70% of the targeted group in Children's with the remaining due to complete by the end of September.</p> <p>Following completion of the mobile phone upgrade project, staff are now able to access their GCC email, files, and Teams on corporate mobile phones as well as personal phones via 'bring your own device'</p> <p>The kit piloted for mobile conferencing did not provide the desired experience and alternative equipment is under consideration.</p>
<p>Develop and deliver tailored ICT training programme for CS Practitioners.</p>	<p>Children's Business Manager/ Assistant Director of Digital & ICT</p>	<p>Dec 2023</p>	<p>Training around new M365 tool set and how to use to improve ways of working delivered. Digital Smarties programme in place and proactively continuing to support teams to maximise the use of the new applications.</p> <p>New starter digital skills & M365 induction commissioned and planned for roll out in January 2024.</p> <p>Training and support model for users of Liquidlogic. Approach agreed by Children's SLT in October and</p>

			being implemented with an initial focus on improving our support to users. Outreach from ICT systems staff is in place with good engagement. Planning has been completed to launch a refreshed champions network in autumn to support this and discussions under way to review our current training modules for gaining access to Liquidlogic.
Explore options to make best use of ContrOCC and Capita One	Assistant Director of Digital & ICT / Children's Business Manager	Dec 2023	<p>ContrOCC is now owned by Liquidlogic, and the future development of the modules has been integrated with our wider Liquidlogic programme.</p> <p>This includes the expansion of use of ContrOCC to manage external placements in Children's as well as Adults.</p> <p>High level approach for Capita One now agreed with a plan to complete the work to upgrade and migrate to a hosted solution by March 2024.</p>

3. ICT employee survey

3.1 User feedback

Our focus on communication with users and ability to take feedback continues to be a priority. We undertook a staff Q&A session on 16 May and then ran a user survey during May and June.

More than 100 staff joined the Q&A with positive conversation regarding recent improvements and future plans.

800 staff completed the survey, 200 of these work in Children's Services.

The purpose of the survey was to try and ascertain the real 'lived experience' of GCC personnel in their day-to-day use of digital services across the council. We asked a series of questions to baseline customer experience but, most importantly, gave users of our systems an opportunity to leave their comments so that we can identify any common themes, issues, or aspirations.

The ICT team are working jointly with colleagues in Children's Services to understand the feedback in detail to shape our roadmap and improve not only the technology, but digital literacy and confidence across the service.

Having analysed these free text comments, the themes are as follows:



In summary, there was little information in the survey that was a surprise, and the next phase of our ICT roadmap will significantly improve most issues. In October we will be starting a structured programme of communication regarding themes within the survey and how the roadmap will impact each issue. Feedback identified that communication and guidance can be too technical, and we are in the process of recruiting a dedicated communications officer to help improve the end user experience.

A summary of the final year of our current roadmap was shared with Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the July meeting.

Overview of ICT roadmap from COSC slides – priorities for 2023/24:

Year Three – 2023/24. Still to come...

Connect - final phases of network project: remove legacy, improve Wi-Fi	Communication – unified telephony: all via Microsoft Teams	Collaboration – join up with partners	Kit – laptop refresh programme, M365, prep for Windows 11
Customer – better experience, improved help desk, skills development	Cloud – core systems and data hosted;	Cyber – improved proactive monitoring, enhanced disaster recovery	Develop our Digital Strategy: beyond stabilisation and the tools to do the job

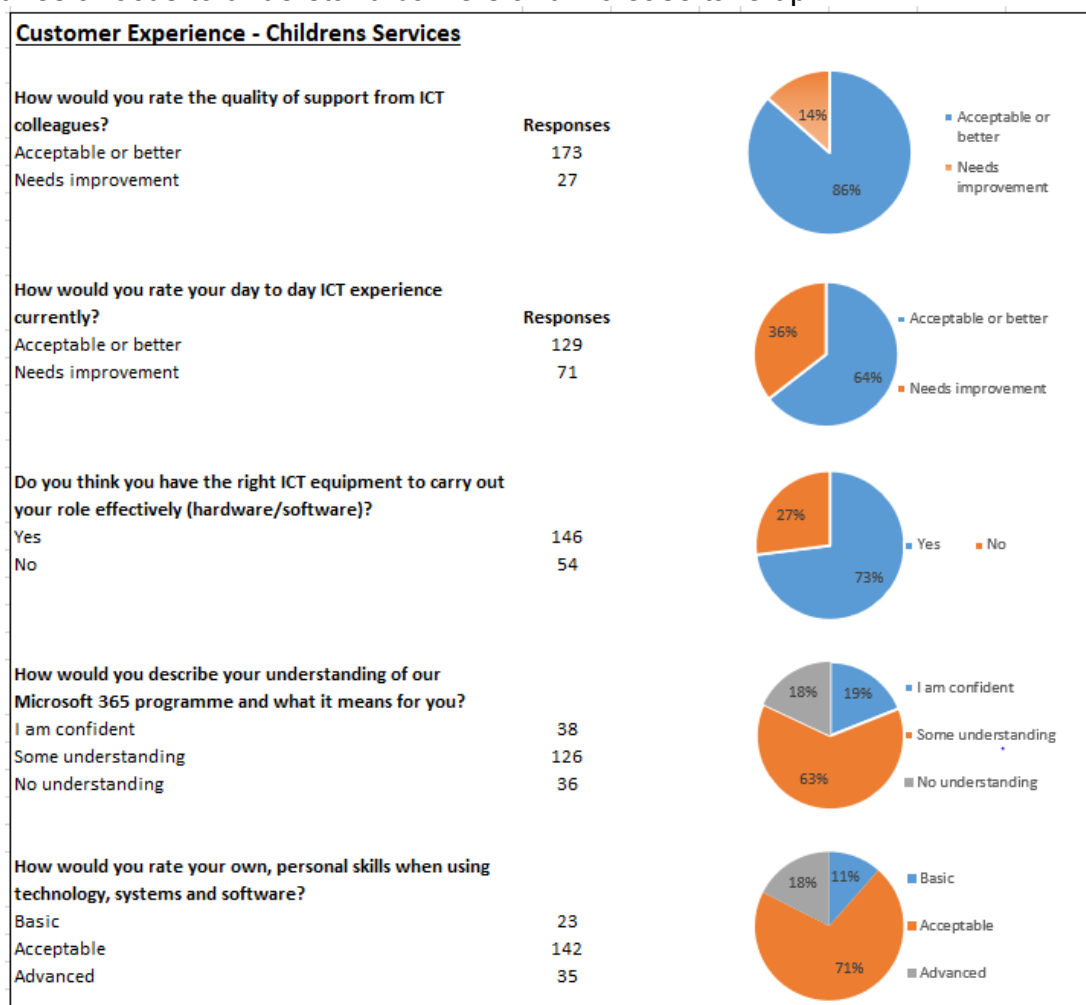
To be retired: Blue layer, Webex, out of date laptops and operating systems, blackberry, on-premise shared drives, majority of servers, desk phones and landlines

3.2 Summary of survey results: customer experience

The charts below provide a summary of the issues in reference to customer experience and to digital skills which are two key themes within the roadmap. Results show that on the positive side, 86% staff feel that they receive good support from ICT colleagues. However only 65% of staff from Children’s felt that route to access the service were acceptable or better and responsiveness and timeliness of the service is also a concern in the free text comments. We have a specific customer programme to respond to this with a focus on both process improvement and customer skills. We have also recently increased the size of the team on a temporary basis whilst we complete the final elements of the roadmap to stabilise user experience.

Staff views on the timeliness of new kit have improved, although we agree that there is still more to do on this with 20% of responses still saying it is not good enough. The laptop refresh programme is aimed at providing the right equipment and improving reliability with about 25% of staff who filled in the survey of the view that they do not have the right equipment.

Results show that more than 80% of staff rate their own digital skills at acceptable or better, however there is a significant theme around desire for training. More than 50% of staff said they had not undertaken any of the Microsoft 365 training, so this requires a focus to understand barriers and increase take up.



3.3 Summary of survey results: user experience

The second key area of the survey was asking for feedback regarding user experience of our technology and infrastructure. Many areas are much improved including access to files, drives and information, printing, room booking and equipment. However, there are three key areas which still require improvement. These areas were as expected and all three still have high priority programmes of work associated with them.

Teams: 72% of users say that they rarely have problems with teams, however 28% said they still have issues at least weekly. We have worked with Microsoft, and they have recognised a widespread problem with performance of Teams. They are releasing a rebuild of Teams in response. We will need to review the impact of this and our Unified Comms project to understand what issues remain after these improvements.

Network issues: Feedback on connectivity has improved, however there are still about 20% of users telling us that they still have issues with Wi-Fi and internet connections at least weekly. The Wi-Fi remediation project will test all our main buildings and user feedback tells us that the laptop refresh programme will also contribute to improve experience.

Outlook: This remains the biggest area of concern with 50% of survey responses from children's services telling us that users are having problems at least weekly. The Exchange online project was still ongoing during the survey which may have contributed to this and has since stabilised. However, we are going to target detailed follow up specifically in relation to Outlook to understand better the specific issues. This aims to understand how much has been resolved via Exchange Online and BYOD and ensure that our wider roadmap will tackle all remaining concerns.

We will continue to use the detailed comments and feedback to shape our plans and to improve our ongoing communication with all staff.

4. Liquidlogic roadmap

As reported at the May meeting, GCC has ambitious plans across Children's and Adult services which involve development of the core modules, greater use of customer portals, enhanced dashboard, and reporting as well as the use of e-brokerage, financial apps and ContrOCC to better manage external placements in both services. This has created challenges with prioritisation and achieving effective planning and co-ordination of critical resources across multiple suppliers.

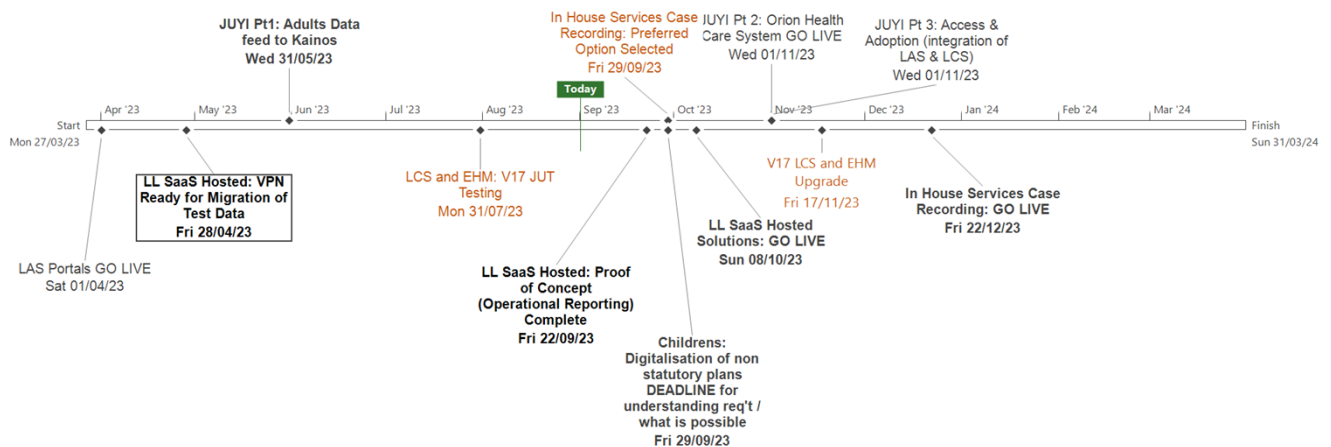
There is now an established programme of work which aims to:

- To provide greater visibility and cohesion of the portfolio of LL related projects that straddle Adults and Childrens services.
- Improved collaboration of all critical resources, establishing agreed timescales across all parties.
- To ensure more effective delivery of these critical projects.

There has been considerable progress with both Adults and Children’s Liquidlogic case management systems since the last meeting.

The focus has been on the project to move our case management systems from our own infrastructure to being hosted by Liquidlogic themselves. There has been some delay, however everything is now in place, fully tested and ready for go-live during w/c 2 October 2023. Two issues caused delay. Firstly, the length of time to migrate our historic records in Children’s given the age of our system and secondly ensuring that we had a reporting system that worked for Children’s social care.

The timeline below sets out the milestones for the rest of this financial year with a focus on Children’s services and wider projects with an impact on Children’s. This includes JUYI which stands for join up your information. This is a platform which combines health and social care information to provide a single view to professionals.



5. ICT performance information

As reported at the last meeting, our ability to report performance information specific to each service area is still being developed. The ability to undertake this in an automated way is linked to the One Programme which replaces our SAP system. This programme includes a link between the HR system and ICT’s active directory which will significantly improve the quality of our data and enable us to drill down into team information regarding incidents raised with ICT as well as user feedback.

Whilst we are still working on this, high level performance information with reference to Children’s Services is provided in 5.1 to 5.4 below.

Where numbers relate specifically to Children’s ICT users, then this includes all employees in the Children’s directorate but not agency or interim staff. As we continue to develop data and the performance information, agency staff will be included.

5.1 Numbers of Priority One incidents – whole council

Priority One (P1) incidents affect corporate wide systems and therefore can impact all users, for example if Outlook or Liquidlogic are not available at all. A Priority Two (P2) incident would be if for example, Liquidlogic was running slowly but still usable. Lower numbers of P1 incidents usually reflect a more stable infrastructure and therefore better user experience and GCC target no more than three each quarter.



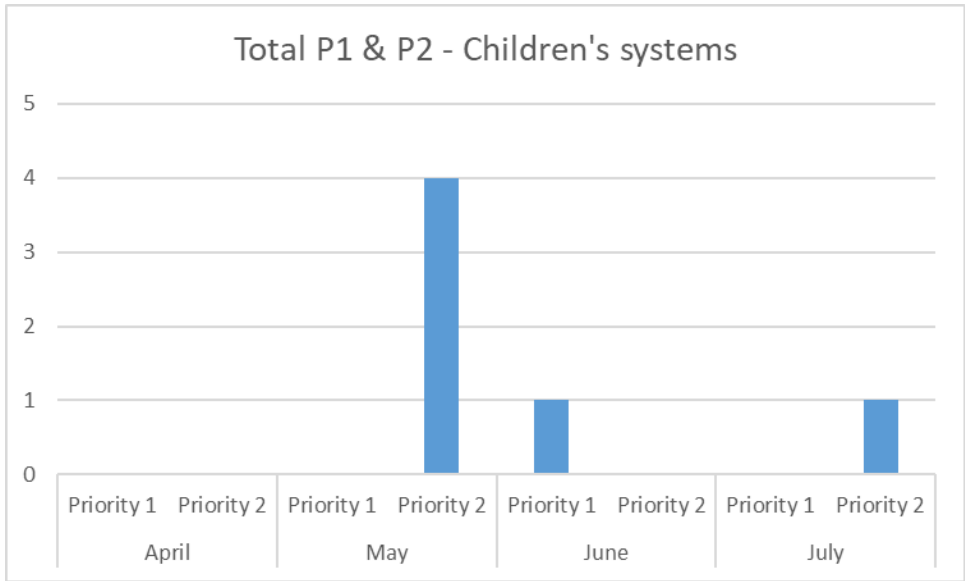
P1 incident volumes were running at our target level until March and April when we had a rise in volume to three each month. Volumes have since reduced but June and July remained above target performance. All P1s in the period were resolved within the four-hour target resolution time. The recent P1s were linked to provider systems which we are in progress of replacing with our modern technology.

5.2 Major Incidents which were reported against Children's systems

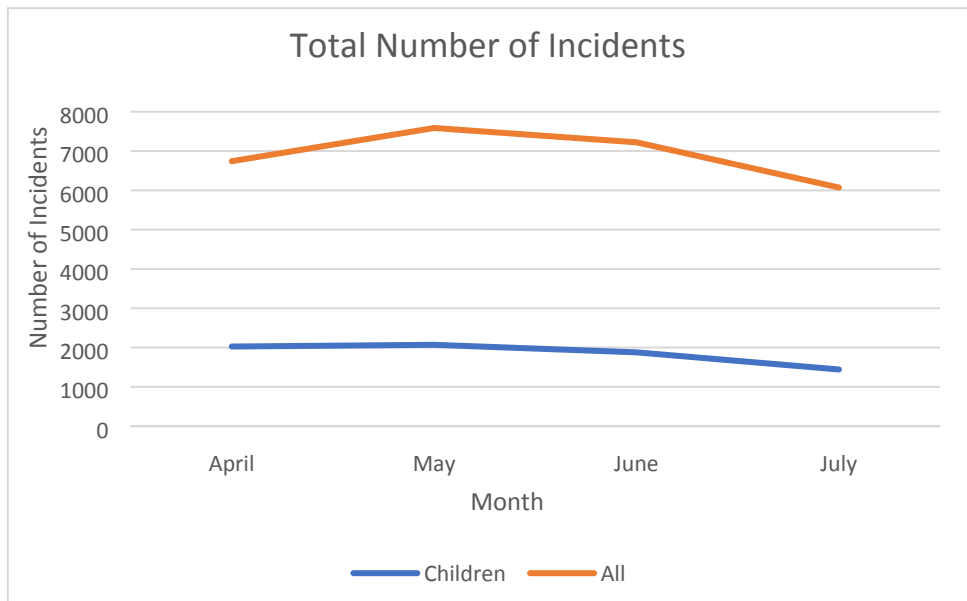
During Q1, one P1 incident and four P2 incidents impacted on the children's specific systems including Liquidlogic, Early Help (EHM), ContrOCC and Capita One. Three P2 incidents were linked to the same source within 24-hour period and resolved same day. All incidents were resolved within resolution time.

All five of these incidents related to Liquidlogic infrastructure and related services, which are being replaced as part of the forthcoming move to cloud hosting in the vendor's environment w/c 2 October 2023.

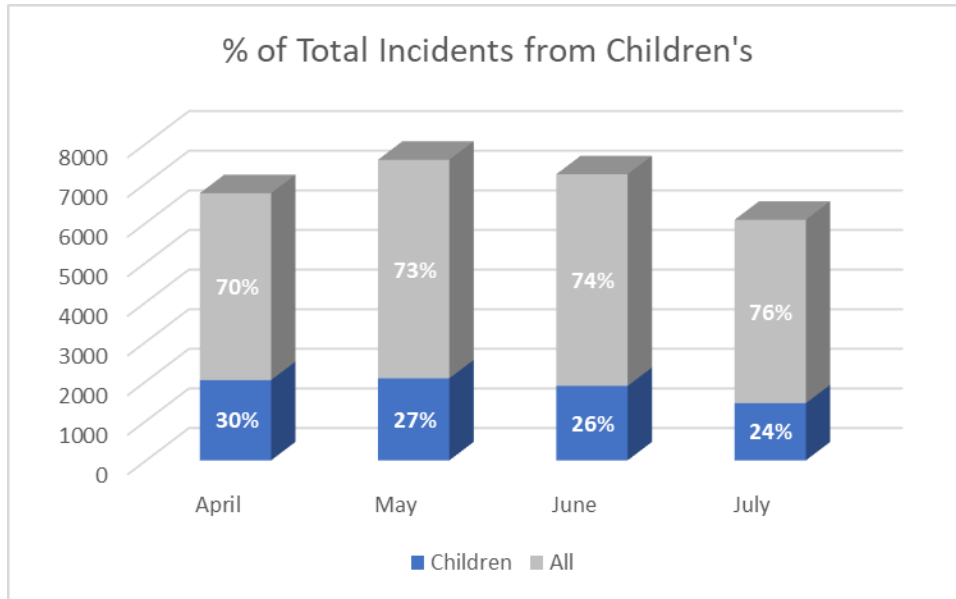
In Q2 to date (July only), there has been one P2 incident; this also related to Liquidlogic infrastructure which is being replaced as part of the move to cloud hosting.



5.3 Childrens incidents logged by individual users



Incident volumes rose significantly across the whole council in May, but this was not reflected in a higher impact on Children's, where volumes remained static from April May and then reduced into June. The number of contacts from Childrens is decreasing.



There are c.1250 employees in the Children’s Directorate which equates to 30% of the total council headcount of 4105. Therefore, contacts from Children’s have been proportionate throughout Q1.

Incident resolution time

Childrens Reporting - Average Incident resolution time - Apr - July 2023

14 Hours 50 Minutes

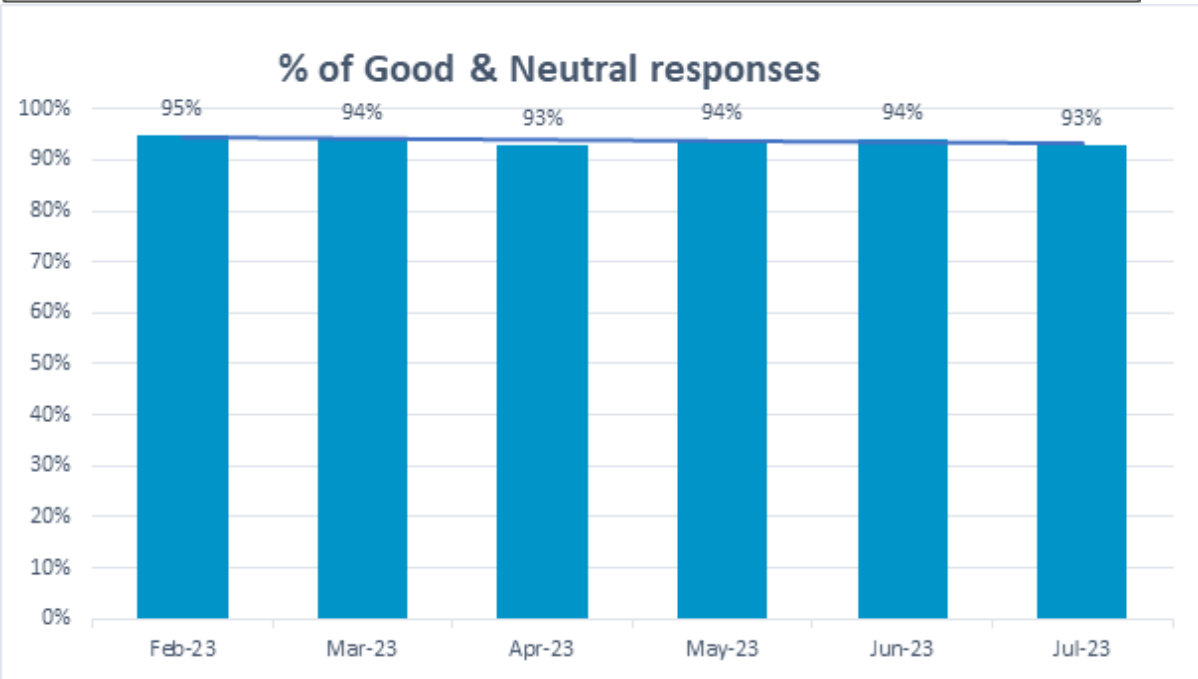
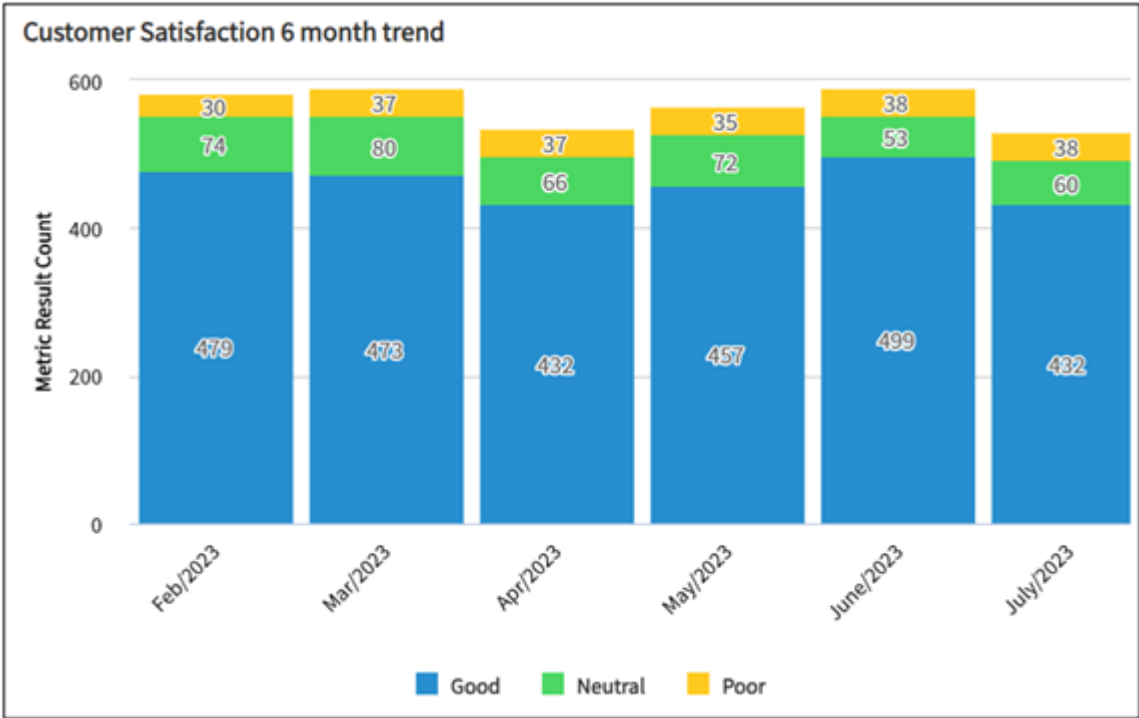
The figure above is looking at only time that ICT are working on the Incident, this does not include time where the service desk team are awaiting an update from the user. This is 90 minutes quicker than the last report in May. However, the overall resolution time is longer, up from 1 day, 21 hours. This is due to longer time for the user to come back to us.

Childrens Reporting - overall resolution time - Apr - July 2023

2 Days 13 Hours 33 Minutes

5.4 User feedback on the ICT Service Desk

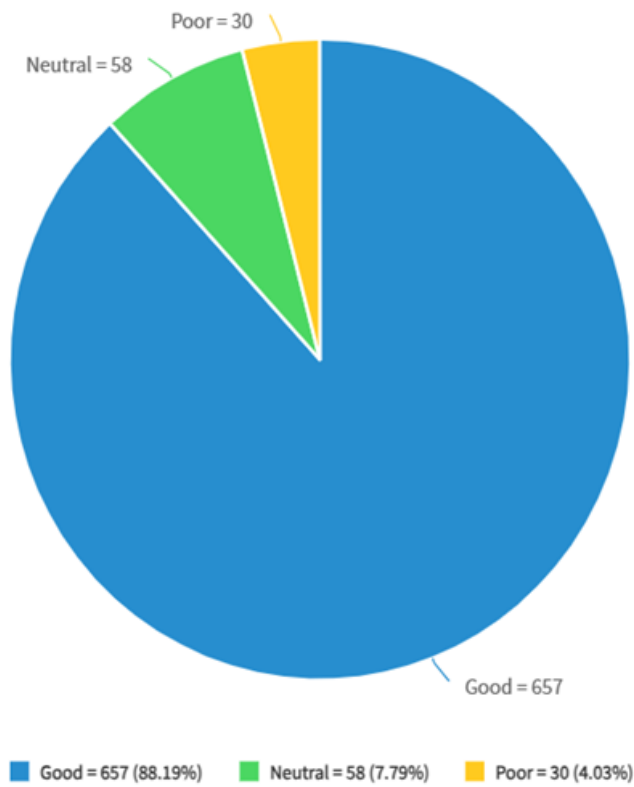
Users who contact the service desk are sent a feedback questionnaire by email and the two graphs below set out the feedback received from the whole council.



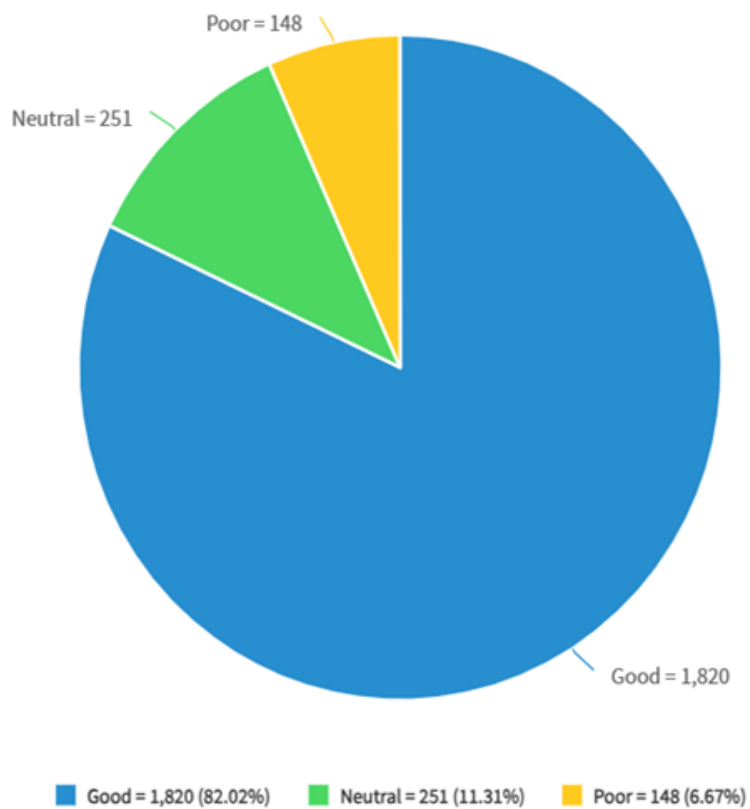
Childrens customer feedback vs overall trend

A higher proportion of children’s users rate the ICT service as Good, than in the wider council.

Childrens Reporting - Childrens Services Overall Feedback Figures - Apr - July 2023



Childrens Reporting - Entire Council Overall Feedback Figures - Apr - July 2023



6. Summary

As in the previous reports to this committee in January and May 2023, there is progress against a planned programme of work that is gradually stabilising our ICT and improving the experience for staff and members. There has been focus on the specific children's systems and joint working between children's services and ICT teams continues to be positive. However, there is still more to do as outlined in our roadmap.

Feedback from the staff survey has provided a benchmark for future comparison and is informing our ongoing roadmap. We will repeat the survey during 2024 and aim to see a better position.

Mandy Quayle, Director People and Digital Services