

# DYNAMIC SMART CITY

A lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all – more and better jobs – more local people with better qualifications and skills – a stronger city centre with more businesses, housing, and cultural opportunities – more and better housing.

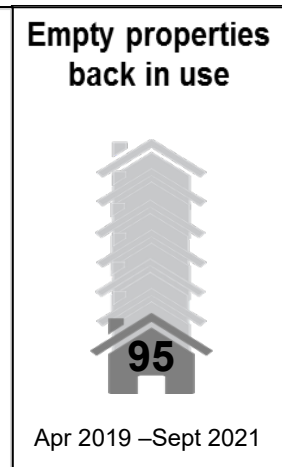
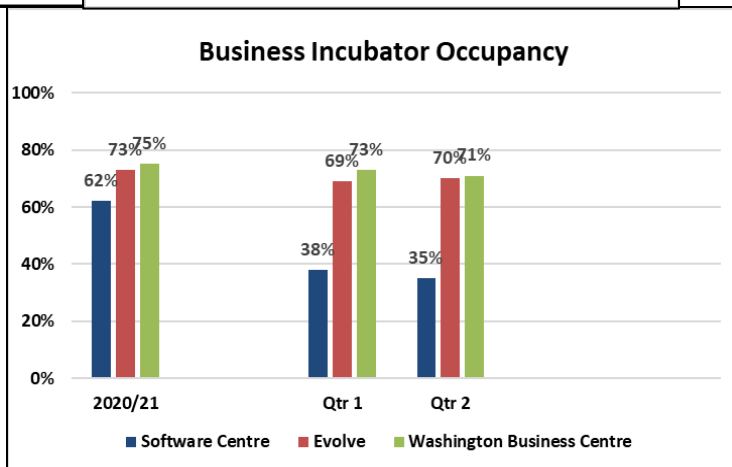
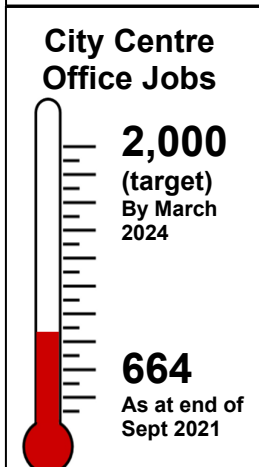
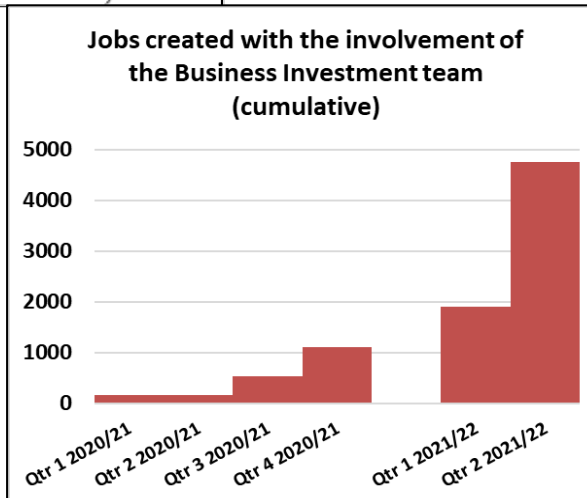
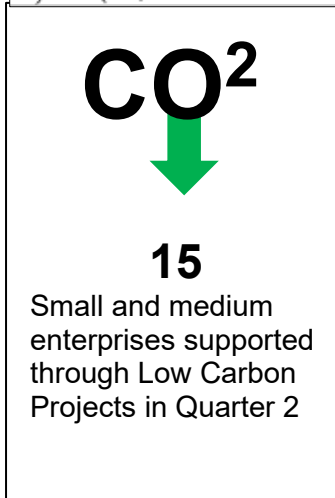
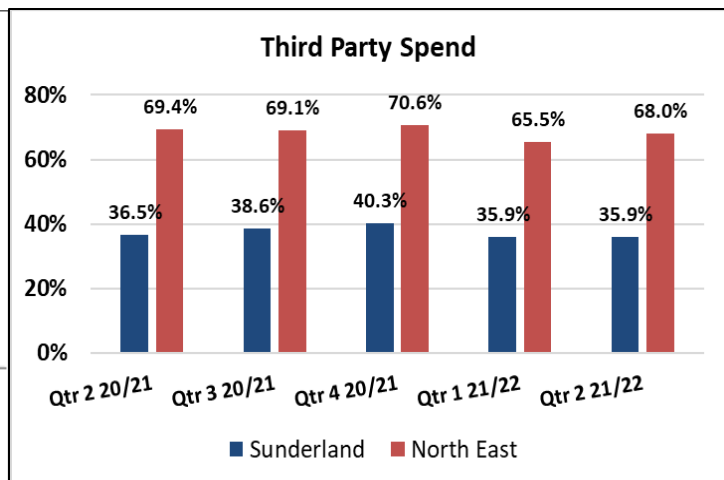
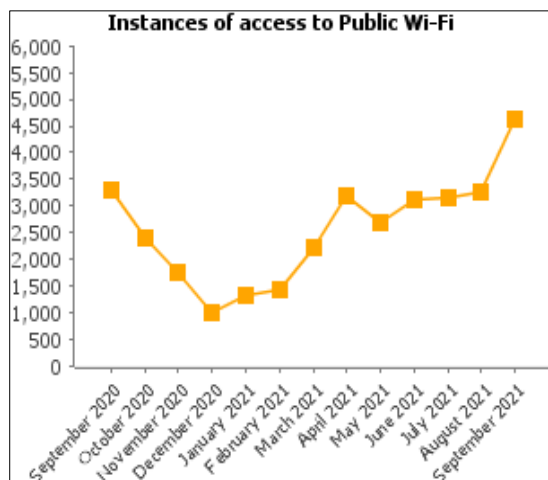


## CITY CONTEXT

	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
% of properties with ultrafast broadband September 2021: 64.5%	UK 68.1%	Improving (September 2020: 63.3%)
CO2 emissions estimates for Sunderland (per capita) 2019/20: 4.2 tonnes	NE 5.5, England 4.9	Improving (2015/16: 4.8 tonnes)
Employment rate Jul 2020 – Jun 2021: 66.1%	NE 70.5%, GB 74.4%	Declining (Jul 2019- Jun 2020: 71.8%)
Proportion of workers earning below Living Wage Foundation rates 2020: 16.1%	NE 22.5%, GB 20.1%	Improving (2016: 26.4%)
Median wage workers 2020: £525.20	NE £521 GB £586	Improving (2016: £480)
% Population NVQ Level 4 qualification 2020: 29%	NE 34.5% GB 43.1%	Improving (2016: 25.9%)
GCSE - % achieving a grade 4-9 in Maths & English 2018/19 (Exams): 58.6% 2019/20 (Teacher Assessed): 64.2% (Exams & Teacher Assessed not comparable)	NE 61.6% England 64.9% NE 68.6%, England 65.9%	Improving (2017/18 57.3%) N/A
Level 3 (A level & equivalent) attainment by age of 19 in 2019/20: 48.5%	NE 50.9% England 57.4%	Declining (2015/16: 52%)
City Centre new homes Qtr. 2 2021/22: 0	N/A	No change (Qtr. 2 2020/21: 0)
People employed in the City Centre 2020: 13,348	N/A	Increasing (2016: 11,882)
Population of the City 2020: 277,846	N/A	Increasing (2016: 277,307)
Net Internal Migration 2020: -403	N/A	Declining (2016: -381)
New homes-built Qtr.2 2021/22: 226	N/A	Improving (Qtr.2 2020/21: 110)
Completed affordable homes Qtr.2 2021/22: 11	N/A	Improving (Qtr.2 2020/21: 6)

# COUNCIL LED ACTION & PROGRESS

2021/22 Timeline	Status
Increase in economic activity at the Port	Completed
Onsite development of Sunderland Station	On Track
New City Hall opens on Riverside Sunderland	On Track
Roll out of 5G city-wide (partnership secured)	Completed
Increased business take-up of low carbon initiatives	On Track
Deliver connected, automated logistics project	On Track



**A lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all** - Our ambition is to lead the way on digital transformation to make Sunderland a Smart City, and through our Smart Cities Strategy we will deliver a range of use cases for smart working and living - with high speed and resilient digital connectivity central to our plans. We have now secured the partnership required for the roll out of 5G, and work has commenced on the delivery of the citywide network including free ultrafast wi-fi and 5G, expected to be live by June 2022. The proportion of Sunderland properties with ultrafast broadband had been on a continuous upward trend to the end of Quarter 1, reaching 65.1%. In August 2021, quality checks were undertaken resulting in the figure being reset to 64.1%. The figure has subsequently risen at the end of September to 64.5%. In 2020/21 instances of access to public Wi-Fi in the City Centre showed a variable trend - broadly following the severity of COVID restrictions in place at the time. Since March 2021, figures have been rising and in September 2021 there were 4,642 instances – more than double the March 2021 position of 2,223 instances. With greater digital connectivity there also comes the opportunity to transform our travel patterns, thereby reducing overall emissions. Through our rapid charging station, we continue to support the use of electric vehicles in the city. Transactions were up from 877 in Quarter 1 (and from 280 in Quarter 2 of 2019/2020) to 1,094 transactions in Quarter 2. We are actively working to become Carbon Neutral as a city by reducing our carbon emissions. Previously published latest data (at 4.2 for the year 2019), shows the CO2 emissions estimate for Sunderland per capita (tonnes per resident) has reduced compared to the previous year (at 4.5) and is lower than both the North East and England. Latest figures for CO2 emissions from local authority operations show a further reduction of 2,872 tonnes to 7,094 tonnes, following on from the reduction of 4,484 tonnes in the previous year. The Citywide Low Carbon Framework and Council Action Plan were adopted at the end of 2020/21 and is now operational. The Sunderland element of the North East Low Carbon Support Programme for small and medium-term enterprises (SME's) is in place and 15 SME's have been supported in Quarter 2.

**More and better jobs** – Our focus in our City Plan was on increasing the number of well-paid jobs in the city by promoting growth in key sectors including automotive and advanced manufacturing, financial and customer services, digital and software, as well as increasing professional services in the city centre, and port related activity. As the Coronavirus pandemic hit in 2020, and persisted into 2021, businesses and employment were impacted. Latest figures on employment show that the employment rate for Sunderland has fallen to 66.1% for July 2020 to June 2021, from 71.8% for July 2019 to June 2020. Our aim now is to ensure that the city and its residents emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic in a strong and competitive position. Building upon the various business grant support schemes delivered during 2020/21 which saw £73.5m paid to the City's businesses and £42m of additional business rates reliefs awarded, further support to business has continued in 2021/22. To the end of Q2 2021/22, £17.6m has been paid in grants to businesses that have continued to be impacted by the pandemic whilst £18.3m has been awarded in additional business rates reliefs in line with the Government's criteria. The business grants schemes are now closed. Through these challenging times for business, we've continued to ensure that our Council activity supports the local economy where possible. 68% of all Council third party spend was within the regional economy, and £7,650,589 of social value was secured through our procurement projects in Quarter 2. We are making progress towards our aim to increase economic activity at the Port but increasing the number of tenants at the port has been impacted by circumstances arising from Covid and Brexit. The Port continues to pursue positive commercial opportunities and there is confidence that some of these will come to fruition by March 2022.

**More local people with better qualifications and skills** – Through the City Plan, the aim is to ensure that residents' skills and qualifications enable them to secure good jobs that match the needs of employers in key sectors - thus reducing the gap in the median wage between Sunderland residents and Sunderland workers (with the weekly median wage for Sunderland residents being £29.30 lower than that for workers as at April 2021). In Quarter 2 a digital skills exercise has been commissioned for skills to support our wider digital ambitions for the city. With more well-paid jobs, and more local people with better qualifications and skills, our long-term aspiration is that Sunderland will be a Real Living Wage City by 2030. Previously published

data shows progress has been made on being a real living wage City. The percentage of workers living below the living wage foundation rate reduced from 26.4% in 2016 to 16.1% in 2020, better than the North East (22.5%) and England (20.4%). New local data shows there are 56 accredited real Living Wage employers in the city and 6,181 workers employed by them. As the city and its residents emerge from the pandemic, we will seek to ensure residents have the skills to be in a strong and competitive position to access employment. We will continue to focus on tackling the barriers for those least able to access employment through initiatives such as Community Local Led Development. So far 1,080 individuals have benefitted from the initiative. The VCS Alliance has also secured Community Renewal Funding (£204k), to support the VCS across Sunderland to create training and work placements for residents, supporting residents to consider the third sector as career of choice, growing capacity for the sector in the future.

**A stronger city centre with more business, housing, and cultural opportunities** – As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic our aspiration is that Sunderland city centre will drive transformational economic growth with Riverside Sunderland clearly demonstrating our investment ambition. In the long term there will be more people living and working in the City Centre. Through Riverside Sunderland we aim to create a vibrant new city centre residential community of 1,000 sustainable new homes, promoting more city centre living. Latest figures published in September 2021 show the City Centre residential population to be 3,089, an increase of 189 people on the previous year. Riverside Sunderland will also comprise of 1 million square feet of modern offices, commercial premises, and other employment space, creating new sites for businesses to grow. Latest published figures show there were 13,348 people employed in the City Centre, an increase on the figure for the previous year of 11,911. At the end of Quarter 2, 664 new city centre office jobs have been created since April 2019. Riverside Sunderland, along with the wider City Centre will benefit from a new heat and power network in the city centre, with a funding application submitted in Quarter 2. We continue to progress our plans for a range of physical developments in the city such as the onsite development of Sunderland station and new station hotel. In Quarter 2, the Central Station principal contractor was awarded through procurement.

**More and better housing** – Through our City Plan we seek to ensure that Sunderland offers the opportunities that families and individuals need to achieve their ambitions – with a housing offer that reflects the homes that people aspire to live in. This includes larger family and high-status homes as well as more affordable homes. This will be achieved through the delivery of key housing sites. Figures previously published for out migration show a slowing from a net of -722 in 2018 to -403 in 2020. Whilst the latest figure is higher than the five-year long-term trend figure of -381 for 2016, the 2016 figure was the lowest figure reached before figures declined substantially in 2017 (to -748) and then began reducing year on year. In Quarter 2, there were 334 additional homes in the city (including new and conversions) - of which 191 are in council tax bands C-G. There have been 11 completed affordable homes in Quarter 2. Alongside this, we are committed to ensuring that the housing we have is of quality - with 5 empty properties brought back into use in Quarter 2 (taking the total since April 2019 to 95), and 114 privately rented properties inspected for hazards. 15 properties were identified to have Category 1 hazards. Action has been taken by officers to work with property owners which has seen 8 Category 1 hazards resolved in the period.

# HEALTHY SMART CITY

Reduce health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives – access to equitable opportunities and life chances – people enjoying independent lives – a city with great transport links – cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhoods.

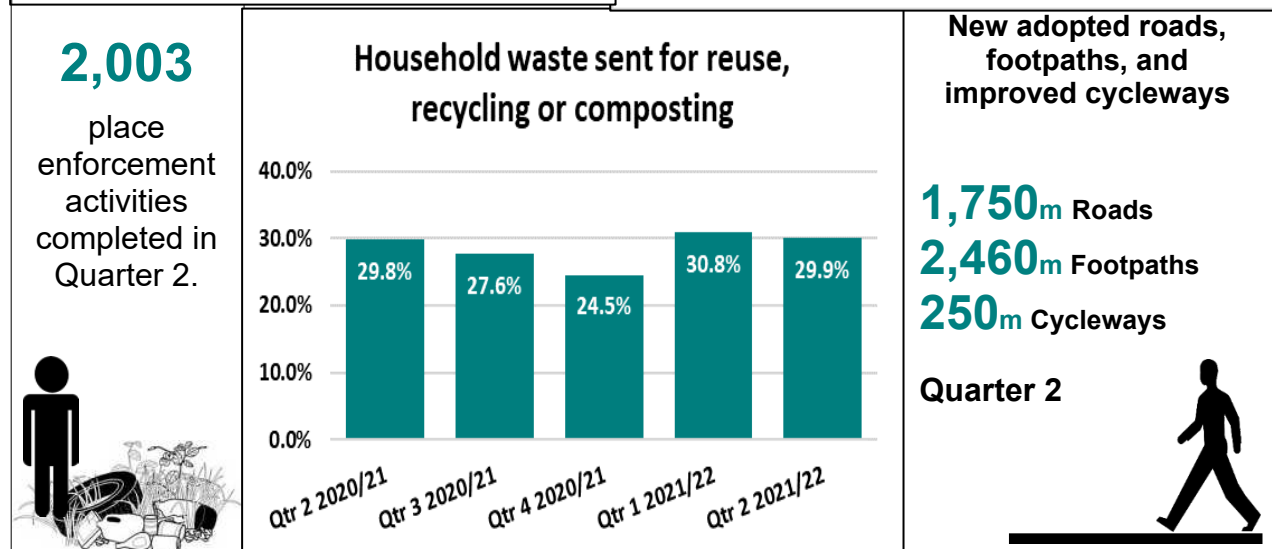
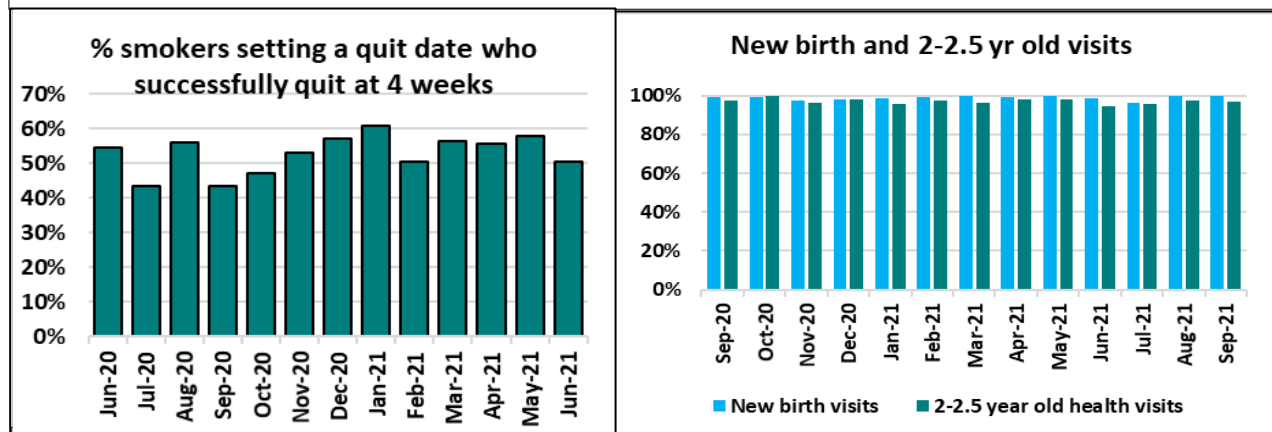
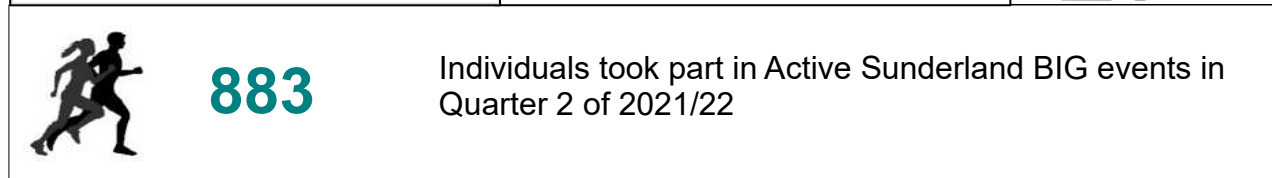
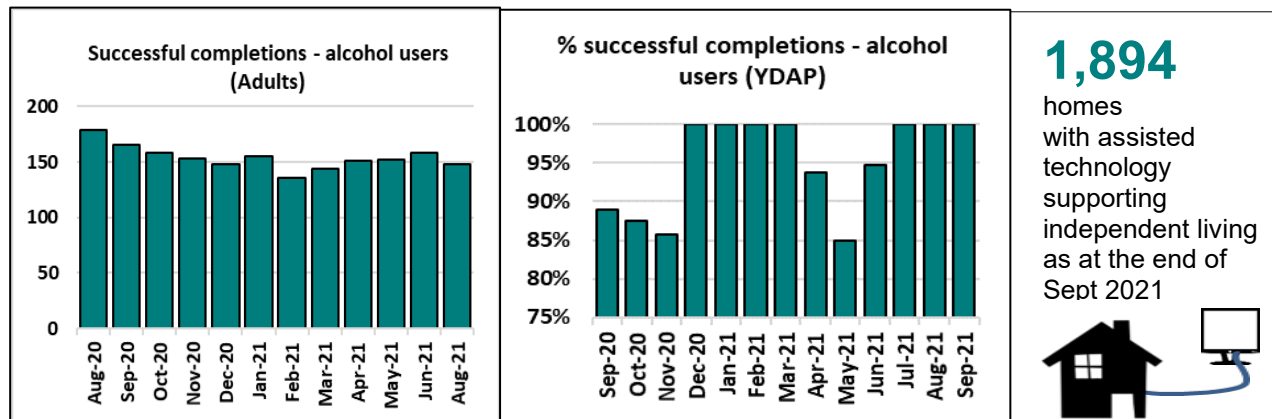


## CITY CONTEXT

	COMPARATIVE DATA	SUNDERLAND TREND
<b>Healthy Life Expectancy at birth 2017-2019 as at 2020/21:</b> <b>Female: 57.3 yrs.</b> <b>Male: 57.5 yrs.</b>	England 63.5 yrs. NE 59 yrs. England 63.2 yrs. NE 59.7 yrs.	Declining (2014-2016: 59.3 yrs.) Declining (2014-2016: 58.8 yrs.)
<b>Admission episodes alcohol-related 2019/20: 2,602</b> (Broad, Persons, per 100,000 pop)	N/A	N/A
<b>Smoking prevalence: 2018/19: 16%</b> 2019/20 release cancelled	England 13.9%, NE 15.3%	Improving (2014/15: 21.5%)
<b>The proportion of adults who are overweight or obese 2019/20: 73.5%</b>	England 62.8%, NE 67.6%	Declining (2015/16: 70.1%)
<b>Prevalence of overweight (incl. obese) among children in Year 6 2019/20: 36.7%</b>	England 35.1%. NE 37.5%	Improving (2015/16: 39.8%)
<b>% of people that are fairly active / active (Active Lives – Public Health) 2019/20: 74.4%</b>	England 77.1%, NE 75.4%	Improving (2015/16: 73.3%)
<b>Women who smoke at time of delivery Qtr. 4 2020/21: 13.7%</b>	England 8.9% NE 12.7%	Improving (Qtr. 4 2019/20: 21.7%)
<b>EYFSP Good level of development 2018/19: 72.6% (2020/21 data release cancelled)</b>	19.4	Improving (2014/15: 66%)
<b>Teenage pregnancy (under 18 conception rate) rolling year: Qtr. 1 2020/21: 18.2</b>	England 14, NE 20.7	Improving (Qtr. 1 2019/20: 29.9)
<b>Proportion of people (18+) living independently (without social care services) Qtr. 2 2021/22: 98.2%</b>	N/A	Improving (Qtr.2 2020/21 98.2%)
<b>Litter - % of relevant land &amp; highways with deposits that fall below an acceptable level Qtr. 2 2021/22: 10.1%</b>	N/A	Declining (Qtr.2 2020/21: 0.99%)

# COUNCIL LED ACTION & PROGRESS

2021/22 Timeline	Status
Deliver Sunderland Covid-19 Health Inequalities Strategy Action Plan	On Track
New Primary School opens	Completed
SSTC3 (Northern Spire to City Centre) opens	Completed





**Reduce health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives** – Our City Plan recognises the need to ensure that health and wellbeing outcomes are significantly improved, with healthy life expectancy at birth in Sunderland (at 57.5 years for males and 57.3 for females for the pooled period of 2017-2019), lower than the North East and England and declining. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, brought a new health challenge to the city. In response, our Public Health team led on managing outbreaks in line with the COVID-19 control plan and worked with environmental health and trading standards to provide advice and guidance on compliance with restrictions. The council continues to provide local trace arrangements for positive COVID cases and has been tasked with contact tracing 7,276 cases (with a 79% success rate) since the commencement of the local scheme (Local 0) on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 to the end of September 2021. Staffing capacity remains at an increased level as high numbers of cases continue to be detected each day, following the commencement of the Autumn/Winter school term. The service continues to operate a hybrid model (currently the council receives positive cases that the national team have been unable to contact after 4 hours).

In addition to the impacts of infection, we know that the pandemic will have had wider health implications in relation to behaviours that can cause harms to health such as smoking, alcohol consumption, inactivity, and poor diet (leading to obesity). We will continue to work, with our partners, on areas where we can support people to make healthy choices. An updated figure has been published for hospital admissions due to alcohol (adults), however, due to changes in how the statistics have been compiled figures are not comparable with previous data or comparator figures. The new Adult Substance Misuse Service has been launched to be responsive to local need and the Alcohol Action Plan is now being implemented across the 8 strands of the plan. The expected update on smoking prevalence has been cancelled. Our Step-up Sunderland App aims to encourage residents to stay active and in Quarter 2 there were 102 new sign ups and 243 million steps counted. In Quarter 2 the BIG Walk, Cycle and Run events were delivered enabling more people to be physically active. The Active Sunderland Wellness Walking programme was re-established with new training for walk leaders, and 464 attendances on led walks. Local research has been completed to understand better levels of resident activity to enable the development of an in-activity plan. Over the summer period a holiday and food programme were delivered, along with additional supporting activities. Sunderland Weight Management programme commenced with August with a target of supporting 1,500 residents. Change 4 Life Team recommenced full time school and family sessions in September, including the introduction of a new school weigh and measure programme. 83 schools achieved Gold, Silver and Bronze award for the Great Active Sunderland School Charter with 30,266 school pupils benefitting from the programme. In Quarter 2 there were 422,187 Leisure Centre attendances and 102,583 visitors through the turnstiles of Football Hubs with 6,990 participants playing football on grass pitches. Work has been undertaken to strengthen the offer within the Healthy Settings Programme and related prevention offer and work completed in relation to the identification of the five Healthy Weight Declaration commitments for 2021/22. We continue to promote healthy choices by our own people through the Employee Wellness programme with external businesses providing advice and guidance.

Latest data published in September 2021, for the three-year period of 2018-2020, shows the suicide rate for Sunderland has increased (in line with the national trend) to 14.4 per 100,000 (age 10+) from 12.4 (for 2017-2019), and is above the England rate of 10.4 and North East rate of 12.4. We will continue to work with our partners to support and enable residents to access mental health services where needed. As a Council we are progressing work towards signing up to the Mental Health Concordat (that will include an action plan with key deliverables).

**Access to equitable opportunities and life chances** – We will take a life course approach to health and wellbeing starting with the early life stages of preconception to early years and adolescence under this commitment. Latest data on women who smoke at time of delivery (for Quarter 4 of 2020/21) shows an improvement to 14.7% from 15.2% in the previous quarter. In Quarter 2, 99.6% of new birth visits and 97.5% of 2.5-year-old checks have been carried out in timescale (within the target of 95%) based on a mixed model of prioritised face to face visits and virtual contacts. In education, following on from the completion of a new primary school building

(Willow Fields Primary School), the building has now been handed over. There was no update on EYFSP Good Level of Development as the 2020/21 data release was cancelled. The rate of under 18 conceptions (teenage pregnancy) has been continuously improving over the year to end of June 2021 (latest data), reducing to 18.2 per 1,000 (from 29.9 for the same period in the previous year) and now under the North East rate of 19.4. Work recently undertaken in support of this agenda includes enhanced C-Card (contraceptive service) in pharmacies, support to schools around a co-ordinated approach to relationships and sex education and implementation in the prevention offer in relation to both targeted and universal services. Work is underway to update the Sunderland Child Health Profiles both at locality and Ward levels, including teenage conceptions and C Card data, that will enable us to understand and act on inequalities in teenage conception rates. Under this commitment we seek to address inequalities in opportunities and life chances that exist across geographical areas through a community asset-based approach, as set out in our Neighbourhood Plans.

**People enjoying independent lives** – Although 98% of people 18+ in the city live independently (without social care services) based on mid-year population estimates, we remain committed to ensuring people in the city can enjoy independent lives. Work has commenced to develop a plan for an integrated health and social care team in support of a city Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy. With the roll out of the assistive technology in the home offer, 1,894 homes had the technology by the end of June 2021. 83% of people who use services have control over their daily lives based on latest figures for 2019/20 (there is no update expected for 2020/21 as the survey was cancelled due to Covid-19). Working with our partners we aspire to reduce the number of emergency hospital admissions due to falls (in people aged 65+), with latest figures (for 2019/20) at 2,628 per 100,000 (compared with 2,412 for the North East and 2,222 for England). We have commenced work with our partners, through the Aging Well Delivery Board. Using local intelligence, we have identified key areas of targeted work that will contribute to the achievement of outcomes identified within the City Plan to reduce falls, and the impact of falls, on our residents. This includes the recruitment of a Falls Coordinator and a targeted Care Home Team. The Board has used data to identify cohorts of residents who have frailty indicators, and this information is being used to target engagement, prevention and early intervention support to our communities at a ward and locality level.

**A City with great transport and travel links** – Our emphasis within this City Plan commitment is about ensuring that people can move around the city with ease through improved transport routes - enabling access to key employment sites. Alongside vehicle transport routes, great travel links is also about having the necessary infrastructure to enable active travel. Progress continues to be made on the new pedestrian access across the Wear river, with the completion of the detailed design. In Quarter 2 there were 1,750m of adopted roads, 2,460m of adopted footpaths and 250m of new or improved cycleways. 1,896 school children have taken part in pedestrian training in 2021/22, and although cycle training has been impacted by COVID, 1,017 children have taken part in cycle training in the same period.

**Cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhoods** – Our focus here is on promoting environmental responsibility amongst residents to achieve a cleaner and more attractive city. The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting at 29.9% in Quarter 2, is consistent with performance in the same period in the previous year. Work continues to drive improvements to the rate of recycling across the city and a revised communications plan is being developed covering Local Services and Refuse to further support this aim. We are developing a 'state of the art' HWRC that will address all recycling streams and provide a facility for all recycling needs. This is progressing well but has been delayed slightly due to issues with Wayleave Agreements. The scheme is now scheduled for completion in January 2022. At the end of Quarter 2, the percentage of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level (at 10.1%) was within target. To encourage communities to take greater responsibility for their environment, we are issuing sanctions where appropriate following enforcement investigations. As at the end of Quarter 2, 2,003 enforcement activities had been carried out. The Quarter 2 enforcement activities included 346 investigations, 1,170 warning letters, 18 Section 47 notices (businesses) and 178 Section 46 notices (residents). Both section 46 and 47 notices relate to the storage, disposal and presentation of waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Spring Clean 2021 event was delayed due to COVID



but has now been delivered and evaluated – with clean-ups facilitated in each area. Further clean ups and activities continue and are planned to build upon the success.

# VIBRANT SMART CITY

More resilient people – more people feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods – more residents participating in their communities – more people visiting Sunderland and more residents informing participating in cultural events, programmes, and activities.



## CITY CONTEXT

### COMPARATIVE DATA

### SUNDERLAND TREND

**Rate of cared for children (per 10k)  
Sept 2021: 104.4**

England 67  
NE 108  
SN 108.7

Improving  
(Sept 2020: 113.6)

**Rate of CYP subject to a child  
protection plan (per 10k) Sept 2021:  
63.5**

England 41.4  
NE 67.2  
SN 56.1

Improving  
(Sept 2020: 73.3)

**Rate of Children in Need (per 10k)  
Sept 2021: 378.4**

England 321.2  
NE 461.2  
SN 415.3

Improving  
(Sept 2020: 379.8)

**Residents supported by food banks  
Qtr.2 2021: 3,919**

N/A

Improving  
(Qtr. 2 2020: 4,101)

**Crime (recorded incidents): (April –  
September 2021): 13,806**

N/A

Improving  
(April – Sept 2020: 14,480)

**Residents' feelings of safety (local)  
Qtr. 1 2021/22: 95%**

N/A

No data for Qtr.1 2020/21  
Survey was suspended

**The proportion of people who use  
services who feel safe 2019/20:  
79.7% (no survey undertaken in 2020)**

England 70.2%  
NE 74.7%  
SN 72.8%

Improving  
(2015/16: 71.5%)

**Number of visitors to the City 2020:  
4,377,000**

N/A

Declining  
(2016: 8,240,000)

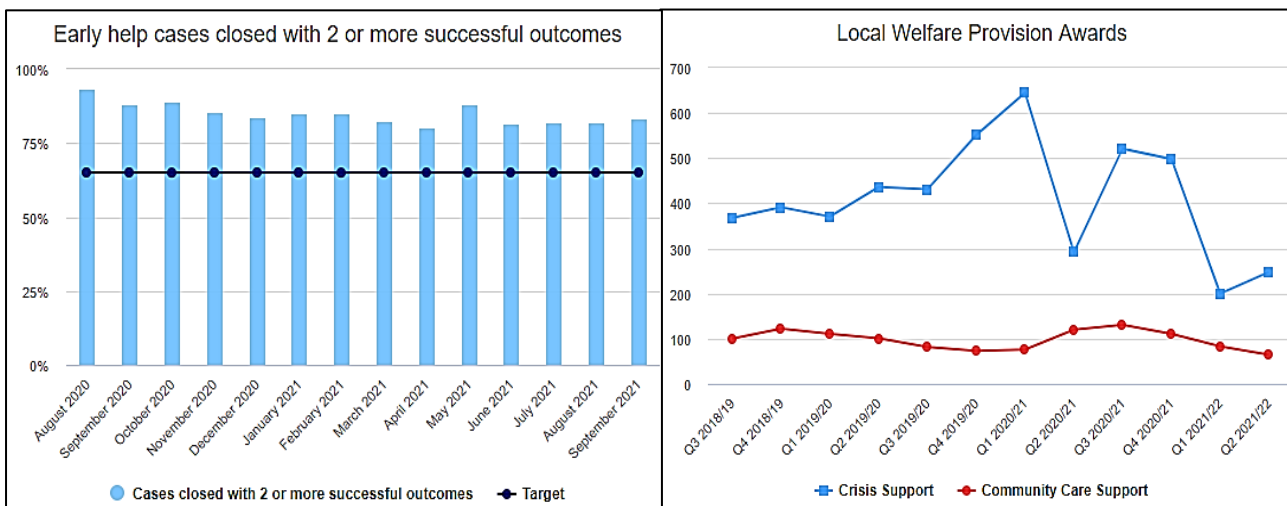
**Overall spend of visitors to the City  
2020: £219m**

N/A

Declining  
(2016: £399m)

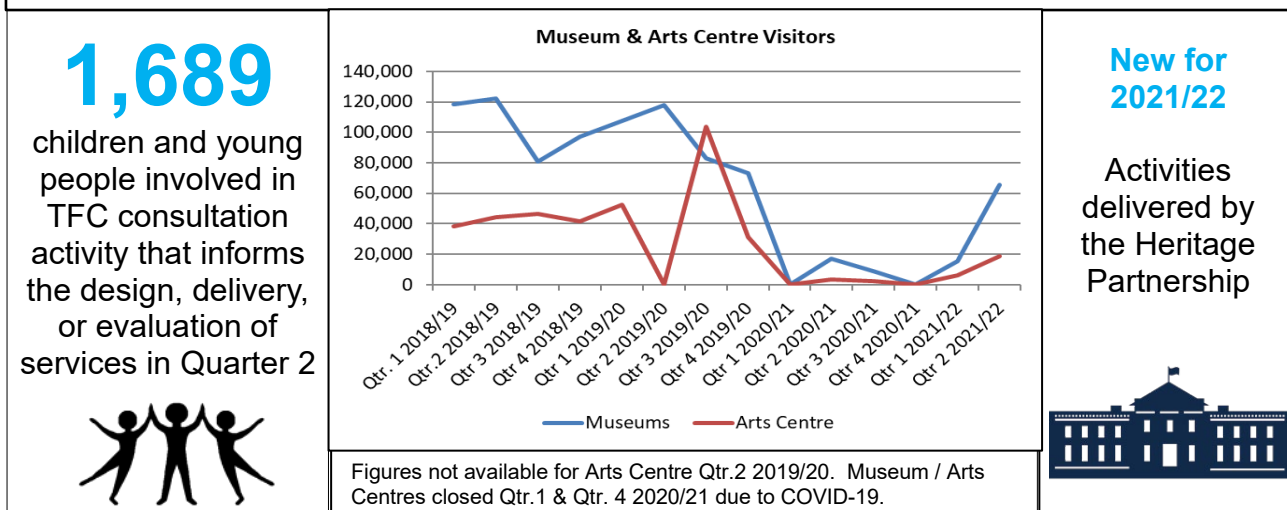
# COUNCIL LED ACTION & PROGRESS

2021/22 Timeline	Status
Commission new domestic abuse services model	On track



## 28 Events

facilitated by the Council, on Council land / in council buildings in **2021/22**



**More resilient people** – We will support families to enable them to be resourceful to respond to challenges and achieve the best possible outcomes for their children. This includes supporting families that require early help, where children are subject to Child Protection or are Cared For with all reduced in comparison with the end of Quarter 1 and the same period in the previous year. The following Children's Service's key delivery targets have been met as at the end of Quarter 2: % of early help cases closed with successful outcomes (at 83.3%), % of all referrals with a decision were within 24 hours (at 99.1%), % of children subject to a child protection plan receiving a statutory visit within 20 working days (at 97.1%), % of Cared for Children that have an up to date Personal Education Plan (at 99.4%), % of Cared for Children that have experienced 3+ placements within the last 12 months (at 8.4%) and % of care experienced young people aged 17-21 in touch with the service within 8 weeks of previous contact (at 91%). We will support our people to be more resilient. We know that our communities have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased hardship experienced by some. During the first few months of the pandemic the use of foodbanks more than trebled and high usage continued throughout 2020/21, with 5,595 residents supported in January to March 2021. In Quarter 1 of 2021/22, figures reduced to 3,744, however, in line with previous years trends figures rose to 3,919 Quarter 2 due to increased demand over summer months. In Quarter 2 there were fewer Crisis Support Awards (at 248) compared with the same period in the previous year (at 292) and substantially fewer to the year prior to that (at 436). There were also fewer Community Care Support awards at 65 (compared with 120 in Quarter 2 of 2020/21). The VCS Alliance alongside the Council are also working closely with health partners by leading the social prescribing workstream, linked to the new ICS place-based arrangements, to ensure services are accessible for all residents, enabling residents to support their own health and personal wellbeing, as well as their financial resilience. Sunderland continues to drive forward the delivery of the Community Wealth Strategy, working closely with City Board partners including the voluntary and community sector, via the recently established VCS Alliance. Sunderland Council has enhanced its social value-added policy in relation to all procurement activity and now, working in partnership with the voluntary sector, via the VCS Alliance, is ensuring targeted support within communities, from all Council investments in the City.

**More people feeling safe in their homes and neighbourhoods** – This commitment relates both to people feeling safe from crime and vulnerable adults who use our services feeling safe. Overall, our residents feel safe in their local area, with the percentage consistently at 96% or above since 2012/13 to early 2020 based on the Northumbria Police Survey. Latest available data is for Quarter 1 of 2020/21 at 95%. Crime for April 2021 to June 2021 (at 13,806 incidents) has decreased when compared with the same period in the previous year (14,480 incidents). We are committed to disrupting criminal and anti-social behaviour through intervention and enforcement with 24 intelligence led pro-active disruption activities carried out in relation to licensing in Quarter 2. In Quarter 2, work undertaken over the last two years to review enforcement and licencing and enabling of locality neighbourhood delivery based on a targeted intelligence led approach was concluded, with the evaluation and review of Neighbourhood Plans. We hope to engage 100% of retailers in the city in our Responsible Retailers Scheme once it has been possible to launch the scheme, with this having been paused during the pandemic and now expected in early 2022.

**More residents participating in their communities** – This commitment is about residents, including children and young people, being able to engage with and participate in their communities. In 2019/20 we widened our volunteering opportunities to support more people to volunteer in a more diverse range of volunteering activities. In Quarter 2, there were 420 volunteers registered for volunteering across a range of volunteering activities including place-based activities, Libraries, Volunteer Chaperones, Events & Active Sunderland and other weekly programme activities. The greatest proportion was place based. There were 1,689 children and young people involved in Together for Children consultation activities that will inform the design, delivery or evaluation of services. Additionally, in Quarter 2, a Young People's Low Carbon Advisory Group was established, engaging young people in climate change discussions that support our low carbon priority, and learning from their insight and understanding of how the world around them is changing. In January 2020 'Crowdfund Sunderland' was launched enabling people to financially support local projects and causes through an online platform. 5

projects have been supported in Quarter 2, taking the total to 12 in 2021/22 raising £94,291 for Sunderland projects. We continue to engage people through Sunderland UK social media channels with 23,000 Facebook and 38,800 Twitter followers as at the end of March 2021. The Council is also working closely with businesses in Sunderland, such as Nissan to enable them to deliver their corporate social responsibilities, maximising volunteering opportunities and targeted volunteer support, matching skills to needs.

**More people visiting Sunderland and more residents participating in cultural events, programmes, and activities**

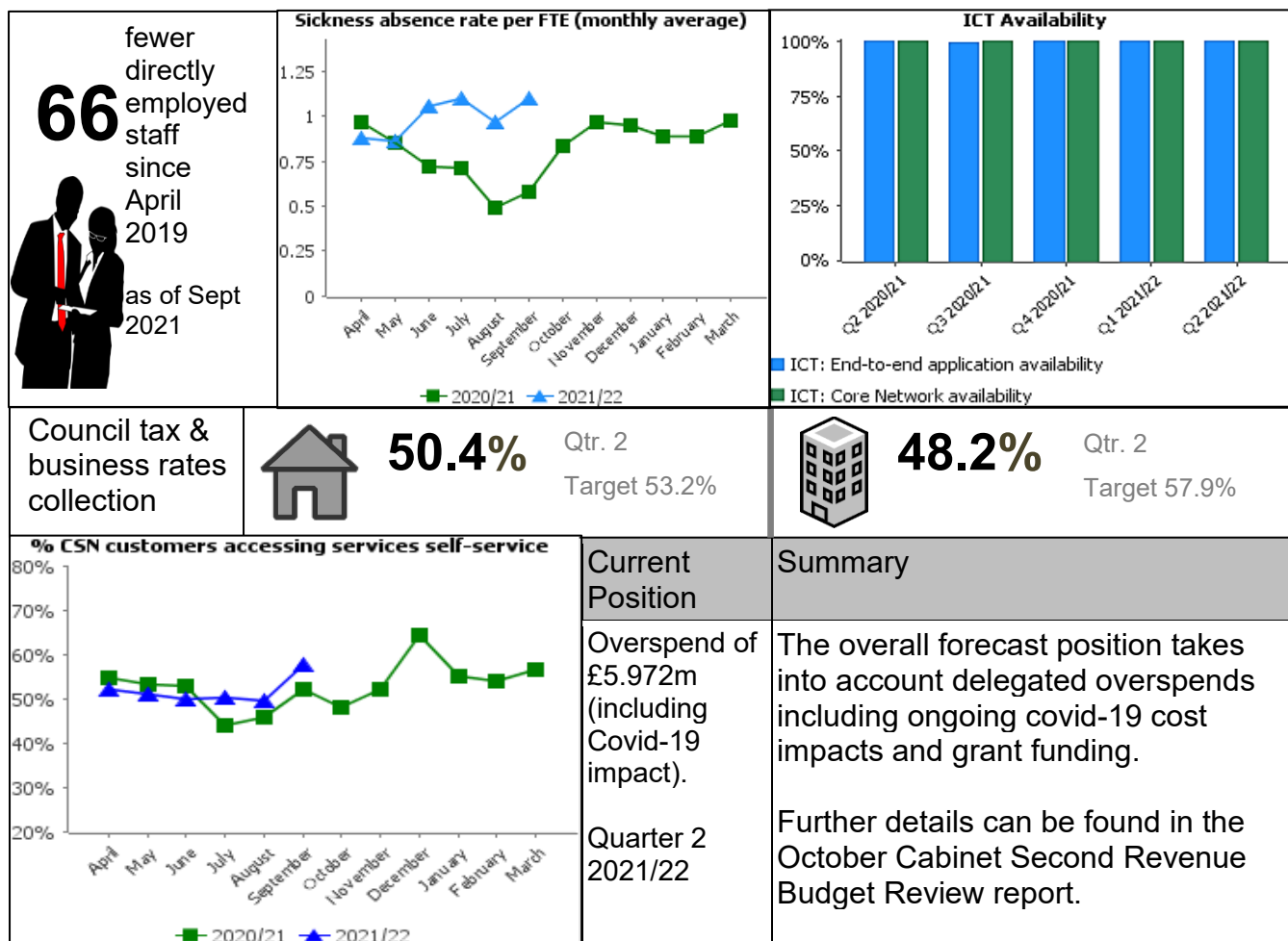
– In previous years the number of visitors to the city (and associated spend) has shown a continued upward trend (visitor numbers increased from 8,240,000 in 2016 to 9,490,000 in 2019 and spend from £399m to £500m in the same period). As the Coronavirus pandemic hit the UK in early 2020, however, cultural venues and events were particularly impacted due to the greater challenges of ensuring social distancing and safe delivery. Visitor numbers reduced from the 9,490,000 achieved in 2019 to 4,377,000 in 2020 and visitor spend reduced from the £500m in 2019 to £219m in 2020. Many cultural and visitor attractions remained closed / cancelled after other sectors began recovery. The Empire Theatre remained closed in Quarter 1 and there were no visitors. Sunderland Empire Theatre re-opened its doors on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021, after 18 months of being closed to the public. With significant media coverage of the re-launch show, the Empire attracted 28,556 visitors to the end of September. The Museum and Winter Gardens and Washington Arts Centre re-opened mid-way through Quarter 1. In Quarter 2 the Museum and Winter Gardens received 65,718 visitors and the Washington Arts Centre received 18,658 visitors. July and August saw Arts Centre Washington delivering a range of free to access workshops and courses for children and families including print making, tie dye and stand-up comedy workshop. The centre also hosted summer workshops for SEN children and their families with support from Together for Children. September saw the return of live theatre to the centre. During Quarter 2, Libraries opened all sites on reduced opening hours. 31,117 physical items were borrowed with 749 new applications for membership in this period. There were over 9,393 digital issues from eBooks / e-Audio / e-Magazine with 149 new users. Libraries services delivered 27 child activities/crafts with 519 people attending. The Books at Home delivery service saw 451 interactions to 185 customers across the City. During Quarter 2, the annual Summer Reading Challenge took place attracting 348 participants. During the Covid pandemic, the challenge was entirely online, however, this year children were able to participate in libraries once again which increased the number of children's book issues over the period.

A Tourism recovery plan is now in place to promote and sustain the return of visitors and participation of residents in cultural events, programmes and activities. Over the summer months a tourism communications marketing campaign was delivered that promoted Sunderland as a 'City of Surprises' - highlighting Sunderland's unique mix of city, coast and countryside. The campaign ran across a number of digital channels and monitoring of those channels showed a successful impact. The campaign drove significant traffic to My Sunderland, with page views and unique page views increased (260% increase for *Events*, 256% increase for *Plan your Visit* and 137% increase for *Home page*) as well an increase in the overall time on the site. Social media across the three Visit Sunderland platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) saw increases in followers, impressions, reach, clicks and engagement during the campaign period.



# ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

Good organisational health – strong financial management – productive and innovative working – a council ready for the future



**Good organisational health and strong financial management** – At the end of Quarter 2, there were 2,703 directly employed staff, 66 fewer compared with April 2019. We are committed to ensuring that we have a productive and healthy workforce, maintaining lower levels of sickness absence. In March 2020, we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic swiftly to enable our workforce to work from home wherever possible, along with a wider COVID response. Business Rates Collection (at 48.2%) and Council Tax Collection (at 50.4%) are under the expected levels (of 57.9% and 53.2%) reflecting the impact of Covid-19 on our businesses and residents. We are committed to maximising external funding and financing opportunities. In Quarter 2, £1,546,529 has been generated through funding bids approved, providing funding / support for: a Port Energy Strategy / feasibility works, an Energy Masterplan for the Northern Spire Park housing site, the Lifestart initiative, Next Generation Advanced Manufacturing Accelerator (NGAMA) research and innovation, IAMP Microgrid, Crowdfund Sunderland platform; a testbed project as part of the Homes for Healthy Ageing programme and the Changing Futures regional consortium project.

There was 1 report to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) by the Council in Quarter 2, for which the investigation is fully completed.

**Productive and innovative working and a council ready for the future** – As a Council we continue to deliver on the organisational change required to optimise productive and innovative working, to counteract financial uncertainty and respond to the new challenges brought by the COVID pandemic. We have been developing a new operating model to ensure that the council is as customer focused and effective as it can be and are currently reviewing all Corporate Support services with a new recruitment process now in place with significant improvements for recruiting managers and job applicants and further improvement activity underway with ICT, Procurement, Finance and Business Support. The adoption and enhancement of digital technologies continues, all our ICT users can connect remotely and the first major upgrade to Windows 10 is currently being deployed to ensure end user devices remain secure and operating as effectively as possible. All users are now transitioning to Microsoft Teams and traditional network shares were switched to read only from the end of October 2021 before being decommissioned in the New Year. We continue to invest in our digital technologies, particularly our website and digital platform to enable more and higher quality digital interaction with our customers, thereby promoting self-serve. During Quarter 2, the first phase of the new Elected Members Platform was released, and further enhancements are currently being developed. The MySunderland website is live with new content. In Quarter 2, 53% of our Customer Service Network customers accessed services through self-serve – exceeding the target of 46%.

