

## Democratic Services

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2 December 2020

## SUMMONS TO ATTEND

**MEETING:** ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
**PLACE:** TO BE HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING BECAUSE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDANCE (see [note](#))  
**DATE:** THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 2020  
**TIME:** 2 PM

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### Members of the Committee:

Councillors: Alaa Al-Yousuf (Chairman), Martin McBride (Vice-Chairman), Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Mike Cahill, Andrew Coles, Owen Collins, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Gill Hill, Liz Leffman, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan and Ben Woodruff.

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### RECORDING OF MEETINGS

The law allows the council's public meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Officer know before the start of the meeting.

## A G E N D A

- 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2020 (previously circulated)**
- 2. Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.
- 4. Participation of the Public**  
Purpose:  
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.
- 5. Call In of Cabinet Decision – Community Recycling – Bring Sites in West Oxfordshire (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – copy attached)**  
Purpose:  
To consider the call-in request relating to the Cabinet decision of 18 November 2020 (minute no. 68) in respect of the future approach to community recycling bring sites in the district.

Recommendation:

- (a) That the Committee decides whether or not to support the call-in request; and
- (b) That, if the request is supported, the Committee determines whether it wishes to submit any additional comments to Cabinet.

**6. Waste Service (Verbal update and presentation)**

Purpose:

To receive a verbal update and presentation followed by Q&A on the Waste Service across West Oxfordshire from Ubico representative and officers.

Recommendation:

That the update be noted.

**7. Air Quality (Verbal update and presentation)**

Purpose:

To receive a verbal update followed by Questions on the Air Quality situation across West Oxfordshire

Recommendation:

That the update be noted.

**8. Approach to Litter Bin Placement and Renewal Programme in West Oxfordshire (Report from the Business Manager – Waste – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To update Members on the issues being experienced with litter and dog bins in West Oxfordshire and to seek approval for a renewal programme to be delivered over the next five years.

Recommendations:

That the Committee considers the following recommendations included in the report to Cabinet and comments as it sees fit:

- a) That the risks and financial implications relating to the provision and servicing of the current litter and dog waste bins be noted;
- b) That the introduction of the set of principles for the placement of litter and dog waste bins going forward be approved, as set out in the report;
- c) That the proposal to complete a rationalisation exercise of the existing litter and dog waste bins to ensure that the coverage is suitable for the district and that bins are located in the most appropriate places and in line with the agreed set of principles referenced in b) above be approved;
- d) That Council be recommended to increase the annual capital budget by £13k per annum over the next five years, to give an annual total of £25k for bin purchases and fitting; and
- e) That Officers work with Ubico to identify the revenue savings arising from this rationalisation and, by agreement, seek to reduce the contract value accordingly.

**9. Update on 2021/22 Budget (Report of the Chief Finance Officer – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To provide an update on the developing budget for 2021/22

Recommendation:

That the report be noted and the Committee submits comments to Cabinet as it wishes.

**10. Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Two (Report of the Chief Executive – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To provide details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aim and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Q2.

Recommendation:

That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q2.

**11. Committee Work Programme 2020/2021 (Report from Democratic Services – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To provide the Committee with an updated Work Programme for 2020/2021.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the work programme, provides comment where needed and makes amendments where required.

**12. Cabinet Work Programme (Report from Democratic Services – copy attached)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 September 2020.

Recommendation:

That the Committee decides whether to express a view to the Cabinet on relevant issues in its Work Programme.

**13. Members' Questions**

Purpose:

To receive questions from Members relating to the work of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In order to ensure that appropriate information is to hand at the meeting, Members may wish to give notice of any questions through the Committee Officer.

Recommendation:

That Members' questions be dealt with as appropriate.



Giles Hughes  
Chief Executive

This agenda is being dealt with by Amy Bridgewater-Carnall, Tel: (01993) 861522;  
Email: [amy.bridgewater-carnall@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:amy.bridgewater-carnall@westoxon.gov.uk)

Note: Councillors will be sent an invitation to the remote meeting via Cisco Webex. Members of the public may view the meeting via [Facebook Live](#). A Facebook account is not required.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 10 December 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 5</b>
Subject	<b>Call In of Cabinet Decision relating to community recycling (Bring Sites)</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Norman MacRae, Cabinet Member for Environment Email: <a href="mailto:norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk">norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Scott Williams, Business Manager - Waste Email: <a href="mailto:scott.williams@publicagroup.uk">scott.williams@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To consider the call-in request relating to the Cabinet decision of 18 November 2020 (minute no. 68) in respect of the future approach to community recycling bring sites in the district.
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex A</a> – Minute from the Cabinet meeting held 18 November 2020 <a href="#">Annex B</a> – Report to the Cabinet meeting held 18 November 2020, incorporating the minute from the meeting of this Committee on 1 October
Recommendations	a) That the Committee decides whether or not to support the call-in request; and b) That, if the request is supported, the Committee determines whether it wishes to submit any additional comments to Cabinet.
Corporate priorities	Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance - Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At its meeting held on 18 November 2020 the Cabinet considered a report regarding the future of community recycling Bring Sites in the District. This Committee had previously considered the matter at its meeting held 1 October 2020.
- 1.2. The minute from that Cabinet meeting is at [Annex A](#), (starting on [page 4](#)); and the report considered is at [Annex B](#) (starting on [page 7](#)), and includes the minute from this Committee's prior consideration of the matter on 1 October 2020.
- 1.3. The Cabinet's decision has been the subject of a call-in request from Councillors Mike Cahill, directly supported by Councillors Geoff Saul, Duncan Enright, Rosa Bolger, Joy Aitman, Luci Ashbourne and Andrew Coles, in the following terms:

*"I request reconsideration of the Cabinet decision to remove permanently the community recycling (bring) sites in West Oxfordshire*

*The arguments put forward for closure were based on two main strands, redundancy, and fly tipping/misuse.*

*When recycling bin collection was on a weekly basis, bring sites were considered to be a necessary provision. With the growing population, fortnightly collections, and the closure of Dean Pit these sites are of even greater importance. Providing larger bins for residents is not the answer. Some streets in the district have very narrow pavements, some have none. The blue bins in use now make walking on such streets dangerous. Far from being redundant these sites are very well used.*

*It is not disputed that sites can become a mess because of fly tipping and misuse by traders and residents. As Councillor Coul suggested at the Environment and Scrutiny Committee if it were known that the Council was prosecuting fly-tippers this would have an effect on the frequency of instances.*

*Insufficient action has been taken over the years to stop fly tipping. I do not share the optimism of those who believe that there will not be an increase in fly tipping if bring sites are removed. Removal penalises those many residents who use the facilities appropriately.*

*It is obviously too expensive to install and service CCTV but it would arguably be cost effective to identify the origin of fly tipped materials at clear up time and follow up.*

*It may well be that when some bring sites were closed in the Cotswold District this did not lead to an increase in fly tipping. Nevertheless, towns in Cotswold District, for example Stow, Bourton and Moreton still all have substantial bring sites within easy walking distance of the town centre.*

*I submit that towns in the North of the District, for example Chipping Norton and Charlbury that are now at least 15 miles from an OCC recycling centre, deserve to have comparable facilities. Closure of bring sites across the whole of our district, including towns such as Burford, Carterton and Witney will inconvenience far more people than it will benefit.*

*Residents have been encouraged to report fly tipping but have not been given an opportunity to have their views heard on the removal of these sites. This should be remedied -whether there is a legal requirement to consult on this matter or not.*

*In summary, I am asking Cabinet to reconsider this decision and to consult with residents as a matter of urgency.*

*Thank you*

*Mike Cahill, with the support of fellow councillors including Richard Langridge, Liz Leffman, Andy Graham, Duncan Enright, Andrew Coles, Laetisia Carter, Geoff Saul, Luci Ashbourne, Joy Aitman, Rosa Bolger and Owen Collins."*

- 1.4. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules the call-in has been referred by the Chief Executive to this Committee for consideration.
- 1.5. Should this Committee support the request, the matter will be further considered by the Cabinet, and provision for that will be included on the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 16 December, which will have been published before the date of this meeting.

## **2. FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. The financial and other implications of the matter are as set pout in the previous reports to this Committee and to Cabinet.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. It is for the Committee to decide whether or not to support the call-in request. If it does, then it may wish to agree specific additional comments for the Cabinet to take into account.

**EXTRACT FROM CABINET DECISIONS OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020****60. APPROVAL OF THE APPROACH TO COMMUNITY RECYCLING (BRING SITES) IN WEST OXFORDSHIRE**

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Business Manager Waste, which updated Members on the issues being experienced at the community recycling sites in West Oxfordshire and sought approval for their permanent removal.

The report explained that 'Bring' site provision had been part of the waste service offered by West Oxfordshire District Council for over fifteen years with fifteen recycling bring sites in the District, three of which were on private caravan/camping parks. A list of all the sites and their facilities were attached as an appendix to the report.

The sites varied in size and offered residents the opportunity to recycle mixed recycling and glass, amongst other things but it was felt that due to the effective kerbside collection service provided, the negatives of policing the sites outweighed the positives in the amount and quality of material received.

The report cited a number of problems experienced at the sites including recycling material frequently being left outside the bins, non-recyclable items being left including mattresses, large waste electricals and increasingly hazardous waste. Significant costs were also being spent on clearing material being left and it was felt that this resource could be redeployed on other street cleansing activities.

Members were asked to consider approving the permanent removal of the community recycling (bring site) facilities and increase the standard number of items for the bulky waste collection from 3 to 4, with the fee remaining at £27.68 in the 2021-22 financial year. It was noted that closure of the sites would be handled in a structured and managed way, with effective communication in order to mitigate the issues being experienced with high levels of contamination, fly tipping and misuse.

The report noted the risk that recycling performance could decrease by 6.7% if the bring sites were removed from service and that some material did not transfer into the kerbside service, but, on balance, the anticipated benefits both financial, reputational and in building in greater capacity for the UBICO operation, looked to outweigh this.

The financial implications were detailed in full in section three of the report and included a breakdown of the operational costs, costs of fly-tipping clearance, the income streams relating to recycling and the proposal to retain the fee for bulky waste as currently set.

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at their meeting on 1 October 2020 and an extract of the minutes from that meeting were attached as Annex B to the report. The Committee had made the following recommendations:

- (a) That the risks and financial, and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities are noted;
- (b) That Cabinet take into account that the permanent removal of the community recycling (bring site) facilities should not take place until the location of each site has been considered in relation to the travel time needed to reach alternative sites, the option of CCTV has been explored and more focus has been placed on prosecuting fly-tippers and carrying out enforcement. However, effective

communication was necessary in order to mitigate the issues being experienced with high levels of contamination, fly tipping and misuse; and

- (c) The Committee considered that residents should be consulted prior to the closure of sites.

Councillor MacRae introduced the report and expressed his thanks to Councillor Biles and the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their input. He proposed a minor amendment to recommendation c) to include the words 'as soon as is practicable' and provided Members with photographic evidence of the misuse of the sites and the difference in appearance once a site had been cleared. He reiterated the provision of the comprehensive kerbside collection service and responded to the proposals put forward by the scrutiny committee.

With regards to the suggestion of CCTV, Councillor MacRae reminded Members of the cost implications of installing this along with the resource requirements. He reported that there was no statutory obligation to consult with residents and he had received positive feedback from Hanborough Parish Council since clearing their nearest site.

Councillor MacRae concluded by commending the work of officers and reminded Members that communication was key in this process.

This was seconded by Councillor Coul who advised that she had attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was satisfied that the queries raised had been answered.

Councillor Cooper queried the reference to 'Narrow support' in section 3.1 of the report and was advised that this referred to the additional cost incurred when access was needed along streets that were too narrow for the refuse vehicles.

Councillor Leffman urged Councillor MacRae to consider the distance that some residents would need to travel to a recycling centre if the bring sites were closed.

Some Members felt that it was not acceptable to remove a service without proper consultation, however, the Cabinet Member and officers assured them that the service was still being provided via the kerbside collection. Officers also confirmed that larger cardboard boxes could be broken down and left by the side of the blue bins for collection during the weekly collections.

In response to a question from Councillor Graham, officers confirmed that there were 400 blue bins in stock and larger households were able to request extra capacity bins.

Councillor Saul queried the lack of a feasibility exercise and felt that increasing the bulky waste collection number from three to four was not commensurate. He suggested that the cost of this service should be reduced, the frequency of collections increased or households could be entitled to a set number of free collections per year.

Following comments made about the distance needed to travel, lower income families and those without transport, Councillor MacRae reminded Members that the sites were also being used to illegally dispose of trade waste.

Some Members welcomed the removal of the sites which appeared cleaner and more in keeping with their areas and reiterated the message that residents should be encouraged to 'reduce' their waste in line with Climate Change initiatives.

Having been proposed and duly seconded, Cabinet agreed the recommendations.

#### **DECISIONS:**


- (a) That the risks and financial, and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities be noted, as set out in this report;



- (b) That approval be given for the permanent removal of the community recycling (bring site) facilities, in a structured and managed way, with effective communication in order to mitigate the issues being experienced with high levels of contamination, fly tipping and misuse; and
- (c) That approval be given for the bulky waste collection standard number of items to be increased from 3 to 4 as soon as is practicable, with the fee remaining at £27.68 in the 2021-22 financial year.

**REASONS:** To ensure the Council continues to deliver excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

**OPTIONS:** Members could decide to retain all or some of the sites whilst acknowledging the issues being experienced and the potential increase in costs by having to service the sites more frequently.

 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>Cabinet: Wednesday 18 November 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 9</b>
Subject	<b>Approval of the Approach to Community Recycling (Bring Sites) In West Oxfordshire</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Norman MacRae, Cabinet Member for Environment Email: norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Scott Williams, Business Manager – Waste Email: scott.williams@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To update Members on the issues being experienced at the community recycling (bring sites) in West Oxfordshire and to seek approval for their permanent removal.
Annex	<a href="#">Annex A</a> – List of all bring sites and facilities <a href="#">Annex B</a> – Extract from draft minutes of Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 1 October 2020
Recommendations	a) That the risks and financial, and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities be noted, as set out in this report; b) That approval be given for the permanent removal of the community recycling (bring site) facilities, in a structured and managed way, with effective communication in order to mitigate the issues being experienced with high levels of contamination, fly tipping and misuse; and c) That approval be given for the bulky waste collection standard number of items to be increased from 3 to 4, with the fee remaining at £27.68 in the 2021-22 financial year.
Corporate priorities	The proposal contained within this report supports the Council priority: Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance - Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council?
Key Decision	Yes
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Councillor Norman MacRae and Senior Officers from the Council and Publica have been consulted on this report and the detail contained within.

## I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. Bring site provision has been part of the waste service offered by West Oxfordshire District Council for over 15 years.
- I.2. The bring sites have not increased in size over time to cope with increasing in housing (in particularly in Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton), and higher levels of recyclable waste being deposited by residents, and this has accelerated during the Covid-19 pandemic with an increase in online shopping and packaging that residents want to dispose of.
- I.3. Sites are frequently subject to recycling material being left outside the bins (littering) and non-recyclable items being left including mattresses, large waste electricals, and increasingly hazardous waste. There is evidence that material is left by traders who are not entitled to dispose of items at the centres and also people deliberately disposing of general waste and/or using them as a Household Recycling Centre (HRC). County Council operated HRC's are much larger and have the ability for the public to dispose of recyclables and general waste. However, they are continually monitored by an on-site team and so they can then police what is being disposed of. Examples of the excess waste/recyclables left and fly-tipping are in the two photographs below.



Chipping Norton



Witney

- I.4. The council has 15 recycling bring sites in the district (3 of which are on private caravan/camping parks) Shown in [Annex A](#).
- I.5. All 15 sites vary in size but they all offer residents the opportunity to recycle mixed recycling and glass, 5 offer small electrical recycling (WEEE) and 11 offer textile recycling.
- I.6. All bring sites banks (dry mixed recycling including paper, cardboard, cans, tins and plastics – DMR and glass) are serviced by the councils waste contractor UBICO with the exception of textiles banks which are privately emptied by SOEX LTD, through a separate contract.
- I.7. South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse District Councils' removed the majority of their recycling bring sites in approximately 2015, but just kept clothing banks. Cherwell still has bring banks, but they are mainly for glass as they don't accept that material as part of their kerbside recycling collections.
- I.8. During 2019/2020 West Oxfordshire District Council collected 12,688 tonnes of kerbside recycling in comparison to approximately 851 tonnes from the recycling bring sites - this accounted for approximately 6.7% of the authority's total recycling performance.

1.9. This report was considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1 October, and the draft minute from that meeting is included at [Annex B](#).

## 2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. Bring sites have been a tried and trusted approach enabling residents to recycle their waste for many years, but in current times where the Council now provides an effective kerbside collection service for a substantial number of items, the negatives in not being able to police the sites usage far outweigh the positives in the amount and quality of material received.
- 2.2. The Council is spending significant costs on clearing material being left outside the bins (littering) and this resource could be redeployed on other street cleansing activities.
- 2.3. There is some evidence that bring sites are used by traders and so there are likely to be companies out there which are not paying for their recycling waste to be collected and processed, which means that the tax payer is picking up a proportion of the costs. In addition, these users are breaking the law by not honouring their duty-of-care responsibilities in arranging for a reputable waste collection contractor to collect and properly dispose of their waste. As a secondary dis-benefit it's likely that they are not using the Councils trade recycling collection service, which is impacting on the income received.
- 2.4. Whilst the bring sites have been a useful alternative to the kerbside service during the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown, and allowed residents to dispose of larger amounts of recycling, particularly in light of the increase in home deliveries, the Council has had to bear a significant financial cost to maintain these sites and respond to the misuse and fly-tipping.
- 2.5. There is a risk that recycling performance will decrease by 6.7% if the bring sites were removed from service and that material didn't transfer into the kerbside service, but on balance the anticipated benefits both financial, reputational and in building in greater capacity for the UBICO operation, look to outweigh this.

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### Costs (Operational)

- 3.1. Pre January 2018 the service ran independently with a separate truck and crew with the below break down of costs:

Truck cost (capital)	£210,000
Depreciate 7yrs	£30,000
Crew pa x 2	£65,000
Fuel pa	£30,000
Maintenance	£15,000
Narrow support	£20,000
Streets fly tipping	£40,000
<b>Total revenue p.a.</b>	<b>£200,000</b>

- 3.2. In Jan 2018, UBICO made efficiencies and included bring sites as part of the domestic recycling rounds, so costs were absorbed into this service and a breakdown of that budget is not available. That does however mean that there isn't a dedicated resource emptying the bring site bins and instead it is divided amongst all of the Ubico recycling collection crews on the basis that the closest domestic round to a particular site is responsible for collecting.

### Fly tipping clearance

- 3.3. During April, May and June this year cleansing crews were visiting bring sites constantly to clear material being left outside the bins (fly-tips). Higher profile sites such as Chipping Norton are cleared daily and smaller sites 2-3 times per week.
- 3.4. The work is carried out by agency staff using a street cleansing truck (taken off other duties) at a cost of approximately £5,000 in staffing alone (over the 12 weeks).
- 3.5. In addition, the Council, through Publica, has to deal with complaints about the bring sites from residents and parish councils as well as undertake investigations into littering / fly-tipping. For the purposes of this review we have made a resource assumption that 0.5fte which is £15,000.
- 3.6. The Council receives two income streams for the recycling material collected from the bring sites:
- Sale of the textile material to the re-processor SOEX at income of £255 per tonne (pre-Covid 19). During the pandemic the textile commodity market have been significantly affected which has resulted in the Council not receiving any income for this material.
  - Recycling credits paid by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). During 2019/2020 the Council received £54.55 from OCC for every tonne of material collected for recycling from the bring sites.
- 3.7. A summary of the income and costs of the service are below for the financial year 2019-2020

Recycling credits (dry recycling DMR and glass)	£40,171
Recycling credit and payment for textiles	£35,598
Total income	£75,768
Processing Fees (SUEZ)	£51,510
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>£24,258</b>

- 3.8. This would indicate that there would be a net reduction in income of £24,258 to the authority if the bring sites were removed.
- 3.9. Whilst it would not be possible to reduce the number of collection crews as the function is spread across the entire fleet, there would be a cost reduction in labour and lower fuel usage as a result of the Ubico recycling crews not emptying the bring sites which is estimated to be £23,000, meaning that the financial implications for the Council are likely to be negligible. In addition, there would be a non-cashable saving from not dealing with complaints of misuse and material being left outside the banks (fly-tipping) (£15,000). There may be an option to partially reduce resources further in the future, but this would have to be completed as part of a modelling exercise and would likely involve collection round optimisation which would result in collection day changes for some residents. In addition, by doing this it would limit the recycling service ability to absorb future housing growth, meaning that additional resources would then be required by UBICO sooner than anticipated.
- 3.10. In recent months Asda in Carterton and four parish councils (Burford, Clanfield, Hanborough and Eynsham) have asked the council to remove the bring sites on their property / in their parish. This could have a negative impact on the other sites, with increased use and misuse.
- 3.11. If the bring sites were removed then it is recommended that a budget of up to £20,000 be allocated for site cleansing and the erection of new signs informing residents that they would no longer be able to deposit recycling items at the sites. The signs would also inform users

that they could recycle those items either by way of the kerbside service, or by using their local Household Recycling Centre and that fly-tipping is a criminal offence.

- 3.12. To support the proposed removal, a communications strategy is being formulated which will include setting out the options available to residents, to ensure that they can continue recycling this material predominantly by way of the kerbside collection service. For larger items which have been deposited at the bring sites previously, the Bulky Waste Service and Household Recycling Centres will be promoted.
- 3.13. A wider review of the Bulky Waste Service is underway, but as a mitigating measure to counter increased fly-tipping as a result of the removal of the bring sites, it would be proposed that the standard number of acceptable items for bulky waste collection, be increased from 3 to 4 (as was the case in previous years) with the fee remaining at £27.68.

#### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The Council is legally required to collect waste under the Environmental Protection Act however, there is no requirement to offer bring sites as a means of collection.

#### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. The Pros and Cons of removing the bring sites are set out below:

##### **Pros**

- Financial implications appear to be negligible. It would offer a financial benefit in the current scenario where greater emptying and cleansing is being required. Would also provide non-cashable savings in officer time.
- Pushes businesses towards using the council commercial waste service
- Reduces cost of clearing fly-tips
- Frees up cleansing staff for other duties
- Reduces complaints / calls / press enquiries and potentially reputational damage
- Reduces contamination in DMR
- Builds in capacity to the recycling collection rounds to be able to absorb property growth in the future
- Reduces demand on ERS team in having to investigate fly-tipping / littering with frequently no evidence present
- Potential increased use (and associated income) of the bulky waste collection service, particularly given that the number of items included in the initial fee of £27.68 will increase from 3 to 4

##### **Cons**

- Up to £20,000 one off costs required to support removal process.
- A potential small reduction in recycling performance & recycling credit income but this could be offset by campaigns and increase in housing in the district
- It's difficult to establish monetary savings from the UBICO contract, other than a reduction in agency staffing and fuel from fly-tipping collection (£23,000). Further work is required on this as part of the renewal of the contract in 2022.
- Fly tipping may increase in other potentially harder to reach areas although the risk of this is low as material being left outside the bins is left by residents who don't see this as an offence.

- Removal may result in an increase in recycling collected at kerbside and increased costs on that service for DMR processing by Suez although the data indicates bring sites only account for 6.7% of the total. UBICO has already confirmed that they have sufficient capacity to cope with an increase in demand from a collection perspective
- Removal of service provided by WODC may lead to criticism but the communications needs to be clear that residents have an effective kerbside service and can request more boxes.
- May result in higher usage of County Council run household recycling centres (Dix Pit).
- May result in an increase in requests for 360 recycling bins and the associated higher container costs so the council will need to adopt a policy to manage this.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1. The recommendations within this report will have a neutral effect on the different service users, customers and staff, because the Council will retain its kerbside recycling collection service and the County Council operated Household Recycling Centre's will also remain available. The only negative effect will likely be felt by traders who currently use the facilities illegally.

## **7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. Not all of the recycling material captured by the bring sites is likely to transfer over to the kerbside service. However, the reduction in fuel used by UBICO in order to service these sites and the ongoing reduction in fly-tipping will lessen the impact this proposal has in the amount of Co2 produced and the effect on the climate.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1. The alternatives to removing the bring sites would be to:
- 8.2. Retain the sites, accepting that they are prone to significant fly tipping, misuse and contamination;
- 8.3. Retain only the larger sites and partially mitigate the problems currently being experienced in having fewer to service however acknowledging that in doing so, this may increase the fly-tipping, misuse and contamination at the remaining sites and result in an increase in net cost for the Council by having to service more frequently.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1. None

## List of all bring sites and facilities

Recycling bank site	Glass	Paper	Cans	Card	Plastics	Textiles	Shoes	Electricals
Bablock Hythe Caravan Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Burford Garden Centre	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Carterton, Black Bourton Rd car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Charlbury Spendlove Centre car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chipping Norton Albion Street car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Chipping Norton Caravan & Camping park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Chipping Norton New Street car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ducklington Aston Rd car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hardwick Park Caravan Site	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Stonesfield Field Close	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tackley Village Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Witney Hailey Rd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Witney Moorland Rd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Witney Woodford Way car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Woodstock Hensington Rd car park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



**EXTRACT FROM DRAFT MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2020**

**COMMUNITY RECYCLING: BRING SITES IN WEST OXFORDSHIRE**

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Waste, which updated Members on the issues being experienced at the community recycling (bring sites) in West Oxfordshire. The report being submitted to Cabinet sought approval for the bring sites' permanent removal.

The scrutiny committee were being asked to take into account the risks and financial and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities and submit any comments to Cabinet.

Scott Williams, Business Manager – Waste, introduced the report and highlighted the significant issues being experienced with the misuse of these sites.

Councillor Leffman highlighted the problem encountered by residents of towns and villages located in the North of the District who had to travel tens of miles to reach a recycling centre. Councillor Leffman suggested that the location of the bring sites should be considered before being closed, because forcing residents to drive long journeys to these sites did not correspond with the Council's commitment to Climate Change.

Some Members recognised the misuse of the sites and many had personal experiences of the problems being encountered. It was suggested that residents should be asked their opinion before the sites were closed and it was agreed that education and communication to residents was key.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Williams advised that when the bring sites were closed in the Cotswold District, it did not result in an increase of fly-tipping. General misuse of the sites was by traders who did not want to sign up to the Trade Waste system and the Bulky Waste service proved residents with an alternative, although it was noted there was a cost to this.

With regard to a question regarding the option of installing CCTV and prosecuting individuals, Mr Williams reminded Members that this would come at a cost, as would monitoring the system and the officer time taken to bring cases to court.

Following a query raised regarding clothing banks, Mr Williams advised that the Council was working with the clothing banks to ensure the service continued effectively, following a slow down due to lockdown. He also stated that the income received from recycling cardboard was running at a negative and authorities were having to pay for recycling.

There was a general feeling that there should not be a blanket closure of the sites because residents should not be disadvantaged by the actions of the minority. Councillor Coul felt that it would become known that the Council was prosecuting fly-tippers and this would have an impact on the frequency of instances.

The Committee agreed that closures should not take place across the board until the location of each site had been considered in relation to the travel time needed to reach alternative sites, the option of CCTV had been explored and more focus was placed on prosecuting fly-tippers and carrying out enforcement.

It was also supported that residents should be consulted with before any sites were closed permanently.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment addressed Members and thanked them for the detailed debate. He provided an update on the enforcement measures carried out recently with nine prosecutions being carried out in the form of fixed penalty notices.

Having considered the report and having heard from the officers and Members present the Committee

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the risks and financial, and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities are noted;
- (b) That Cabinet take into account that the permanent removal of the community recycling (bring site) facilities should not take place until the location of each site has been considered in relation to the travel time needed to reach alternative sites, the option of CCTV has been explored and more focus has been placed on prosecuting fly-tippers and carrying out enforcement. However, effective communication was necessary in order to mitigate the issues being experienced with high levels of contamination, fly tipping and misuse; and
- (c) The Committee considered that residents should be consulted prior to the closure of sites.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 10 December 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 8</b>
Subject	<b>Approach to Litter Bin Placement and Renewal Programme in West Oxfordshire</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Norman MacRae, Cabinet Member for Environment; Email: <a href="mailto:norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk">norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Scott Williams, Business Manager – Waste Email: <a href="mailto:scott.williams@publicagroup.uk">scott.williams@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To update Members on the issues being experienced with litter and dog bins in West Oxfordshire and to seek approval for a renewal programme to be delivered over the next five years.
Annex	<a href="#">Annex A</a> – List of all current litter and dog waste bins
Recommendations	<p>That the Committee considers the following recommendations included in the report to Cabinet and comments as it sees fit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>That the risks and financial implications relating to the provision and servicing of the current litter and dog waste bins be noted;</li><li>That the introduction of the set of principles for the placement of litter and dog waste bins going forward be approved, as set out in the report;</li><li>That the proposal to complete a rationalisation exercise of the existing litter and dog waste bins to ensure that the coverage is suitable for the district and that bins are located in the most appropriate places and in line with the agreed set of principles referenced in b) above be approved;</li><li>That Council be recommended to increase the annual capital budget by £13k per annum over the next five years, to give an annual total of £25k for bin purchases and fitting; and</li><li>That Officers work with Ubico to identify the revenue savings arising from this rationalisation and, by agreement, seek to reduce the contract value accordingly.</li></ol>
Corporate priorities	The proposal contained within this report supports the Council priority: <b>Climate Action - Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.</b>

Key Decision	Yes
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Councillor Norman MacRae and Senior Council and Publica Officers.

## I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. Under the Environmental Protection Act, West Oxfordshire District Council is a 'Litter Authority' and is responsible for cleansing of the adopted highway within its district boundary, and may provide and maintain in any street or public place receptacles for refuse or litter (referred to as litter bins).
- I.2. It is the duty of a Litter Authority to make arrangements for the regular emptying and cleansing of any litter bins provided or maintained by them and the regular emptying must be sufficiently frequent to ensure that no such litter bin or its contents shall become a nuisance or give reasonable ground for complaint.
- I.3. To support this and as is commonplace in other areas, the Council has for many years provided a network of litter and dog waste bins to encourage responsible disposal of those waste types. The existing provision captures litter and dog waste, which has a direct benefit to the street cleansing function, in not having to manually pick items deposited in the bins from the adopted highway. This in turn then means that the street cleansing function has been able to concentrate efforts on other cleansing duties which are important to the Council in upholding its duty as a Litter Authority, and for the benefit of local communities.
- I.4. The Council has always aimed to provide a sufficient coverage of bins across the district, but in recent times Town/Parish Councils have requested additional requirements which have been deemed as a nice to have, rather than critical to the service. As a result, the costs of the bin purchase, installation and emptying has been paid for by Town/Parish Councils. Latest data from UBICO shows projected income this year of £11k to the Council, paid by some of the Town/Parish Councils for emptying litter/dog bins in this category in certain areas and goes to offset some of the cost of the service.
- I.5. Having conducted a recent evaluation of the bin portfolio, the Council currently has approximately 700 litter and 500 dog waste bins (total 1,200) in place, which are in varying conditions and have differing levels of usage. In many cases there are multiple bins in the same location and in some cases these are seldom used.
- I.6. People expect bins to be accessible, easy to spot – but the logistics of managing a large bin estate, and making it work as effectively as possible, is far from simple. A visible, well maintained litter bin is more likely to be used than an overfilled rusty litter bin with holes, but the Council doesn't have a replacement programme for litter/dog bins and instead has always acted to replace them on a case-by-case basis. This unfortunately means that a significant number of bins have all come to the end of their usable life at the same point in time and so it is appropriate to undertake a review, introduce a set of principles to ensure that the coverage is suitable for the district, and have an annual replacement programme to avoid this occurring in the future.
- I.7. Litter and dog waste now both go to the Energy from Waste Facility and so recently stickers have been placed on litter bins in certain areas informing that dog waste can also be placed in them. In addition, brand new bins which are being installed in areas close to dog walking routes also have the information attached.
- I.8. To ensure litter bins remain aesthetically appealing, the maintenance of them is important and litter bins are developing to become more efficient. The development of a smart bin, which informs a central hub when it requires emptying, and plans a collection route, can help with

the maintenance of litter bins (particularly in high usage locations like town centres), and play its role with reducing the amount of litter on the streets. Ubico is currently supporting a trial of smart bins in Cheltenham as part of their forthcoming In-Cab Technology project, and those results will be appraised as part of the Councils proposed litter bin replacement programme and support the Councils implementation of In-Cab Technology in 2021. *Initial understanding is that smart bin technology can be retrofitted to any bin and the price quoted by an external provider to a Ubico partner authority for the set-up and installation of 29 devices, and 3-months subscription as a service was £4,218.75. In addition, this particular supplier is working with Yotta (the Councils forthcoming In-Cab Technology provider) to improve the In-Cab Technology system they offer, so is an element the Council can build in to that project.*

- 1.9. The Council has adopted a [design guide for street scene and public realm](#) which identifies that the streets and roads of West Oxfordshire are increasingly cluttered with a proliferation of traffic signs, bins, bollards, guard rails and street furniture. This results in streetscapes that are both unsightly and lack character. It identifies that coordinated action is needed to reverse this decline. The URL for the design guide is <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/53bn5agi/18-design-guide-street-scene-and-public-realm.pdf>
- 1.10. This report is being considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December, and this Committee is invited to submit comments on the report, and on the recommendations to Cabinet set out on the first page.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. In order to tackle the urgent requirement to replace bins (as outlined in 1.6), the Council (supported by Ubico) has initiated replacement works, with bins in the worst state of repair being replaced as a priority. To date 68 bins have been replaced in the main towns of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, but there are approximately 100 bins still in need of replacement and an estimated 25 from the remaining assessments. To tackle this, 50 bins are scheduled to be replaced over the coming months which will now focus on the other areas of the district.
- 2.2. Capital budget of £53k was set aside in 2019/20 and largely went unspent, so this has been carried forwards into this financial year and added to a budgeted provision of £12k, making a total budget this year of £65k.
- 2.3. Metal litter bins cost £261.25 per bin and plastic versions cost £135. Because metal bins are far more expensive than their plastic alternatives, and over time they degrade and look tatty, working in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, agreement has now been given for plastic bins to be used wherever possible.
- 2.4. The anticipated replacements required mean that the budget will likely be fully used in responding to the urgent works this year, but there will be no programme and only limited budget in place for further replacements in the coming years.
- 2.5. In order to effectively provide a suitable coverage of litter/dog bins it is necessary to define a set of principles by which the management team can use to review and rationalise the existing portfolio, and ensure that adequate provision is in place at the areas which will most benefit, and that those bins are replaced when necessary.

## **3. BIN PROVISION PRINCIPLES**

- 3.1. Bin positioning is important because litter bins need to be placed in prime locations such as along pedestrian pathways that are well used, commercial shopping areas and in places where littering and/or dog fouling is a problem. Litter bins near fast food restaurants, bus stops and train stations also help to catch some of the 'on the go food' users. Much of the research carried out shows that people often blame their littering on a lack of bins.

- 3.2. The changing lifestyle with people in a rush means that more people are eating 'food on the go'. Research carried out by Keep Britain Tidy showed that in 80% of sites surveyed, that there was some form of 'food on the go' litter present. With the pace of daily life increasing, more and more people eat on the go, resulting in the requirement for well positioned litter bins. Whilst the amounts of litter have been impacted upon by the Coronavirus Pandemic and associated lockdown measures, it's reasonable to assume that 'food on the go' will continue to result in litter with litter amounts increasing as restrictions are relaxed.
- 3.3. It is important to consider where the demand for the litter bins will be the greatest. By providing litter bins in areas which require them, for example near to a bus stop, can play its part in preventing the dropping of litter and encourage people to dispose of litter responsibly.
- 3.4. An experiment carried out by Keep Britain Tidy showed that when a litter bin was placed within a 50 metre strip outside a row of shops, there was 10% reduction in overall littering. This demonstrates that by ensuring litter bins are placed where there is demand, it will play its role in helping to reduce litter being dropped on the streets and support the overall cleanliness of the district and reduce the cost of this service.
- 3.5. Recycling litter bins can be effective if properly designed and positioned however, it's common for the material captured to be of poor quality and contaminated with non-recyclable items, such as food waste. This then risks there being greater amounts of contamination in the recycling material stream and may result in a load being rejected by the re-processor, which would mean an increase in cost for the Council.
- 3.6. The high street has been changing for a number of years and whilst there is still a high degree of footfall in certain areas, a large proportion of shoppers are now electing to make purchases online and have home deliveries. This in turn means that the high streets are shrinking and their usage is reducing, so it is important to ensure that litter bins are provided in areas where they are most effective and not outside a vacated shop or a building that used to be a public house for example. In addition it's important to recognise that bins must be accessible to all users including those with disabilities.
- 3.7. Within the district there are a number of examples of bins being located inappropriately or two bins being located very closely together or litter and dog waste bins next to each other, which is a waste of resource and goes against the priority outlined in the Councils design guide 18.
- 3.8. Litter and dog waste bins therefore need to be available, accessible and visible to be most effective.
- 3.9. It is proposed that the Council introduces a zonal system for the placement of litter/dog waste bins as follows;

**Zone 1 – Town Centres with large numbers of commercial shops, licenced premises and food outlets**

Litter bins would be placed in prominent positions, with multiple bins only being located in very high footfall areas

**Zone 2 – Village Centres with smaller numbers of commercial shops, licence premises and food outlets**

Litter bins would be placed in prominent positions

**Zone 3 – Bus stops and roads having smaller grocery type shops**

Litter bins would be placed at key bus stops and in prominent positions

**Zone 4 – Outdoor recreational areas (solely those owned by the council)**

Single (or multiple where there is a clear need) litter and/or dog waste bins would be located at entrance and exit points and within these areas at strategic locations based on the historic provisions and where the Council has a responsibility to provide

### **Zone 5 – Housing estates & outlying town/village areas**

Single litter and/or dog waste bins in these areas would be strategically placed based on demonstrated need - on a recognised school walking route for example

- 3.10. Officers would review the location of the current bins and make a decision using the principles as a guide, together with an accessibility assessment, to decide whether they were providing good, limited or little benefit - (in certain cases using the principles may not be feasible and in which case a bespoke assessment including accessibility would be undertaken, but these instances should be in the minority and with the increase in budget provision, the necessary money will be available to support this should there be additional costs).
- 3.11. Consultation would then be had with the relevant Town/Parish Councils where bins were in locations offering limited or little benefit including those which had previously been paid for (including the current emptying) by that Town/Parish Council, with the proposal that they be removed and providing they were in good order, used to increase the capacity in areas with a greater need or kept for a future replacement.
- 3.12. A [report on determining the impact on litter levels when removing litter bins from locations across Herefordshire](http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Herefordshire_Council.pdf) showed that it is incorrect to assume that the removal of litter bins would automatically result in increased litter. With effective planning and the necessary Town/Parish Council consultation, the removal of certain litter bins could actually result in a reduction in litter, if similar results were seen in West Oxfordshire. The URL for the report is [http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Herefordshire Council.pdf](http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Herefordshire_Council.pdf)
- 3.13. Using the £12k capital budget provision and allocating an additional £13k each year, the bins in the worst state of repair would be replaced using the zonal assessment and a co-ordinated approach between the Council, Ubico and the Town/Parish Council responsible.
- 3.14. This approach would also reduce the litter bin related complaints from residents, Town/Parish Councils.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The Ubico provision required to empty the current litter and dog bins across the district is approximately £287k per annum – but these costs are built in to the street cleansing contract costs and therefore not itemised separately. Officers will work with Ubico to review the costs of providing the service annually as part of the budget setting process.
- 4.2. Whilst a proportion of cost is already captured within the Ubico contract and supporting budget relating to existing resources, Ubico has estimated that it costs up to £150 to install a new litter/dog waste bin because of the complexities brought about by having to liaise with all service providers, gas, water, telecoms and electric prior to the works being undertaken with labour and the materials involved - postcrete, slabs, thunder bolts and fittings. Replacing existing bins where there is no need to install a new concrete base would be lower in cost due to less materials being required. In addition, commonly in that case there would not be the need to liaise with third party utility companies, so for the purposes of this review an average cost of £100 is assumed to fit each bin.
- 4.3. Officer's initial estimate is that a number of litter and dog bins can be consolidated and the number can be reduced by up to 25% (280) without having any detrimental impact on service provision, In addition, there are a number of examples of bins being located inappropriately and offering little benefit so it is assumed that these could be removed. This reduction in the number of bins having to be serviced would equate to up to circa £70k of the current expenditure, but a large proportion of these costs are related to the pool of labour used to

complete all of the cleansing activities in the district, which could not be reduced and are therefore non-cashable. If however 25% (280) were removed, there would be cost reductions associated with a reduction in fuel, which is estimated to be £30k per annum and so officers would work with Ubico to capture these savings and look at further efficiencies as part of the programme.

- 4.4. UBICO shows projected income this year of £11k for emptying litter/dog bins in certain areas where Town/Parish Councils are paying for the enhanced service and so this may be affected should bins in a certain location be removed. However, with a litter bin portfolio which reflects the needs of the district and provides effective coverage, it is anticipated that operational savings would be available in reduced time and fuel (as per 4.3) which would more than offset this. There would also be less Co2 produced which would go towards supporting the Councils aspirations in tackling the declared climate emergency.
- 4.5. A budget growth of £13k is proposed which added to the current provision of £12k would make an annual replacement and fitting fund of £25k, and would allow for the purchase and fitting of approximately 100 of the new style plastic litter bins.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. The Council is legally required to cleanse the adopted highway under the Environmental Protection Act and as a 'Litter Authority', but there is no stipulation on the type and/or number of litter/dog waste bins which must be provided.

## **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. The Pros and Cons of rationalising the litter/dog waste bin portfolio and adopting a replacement programme for the next five years are set out below:

### **6.2. Pros**

- Builds in an effective replacement programme using agreed parameters for bin placements.
- Provides effective coverage of litter/dog waste bins and limits wasted resources.
- Reduces cost of collecting litter/dog waste by Ubico and therefore the Council.
- Frees up cleansing staff for other duties.
- Reduces complaints / calls / press enquiries and potentially reputational damage.
- Reduces demand on ERS team in having to investigate littering with frequently no evidence present.

### **6.3. Cons**

- Littering/dog fouling may increase in areas where a bin has been removed or moved.
- It's difficult to establish monetary savings from the UBICO contract, other than a reduction in fuel from litter bins emptying (estimated at £30k). Further work would be required on this as part of the renewal of the contract in 2022.
- Removal of bins provided by WODC may lead to criticism, but the communications needs to be clear that there is a strategic and effective provision of litter/dog waste bins for residents and visitors to the district, and that the programme future proofs the ongoing replacement requirements for the next five years.

## **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 7.1. Litter has direct financial, environmental and health consequences to individuals and communities. To aid in the prevention of littering, and to save the cost of street cleaning it is



necessary to consider the positioning of litter bins, ensuring they are placed in key locations. It is important to remember that litter bins should be accessible, available and visible.

- 7.2. The recommendations within this report will have a positive effect on the different service users, customers and staff, because the Council will improve the network of litter/dog waste bins and have these resources in the right areas. In addition, the formalised replacement program will ensure that bins needing replacement will be actioned promptly.

## **8. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. Having litter/dog waste bins strategically positioned will optimise the Ubico collections and should reduce fuel usage, which will have a direct carbon benefit in lower emissions and the CO<sub>2</sub> produced. In addition, the potential introduction of smart bins would further increase efficiency and reduce the fuel used.
- 8.2. Having a robust set of principles and replacement programme for litter/dog waste bins will ensure that they are fit for purpose and able to effectively hold litter and dog waste.
- 8.3. If recycling litter bins were installed in appropriate locations, then there would be a direct climate benefit, in diverting the material captured away from energy recovery.

## **9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 9.1. The alternatives to implementing a litter/dog waste bin siting and replacement strategy would be to:
  - Retain the current approach with the large number of bins, accepting that they are not all in the correct locations and Ubico will likely be wasting time and fuel in having to visit them;
  - Accept that Ubico will likely not be able to manage collecting from all of the bins and so additional resources would be required sooner than if the bin estate is managed by way of the replacement programme;
  - Accept that without an agreed set of principles, the location of litter bins is likely to be decided upon with little evidence to support their effectiveness.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1. None

## List of all current litter and dog waste bins

<b>Area</b>	<b>No.of dog bins</b>	<b>No.of litter bins</b>
Witney/Hailey/Ducklington	83	132
Minster Lovell	18	20
Carterton/Black Bourton/Alvescot/Brize Norton	62	81
Woodstock/ Wooton/ Hanborough/Bladon	39	85
Charlbury/Finstock/Ramsden	23	36
North& South Leigh /Freeland	20	21
Chipping Norton	41	69
Leaffield/ The Wychwoods	28	27
Great Rollwright/ Over Norton	9	6
Enstone/Chadlington	18	16
Taynton/Fifield/Churchill	9	6
Kingham/Salford	9	19
Tackley/Middle Barton/Great Tew	18	15
Coombe/Stonesfield	15	13
Burford/Fullbrook/Bradwell/Lechlade	28	49
Eynsham/Cassington/Sutton	30	31
Bampton/Aston/Cote/Clanfield	26	31
Stanton Harcourt/Standlake/Northmoor	22	11
A40 Layby		22
<b>Total</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>690</b>



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 10 December 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 9</b>
Subject	<b>Update on 2021/22 budget</b>
Wards affected	All indirectly
Accountable member	Councillor Toby Morris, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources Email: <a href="mailto:Toby.Morris@westoxon.gov.uk">Toby.Morris@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Elizabeth Griffiths, Chief Financial Officer Email: <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.griffiths@westoxon.gov.uk">Elizabeth.griffiths@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on the developing budget for 2021/22
Annex	<a href="#">Annex A</a> – Detail of base budget changes by cost centre
Recommendation	That the report be noted and the Committee submits comments to Cabinet as it wishes.
Corporate priorities	The Council is committed to delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No

## I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Each year the Council prepares its budget for the following year. The Council's funding will not be determined until the new year so this draft is very much an early indication and subject to change.

## 2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. In the MTFS presented to Council last year, the estimated budget gap in 2021/22 was circa £3m. This included an unidentified savings target of £1m which still left a shortfall of £2m to be funded from general reserves.
- 2.2. The expectation was that business rates would be reset by Central Govt which would reduce WODC's income by £2m and New Homes Bonus would also reduce by £1m so while there was a small expectation of growth in items like Leisure Income, these two funding reductions essentially generated the £3m shortfall.
- 2.3. This £3m shortfall was our forecast position pre Covid and unfortunately the pandemic has had a huge impact on our income and investments.
- 2.4. On a positive note, it now looks like the expected rates reset will be deferred for at least another year but while this is the generally accepted belief across Local Govt, we await confirmation from Central Govt that this is the case. This means that the current reforecast MTFS could still have its funding reduced by up to £2m.
- 2.5. The impact of the current social distancing on our income has called into question projected Leisure income of almost £1.5m as our Leisure Contractor GLL do their best to bring the business back to a break even position, having suffered not one, but two lockdowns this year.
- 2.6. Commercial income has also been impacted with a current projected reduction of £350k next year. While the Authority is doing everything it can to help our local businesses survive, it won't be clear until the furlough scheme ends what the final toll on our local economy is, so while things hopefully improve, this expected income figure also carries a large amount of risk.
- 2.7. The tax base calculation has been initially drafted but the Council Tax figure included in the table below assumes a band D increase of £5 which has yet to be discussed and agreed.
- 2.8. The current draft budget shows a deficit of just over £2m as per the table below:

### 21/22 budget funding position - first draft

20/21 budget surplus 1,395

#### Movement in budget:

Inflationary increase in staffing costs	(233,712)
Income generation and expenditure cuts	588,369
Expected Covid related income losses	(1,824,379)
Change in one off growth/ funding	<u>988,902</u>

Budget deficit before funding changes (480,820)

#### Changes in funding (estimated and subject to change):

Potential change in Council Tax (TBD)	294,886
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Reduction in Business Rates income	(904,262)
Other funding reductions (RSG, NHB etc)	<u>(1,051,727)</u>

Changes in funding (1,661,103)

21/22 draft budget deficit **(2,140,528)**

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. Clearly the current projected budget deficit is unwelcome. It should however be apparent that most of that shortfall is being driven by the reduction in income caused by Covid which can be seen on the line detailing Covid related income losses of £1.8m. While the forecast budget places no expectation of income from the Leisure provider, it does not currently allow for the continuation of the financial support the Council has been providing in 2020/21.
- 3.2. The current draft of the budget allows for a 2% pay award across Publica staff, net of savings targets that Publica have been set. It does not allow for fixed term contracts where funding has ended to be incorporated into base budget or for any growth of additional posts.
- 3.3. Small amounts of additional income have been added to the Business Managers' targets but part of this uplift is the contractual increase in Leisure income which we are unlikely to realise in the short to medium term.
- 3.4. It should be recognised that the Publica Business Managers have risen to the challenge and made savings wherever possible, resulting in a £324k reduction in budgeted expenditure. They have been very engaged in the budget setting process and should be commended for doing everything they can to reduce the Council's budget shortfall.
- 3.5. The Ubico 21/22 budget is still being discussed. In the current draft it has been held at 20/21 levels, but while they initially requested a small increase in budget, they have been asked to review and find savings to help our position.
- 3.6. As referenced before, the funding figures are very much subject to change and include a projected £5 band D increase in Council tax.
- 3.7. While we are hopeful that the rates reset has been deferred another year, we are still projecting a large decrease in income from Business Rates. There is a deficit which we are allowed to spread over three years but since we are expecting a further very large reduction next year there seems little point in deferring losses into a year where we face even larger financial challenges.
- 3.8. Other funding is still to be communicated by Central Govt and could move either in our favour or to our detriment. These losses were expected and forecast in last year's MTF5.
- 3.9. The projected shortfall does not include any new funding for the ongoing Covid situation from Central Govt / MHCLG. In the current financial year this support has covered our losses so we are hopeful that there may be some measure of support next year although it's unlikely to cover the full deficit and none has, at this stage, been offered or even referenced.
- 3.10. We are currently forecasting a budget surplus for 20/21 based on this year's additional Govt support so would look to set any surplus created this year aside to help mitigate next year's projected losses.
- 3.11. The Council should recognise three very important decisions that it has taken recently.

- WODC set aside funding for Covid recovery from its 19/20 outturn which has allowed it, in this time of financial constraints, to fund vital recovery work supported by members to aid our residents and local business community.
- The Council has formally adopted an important investment strategy meaning that all future projects must contribute positively to the long term financial stability of the Council as well as serving Council priorities.
- The members have recognised that the Council faces a difficult financial situation and have strategically reviewed all recent proposed expenditure in that context, taking part in budget discussions and critically evaluating the necessity of projects in order to prioritise focus, staff resource and funding on core activities and urgent needs.

3.12. The detailed breakdown attached in [Annex A](#) has been reported by Business Manager's budget and not by Service Area. This makes reporting subsequent drafts of the numbers quicker and more efficient and relates them back to meetings that members are having with Officers on those budgets.



## Annex A - detail of base budget changes by cost centre

	20/21 budget	One-off adj	Pay inflation	BM changes	Covid adj	21/22 budget
Assets	2,359,260	94,000	(9,094)	192,882	(320,650)	2,316,398
Commissioning Strategy	(6,254,716)	86,000	(8,286)	(175,364)	0	(6,352,366)
Comms & Marketing	(142,000)	0	(2,330)	14,100	0	(130,230)
Contracts	262,925	(43,562)	(3,500)	436,066	(1,503,729)	(851,800)
Corporate Finance	(5,324,100)	4,000,000	(12,855)	(50,000)	0	(1,386,955)
Corporate Responsibility	(1,340,420)	0	(12,509)	71,950	0	(1,280,979)
Customer Experience	(962,650)	(100)	(22,635)	(32,250)	0	(1,017,635)
Development Management	(232,400)	(3,242)	(34,942)	(91,043)	0	(361,627)
Env & Regulatory Services	(106,200)	0	(1,822)	0	0	(108,022)
Finance	(665,100)	0	(64,160)	3,450	0	(725,810)
Insight & Intelligence	(455,700)	0	(7,696)	32,250	0	(431,146)
Localities	(732,920)	104,100	(5,354)	30,400	0	(603,774)
Operational Services	(1,309,300)	74,300	(32,493)	161,928	0	(1,105,565)
People	(292,200)	0	(5,010)	14,000	0	(283,210)
Technology	(1,052,800)	0	(11,026)	(20,000)	0	(1,083,826)
	(16,248,321)	4,311,496	(233,712)	588,369	(1,824,379)	(13,406,547)

### Assets:

This cost centre covers our commercial properties and our climate change programme. The expectations around commercial income have significantly reduced due to the pandemic and staff in this department are carefully managing many requests for deferred and reduced rents.

The climate change programme had an original vision of a budget of £200k per year for three years but the funding for this wasn't set aside and we have no additional capacity to do this. We did however add considerable resource to this team and extend the climate manager's post by two years using the Covid recovery funds so the hope is that with over £100k still in earmarked reserves from the initial tranche of funding, this programme can continue to achieve its objectives for the next two years without placing any additional strain on base budget.

### Commissioning Strategy:

This budget covers grounds maintenance and waste and contains large parts of the Ubico budget. There has been pressure on the recycling element of the budget due to an increase in the cost of recycling and the team are working to find solutions to reduce this strain.

The Ubico budget has been held at last year's figures for now pending a conversation with them. Various funding was given last year on the basis that it would generate savings this year so that will be discussed. Some of these one off items make up the reduction in one off funding shown in the table above.



### Communications and Marketing:

The way that the Communications department approaches its messaging has changed and the budget has altered to reflect that, reallocating budget from more hard copy approaches to electronic and social media. We are also in discussions with other cost centre managers to centralise the marketing budget. Existing Business Managers would still have input into their marketing spend but it allows the specialists in the Comms dept to bring their expertise to each task and find the most cost efficient way to reach the most people. The initial response from BMs has been that this would be a welcome support.

### Contracts:

The main item in this budget is the Leisure contract. The expected improvement in budget comes from the uplift in contractual income we would have received had our Leisure Centres been operating as normal. GLL, who have the contract to operate them, are doing their best to return to a profitable operation but until social distancing ends, it's unlikely we'll see sufficient profits generated to enable them to pay management fees so this income has been provided against. This is the single biggest impact on our base budget and the largest ongoing threat to our financial stability related to income within our control.

### Corporate Finance:

This section covers centralised services like Legal and Treasury. The large adjustment was caused by a one off pension payment that was required last year but does not form part of the baseline budget ongoing.

### Corporate Responsibility:

These are central governance costs, members costs, election costs etc. We're expecting a reduction in this expenditure as travel remains reduced and we are hoping that some of the efficiencies in comms rolled out in other departments can be mirrored in this one.

### Customer Experience:

There's a variety of services contained here from customer service and office reception to homelessness services which see an uplift in budget due to the requirement to house more people caused by Covid.

### Development Management:

Planning application, appeals, conservation, flood defence and the Growth Board are covered by this budget which has seen a growth in both income and costs. Part of the excess growth in costs is caused by the Growth Board initiative requesting further time to deliver its objectives but since it has no more budget to fund the staff seconded to it, it has asked all participating Councils to cover their costs next year.

### Environmental and Regulatory Services:

This is a relatively small budget for ERS services and hasn't changed.

#### Finance:

The rise in Finance costs is an increase in the contract cost for Internal Audit.

#### Insight and Intelligence:

The main focus of this budget is planning policy. Some small savings but otherwise no material change.

#### Localities:

These are the budgets for communities, arts and tourism. Although it looks like the budget has decreased, it's an adjustment for short term initiatives which were funded from reserves for a specific period of time.

#### Operational Services:


This department covers all aspects of benefit payments and collection, including fraud investigation. It also covers pollution control, food safety and markets. We are hoping to reduce costs in this area next year including a reduction in the Ubico cost for cleaning up on market days which rose tenfold from 19/20 to 20/21. The budget changes are mostly a projected surplus in housing benefit and an expected reduction in court fees.

#### People:

People covers human resources and training. No significant change to this budget.

#### Technology:

This budget predominantly covers IT. There is a small increase relating to increased spend on licenses. These are not all new but the previous budget was being overspent. The Business Manager is doing all he can to hold costs to within the current budget, in spite of the sharp increase in reliance on IT caused by lockdowns and the increase in home working. He has however flagged that going forward there is likely to be an increased funding requirement in the capital programme because laptops have a shorter useful life than desktops.

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 10 December 2020</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 10</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Two</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>All relevant Cabinet Members</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>This report provides details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aim and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Q2</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p><a href="#">Annex A</a> – Council Priority report <a href="#">Annex B</a> – Performance Indicator report</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q2</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity</p> <p>A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy</p> <p>Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Council monitors service performance and progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 1.2. Each quarter, performance and progress in those service areas relating to the work of this Committee are provided in this report.

## **2. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

- 2.1. A new Council Plan 2020-2024 was approved by Council in January 2020. Although reporting on progress against the four year Plan commenced in Q1, the main priority for the Council over the last six months was its response to Covid-19, and the subsequent recovery work.
- 2.2. In June 2020, Council approved the recommendation that a Local Recovery Plan should be prepared to complement the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-24. The Cabinet and Council approved the draft Local Recovery Plan in October. The Covid-19 Recovery Themes are Economy, Community, Climate and Council, Service Delivery and Finance, and are closely aligned with the six Council Plan priorities to ensure that actions prioritised as part of the Covid-19 recovery will also positively contribute to the achievement of the Council Plan.
- 2.3. A high level Commissioning Framework was approved by Cabinet in October 2020. The Commissioning Framework identifies that the provision of robust performance data – quantitative and qualitative, together with a robust analysis of that data and evidence – is vital to ensure that the Council has the information to assess whether its commissioned services are being delivered to a high quality.
- 2.4. A new performance management framework is being developed; a much broader framework than previous frameworks. It sets out six key strands of information on which assurance needs to be provided, with a key shift in focus from performance monitoring to performance management:
  - Business analytics and service assurance
  - Place based measures and comparators
  - Publica Business Plan strategic actions
  - Council Plan priority actions
  - Project and programme management assurance
  - Risk and opportunity management
- 2.5. As part of the Business Analytics and Service Assurance strand, a new set of performance indicators was implemented in Q1 as part of a newly styled performance report. The indicator set and performance report will evolve over time based on feedback from senior officers and Members.
- 2.6. The Commissioning Framework also sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica's Executive Director (Commissioning) is accountable to the Council for the services commissioned from Publica, and also for the services commissioned by Publica from third parties on behalf of the Council. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

- 2.7. The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on progress towards achieving the Council's priorities and service performance. He has assessed performance in line with the high level Commissioning Statement, and confirms that overall, services have been delivered to the agreed quality and standard; and he was pleased to note that work has progressed on some of the actions set out in the Council Plan. The Chief Executive has also noted the continued impact of Covid-19 on communities, customers, services, staff, and businesses as they attempted to recover over the summer; and the recent announcement of a second lockdown. He has drawn particular attention to the following:
- i. When the nation went into lockdown in March 2020, a significant number of staff were redeployed to support our communities; following the intense period of activity, seconded staff have returned to their substantive roles. Furthermore, he has noted that during Q2 many services continued to support residents, communities and businesses that have been impacted by Covid-19, together with the recovery of the high street and tourism as part of their every day job;
  - ii. The Local Recovery Plan has been approved and provides a framework to help guide the Council's recovery effort. Our partners will also be developing their recovery plans so it will be important to be flexible in our joint collaborative efforts. It has always been recognised that the Council might need to pivot back and forth between organising a response and community support effort and the recovery effort as the pandemic develops;
  - iii. By August 2020, leisure facilities, parking enforcement and food safety inspections had restarted. The Council agreed a financial package with GLL to reopen on 25 July in a phased approach; the core activities of gym, group exercise, and swimming were operational until 2 November, when they were required to close down again in line with the requirements of the second lockdown;
  - iv. Affordable housing has continued to be delivered in the District and demonstrates the success of the strategic sites included in the local plan in bringing forward housing numbers. The first affordable housing plots at East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area were completed in Q2. The delivery of affordable housing is on track to exceed the Local Plan target of 274 for the year;
  - v. The number of households living in emergency accommodation has started to decrease; the Housing team has created exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. Furthermore, the 'Housing First' project went 'live', the Council has worked with Aspire and Cottsway to place six complex cases into permanent accommodation where they will receive one-to-one support to address their needs.

### **3. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT**

- 3.1. Over the last six months, the Council's main priority was the response to Covid-19 and the recovery phase, which continue to be key themes running through this report.
- 3.2. In addition, to the response and recovery work, progress is being made on the actions in the Council Plan including:
- i. The Climate Action Working Group endorsed the new Sustainability Standards in Planning as a mechanism for reducing carbon levels within new developments; and a net gain biodiversity mechanism has been developed to ensure that major developments deliver a net gain;
  - ii. Responses to the consultation on the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document will be incorporated into the revised draft for review by Cabinet in December;

- iii. Progress is being made to introduce Electric Vehicle Charging Points to the District Council owned carparks in partnership with the Oxfordshire Park and Charge project. A report is being prepared for November Cabinet which will detail the six Council car parks shortlisted for EVCP in Spring/Summer 2021;
- iv. A £90k grant has been secured from the Discover England Fund which will contribute to the 'Uncover the Cotswolds' project. The project will focus on the domestic tourism market but also provide support for enabling the online capabilities of local businesses.

3.3. A full report is attached at Annex A.

#### **4. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

- 4.1. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Environmental Regulatory Services, Waste Management, and Parking; the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at Annex B with pages [x to y](#) providing the further relevant information.
- 4.2. The majority of staff have continued to work from home, and some services have had to find new ways of working. Overall, many services have performed well in the current conditions and restrictions with no significant detriment to limiting the delivery of services to online, virtual or phone.
- 4.3. There are six targeted indicators; four indicators achieved their targets (Green), and two indicators achieved their targets 'within tolerance' (Amber). The two 'Amber' indicators related to food safety and parking; service delivery was affected by Covid-19.
- 4.4. A full report is attached at Annex B.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None

#### **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. None

#### **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1. None

#### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None



COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT  
**June 2020 - September 2020**

## West Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2020-24

Our vision is to support West Oxfordshire to be fit for the future through:



### 1. Climate Action

Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.



### 2. Healthy Towns and Villages

Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.



### 3. A Vibrant District Economy

Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.



### 4. Strong Local Communities

Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.



### 5. Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population

Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.



### 6. Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance

Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.



## What has been happening since the last Council Priorities Report for Quarter I (covering April – June 2020)?

As with the last Council Priorities Report covering April – June 2020, the following 12 week period (July – September 2020) has seen continued focus on Covid-19 by the Council, with efforts shifting from ‘response’ to ‘recovery’, whilst also working towards delivery of the Council Plan 2020-24 and maintaining essential services and supporting local business and the economy, the voluntary and community sector and local residents.

This report provides an update on progress against each of the Council Plan’s priorities but also takes the opportunity to highlight work towards planning for the District’s Covid-19 recovery from the impacts of the pandemic and in the longer term, the District’s renewal. During the summer months cross-party discussions informed the development of the West Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery Plan, demonstrating the Council’s commitment to working with others to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. This Recovery Plan complements the delivery of the Council Plan through the Covid-19 Recovery Themes of Economy, Community, Climate and Council , Service Delivery and Finance and provides a helpful framework for ensuring that the wide ranging impacts of the pandemic are mitigated against and adapted to. These Recovery Themes are closely aligned with the six Council Plan priorities to ensure that actions prioritised as part of the Covid-19 recovery will also positively contribute to the achievement of the Council Plan (see Table 1)

Table 1 – Covid-19 Recovery Theme	Related Council Plan Priorities
Economy	<u><i>A Vibrant District Economy</i></u> - Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.
Community	<p><u><i>Healthy Towns and Villages</i></u> - Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better well being for everyone.</p> <p><u><i>Strong Local Communities</i></u> - Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.</p> <p><u><i>Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population</i></u> - Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.</p>

Climate	<u>Climate Action</u> - Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.
Council, Service Delivery and Finance	<u>Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance</u> - Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

## **Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity**

### **Quarter 2 Update (key highlights of activity during July – September 2020)**

- The Climate Change Strategy is due to be presented to Full Council in early 2021. This will be an overarching document which will provide a framework for work across the District addressing the impacts of Climate Change.
- The Wychwood Project has been working with the Council to carry out site visits and make recommendations for ecologically-sensitive land management of Council owned land and also to identify sites with potential for larger scale biodiversity enhancement.
- The Council is exploring the potential of applying a 'natural capital approach' to land management in the District in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council to identify strategic land management priorities.
- The Government now requires, through the emerging Environment Bill, a mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain from new development. A Biodiversity Net Gain mechanism (a biodiversity metric calculator) has been implemented into development management to measure biodiversity losses and gains from development to ensure that a net gain is delivered. This is currently being applied to all major planning applications in accordance with Local Plan Policy EH3. Five applicants have proactively applied the biodiversity metric calculator to their proposals and produced a biodiversity net gain strategy for their development, one of these being the redevelopment of Eynsham Hall. On a similar theme, the draft Area Action Plan for Salt Cross Garden Village requires a 25% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Following work completed by the Council to assess the financial viability of delivering net-zero carbon as a standard across all development at Salt Cross Garden Village, Climate policies within the draft Area Action Plan require alignment with net-zero carbon development and are included in their entirety as a 'golden thread' through the AAP.
- A Sustainability Standards in Planning (for Development Management) has now been produced and endorsed by the Climate Action Working Group as a mechanism for raising the sustainability standard of new development through planning.

## Healthy Towns and Villages: Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone

### Quarter 2 Update (key highlights of activity during July – September 2020)

- The Health Impact Assessment toolkit has been drafted and will be tested on some major planning applications ahead of publication. It is anticipated that this will be taken to the Oxfordshire Growth Board for endorsement in January 2021.
- The first draft of the Indoor Built Leisure Facilities Strategy has been received and Officers are reviewing its recommendations, ahead of consideration by Cabinet. At this point the report will be sent to consultants, Ellis Williams, in order to progress the site identification work for the potential new Windrush Leisure Centre. Additionally, Sport England has completed its assessment of leisure facility need against projected population growth for the District.
- The focus during this period for health and social care has been on re-introducing some services back to the areas where it is safe to do so. The Community Wellbeing service adopted a Locality focussed approach during the emergency which has continued this during this period. The potential for developing Wellbeing Hubs as a means to make services more visible and accessible to people, closer to where they live is being explored.
- The Community Activities grant has continued as a route to ensuring that the Council's grants programme facilitates the enhancement of community facilities and the provision of activities which promote health and wellbeing, although the investment level has been lower than in previous years. This has been supplemented by the Covid-19 small grant scheme.
- In partnership with other Oxfordshire authorities the Council has designed a mechanism to distribute the government funded Emergency Assistance grant to individuals, and groups.
- The West Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector (VCS) consultative and development group has been established to bring together representatives from each VCS sector in West Oxfordshire, eg Faith, transport, food, children mental health, etc. for the purpose of encouraging local collaboration and enabling joint bids for funding.
- The Go Active Get Healthy (Diabetes) programme funded by the Clinical Commissioning group is continuing albeit via online and telephone contact.
- GLL has withdrawn funding for the 'Inclusion Officer' during Covid-19 and so the Council is providing limited disability adult and after school activity online. Alternative options for reinstating the support of the Inclusion Officer are being explored, including an alternative role to provide this support directly with service users.

## **A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy**

### **Quarter 2 Update (key highlights of activity during July – September 2020)**

- Most of this period has been spent responding to the COVID pandemic – through responding to business enquiries and frequently communicating with all businesses to keep them informed of relevant government announcements, resources and legislation. The Council has also worked closely with the Oxfordshire LEP to ensure additional appropriate levels of support for businesses.
- Specific focus on our market towns and villages saw the implementation of a new pavement license regime and the undertaking of further works in the town centres to enable the safe reopening of the high streets from early July.
- Two government grant programmes in support of local businesses were also administered with the following sums distributed:
  - £17,420,000 to small businesses within the retail, hospitality and leisure sector with a rateable value of £15k or below. 1,742 businesses received this £10,000 grant;
  - £9,375,000 to the retail, hospitality and leisure sector with a rateable value of between £15k and £51k. 375 businesses received this £25,000 grant; and
  - £1,286,708.67 was paid to businesses that did not qualify for the above grants. This was a discretionary scheme. 155 businesses/people received grants of £10k or below and a further nominal number received a £25,000 payment.
- Progress is being made to bring Electric Vehicle Charging Points to the District Council owned car parks in 2021. WODC are a partner in the Oxfordshire-wide Park & Charge project and working with OCC and the commercial partners. A report is being prepared for November Cabinet with information on the six Council car parks shortlisted for EVCP in Spring/Summer 2021. The shortlisting has been carried out by the project team and partners with reference to Innovate-UK criteria, landscape/environmental issues including flood risk considerations, planning considerations and commercial viability
- The Council is contributing as a funding partner and Steering Group member in the update of a Low-Carbon Economy Report for Oxfordshire, working with Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) and District Councils across the County.

## Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities

### Quarter 2 Update (key highlights of activity during July – September 2020)

- The implementation of Public Art schemes as a means of delivering positive place making is ongoing although progress has slowed during the pandemic. The main projects underway are in Chipping Norton and Carterton and local steering groups have been established to guide progress.
- The Community Safety Partnership reconvened during this period with a revised action plan and this is an excellent example of effective joint working and intelligence sharing to help build resilience in our local communities.
- The shift to virtual working as a result of the pandemic has had the benefit of enabling greater engagement with countywide partnerships and raising the profile of West Oxfordshire's needs within these. Examples of this include
  - Attending the Multi agency Early Help group established by OCC to support schools worried about individual students;
  - Attending the Domestic Abuse countywide cell to link with service providers;
  - Supporting Thames Valley Police (TVP) who run the Joint Agency Tasking and Coordinating (JATAC) meeting to focus statutory and community services on areas of need relating to young people; and
- Working jointly with TVP, the Violence Reduction Unit and other Councils to reduce violent crime.
- In response to the Council Plan commitment to amplify the voice of residents (especially those who have traditionally been heard less) a newsletter is in production to proactively respond to concerns over lack of information from the Council and this will focus on topics which are of greatest interest or concern. As part of this ongoing engagement we will particularly focus on drawing on the experiences of residents, including people with disabilities, their families and the services that support them to inform our activity.
- In terms of working to promote West Oxfordshire as a visitor destination a £90k grant has been secured from the Discover England Fund which will contribute to the Uncover the Cotswolds project. This will focus on the domestic tourism market but also provide support for enabling the online capabilities of local businesses. The 'Real Cotswolds' project in Woodstock has been launched in partnership with Wake up to Woodstock ([www.cotswolds.com/woodstock](http://www.cotswolds.com/woodstock)) and aims to promote businesses in Woodstock (for the benefit of journalists and visitors). This approach will be rolled out to Witney in November 2020.
- The wider support for all sectors of the visitor economy continues with regular virtual networking meetings to signpost them towards guidance and financial support, and to promote best practice and practical ideas for recovery.

## **Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire**

### **Quarter 2 Update (key highlights of activity during July – September 2020)**

- The consultation on the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document generated a number of responses – a revised draft is being produced for review by Cabinet in December in response to this feedback which will be subject to further consultation.
- Rushy Bank and Stanton Harcourt self and custom build sites are now in design discussion with the developers. A further recent self-build plot that Cottsway are selling has also been advertised to the self-build community through the council website.
- A workshop for prospective community and self-build housing was held for the Garden Village site and there is interest in forming a Co-housing group and possible Community Land Trust going forward.
- Work with Langford Parish Council on developing the site at The Elms, Langford is progressing.
- Flexibilities have been built into the Oxfordshire Growth Deal programme to make the affordable housing grant more competitive. A fourth year has been added to the programme that will run from 2021-22. Permission has been obtained from WODC cabinet to develop a programme of 30 more shared ownership homes with Heylo that will be additional to the 4 mentioned in the Quarter 2 summary. This will blend Growth Deal funding and S106 developer contribution receipts.
- Growth Deal funded schemes currently under construction are Rockhill, Chipping Norton with Housing 21 for 80 x Extra Care units and two schemes with Cottsway in Carterton and Bampton that will deliver a total of 49 apartments for Social Rent.
- In year 2019/20 there were 469 affordable homes completed in West Oxfordshire (by comparison in 2018/19 there were 180 completions). The programme for 2020/21 has Covid-19 related caveats, but Registered Providers are currently forecasting delivery of 389 affordable homes in the District which demonstrates the success of the strategic sites included in the local plan in increasing affordable housing delivery.
- The Housing team have submitted a bid for £1.3 million Government funding from the Next Steps Accommodation Program (NSAP) which will enable the Council to acquire a 16 unit self-contained property in Witney to help ease the homelessness situation. NSAP will be sharing a grant determination letter with the Council in due course, officially confirming its final funding allocation. A report has been put on the Cabinet work agenda for November/December which will give full details of the outcome of the bid with proposals and recommendations.

## **Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council**

### **Quarter 2 Update (key highlights of activity during July – September 2020)**

- As mentioned in the last update, Publica released the Salesforce BOT onto the Councils websites. The Salesforce BOT is available 24/7 and replaces the Live Chat functionality. It answers questions and signposts visitors to the necessary information. If the BOT is unable to answer a query, it will transfer the enquiry to Customer Services using the Live Chat feature. The data shows the BOT is able to answer around 80% of all enquiries without having to transfer the request to Customer Services and/or leave a message. We continue to monitor and improve the BOTs performance and modify its configuration as new Council Services are added to it. Between July and September 2020, the BOT held 4,632 conversations with customers across the three councils, and on average was 85% successful in answering customer queries without needing to transfer them to a Customer Service Advisor.
- Over the past 3 months, the ICT team have been working closely with the new Customer Experience Improvement Team. Applications currently being developed cover new Fly Tipping and Abandoned Vehicle processes and improving the customer services interface. Work has also commenced on integration with the new Waste Management system for Cotswold DC which could also be used by West Oxfordshire next year.
- The new revenues and benefits system, Civica, is on budget and has been meeting all of its key dates this quarter. Data migration work has commenced and the first cut of data was returned to the service during September for testing. Officers have also started setting up the system security, users and user groups. The Council is on schedule to implement the new system in mid January 2021, with customers being able to self-serve for the majority of their revenue and benefit transactions. This will offer customers greater flexibility, and will free up resources within the Council to support other customers who are unable to self-serve. Online self-serve options also uphold the Council's commitment to protecting the local environment, allowing staff to work more remotely. To ensure residents are still receiving the same service whilst the new system is being prepared, the team has sought extra support from external colleagues at Civica On-Demand.
- The Customer Service Improvement Team have been working to ensure all automated features on the Council website are 'fit for purpose' through the utilisation of customer feedback, and the communications team have been liaising with services to improve the website's content.
- In response to Covid-19, the ICT team have built and deployed an online application for the Test and Trace £500 support payment, which is now live across the three council websites.



**For further context for this Q2 update please refer to Q1 Council Priorities report from Cabinet September 2020**

<https://cmis.westoxon.gov.uk/cmisis/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/3480/Committee/13/Default.aspx>



Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:  
**July 2020 - September 2020**

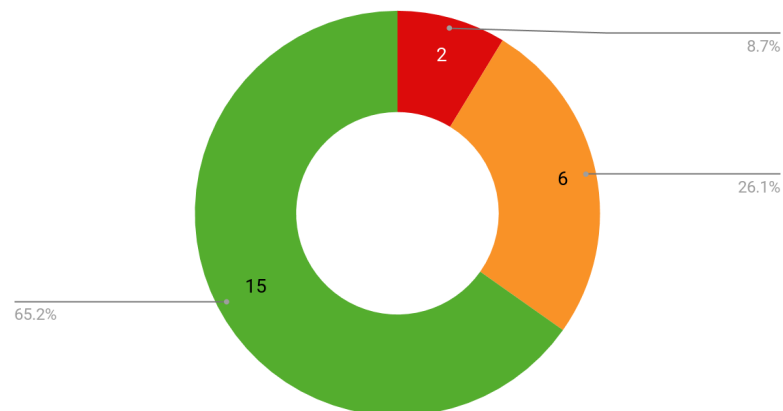
## KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS LIST

Finance and Management O & S Committee	Economic and Social O & S Committee	Environment O & S Committee
Customer satisfaction – face to face	Number of households living in emergency accommodation for under 28 days	Number of fly tips collected
Customer satisfaction – web	Number of households living in emergency accommodation for over 28 days	Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place
Customer satisfaction – telephone	Number of Long Term Empty properties	Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within one working day
Customer satisfaction - email	Percentage of major planning applications determined	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales
Percentage of calls responded to within 20 seconds	Percentage of minor planning applications determined	Residual household waste per household (kg)
Percentage of telephone calls abandoned by the customer	Percentage of other planning applications determined	(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled
(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected	Percentage of planning appeals allowed	(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste by waste streams
(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected	(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered	Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process new housing benefit claims	Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days	Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit change of circumstances	Number of visits to leisure centres	
(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay	Number of gym memberships	

# KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

## At a glance...

Summary of Performance



### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Due to Covid-19, some services were unable to operate in Q1. Following the lifting of restrictions in July, all services (except shop mobility) were operational for the most of Q2 including the leisure centres, food safety, and parking enforcement.

Overall, services are performing well but some services continue to be impacted by Covid-19 such as collection rates and homelessness; and further impacts on our resources and finances can be expected as England progresses through the second lockdown.

Services have adapted to a new way of working, and the majority of staff continue to work from home. There does not appear to be a significant detriment to limiting the delivery of services to online, virtual or phone; and customer satisfaction for services delivered by phone remains high

Indicator	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	Green
Customer satisfaction - F2F	n/a
Customer satisfaction - website	Orange
Customer satisfaction - email	no target set
% calls responded within 20 secs	Red
% abandoned calls	Red
CT collection rate	Green
NNDR collection rate	Orange
Average days to process HB new claims	Green
Average days to process HB change events	Green
% HB overpayment	Orange
Households in Emergency Accommodation under 28 days	Green
Households in Emergency Accommodation over 28 days	Orange
% major applications determined within time	Green
% minor applications determined within time	Green
% others applications determined within time	Green
% planning appeals allowed	Green
Affordable homes delivered	Green
% land charge searches dispatched within time	Green
% high risk notifications assessed within time	Green
% high risk food premises inspected within time	Orange
Residual waste per household (kg)	Green
% overall recycling rate	Green
Missed bins per 100,000	Green
Leisure visits	no target set
Gym memberships	no target set
Parking enforcement hours	Orange

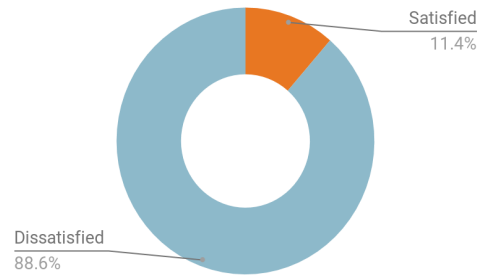
# CUSTOMER SERVICE

## Customer satisfaction

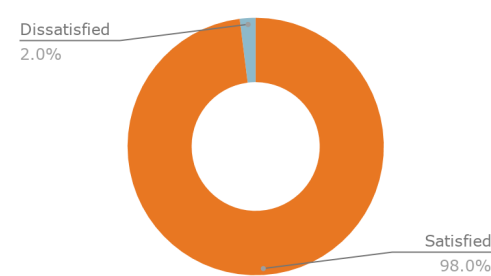
Face to face - no surveys due to Covid19



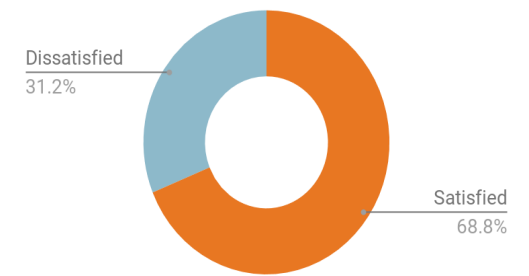
Website - 44 respondents



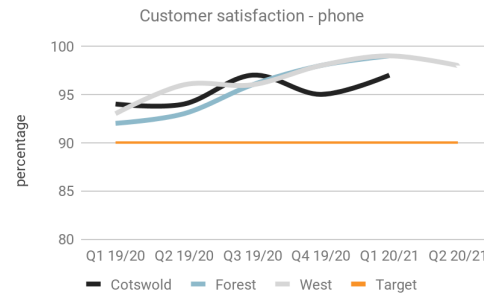
Phone - 1421 respondents



Email - 170 respondents



## What's the trend?



### OBSERVATION

Due to Covid-19, the Council closed its reception areas and therefore no face to face surveys have been completed so far for the year.

Overall, satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone continue to be high, while satisfaction for services via the website appear to be low. Just 44 website users responded to the survey; this indicator has been set to 'Amber' to recognise that 44 responses is an extremely small proportion of the 395,318 visitors to the website in Q2. A new website went live on 12 March 2020 designed to be more user friendly and allow people to transact with us, as well as acting as a source of information. Officers are continuing to make improvements to the content; and documents are also being reviewed to ensure that they are compliant with accessibility guidelines. The Council has a duty to provide the same level of access to services and information to all our customers and those using our website, regardless of their abilities.

The Council commenced collection of satisfaction ratings for services delivered via email on 2 April 2020; all outbound emails sent by customer services from Salesforce contain a link to the survey

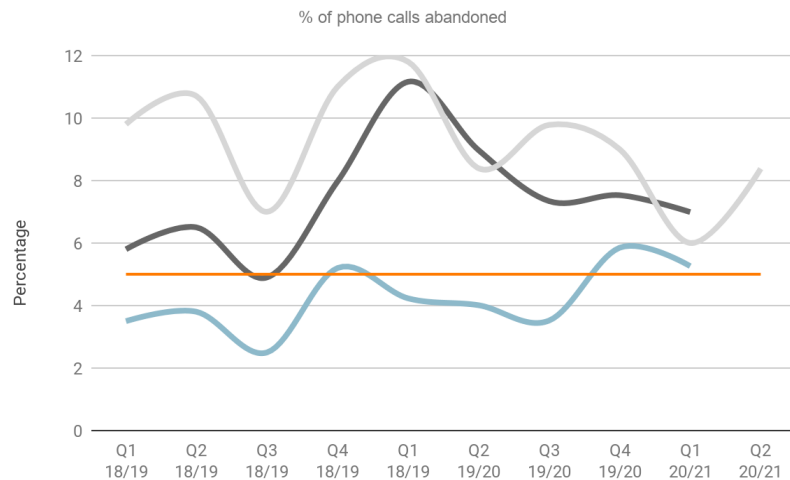
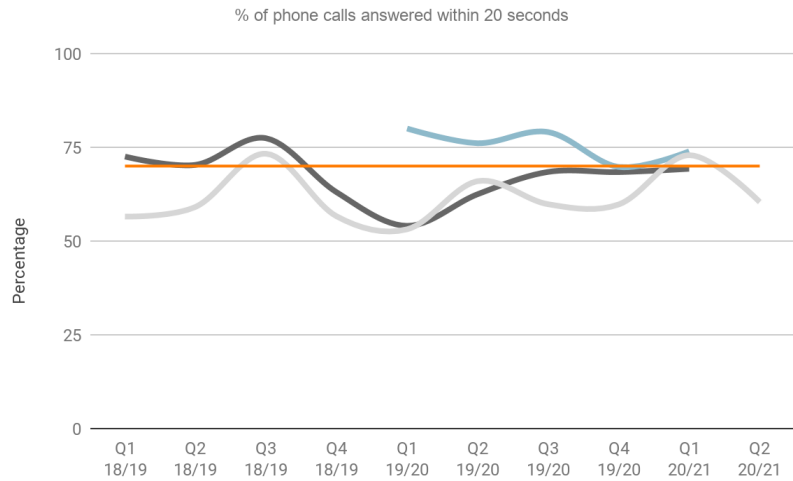
## Telephone calls - response and abandonment

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION

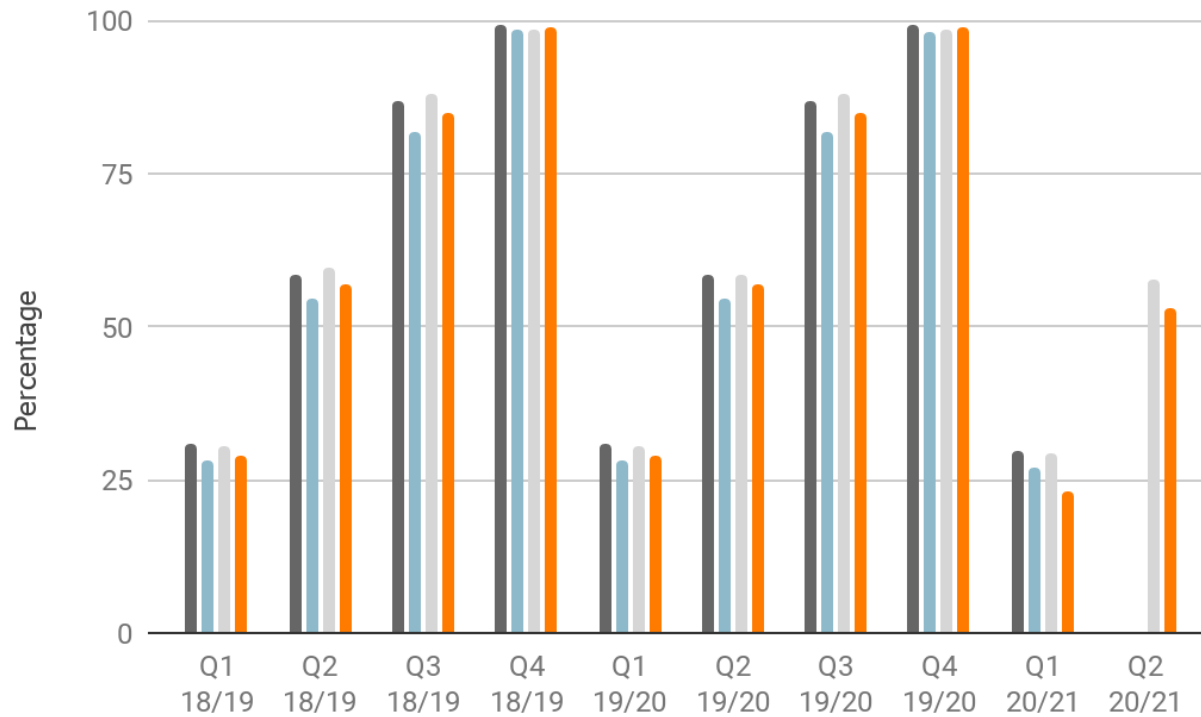
For a large part of 2019/20 performance was affected by the implementation of the new CRM system and further enhancements that took time to 'bed in', as well as turnover of staff.

There were higher workloads in 2019-20 Q4 including a spike in calls relating to garden waste renewals, and to Covid-19. The transfer of four staff who usually provide face to face services to the phones was helping to improve performance levels.

Historically, performance has struggled to meet targets; and performance has once again dipped during Q2. The impact of home working on team work is being reviewed, and a renewed focus on team activities and meetings has been initiated

## Revenues and Benefit

### (Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected



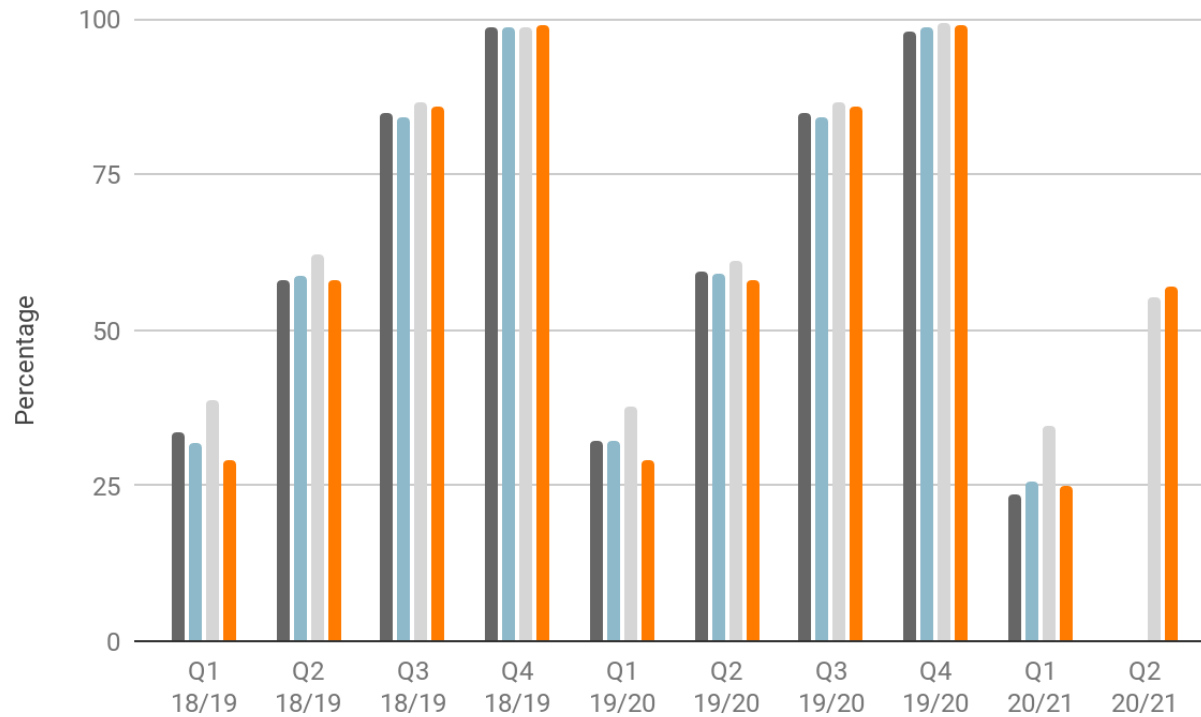
#### OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q2, the collection rate was ahead of the re-profiled target, although down on previous years.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, all recovery action was paused following government guidance and Member decision. The service is working with customers to re-align payment instalments to potentially run between June 2020 and March 2021.

The service had the go-ahead at the end of September to re-commence recovery actions which will consist of reminders and final payment letters. Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21

## (Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected



### OBSERVATION:

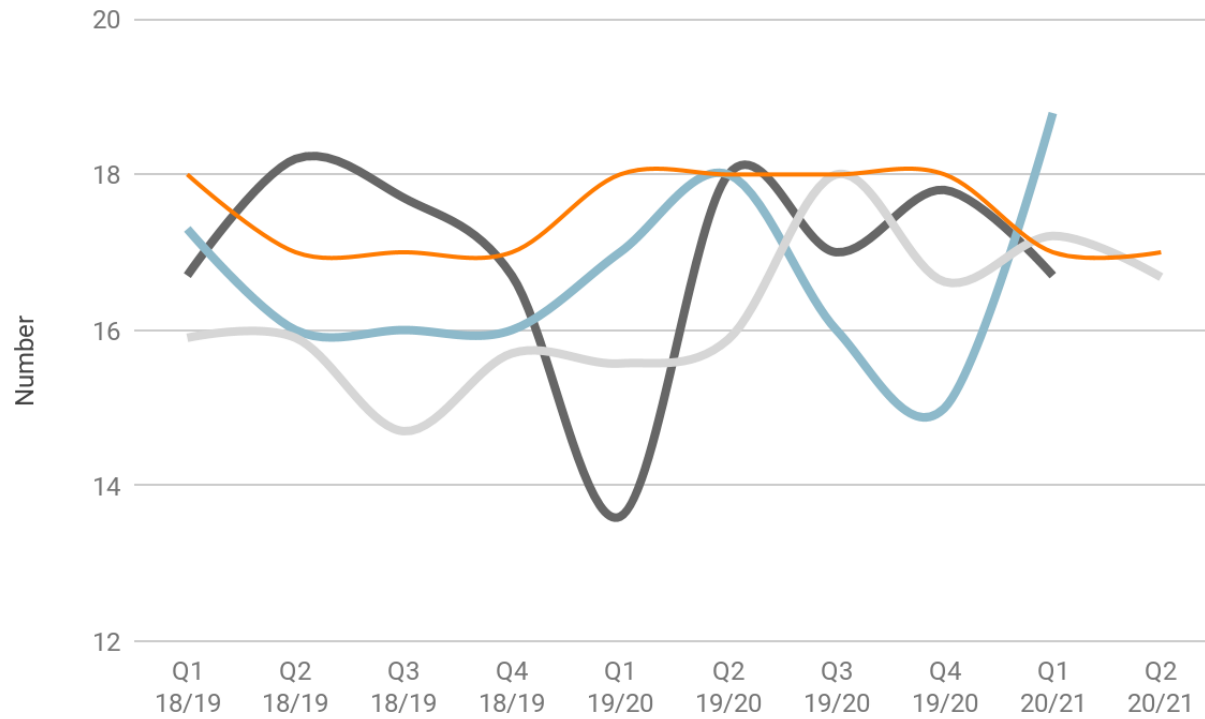
The Q2 target was slightly adjusted to take account of the impact of Covid-19. Although the collection rate was slightly down on the reprofiled target at the end of A2, it still remains somewhat lower than previous years.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 and the lock down, many businesses were closed in Q1, and part of Q2; and all recovery action was paused.

Covid-19 is having a major impact on business rate collection figures throughout the country. Government have gone some way in helping certain businesses with 100% business rate relief, but there are still those businesses which have seen an impact on their out turn which have not received any assistance and are therefore struggling financially. We are working with businesses where we are able to and supporting them through manageable repayment plans



**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process new housing benefit claims**

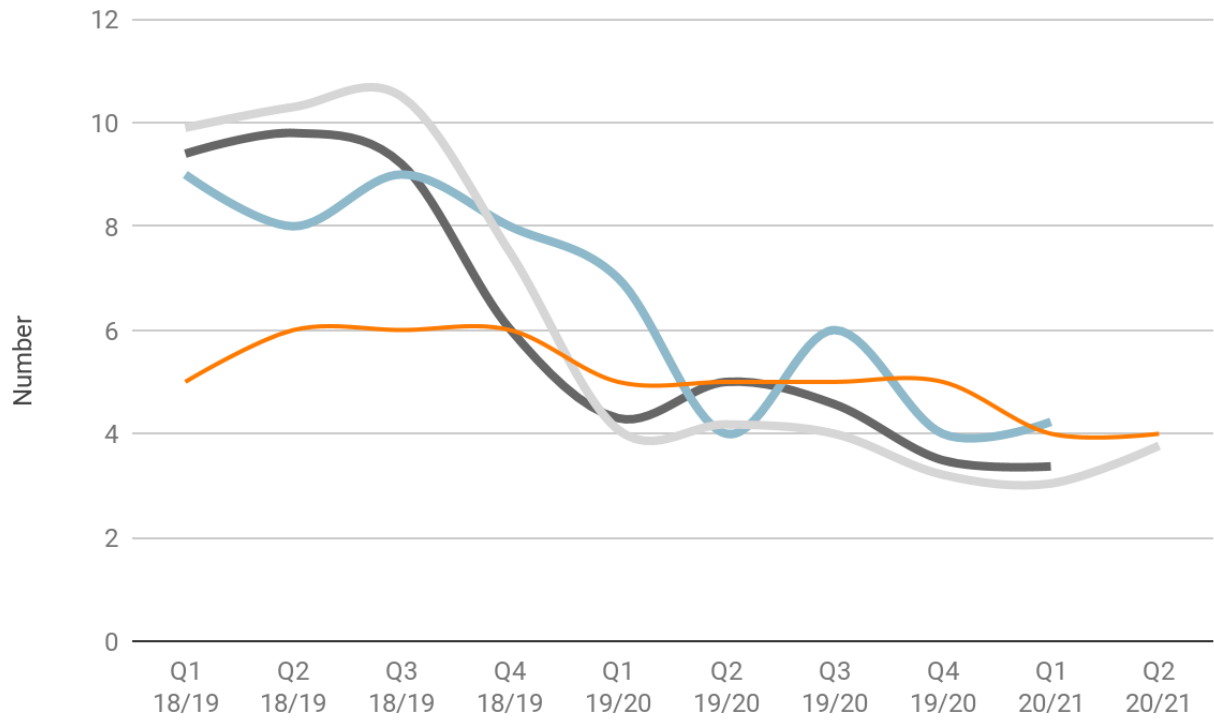


**OBSERVATION:**

Overall, the number of new claims has been falling as claimants are moved to Universal credit. However, there has been an increase in temporary accommodation claims (which the council is responsible for) due to the impact of Covid-19. These types of claims can be difficult for some councils to administer as the claim requires a signature and claimants may be placed outside of the District or have difficulty returning forms to the Council especially during lock down.

Note that historically the quarterly targets have been profiled and have generally been maintained at 17 or 18 days

**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit change of circumstances**



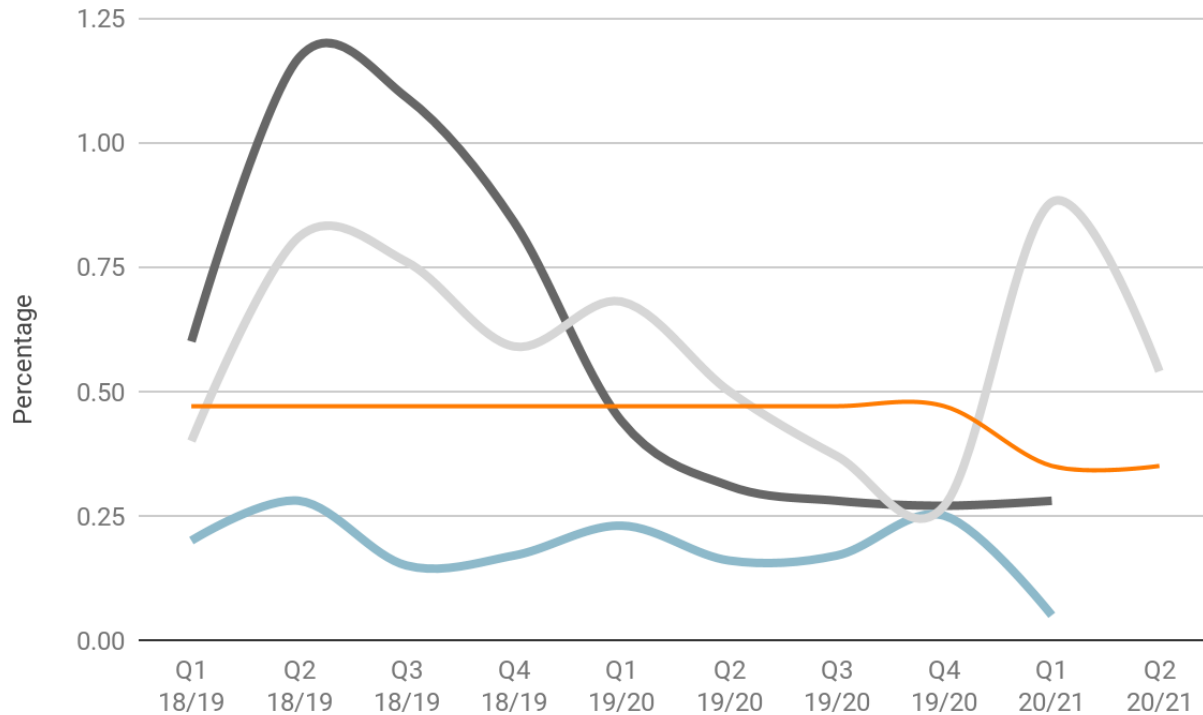
**OBSERVATION:**

The number of Universal Credit claims has increased due to the impact of Covid-19, which in turn has resulted in an increase in changes that affect housing benefit and council tax support (the latter is not included in this indicator).

Overall, performance remains comfortably within the target; however, staff have started to support the data migration and testing activities related to the roll out of the new revenues and benefits system which is likely to take capacity out of the service during Q3.

Note that historically the quarterly targets have been profiled and have generally been maintained at 5 or 6 days. A more stringent target of 4 days has been set for 2020-21

**(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay**



**OBSERVATION:**

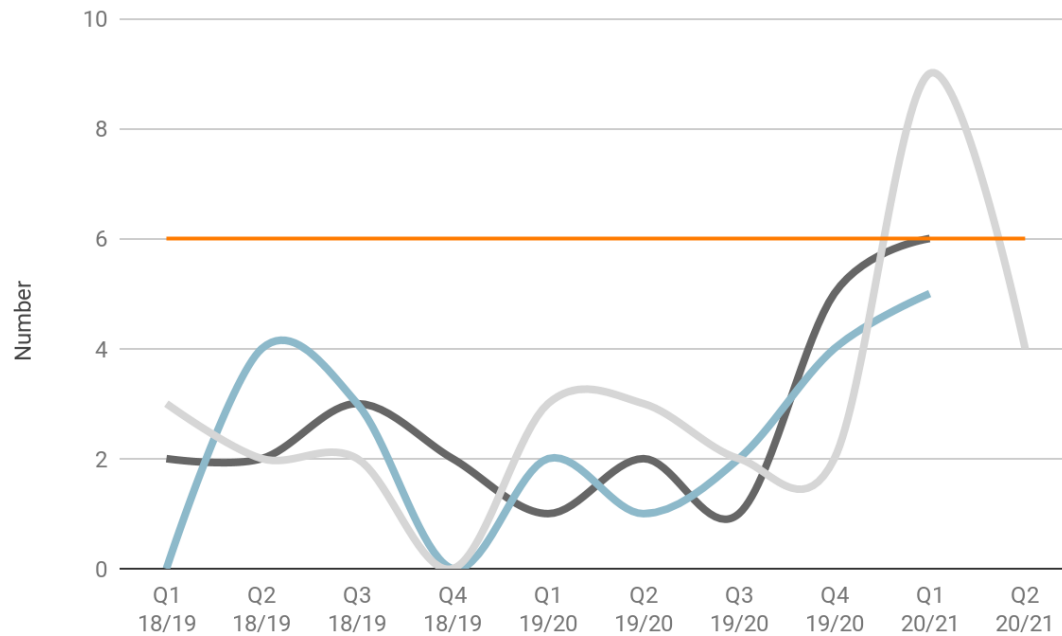
We are continuing to involve a number of staff in quality assurance. Due to the high volume of change of circumstances, we take a sampling approach and target areas which we know have high error rates such as calculation of earnings.

There was a small number of errors relating to high value overpayments in Q4 which were amended in Q1. This spike will flatten out over the course of the year, and the annual target of 0.35% is expected to be achieved. Therefore, this indicator has been set to amber

## Housing Support

### (Snapshot) Number of households living in emergency accommodation for under 28 days

Target      Cotswold      Forest of Dean      West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

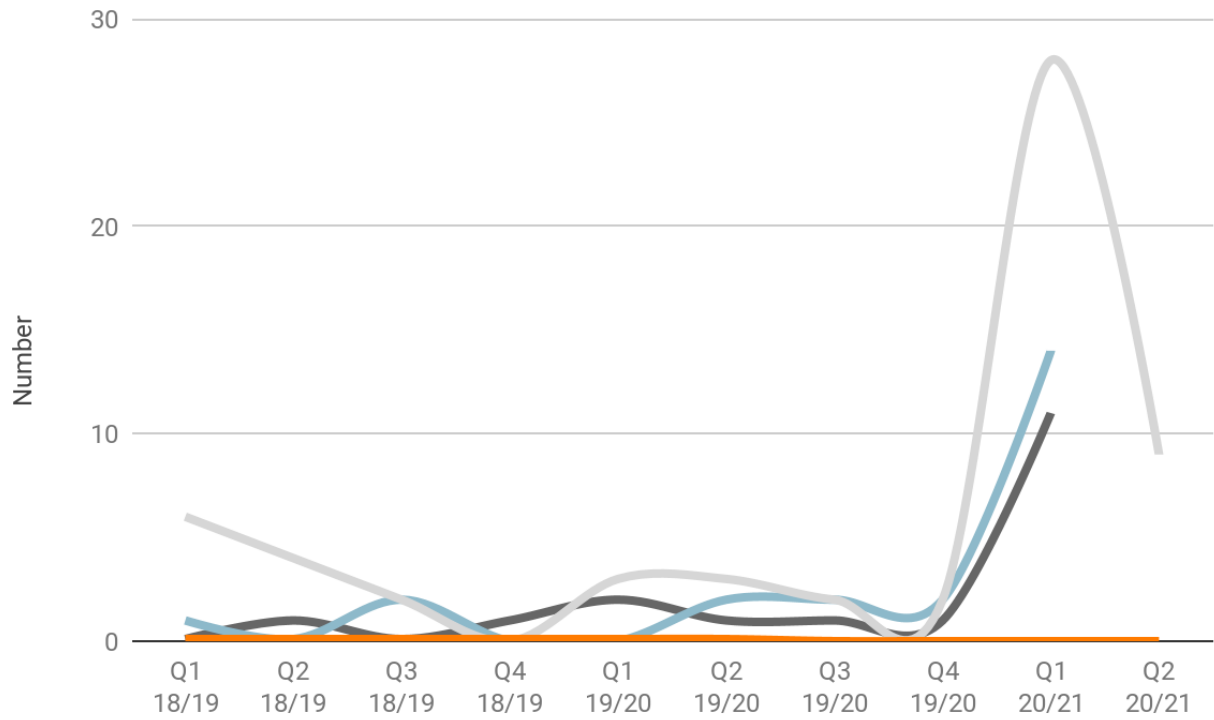
Due to Covid-19, councils are required to place all clients who are rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness regardless of priority need who have approached the Council, into emergency accommodation.

The number of households living in emergency accommodation has started to decrease; the Housing team has been creating exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. In addition, some households and rough sleepers have chosen to leave emergency accommodation.

As part of the Housing First project, the Council has worked with Aspire and Cottswoy to place six complex cases into permanent accommodation where they will receive one-to-one support.

As Covid-19 infections increase and further restrictions come into place during the Autumn and Winter months, it is likely that numbers will start to rise again

**(Snapshot) Number of households living in emergency accommodation for over 28 days**



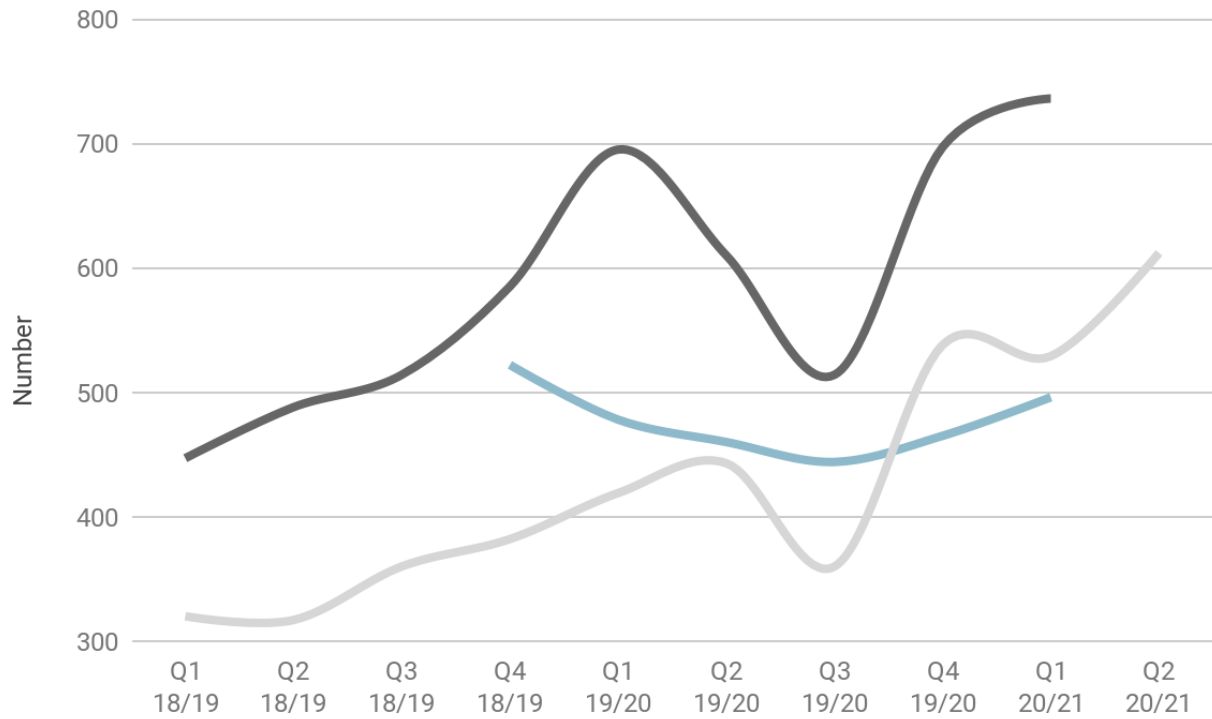
**OBSERVATION:**

The number of households living in emergency accommodation has started to decrease; the Housing team has been creating exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. In addition, some households and rough sleepers have chosen to leave emergency accommodation.

This indicator has been set to 'Amber' to recognise that the service has been significantly impacted by Covid-19 and the first lockdown; it has followed government guidelines and worked hard to place all households that have approached the Council

**(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties**

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**

The number of long term empty properties has increased due to a combination of reasons; initially house moves were paused to help contain Covid-19 in the first wave, and there have been delays to planned demolitions including the 44 housing association properties. In addition, there are a number of retirement properties which have not sold.

The LTE officer post is responsible for monitoring properties and working with landlords to support them to bring their properties back into use, however, this post is currently vacant. The post is currently grant funded for two years and will expire at end of March 2021. Therefore, it will require Cabinet approval to extend the contract

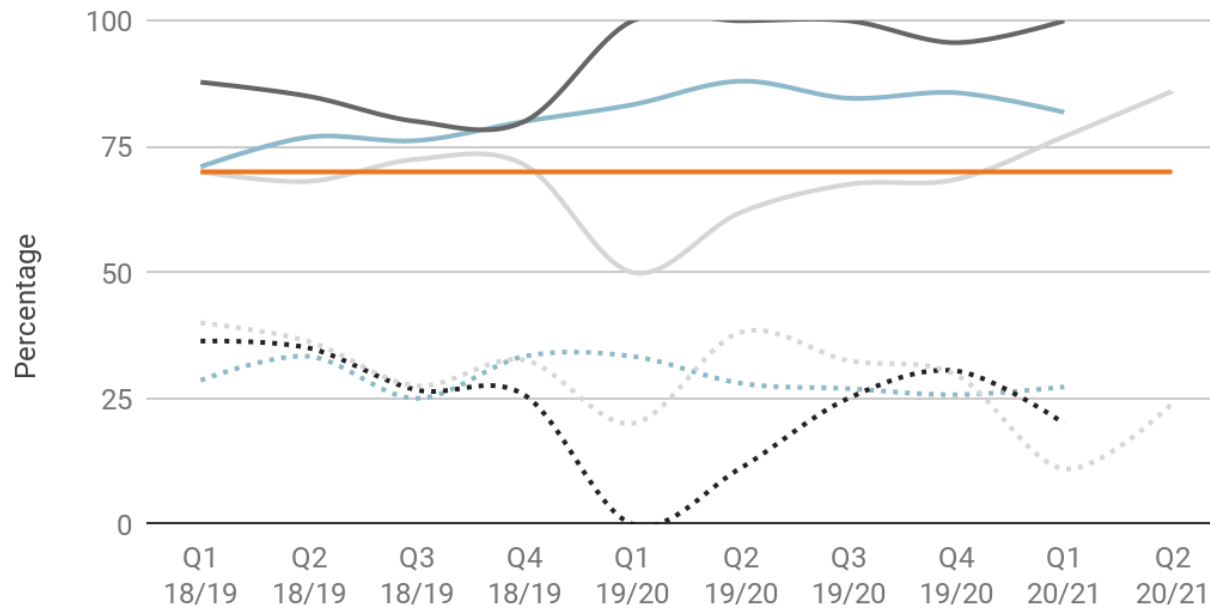
## Planning and Strategic Housing

### (Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within an agreed timeframe



% of all application completed within 13 weeks



#### OBSERVATION:

Twelve major applications were determined in the quarter, and 21 for the first six months compared to 26 for the same period a year ago.

The service reports that the number of applications received over the summer has been a record nationally. The Council experienced a dip in numbers around the time of the first lockdown which has been almost entirely eliminated by the higher volumes received since May. The Planning team has found the restrictions imposed by Covid (no meetings, limited site visits, largely home based working, limited availability of consultees etc ) have impacted on efficiency and with higher than normal volumes coming through, performance is likely to fall.

Registration/validation is proving particularly problematic as a home based exercise and is reducing the time available to the planning officer to determine the application .

Note that the charts for the planning performance measures have been separated to demonstrate the number of applications that are completed within the set time frames and the number that are completed as a result of an agreed extension of time.

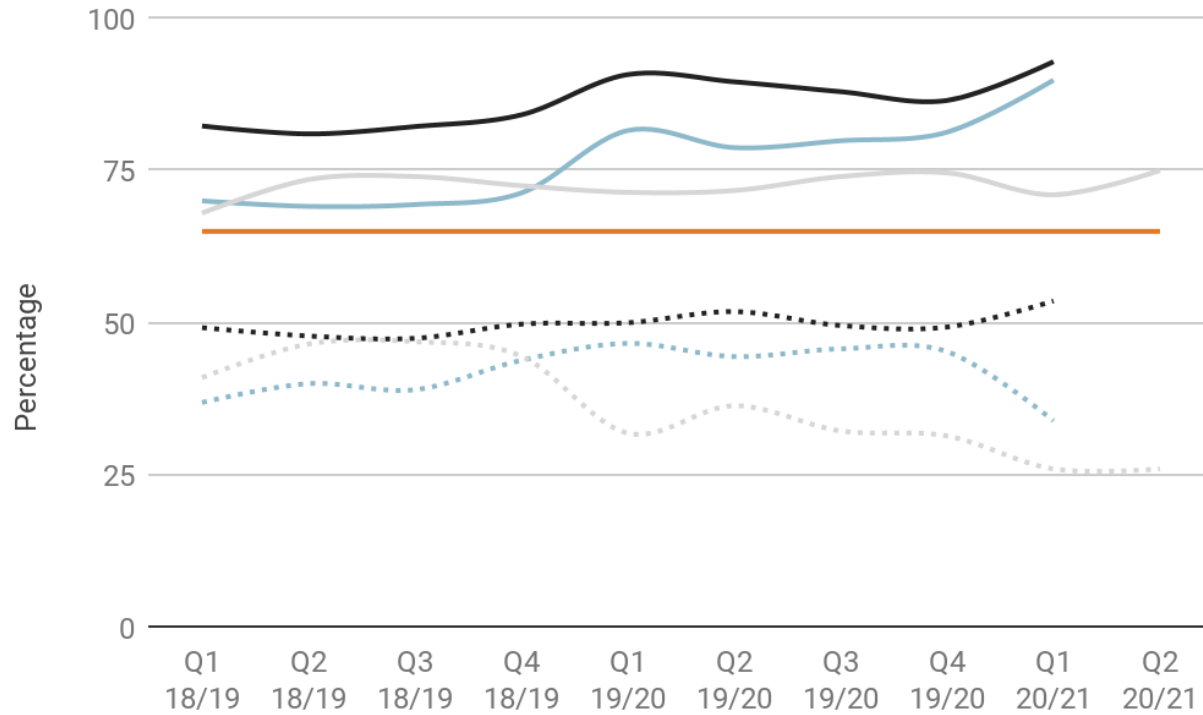
Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable.

## (Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



### OBSERVATION:

83 minor applications were determined in the quarter, and 159 for the first six months compared to 269 for the same period a year ago.

The challenging work conditions coupled with higher volumes of applications coming through is likely to start impacting on performance. Registration/validation is proving particularly problematic as a home based exercise and is reducing the time available to the planning officer to determine the application



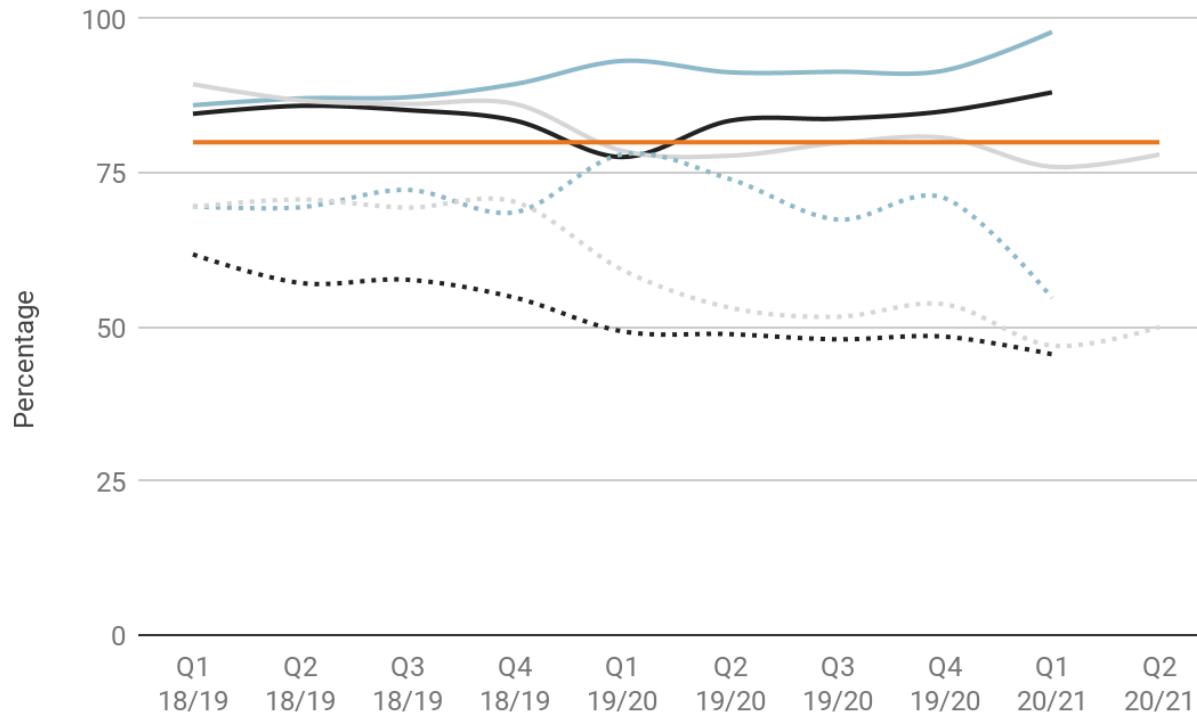
## (Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

233 other applications were determined in the quarter, and 461 for the first six months compared to 629 for the same period a year ago.

The challenging work conditions coupled with higher volumes of applications coming through is likely to start impacting on performance. Registration/validation is proving particularly problematic as a home based exercise and is reducing the time available to the planning officer to determine the application

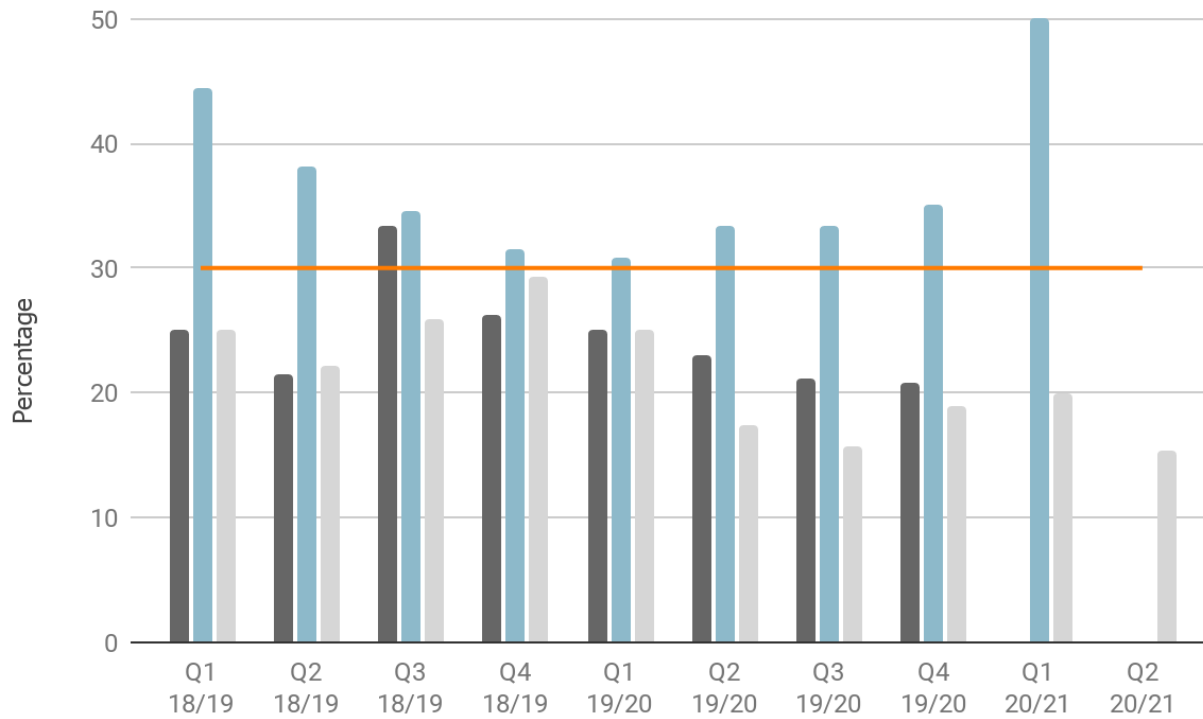
**(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed**

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire

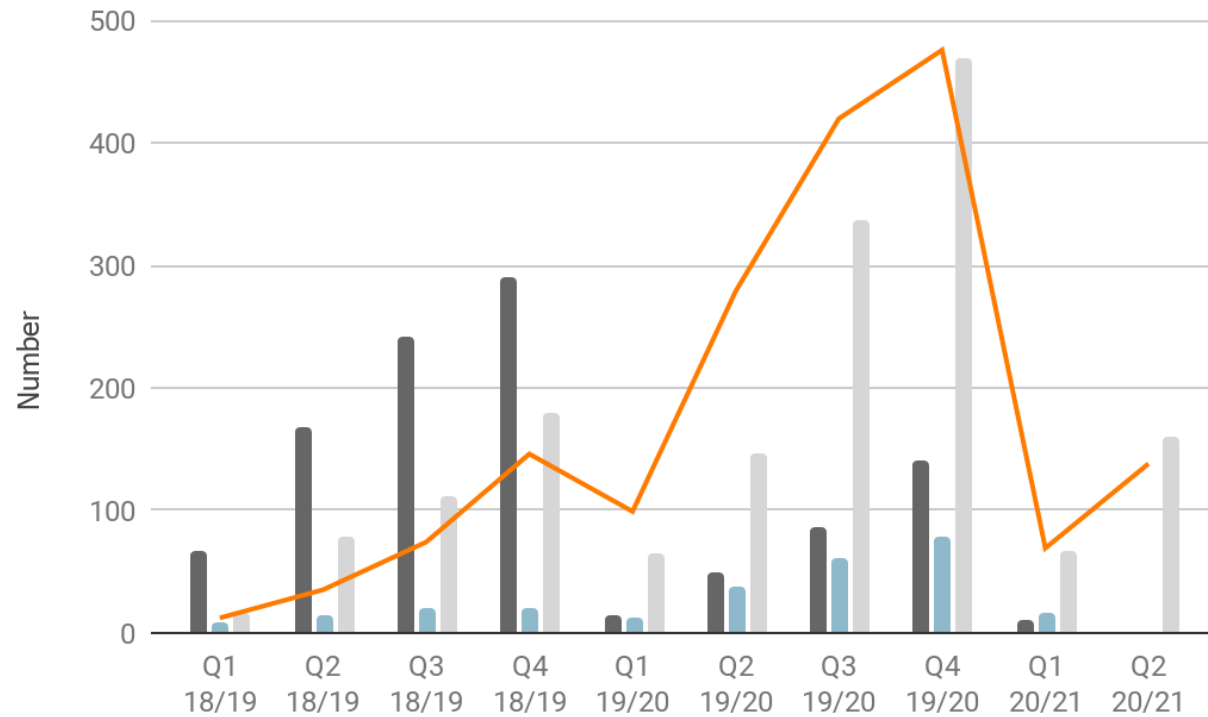


**OBSERVATION:**

Eight planning appeals were determined in the quarter with one appeal allowed.

Cumulatively from 1 April 2020, two of the 13 planning appeals were allowed

**(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered**



**OBSERVATION:**

Ninety-four affordable homes were delivered in Q2 for rent (52) and low cost home ownership (42) including plots in Carterton and Stanton Harcourt (Cottsway, Aston (Sovereign)).

While the first affordable housing plots at East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area were completed in Q2, the Pinsley Farm site in Long Hanborough has now delivered all of its planned affordable housing.

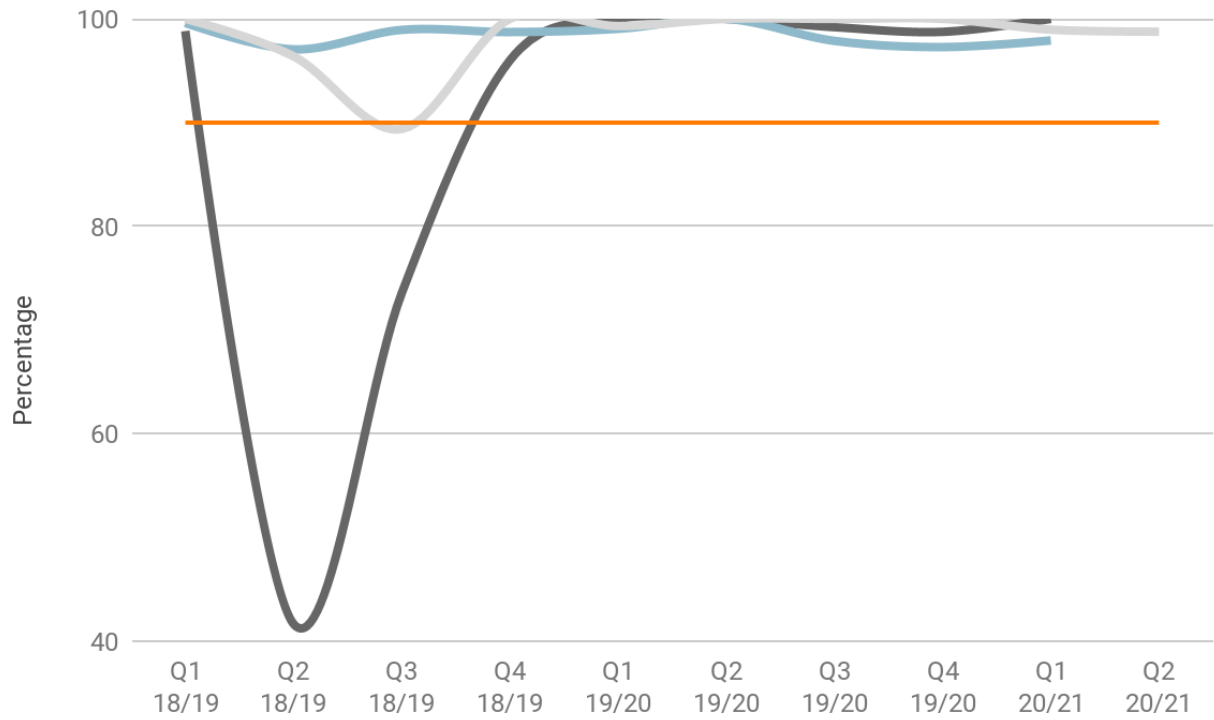
There have been delays at West Witney and Eynsham (Sage) where there have been material supply chain issues related to Covid. Despite this, 32 affordable homes were delivered, with the remainder scheduled for delivery in Q3.

There has been an upward revision to the number of affordable homes to be delivered by the end of the year on the Downs Road, Witney site. The shortfall of affordable homes delivered on this site in Q2 are expected to be delivered in Q3.

For the first six months of the year 161 affordable homes were delivered; the annual target of 274 based on the local plan is expected to be exceeded

### Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days

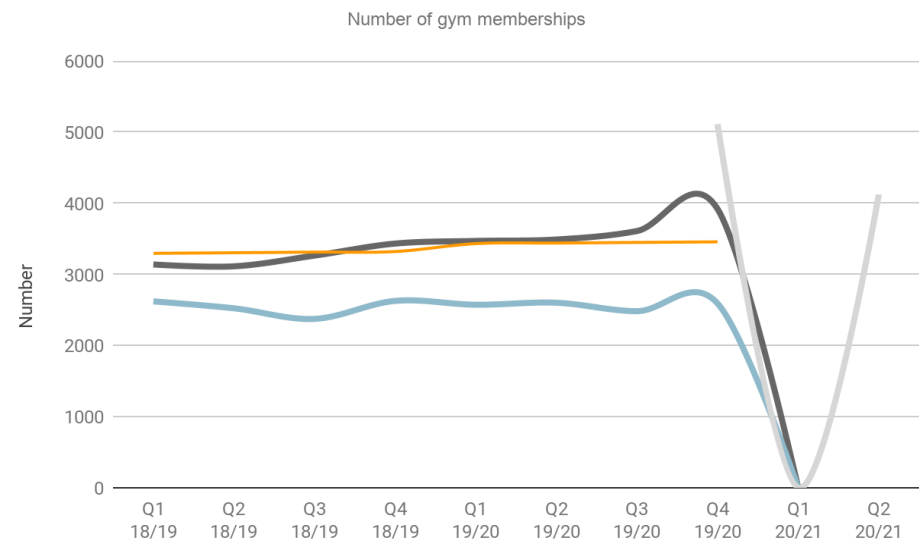
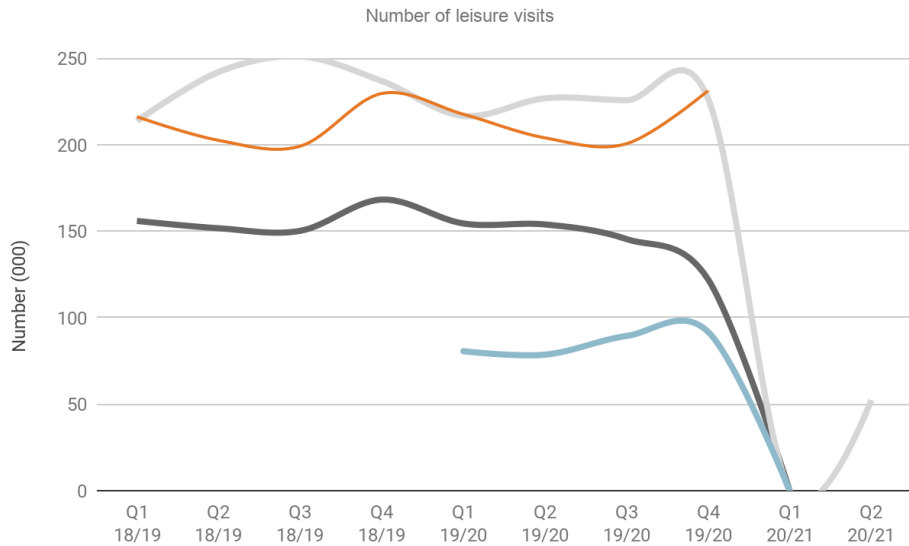
Target      Cotswold      Forest of Dean      West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**  
The service processed 464 official land charge searches; 453 searches were dispatched within 10 working days.  
There has been an increase in the number of official land charge searches compared to the same period of the previous year (346) which may be due to the 'stamp duty holiday' and/or Brexit. Overall, the service is maintaining a high level of service delivery.

## Leisure

### Number of visits to leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships



#### OBSERVATION:

Following the re-opening of some of the Council's leisure facilities on 25 July, all facilities had reopened providing the core activities of Gym, Group Exercise, and Swimming with additional activities to be restarted in line with government advice and in conjunction with Covid-19 protocols on social distancing, pre-booking, enhanced cleaning. At the end of Q2, gym memberships have decreased by 19% from pre-Covid times

The recent announcement of a second lockdown will result in the closure of the leisure services for another four weeks.

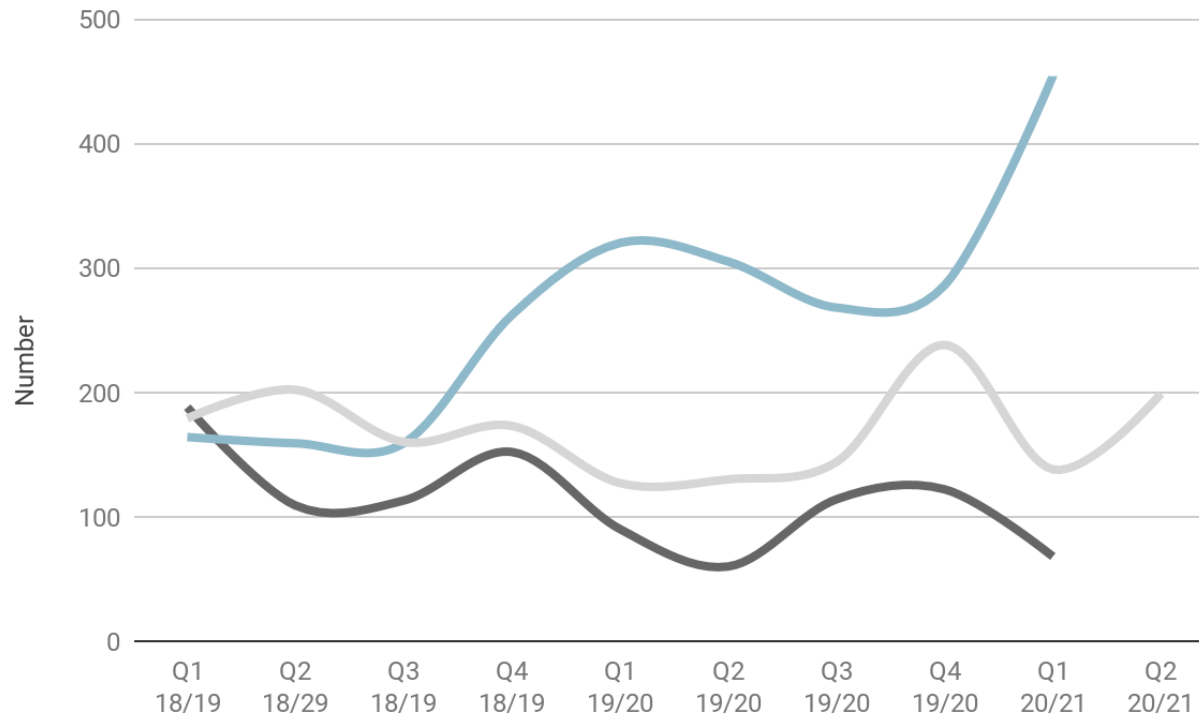
A contract variation has been put in place and a financial recovery package agreed until March 2021

Note that no targets have been set for 2020-21

## Environmental and Regulatory

### Number of fly tips collected

Cotswold      Forest of Dean      West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

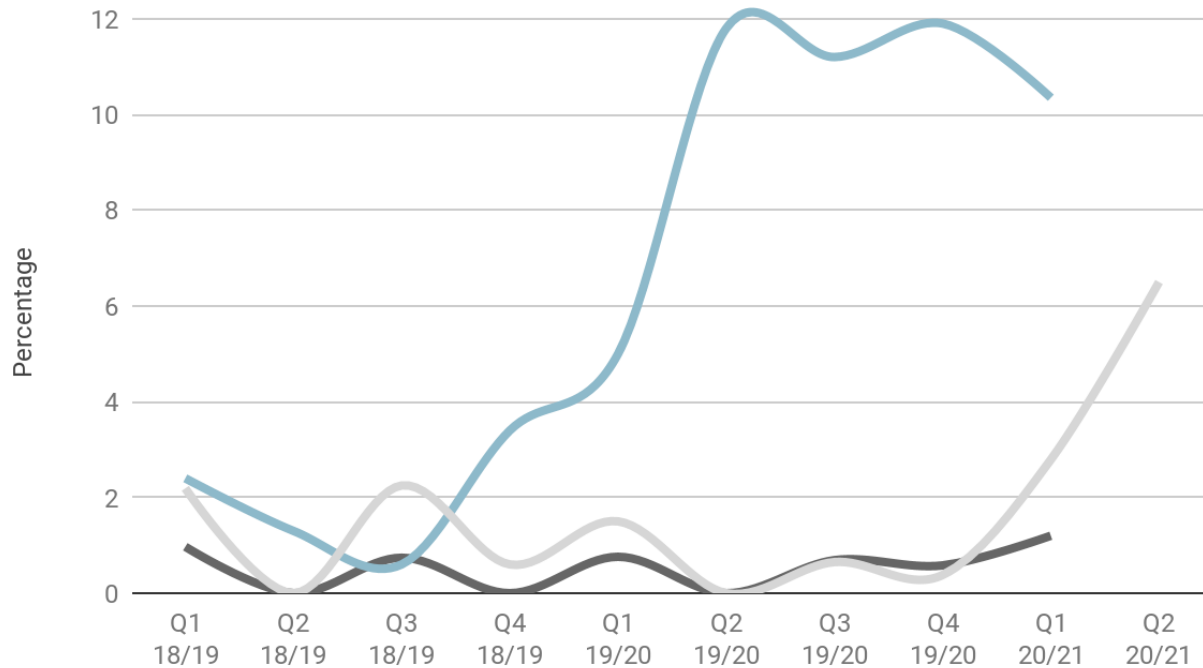
Due to Covid-19, increases in fly tips have been reported nationally, however this is not yet evident in West's figures

The fly tipping service has been redesigned based on customer and user need with the introduction of new on-line forms and web pages. The new process was introduced in October and will make it easier and quicker for residents to report flytips. It will also reduce duplication and therefore create a more efficient and responsive service.

A high percentage of the fly tips at the Forest of Dean are at recycling sites, which are not counted by West and Cotswold

**Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place (defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)**

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**

There were 246 notifications of fly tips in Q2 which resulted in 17 enforcement actions (seven FPNs, one simple caution and nine warning letters).

At West and Cotswold, fly tipping is investigated by ERS who take a risk based triage approach to investigation. Officers use their professional judgement to decide whether it is likely that the fly tip will contain evidence that could lead to enforcement action; this is based on an assessment of the waste type reported, for example, black rubbish bags are likely to contain evidence that could lead to enforcement action being taken while a fly tip of car tyres would be highly unlikely to contain the necessary evidence. In Q2, the ERS team visited 43 fly tips.

In contrast, at Forest of Dean, the Street Warden team usually investigate all fly tips but is now also taking a risk based approach due to Covid-19 and the redeployment of some resources.

The Council will always take enforcement action if fly tipping is witnessed.

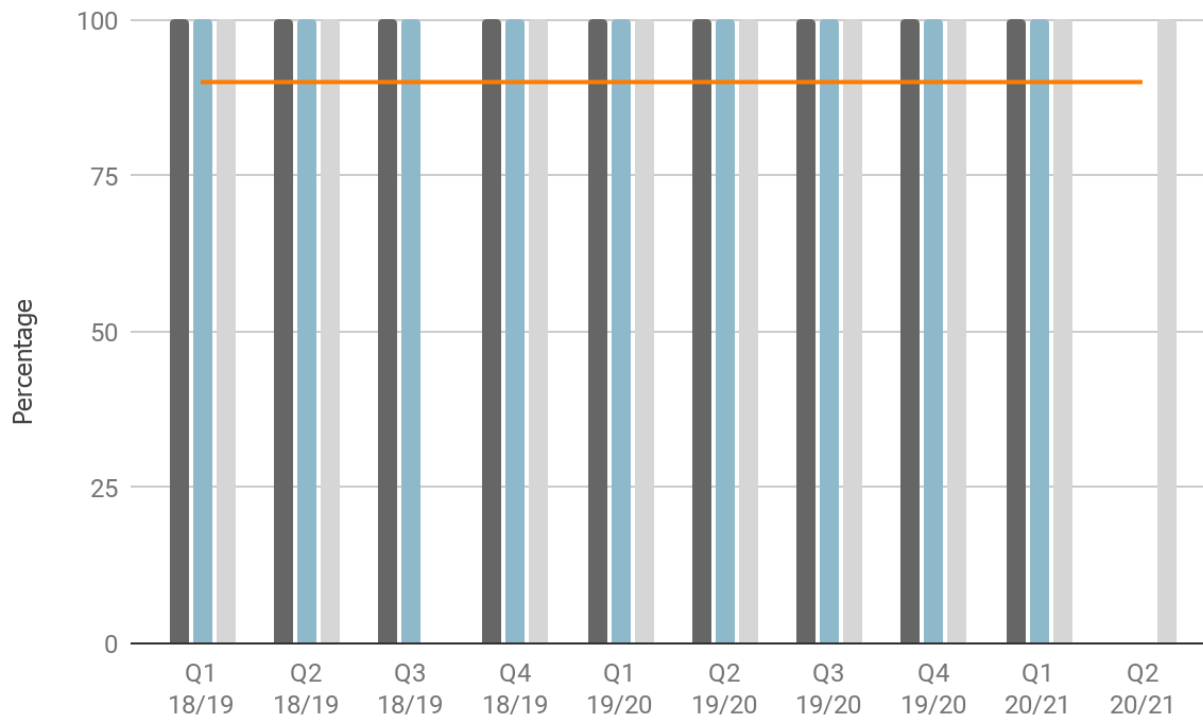
**Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day**

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire

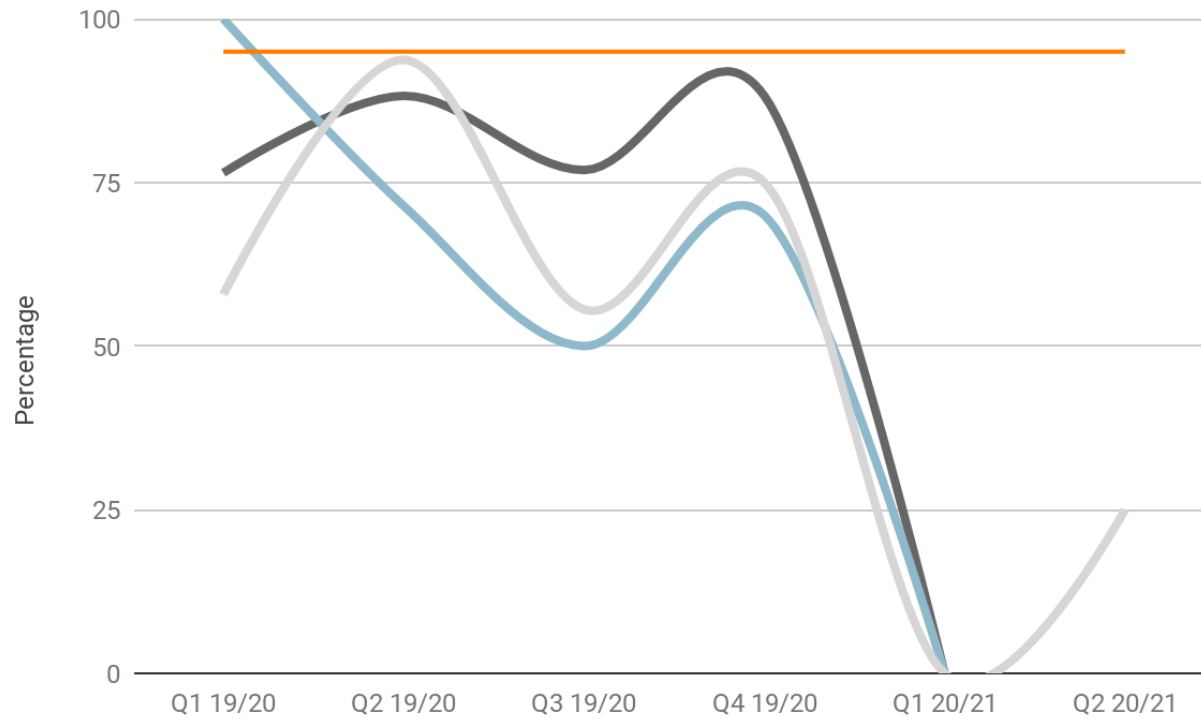


**OBSERVATION:**

Three notifications were received in Q2 and assessed within one day; there were two reports of oil spills and one e-coli case.



## Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



### OBSERVATION:

This indicator has been set to 'amber' to recognise that the service had to cease site visits in mid-March following Covid-19 advice. Further guidance was received from the Food Standards Agency to cease all Food Hygiene Interventions until 18 July.

The FSA published guidance on 17 July advising that routine inspections in high risk food businesses should recommence, excluding businesses catering for vulnerable people. A backlog of inspections is now being undertaken in line with the guidance. Four inspections (for high risk premises) were due in Q2, one was completed within the 28 day timescale.

With the recent announcement of the second lockdown, it is likely that performance will continue to be impacted

## Residual household waste per household (kg)



Target



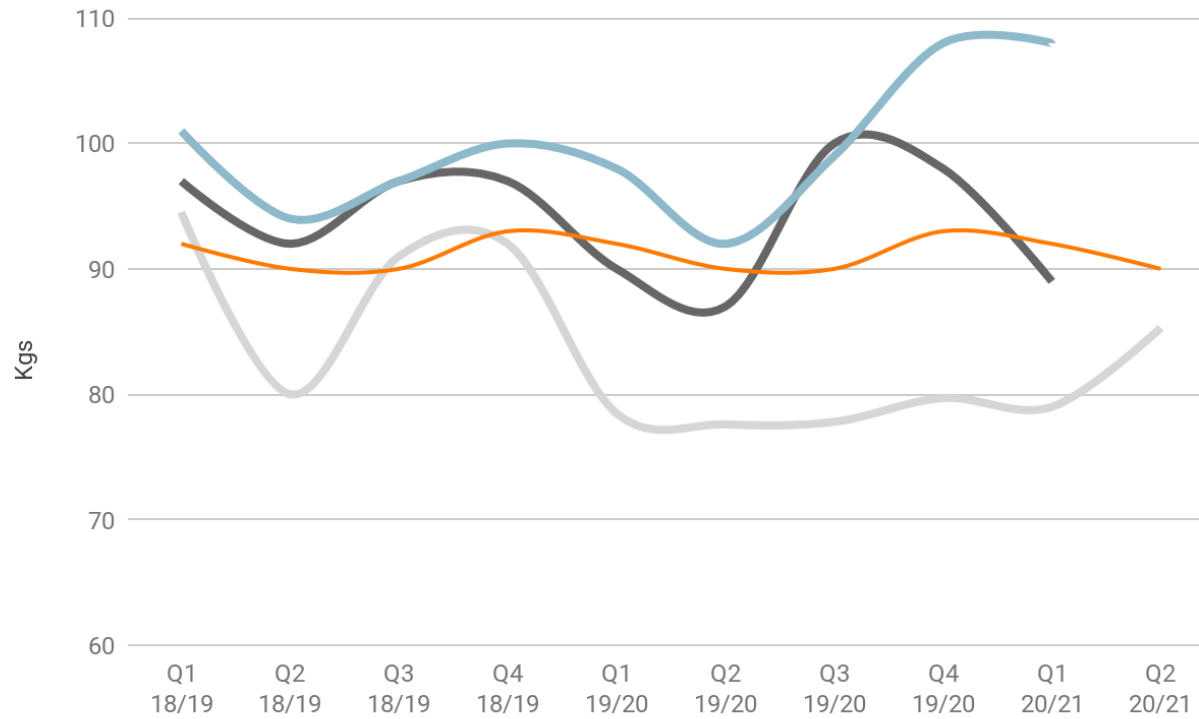
Cotswold



Forest of Dean



West Oxfordshire



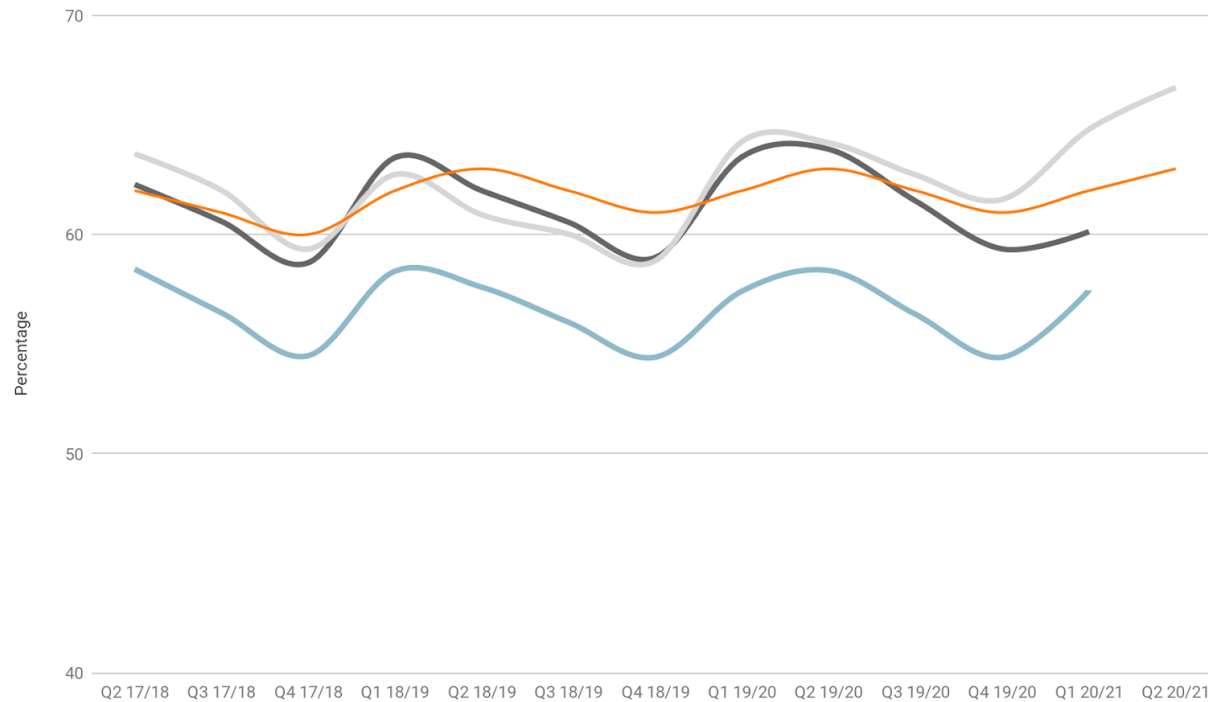
### OBSERVATION:

Due to the impact of Covid-19, all waste and recycling streams have increased.

Residual waste has increased over 12% compared to Q2 of the previous year; All excess recycling and food waste is being collected at the kerbside if presented correctly. Excess residual waste is being directed to the HWRCs as they are now fully open.

Both the Council and the Oxfordshire Recycles (OCC partnership work) are using their social media channels to promote waste reduction

## (Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled



### OBSERVATION:

Due to the impact of Covid-19, residents are presenting higher amounts of all types of waste.

Dry recycling tonnages were up over 50% on the previous year, while food tonnages were up over 21%.

The combined recycling rate for the first six months of the year was 66.7% compared to 64.8% a year ago; and is well ahead of the target.

The dry recycling rate was 28% (an increase of 3.5 percentage points compared to the same period a year ago), the composting rate was 29.4% and food waste sent for anaerobic digestion was 9.3%.

The service is working closely with UBICO; and all additional recycling and food waste presented correctly at the kerbside by residents is being collected.

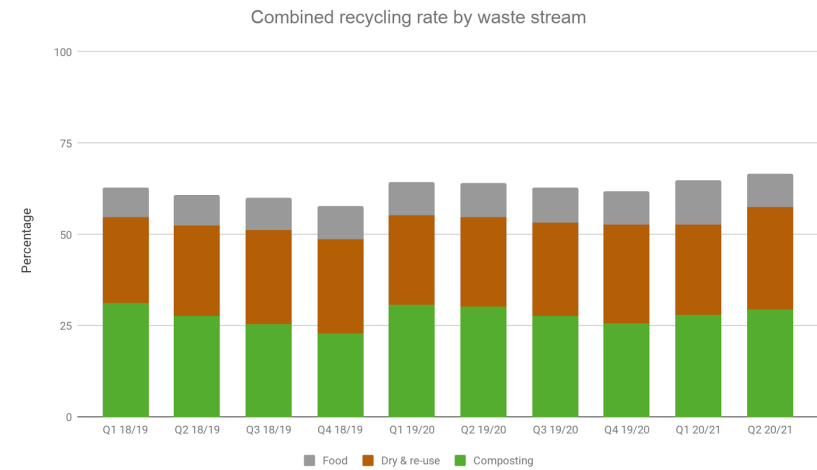
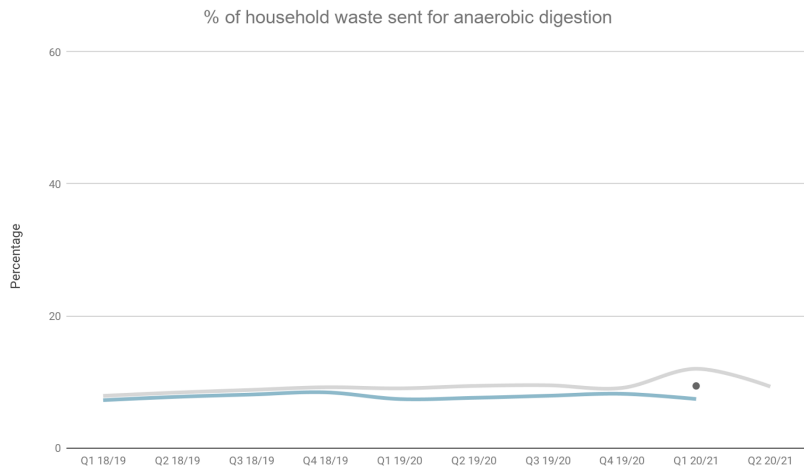
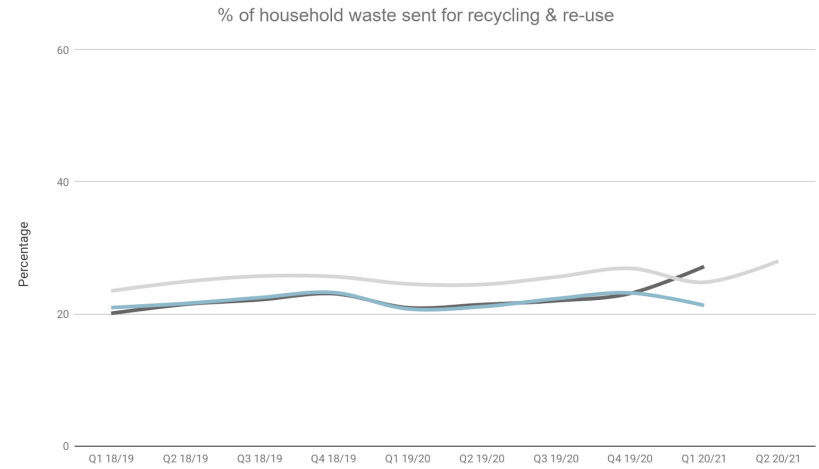
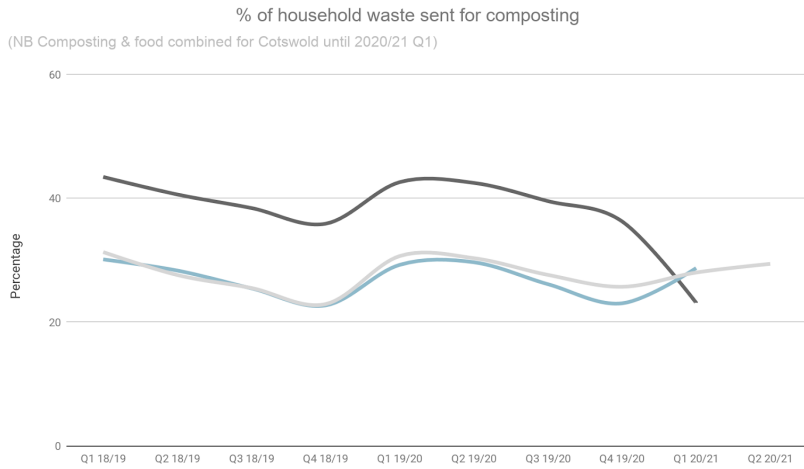
Note that the quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

# (Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled by waste stream

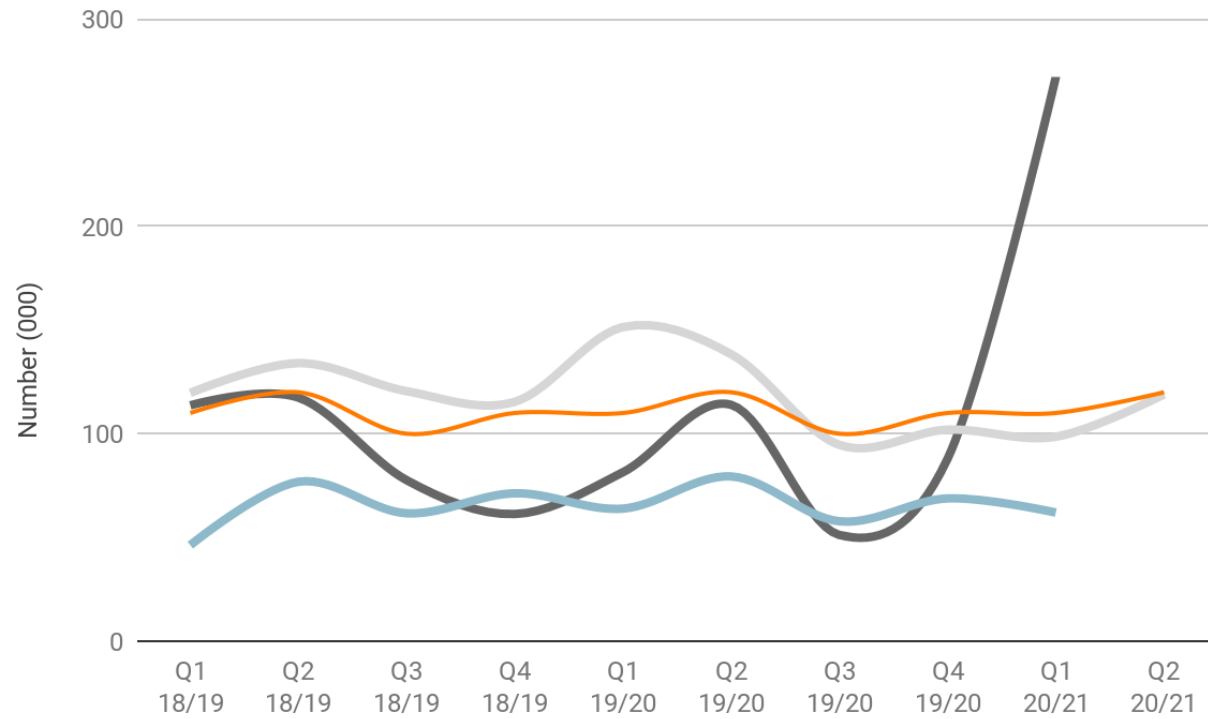
Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



## Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



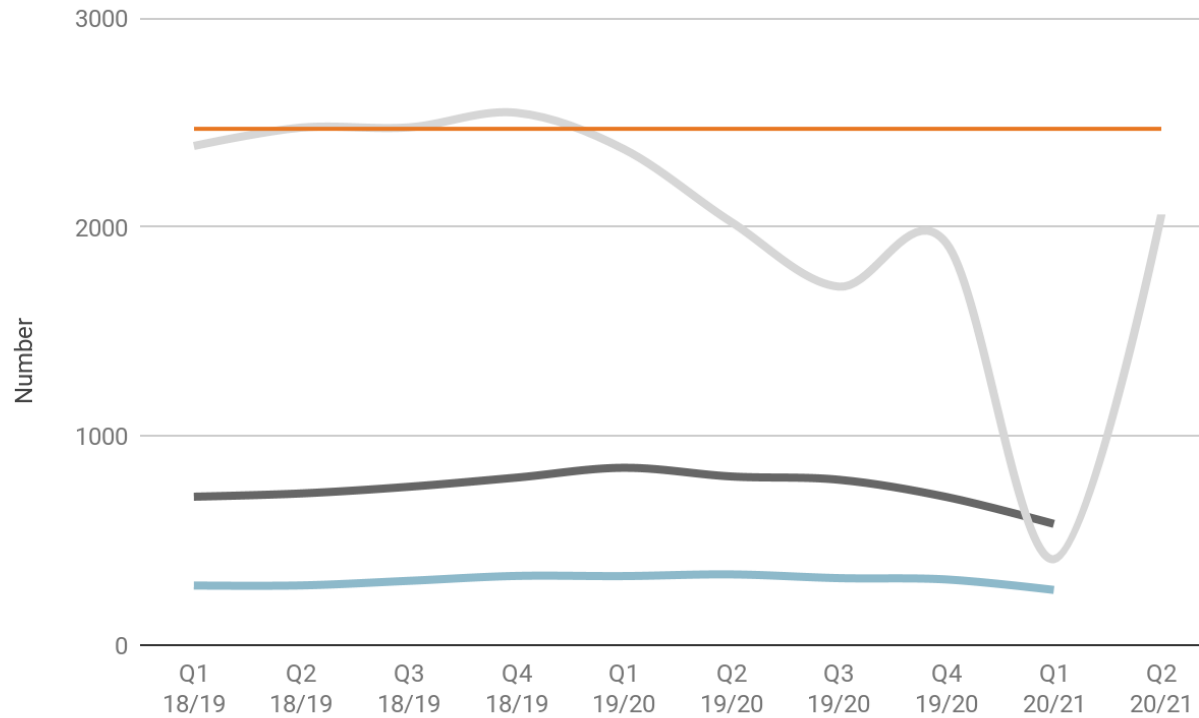
### OBSERVATION:

Overall, there have been improvements over the last year. Previously, the service experienced a high staff turnover in waste crews, and the lack of local knowledge amongst new staff and agency staff caused an increase in the number of missed collections.

There was an increase in the number of misses in March 2020 due to staff absences related to Covid-19, and the use of more agency staff who did not possess local knowledge. Although the service had anticipated that there would be further increases in misses due to increases in waste and recycling tonnage, performance remains within the target. The service is working closely with UBICO to reduce the number of missed bins

## Parking

### Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits



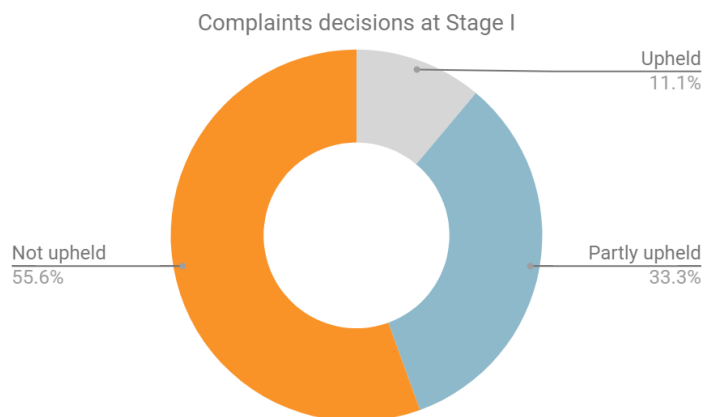
#### OBSERVATION:

All enforcement activities were suspended on 23 March until 15 June 2020 due to Covid-19, and staff were redeployed to support communities.

During Q2, the number of enforcement hours started to return to pre-covid levels; however capacity levels were still down with one vacant part time post and one officer on long term sick. Enforcement officers were also undertaking other duties such as traffic management related to temporary pavement widening and one way systems for social distancing. Therefore, this indicator has been set to amber.

During the second lockdown, there will be a focus on enforcing dangerous parking and illegal use of disabled bays. Enforcement officers will also be supporting track and trace, and food parcel deliveries

## COMPLAINTS - ARE WE DOING THE 'DAY JOB' REALLY WELL FOR OUR COUNCILS?



### OBSERVATION:

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st July 2020. The Corporate Responsibility team is managing all complaints allowing services to focus on delivery.

The complaints shown below only include upheld or partially upheld complaints

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Development Management	Unhappy with the process followed during naming of the Garden Village	The outcome of Stage II complaint was appealed and escalated to Stage III, which concluded that there had been some inaccuracies in a cabinet report and a press release which was subsequently corrected. A series of recommendations has been developed to ensure that these types of issues do not arise again. The appeal also concluded that the Stage II investigation had been inadequate and officers will receive further training. The Council has apologised to the complainant	III	Upheld	14 days
Waste & Recycling	Dissatisfied with bulky waste collection service	The first incidence of missed collection was due to the complainant not providing access to the bulky waste items. The Council acknowledged that there was an error on their part during the booking of a second bulky waste collection slot, and apologised for this. A new collection slot has been rebooked	II	Upheld	10 days

Revenues & Benefits	Unhappy with processing of Coronavirus Discretionary Grant application	Confusion over location of business on behalf of the assessor meant that the grant was not paid. This has been rectified	I	Partly upheld	1 day
Development Management	Misconduct of Public Officers and failure to uphold Equality duties	The Council failed to acknowledge some of the complainant's communications which we accept is not good practice. The Council also apologised for the mishandling of the case when it was transferred to an enforcement officer. However, no evidence has been found to substantiate any other claims made in the complaint	I	Partly upheld	4 days
Building Control	Poor level of service provided including failure to respond to queries	Investigation concluded that the Council conducted the processing of the application in accordance with the regulations. However, the time taken to resolve the issues was unacceptable, as was the failure to respond to three communications from the complainant. An apology was given	II	Upheld	14 days







WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday 10 December 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 11</b>
Subject	<b>Committee Work Programme 2020/2021</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Alaa Al-Yousuf, Chairman Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: <a href="mailto:alaa.alyousuf@westoxon.gov.uk">alaa.alyousuf@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Committee with an update on its Work Programme for 2019/2020 and suggest a programme for 2020/21.
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex 1</a> - Work Programme for 2020/2021
Recommendation	That the Committee notes the work programme, provides comment where needed.
Corporate priorities	To enable the Committee to review its Work Programme and support the Council's priorities to protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy, to meet the current and future needs of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. At the May meeting the Committee gave consideration to the development of its Work Programme for the year having regard to the changes to the approach to scrutiny work adopted by Council on 22 October 2008.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. At the last Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a new style work programme was considered and adopted. This is made up of a number of regular updates covering areas of work that fall into the scrutiny committees' remit.
- 2.2. Members are asked to consider the programme, attached at [Annex I](#), along with the Cabinet work programme, and decide if there are any items that they wish to scrutinise in particular.
- 2.3. Once considered, the Committee can decide whether to submit formal comments or recommendations to the Cabinet as they see fit.
- 2.4. In addition to the items contained in the Work Programme there will still be the opportunity to bring forward one-off reports and papers on particular issues of interest to the Committee but it will also be necessary to maintain a general overview of the ways in which external agencies are responding to community concerns. The inclusion of a standing agenda item for Members' questions also provides the opportunity to raise relevant issues.
- 2.5. Flood Prevention, Drainage & Sewerage Infrastructure Issues: this item is listed for consideration at the meeting but as yet, no update has been received.
- 2.6. Council 28 October 2020 – Bulk Waste Charges: Members may wish to consider the request put forward at the Council meeting from Councillor Enright, during consideration of the Bring Sites report (Minute number 38.7). Councillor Enright asked if the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee could reconsider the charges as part of its work programme.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. None

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. Not applicable

## **6. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. Whilst there may be climate change implications arising from specific items within the Work Programme, there are none arising directly from this report.

## **7. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 7.1. In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, Committee has the power to investigate any matters it considers relevant to its work area, and to make recommendations to the Council, the Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council as it sees fit.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None

**DECEMBER 2020**

	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
1	Air Quality	Verbal update & Q&A	Councillor MacRae / Phil Measures		Update needed to provide update on situation since Covid.
2	Waste Service	Presentation & verbal update	Scott Williams / Councillor MacRae Ubico representative to be invited (Area Manager)	Six monthly	Scott Williams to provide service update and provide data for information.  To discuss and review options for new waste contract due for renewal in 2022.
3	Flood Prevention, Drainage & Sewerage Infrastructure Issues	Update	Councillor Harvey / Laurence King / Matt Kirby		Update needed to provide update on situation since Covid.
4	Litter Bin Replacement Programme (Cabinet WP Number 19)	Cabinet report	Scott Williams / Councillor MacRae	Cabinet – 16 December 2020	See separate agenda Item

**FEBRUARY 2021**

	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
I					

Regular Reports	Frequency	Next Meeting Date
Update on Carbon Action Plan – Ness Scott and Councillor Harvey (Cabinet Work Programme number 3)	Every meeting	December 2020

**Suggestions for future workstreams**

Update from representative on relevant Cabinet Advisory Group for Environment – if appropriate.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 10 December 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 12</b>
Subject	<b>Cabinet Work Programme</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable members	Michele Mead, Leader of the Council <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk">michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 17 November 2020.
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex 1 – Cabinet Work Programme published 17 November 2020.</a>
Recommendation	That the Committee decides whether to express a view to Cabinet on relevant issues in the Work Programme for the period.
Corporate priorities	To maintain and enhance West Oxfordshire as one of the best places to live, work and visit in Great Britain and to meet the current and future needs of residents.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Cabinet Work Programme is produced on a monthly basis in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Regulations relating to publicity for Cabinet decisions that came into force on 10 September 2012. The programme sets out the Cabinet's work programme for the following three months, as applicable.
- 1.2. The programme [published on 17 November](#), covering the period to February 2021 is included in the [Annex to this report](#), for comment.

## **2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. None

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. Not applicable

## **5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 5.1. The Committee may take such action as it considers appropriate within its terms of reference

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1. None

## Cabinet Work Programme published 17 November 2020

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
1.	Approval of upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision and monitoring arrangements	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020		To be considered by Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 November
2.	Approval of Litter Bin replacement programme	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020		To be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 December
3.	Approval of Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22	No	No	Cabinet then Council	16 December 2020		
4.	Consideration of annual Local Plan Monitoring Report	No	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	
5.	Consideration of responses to the Woodstock car parking survey and any further actions	No	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	



No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
6.	<p>Consideration and approval of lease proposal for investment property</p> <p>Proposed to be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person".</p>	Yes	Yes	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	
7.	<p>Approval of acquisition of economic development property</p> <p>Proposed to be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person".</p>	No	Yes	Cabinet then Council	16 December 2020	None	
8.	<p>Oxfordshire Growth Board: To consider and comment on a Draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire, as part of a wider public engagement exercise.</p>	No	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	To be considered by Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 November

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
9.	Consideration of 2020/21 Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report	No	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	
10.	Approval of Infrastructure Funding Statement	No	No	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	
11.	Update report relating to the Unicorn at Great Rollright  Proposed to be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person".	No	Yes	Cabinet	16 December 2020	None	
12.	Approval of draft West Eynsham Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 January 2021	Consultation draft	
13.	Approval of East Chipping Norton draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation	No	No	Cabinet	13 January 2021	None	
14.	Approvable of funding and associated matters for affordable housing, scheme at The Elms, Langford	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 January 2021	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
15.	Summary and Detailed revenue budgets for Base 2021/22; Fees and charges for 2021/22; draft Medium Term Financial Strategy; Council Tax base and parish precepts, and draft Capital Programme Revised 2020/21 plus future years (following consultation and comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committees)	No	No	Cabinet then Council	13 January 2021	None	
16.	Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for Ascott under Wychwood under the Neighbourhood Planning (General Regulations) (2012)	No	No	Cabinet	13 January 2021	<a href="#">Ascott under Wychwood neighbourhood plan documents</a>	
17.	Consideration of options for the future use of the Guildhall, Chipping Norton	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 January 2021	None	
18.	Adoption of Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy	No	No	Cabinet	13 January 2021	Strategy Document	
19.	Approval of North Witney Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Issues Paper for Consultation	No	No	Cabinet	17 February 2021	None	
20.	Approval of East Witney draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation	No	No	Cabinet	17 February 2021	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
21.	Approval of revised draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document for consultation	No	No	Cabinet	17 February 2021	Previous draft, approved June 2020	
22.	Consideration and recommendation to Council to approve the budget, fees and charges, capital programme, prudential indicators, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Council Tax and Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22	No	No	Cabinet then Council	17 February 2021	None	
23.	Consideration of 2020/21 Quarter Three Performance Monitoring Report	No	No	Cabinet	17 February 2021	None	