



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) 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

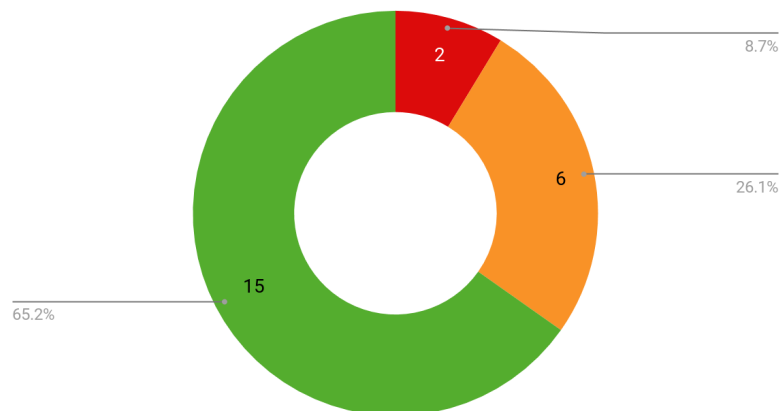
KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS LIST

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

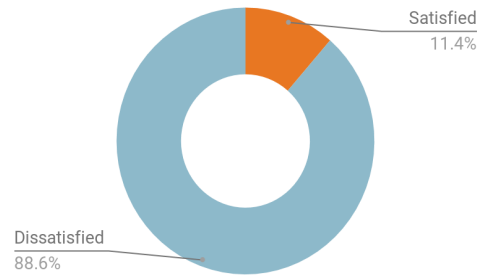
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer satisfaction

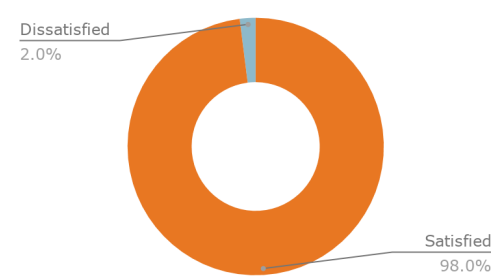
Face to face - no surveys due to Covid19



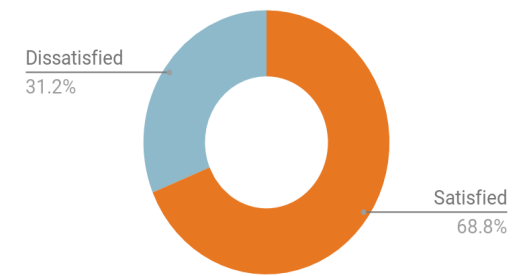
Website - 44 respondents



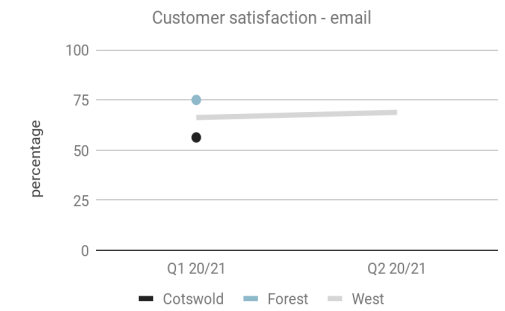
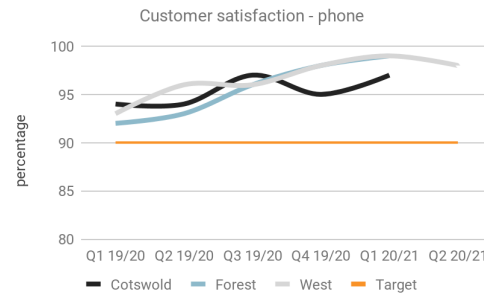
Phone - 1421 respondents



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

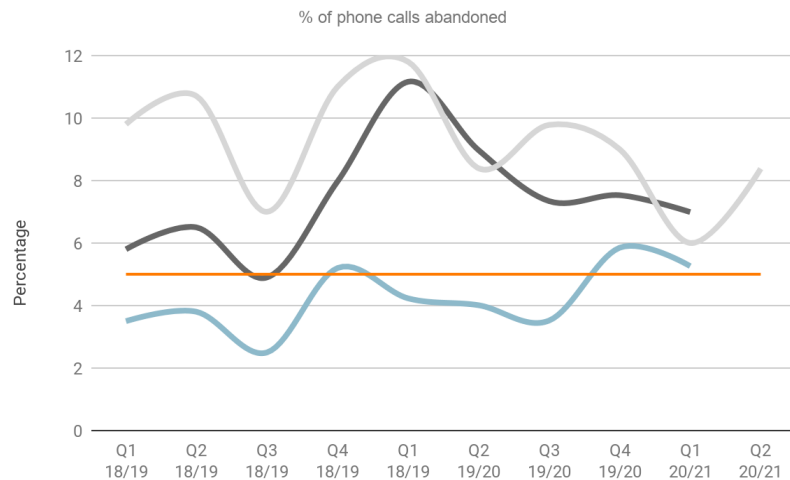
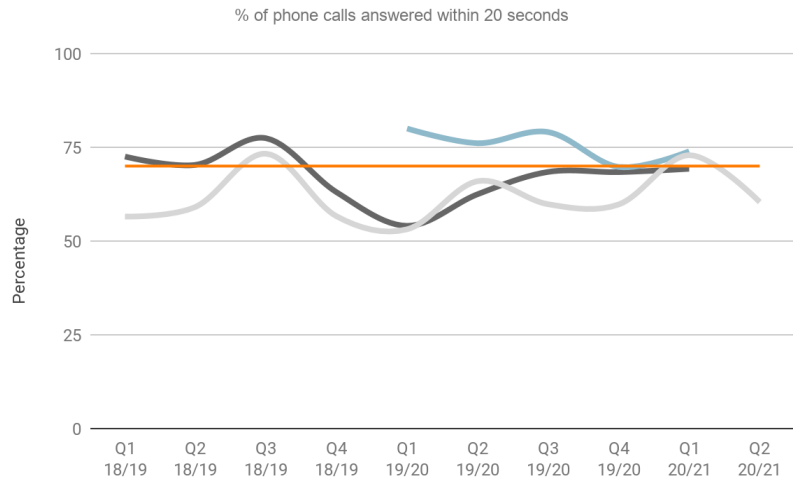
Telephone calls - response and abandonment

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION

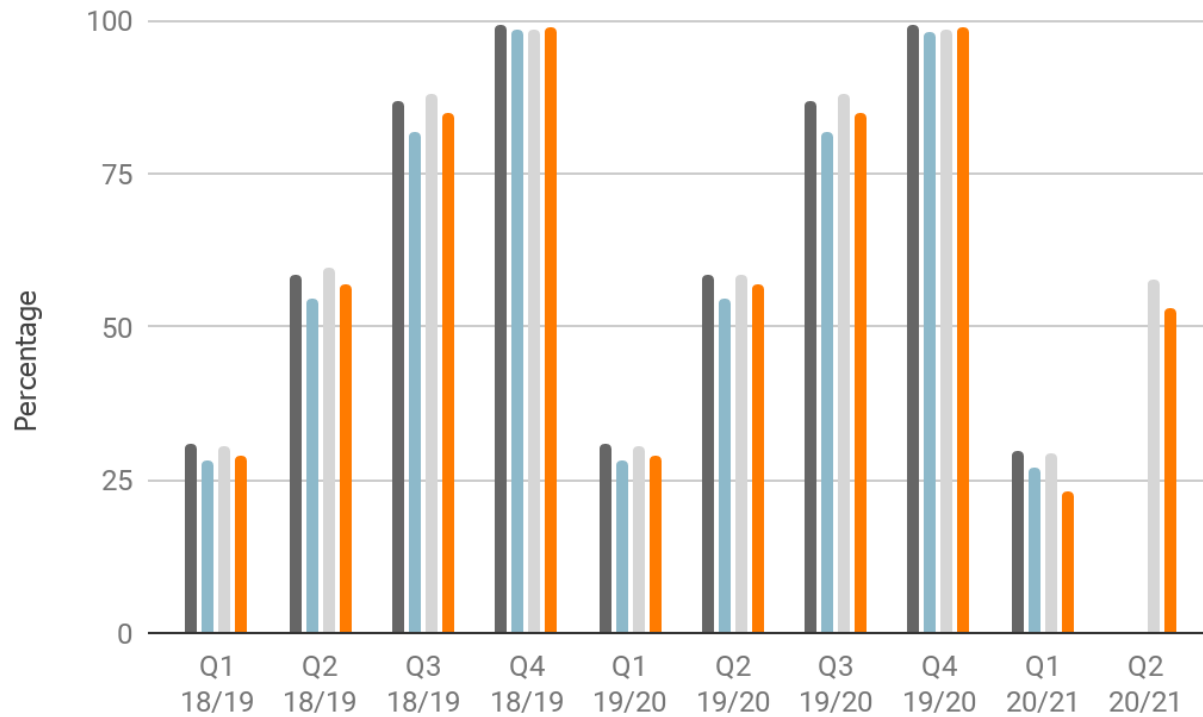
For a large part of 2019/20 performance was affected by the implementation of the new CRM system and further enhancements that took time to 'bed in', as well as turnover of staff.

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



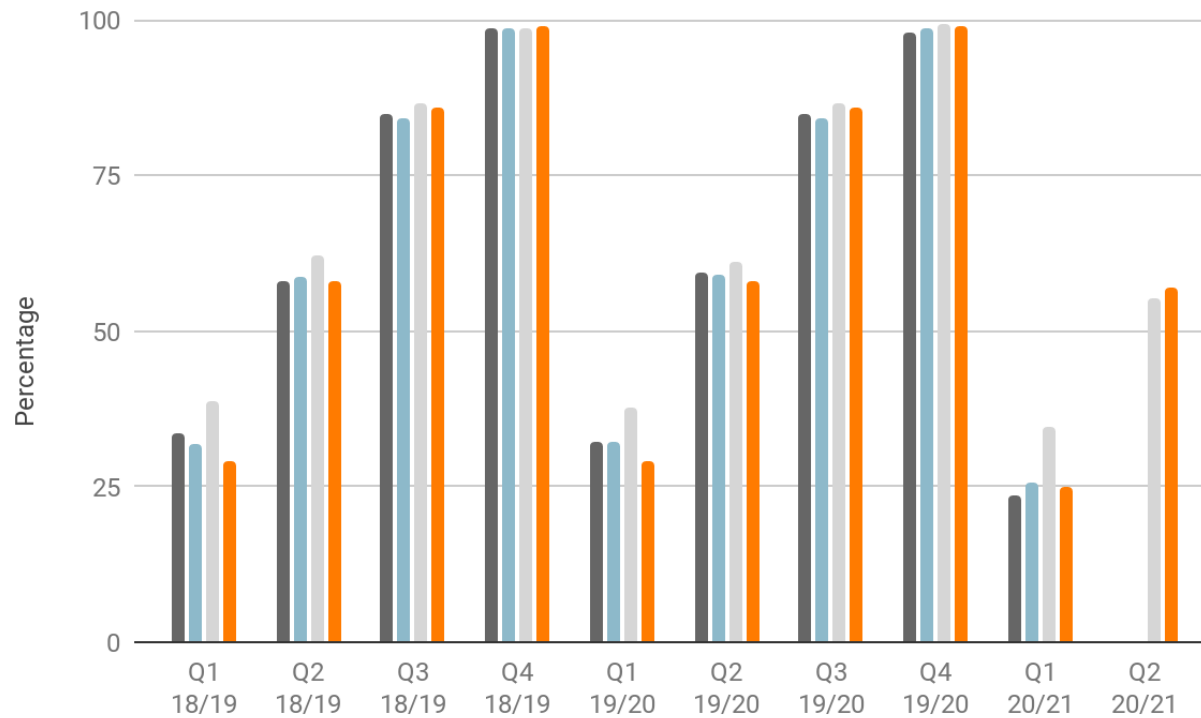
OBSERVATION:

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



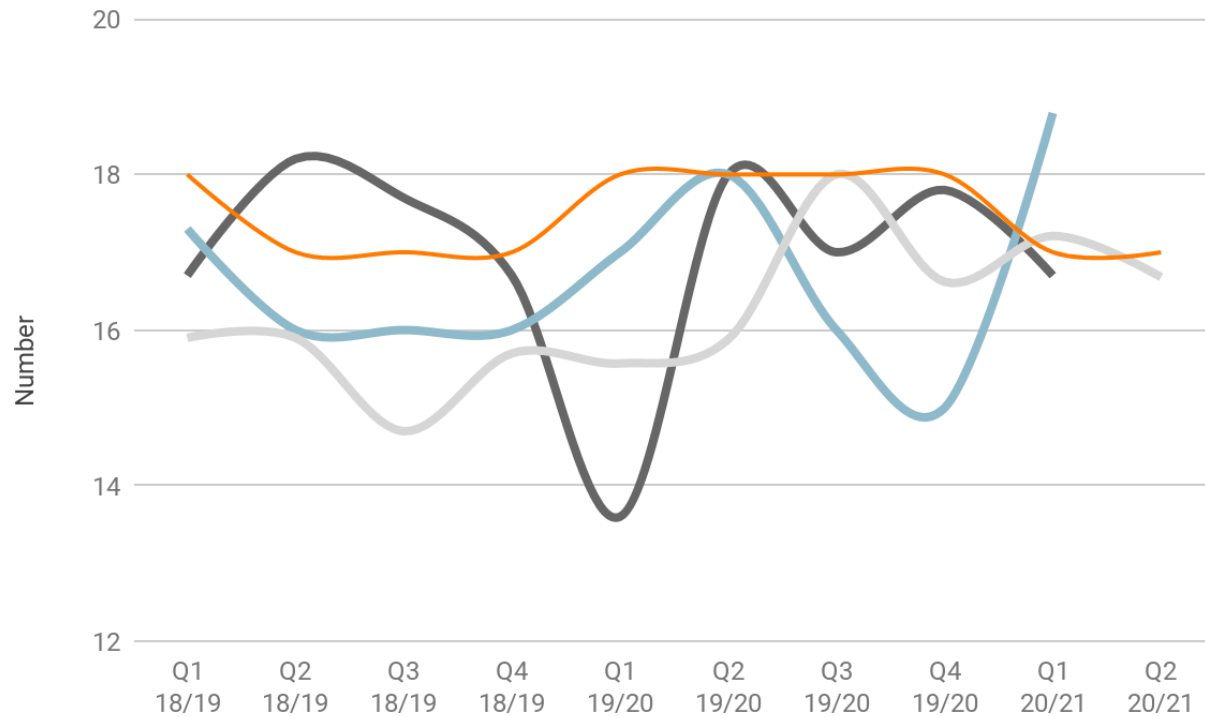
OBSERVATION:

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

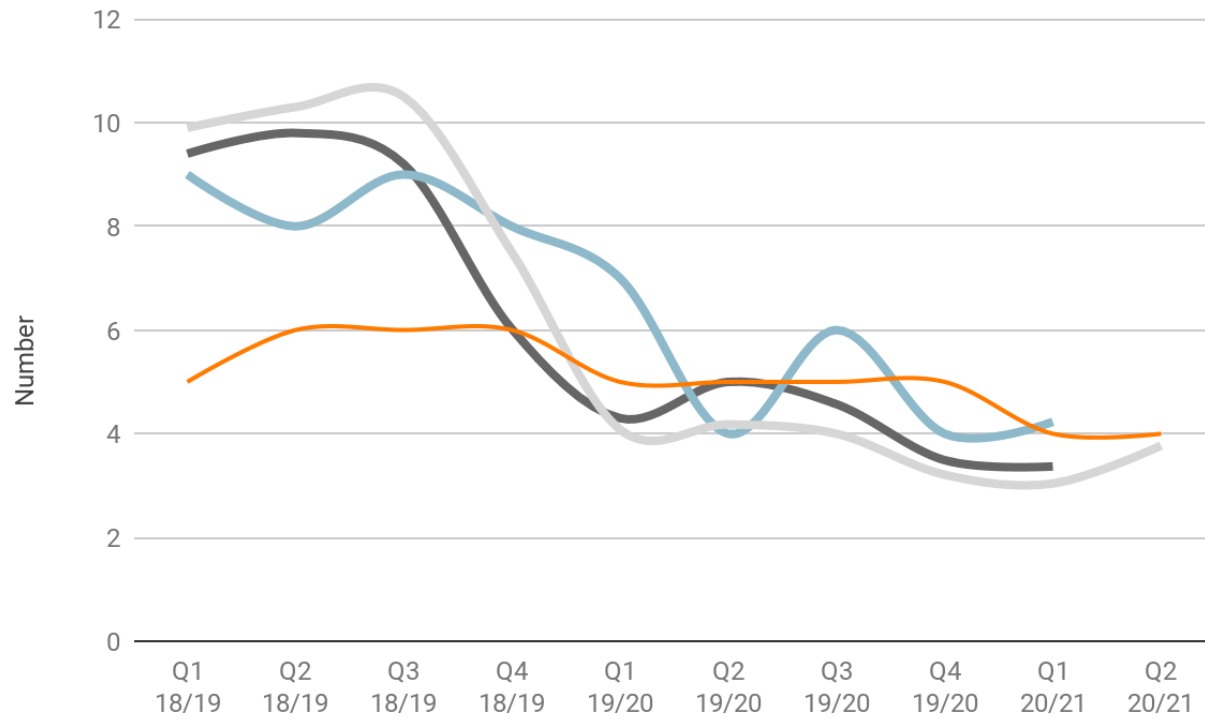


OBSERVATION:

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



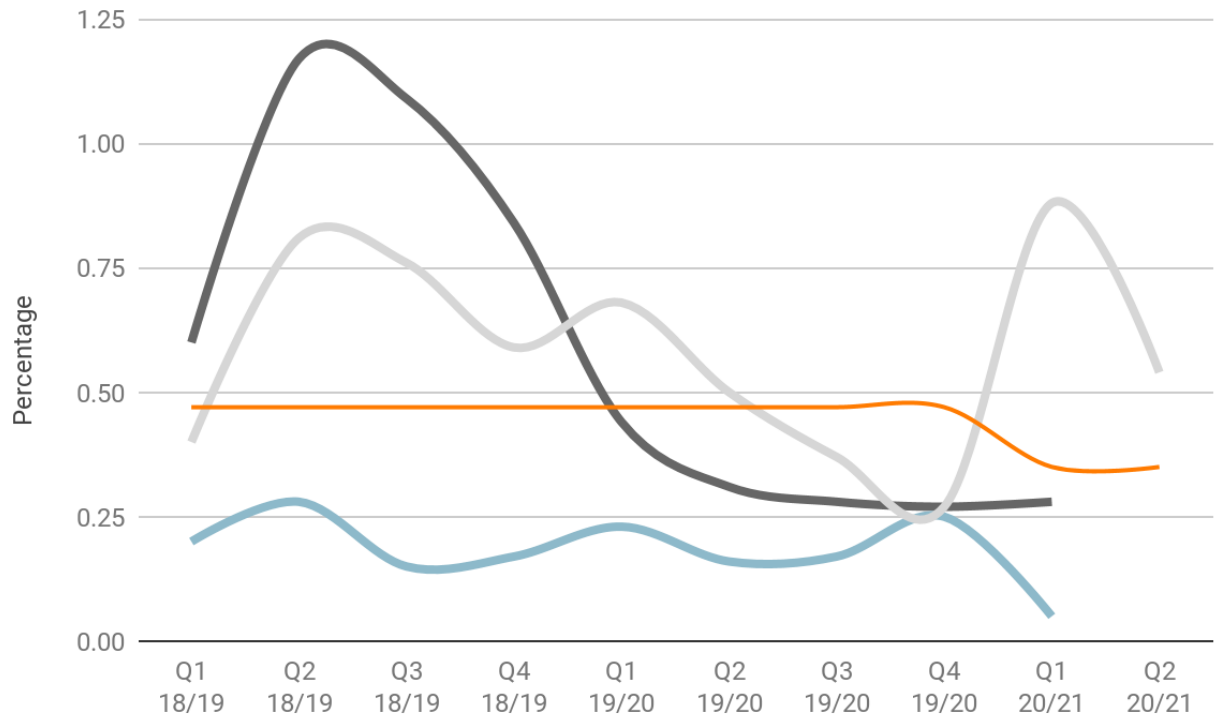
OBSERVATION:

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:

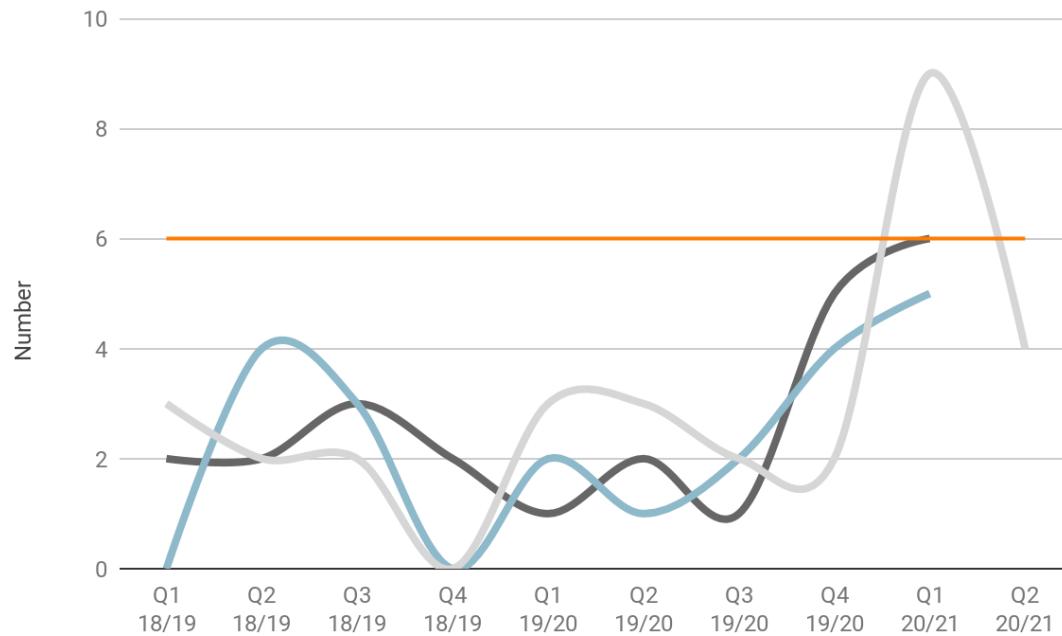
We are continuing to involve a number of staff in quality assurance. Due to the high volume of change of circumstances, we take a sampling approach and target areas which we know have high error rates such as calculation of earnings.

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:

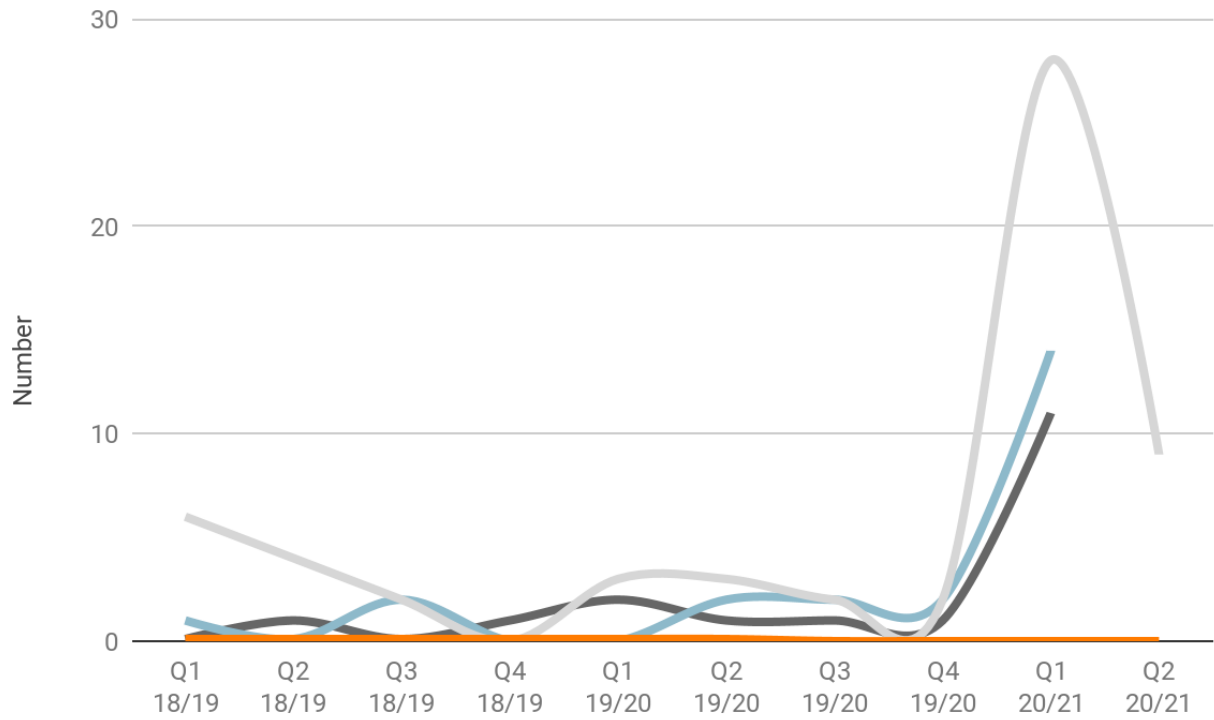
Due to Covid-19, councils are required to place all clients who are rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness regardless of priority need who have approached the Council, into emergency accommodation.

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



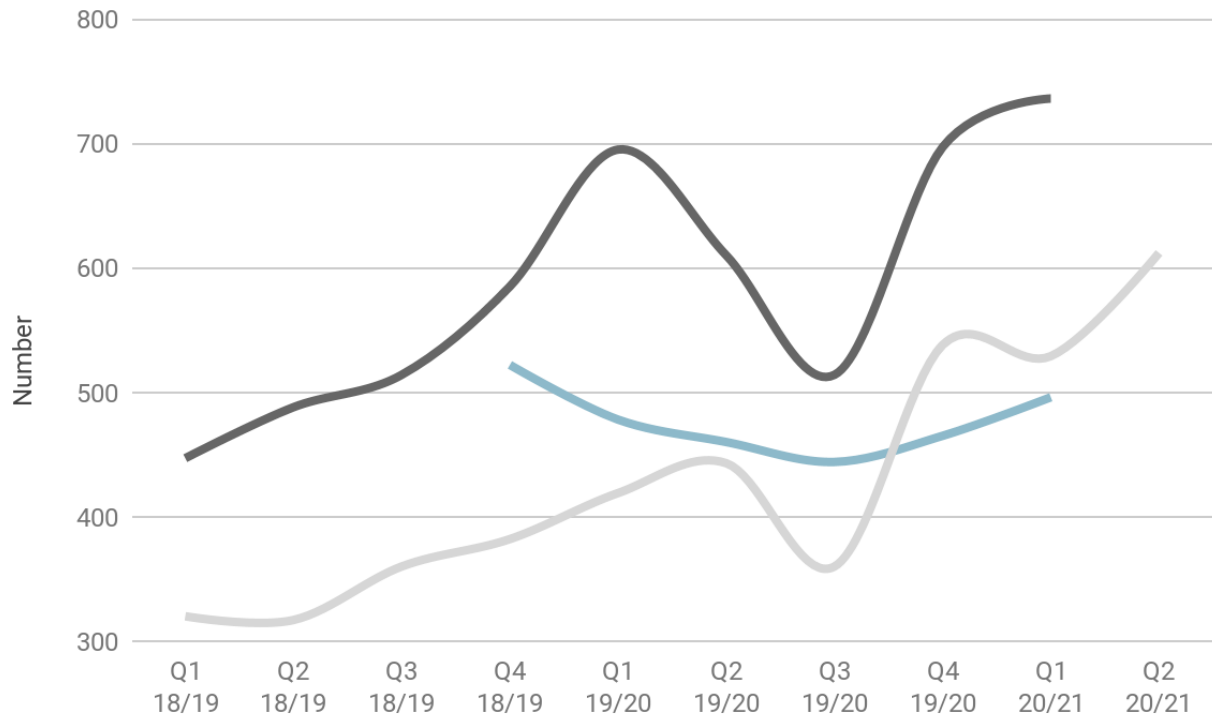
OBSERVATION:

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

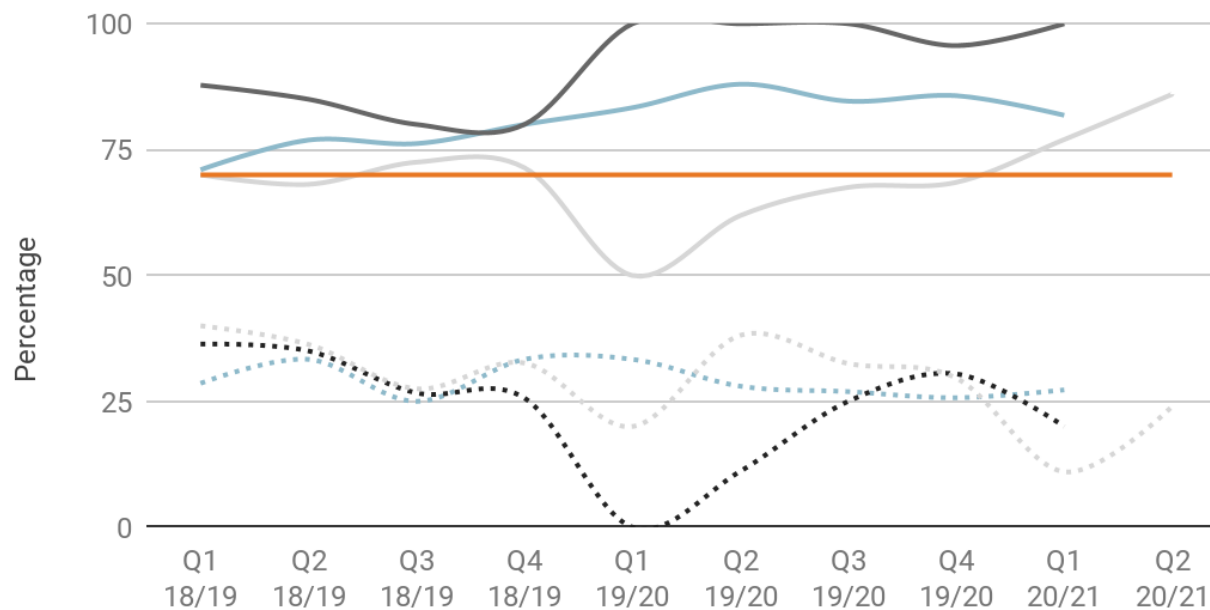
Planning and Strategic Housing

(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.

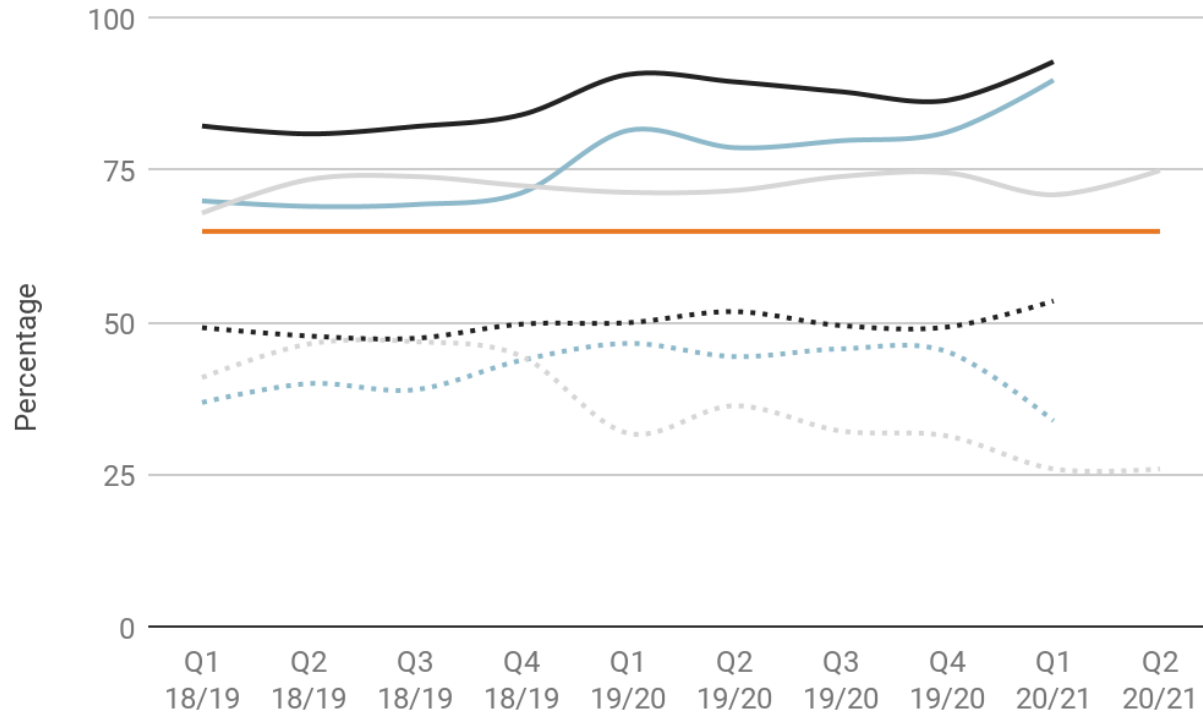
Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable.

(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

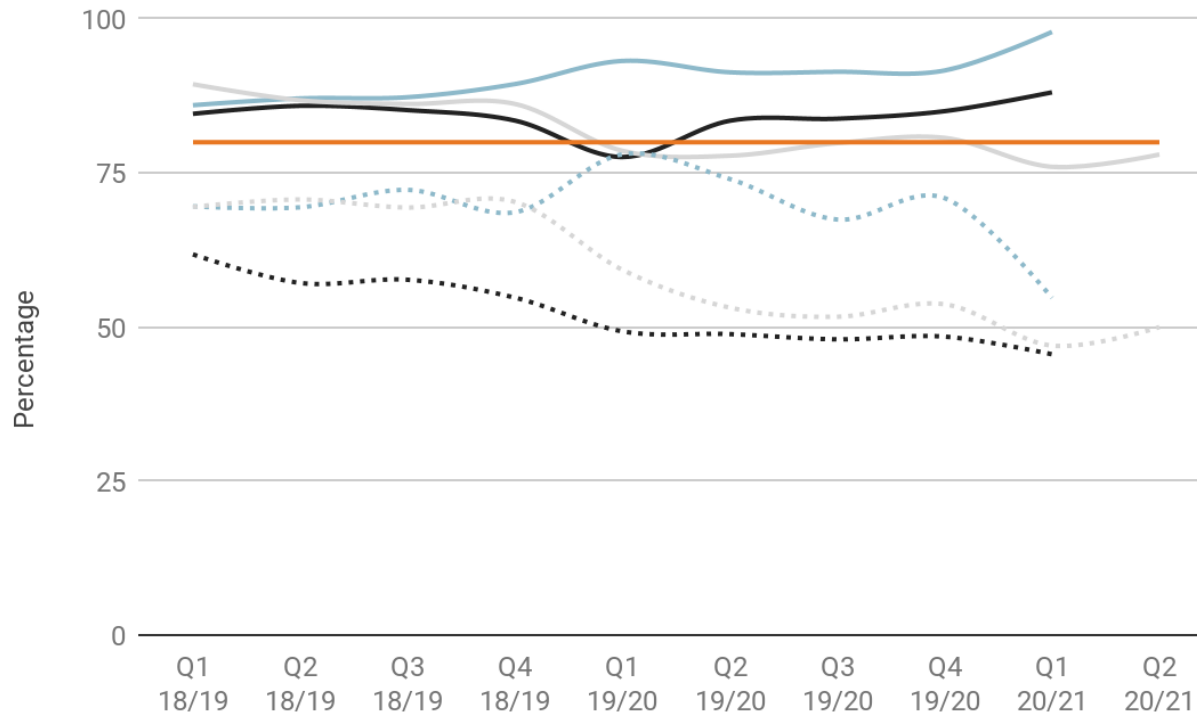
(Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% 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

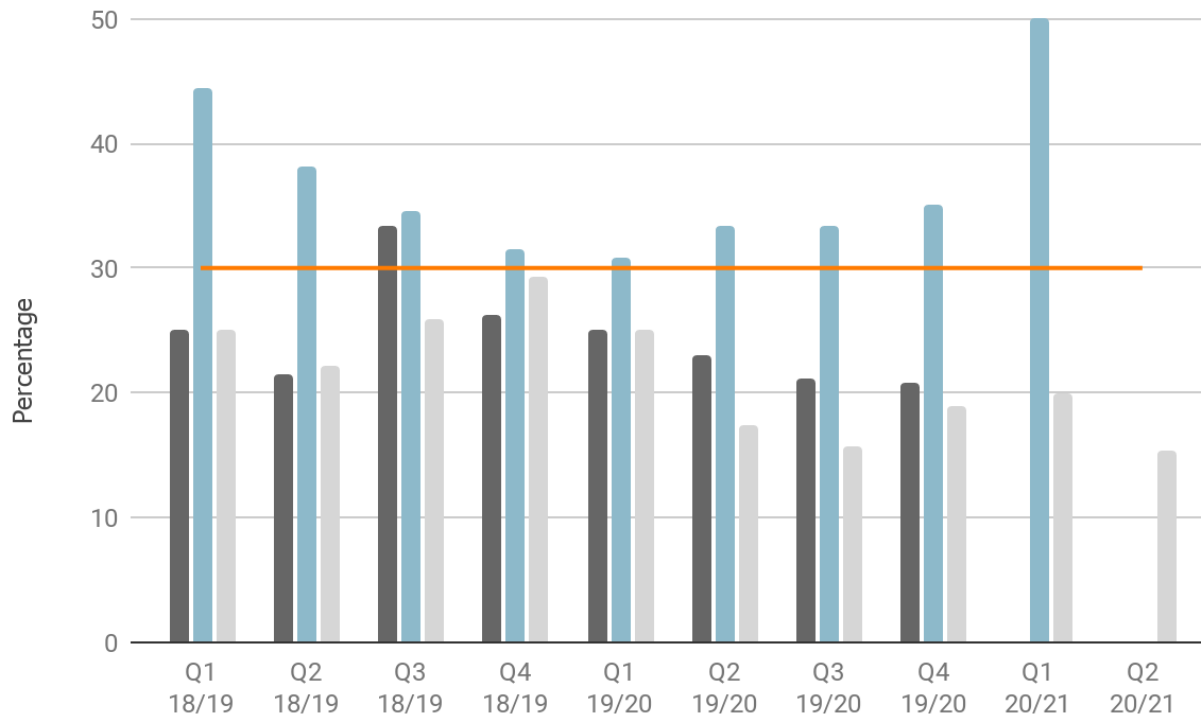
(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire

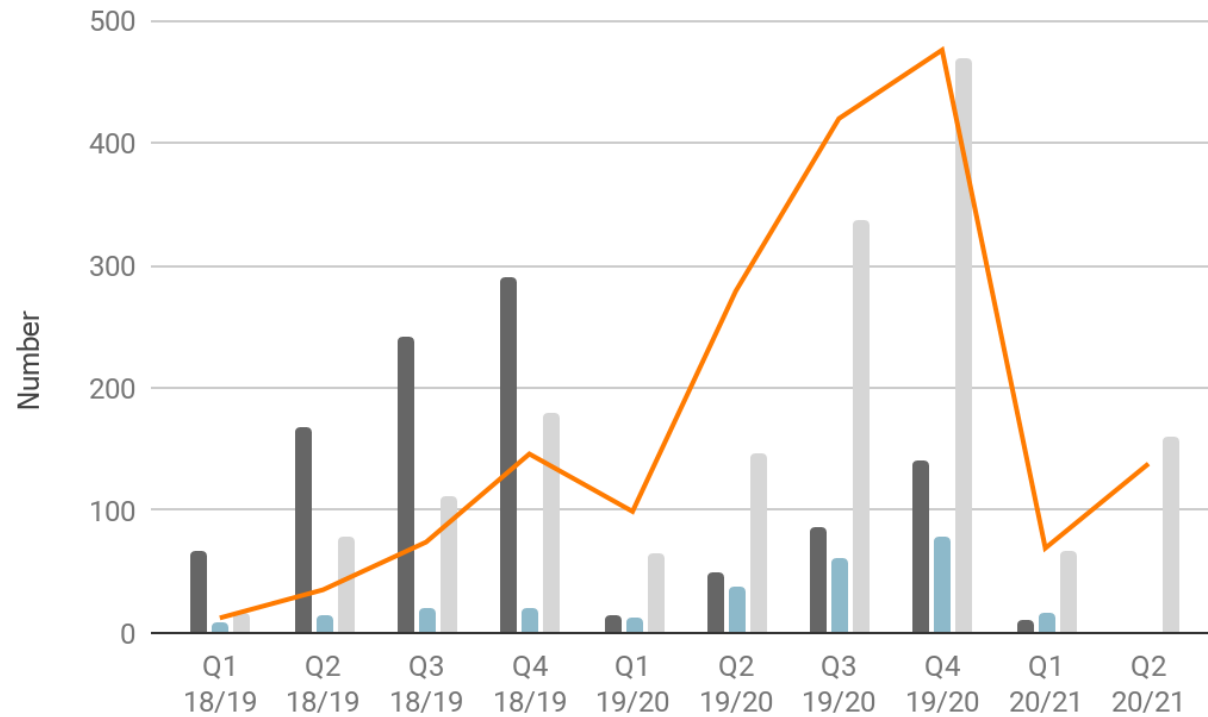


OBSERVATION:

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.

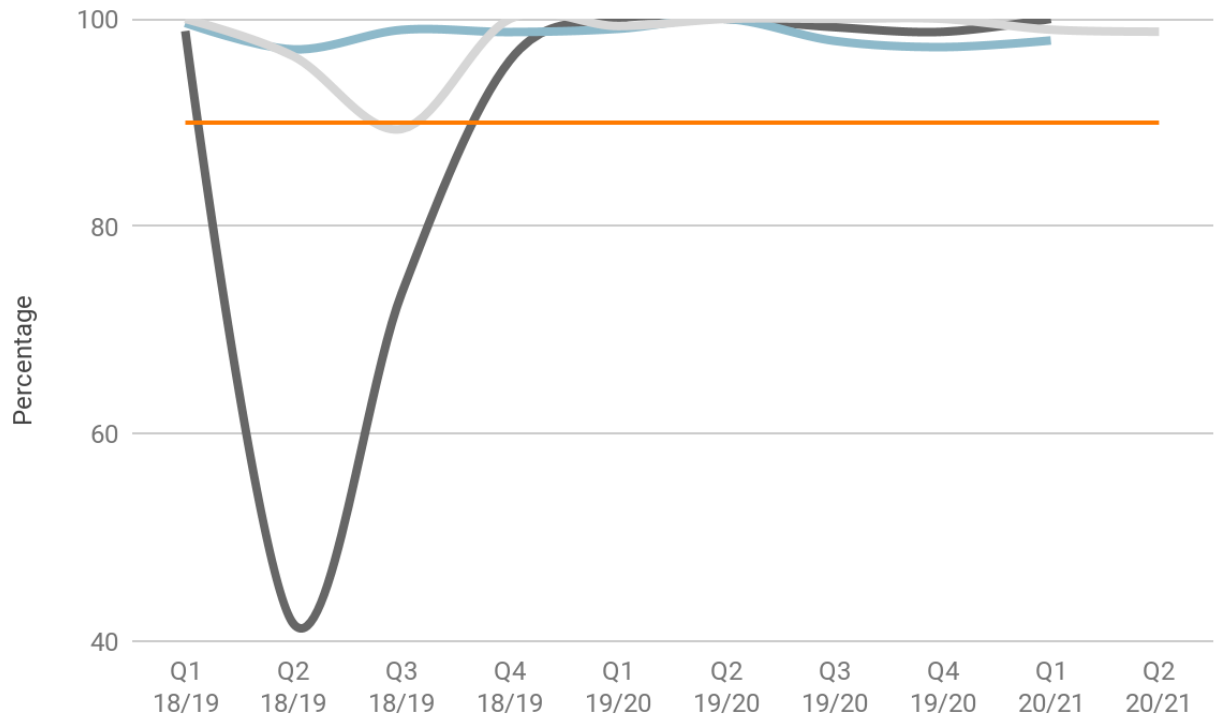
There have been delays at West Witney and Eynsham (Sage) where there have been material supply chain issues related to Covid. Despite this, 32 affordable homes were delivered, with the remainder scheduled for delivery in Q3.

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

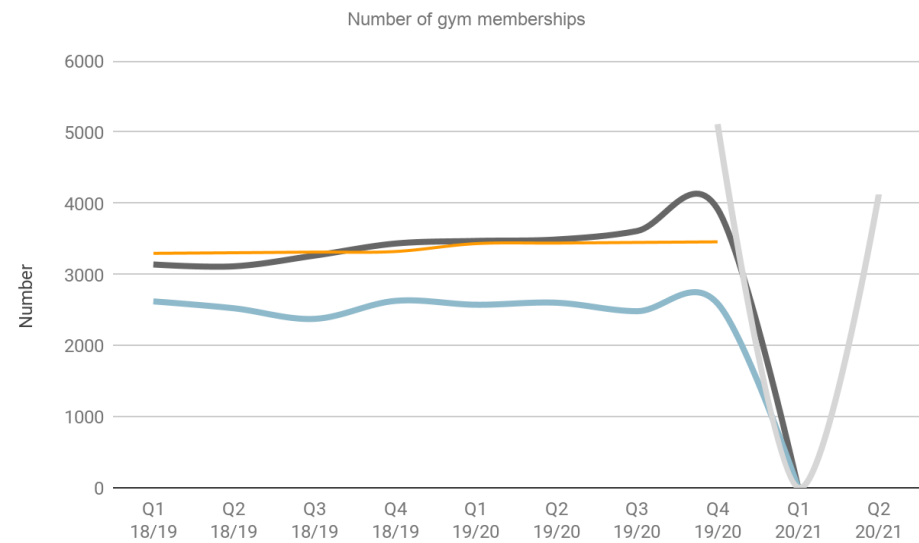
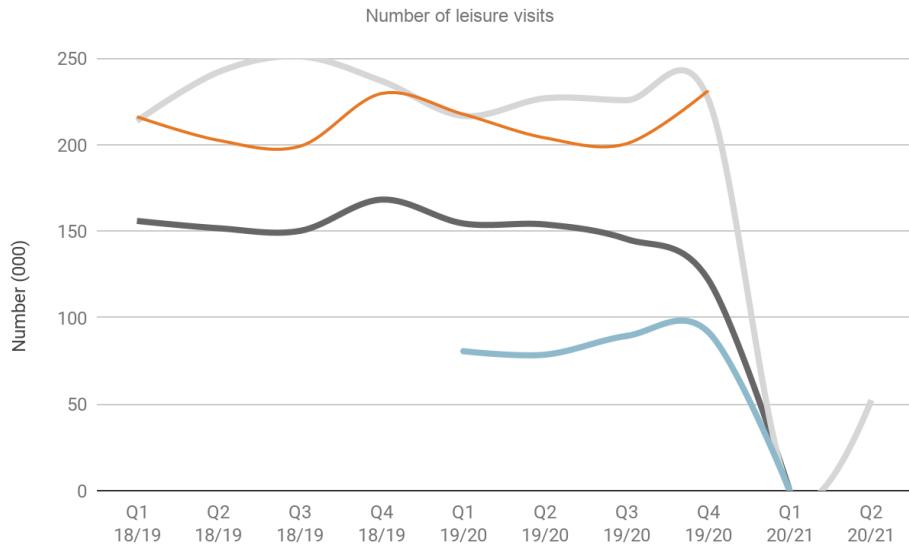
Target Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire



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.

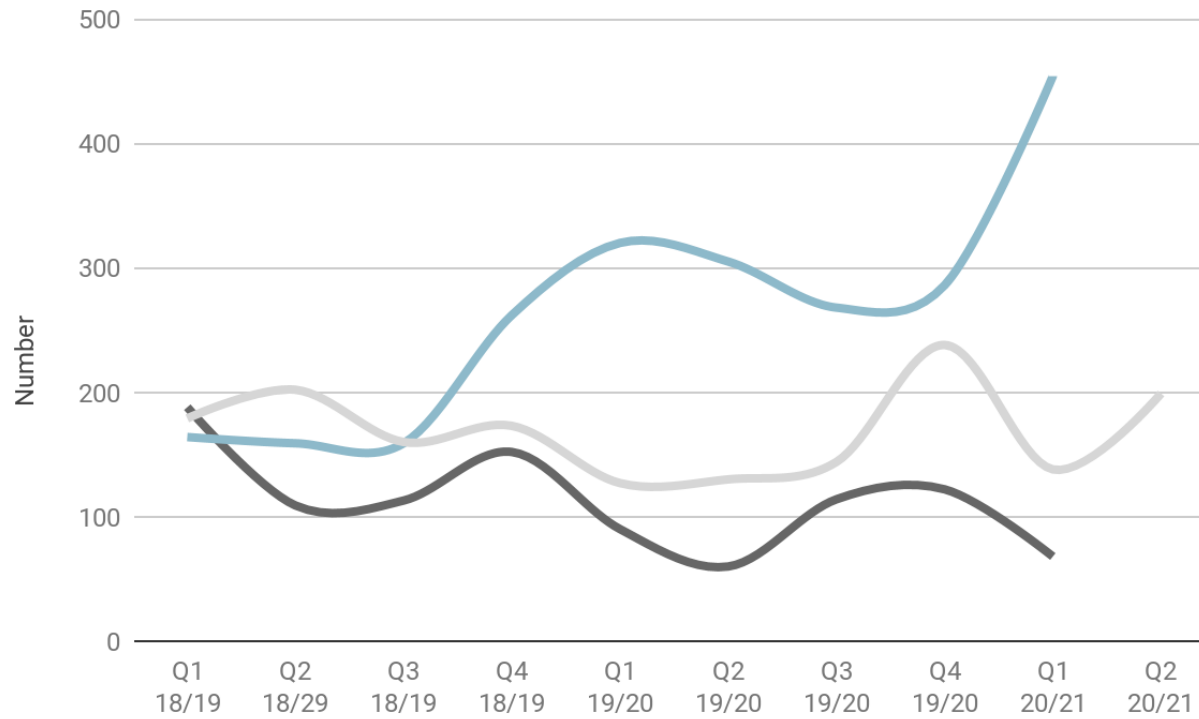
A contract variation has been put in place and a financial recovery package agreed until March 2021

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:

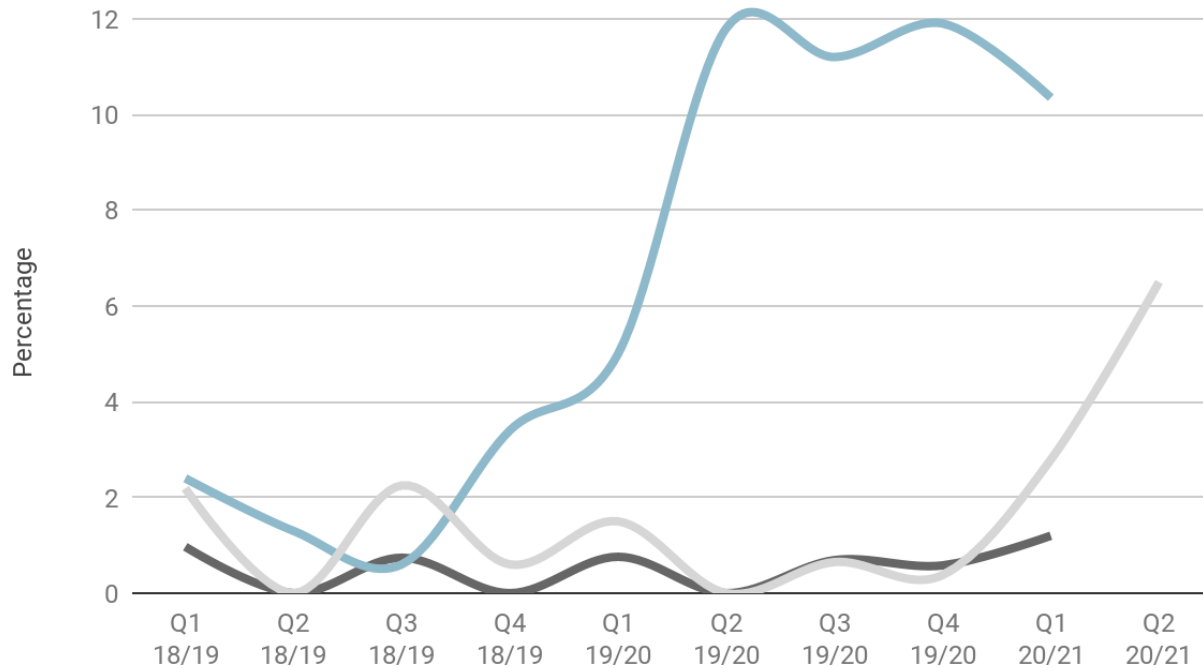
Due to Covid-19, increases in fly tips have been reported nationally, however this is not yet evident in West's figures

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.

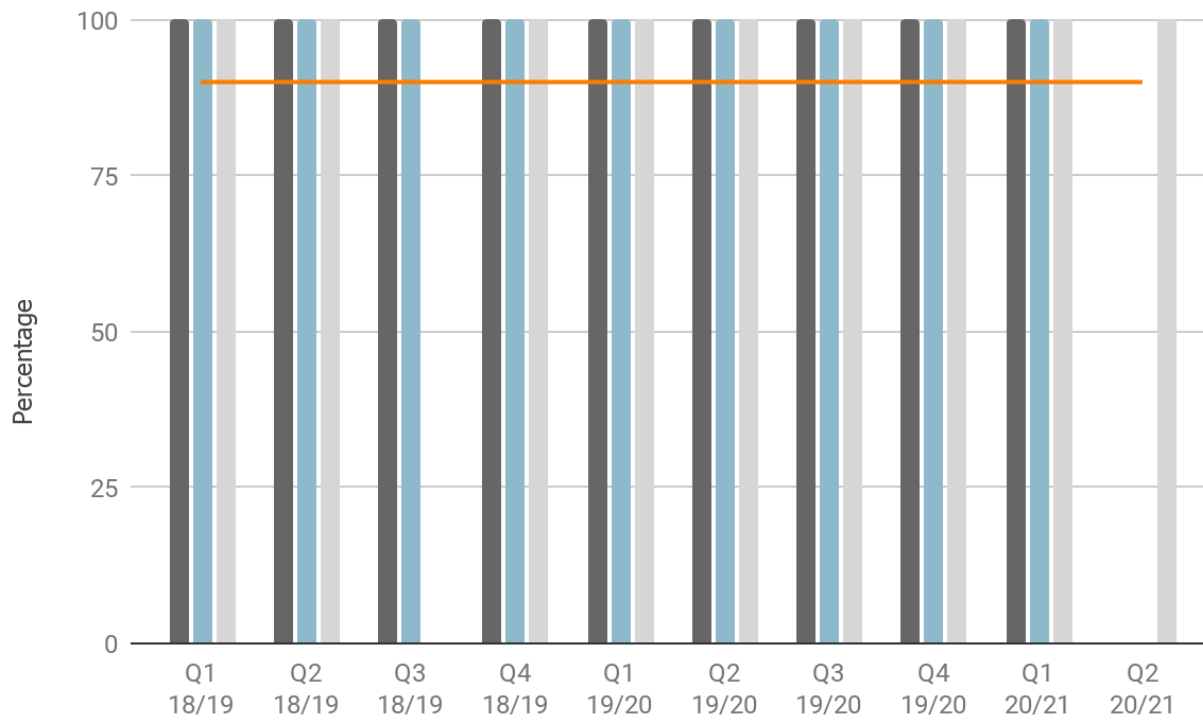
Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

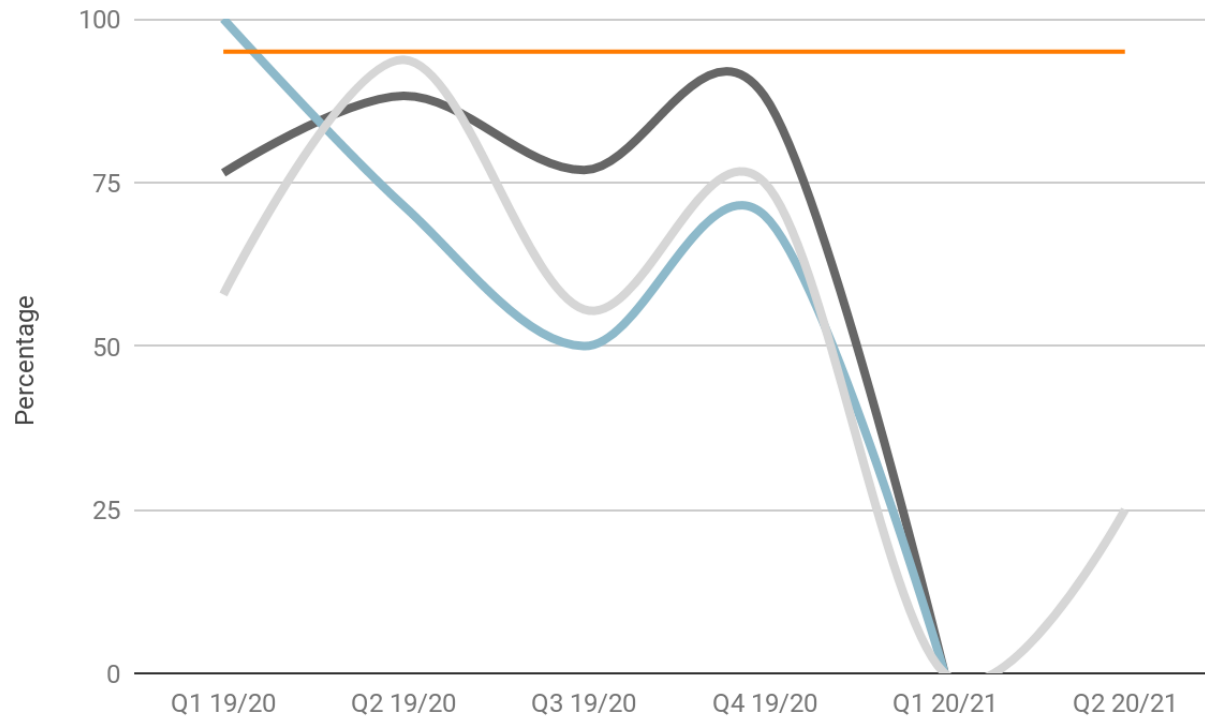
West Oxfordshire



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



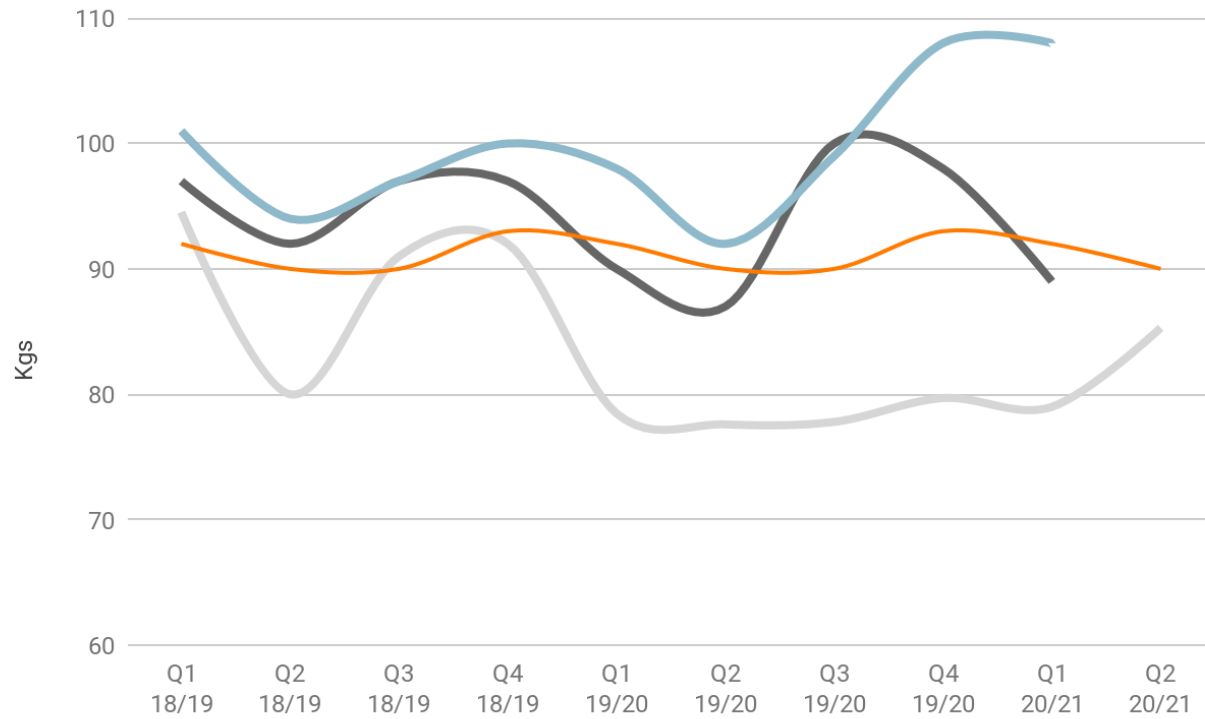
OBSERVATION:

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)



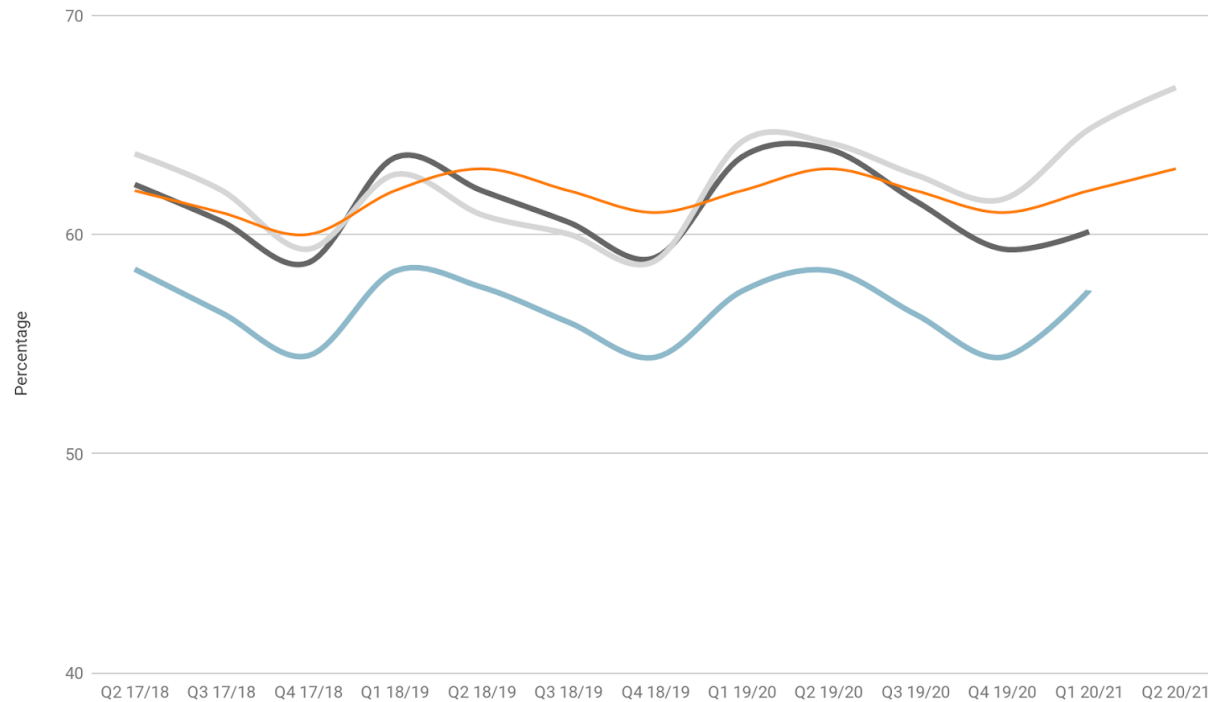
OBSERVATION:

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.

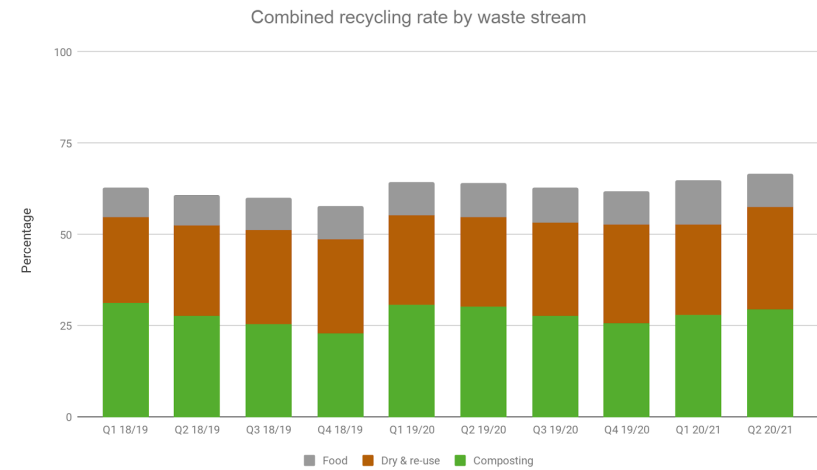
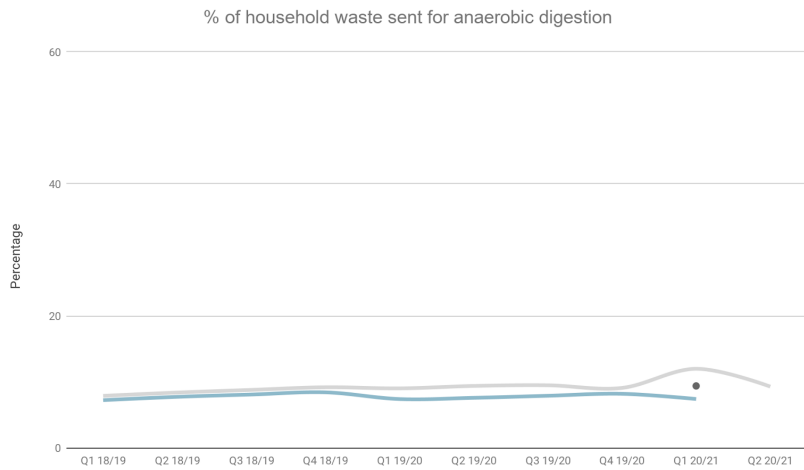
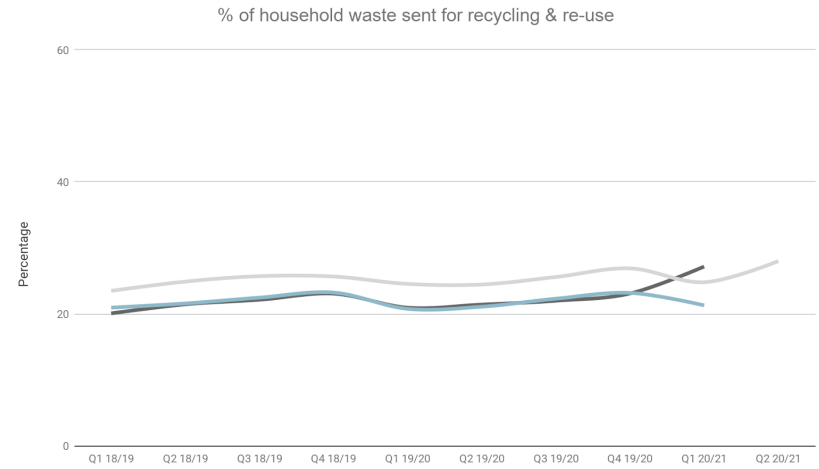
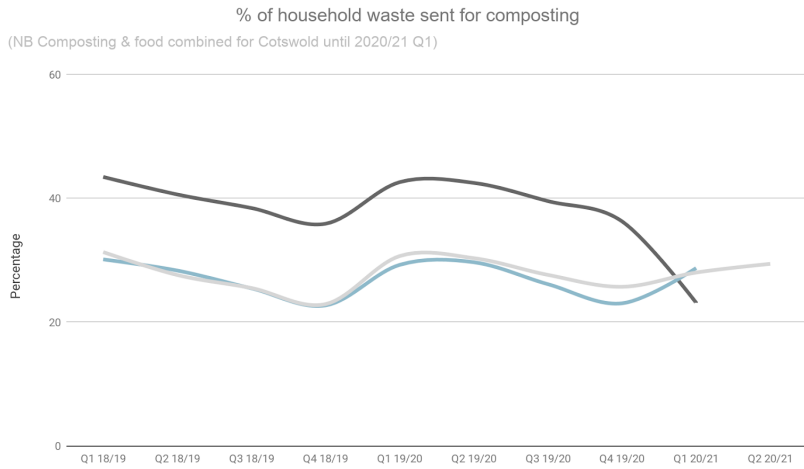
Note that the quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled by waste stream

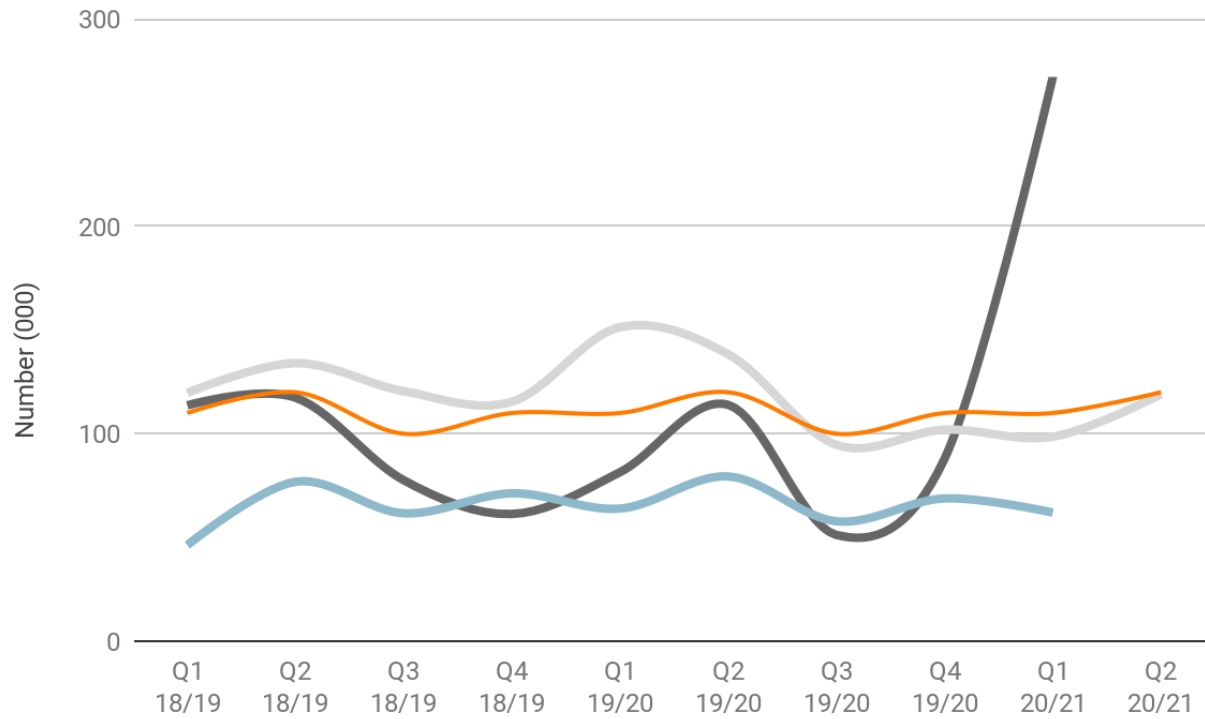
Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



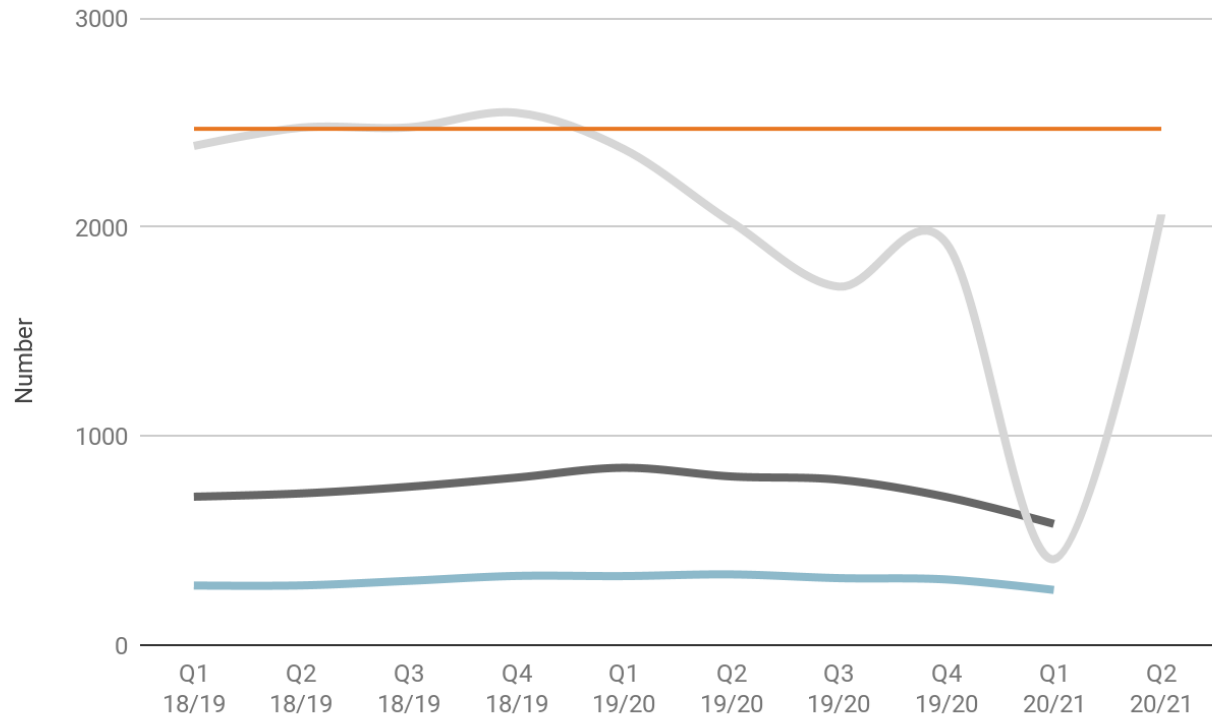
OBSERVATION:

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



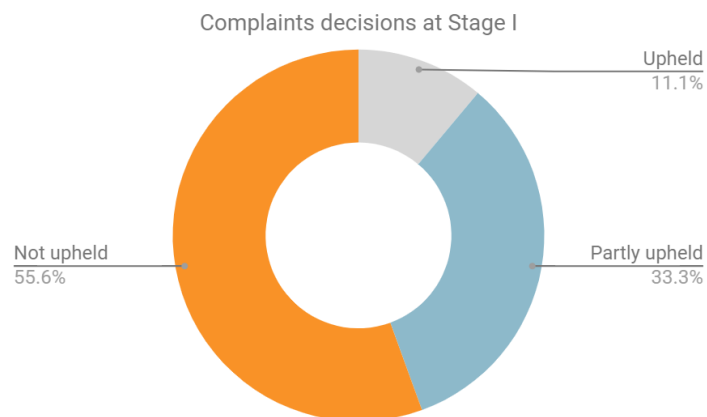
OBSERVATION:

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

