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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Wednesday, 8 September 2021

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held in the Council Chamber, Woodgreen, Witney OX28 1NB on **Thursday, 16 September 2021 at 6.30 pm.**

Giles Hughes

Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Andy Graham (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jake Acock, Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Laetisia Carter, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Maxine Crossland, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Andrew Prosser and Councillor Alex Wilson

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 10)
    To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2021.

2. **Members Questions**
    To receive any questions from Members of the Committee.

3. **Apologies for Absence**
    To receive any apologies for absence.

4. **Declarations of Interest**
    To receive any declarations from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting.

5. **Participation of the Public**
    To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

6. **Chairman's Announcements**

    Purpose:
    To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Committee.

7. **Cottsway Housing - Presentation**
    Purpose
    To receive a presentation from representatives of Cottsway Housing.

    Recommendation
    Committee members note the presentation.

8. **Preparation for the Arrival of Refugees from Afghanistan** (Pages 11 - 14)
    Purpose
    To receive an update report on the preparations for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan.

    Recommendation
    The report is noted.

9. **Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc** (Pages 15 - 28)
    Purpose
    To agree the District Council's formal response to the current MHCLG public consultation *'Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc'* which is running for 12-weeks from 20 July 2021 – 12 October 2021.

    Recommendations
    a) That the report be noted; and
    b) That the suggested draft response attached at Annex A be submitted as the Council's formal response to this consultation.

10.   **Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2021-22 Quarter One** (Pages 29 - 60)
        <u>Purpose</u>
        To receive details of service performance during Quarter 1.

        <u>Recommendation</u>
        That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2021-22 Quarter 1.

11.   **Committee Work Programme** (Pages 61 - 66)

        <u>Purpose:</u>
        To provide the Committee with an updated Work Programme for 2021/2022.

        <u>Recommendation:</u>
        That the Committee notes and manages its' 2021/2022 Work Programme, adds items which fall into its' remit and provides comment where needed.

12.   **Cabinet Work Programme** (Pages 67 - 72)

        <u>Purpose</u>
        To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 17 August 2021. (Please note that a newer version of the Cabinet Work Programme will be published on 15 September 2021 – copies of this will be circulated at the meeting).

        <u>Recommendation</u>
        That the Committee decides whether to express a view to the Cabinet on relevant issues in its Work Programme.

13.   **Members Questions**
        <u>Purpose</u>
        To receive any questions from Members of the Committee.

(END)

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the
Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Held at 6.30 pm on **Thursday, 8 July 2021**

PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Andy Graham (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jake Acock, Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Laetisia Carter, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Andrew Prosser, Councillor Dean Temple and Councillor Alex Wilson

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Phil Shaw (Business Manager - Development Management)

13   Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14   Apologies for Absence

Councillor Temple substituted for Councillor Crossland.

15   Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

16   Participation of the Public

There were no submissions from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

17   Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

18   Presentation from GLL Better

Following a request from the Committee at a previous meeting, a presentation was given by GLL Better (Greenwich Leisure Ltd), the Council's Leisure Services provider. Mr John Busby and Mr John Amatt from GLL gave a slide presentation to the members and it was agreed that a copy would be circulated to Members after the meeting

The presentation was received well by all members and the Chair thanked GLL for their contributions during the height of the Covid crisis.

Councillor Carter stated that GLL had been a lifeline to people in Chipping Norton, and that they should be proud of their staff.

A general discussion was held on the GLL presentation where the following topics were raised, noted and discussed:

- Carterton football pitches and grounds – Plans were in place for improvements, a local nominated grounds communicator was also in place.
- Swimming pools were due to open from 23rd July 2021

- Discussion of inclusivity for access to the swimming pools, which included water temperature management to enable this service, as swimming pool heating systems aged
- Retention of 'trickle feed entry' as public liked this approach and it enabled centres to manage the flow of people
- More Pilates and yoga sessions were desired
- Future plans were being looked at in case of further lockdowns
- Workforce reviews, currently full staffing levels
- Energy action plan and investment in upkeep of centres
- Income from clubs were now being closely managed

Having received the presentation and having debated the issue, the Chairman thanked the representatives from GLL for attending and answering queries from the Committee.

The Committee

Resolved that the presentation be noted.

19 **Enforcement Update**

Members received a verbal update from the Business Manager – Development Management, on the current workload and initiatives within the Planning and Enforcement teams.

A summary of the update was as follows:

- A 46% increase in planning applications this year, had resulted in a pressured workforce
- There were less staff to manage applications – a current review was in place on staff retention and recruitment, and proposal on re-introduction of grading structure, retention of junior staff, to enable them to grow into senior positions, was a future aim
- 30% of workload currently being focussed on as a priority
- 70% of workload to be managed by new workflow initiatives
- Length of time to manage cases had increased due to Covid restrictions
- Implementation of shared investigators resulting in less site visits
- Implemented a building management investigator to monitor construction sites in the field, this had reduced the numbers of complaints received
- Lead times at courts were very lengthy, officers were working with applicants to negotiate and try to avoid court routes

The update was greatly appreciated by all members and Mr Shaw was thanked for attending.

Members wanted the staff to be aware that they were very aware of the current increased workload they were faced with, especially with the limited current resources available. Members wished to be supportive of the initiatives in place to address the situation and

Resolved that the update is noted.

20 **Oxfordshire Plan Consultation Document**

Members received a report from the Chief Executive which asked Members to consider the approval of the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document. This set out a range of planning policy options and a series of spatial strategy options for Oxfordshire.

When complete, the Plan would provide a high level spatial planning framework up to 2050 and would be statutory planning document, supplementing Local Plans. Members were asked to express a view on the recommendations due to be considered at Cabinet on 21 July 2021. The Chief Executive, Giles Hughes introduced the report.

Mr Hughes advised that, as the lead senior officer for Oxfordshire, he would work on delivery of the Plan with colleagues across the Oxfordshire Councils. Councillor Haine also sat on the Oxfordshire Plan Advisory Group, alongside fellow Cabinet Members from the other Oxfordshire Councils. He explained that this was an ambitious project for a long term view, and was a notable national piece of work, which had government funding. The Plan was a draft consultation document, looking at options and no key decisions had been made as yet. Requirement at this stage was to obtain approval to consult on the plan and its options. There would be a ten week consultation process, due to start at the end of July, with on-line webinars being delivered. Libraries would also provide accessibility for the public to view the document.

The Chairman suggested that he would go through the document page by page with Councillors indicating when they had feedback or comments, or if a section required further discussion

During consideration of the document, the following key items were noted and discussed:

- Final consultation document needed editorial context reviewed to ensure clarity, especially maps and pictorial content
- Last review in 1977 resulted in boundary and county changes, affecting political local seats and national seats
- Clarification was required on the tight timeframes already agreed by programme team
- Councils had different targets for Climate emergency and there was a need to work across Councils to work more closely together to develop a future plan
- Offsetting framework mentioned, clarity of the framework would be useful
- Light pollution, requirement to protect areas of Dark Skies
- Biodiversity net gain, definition required
- Appropriate terminology for Traveller and Gypsy communities
- Document should not be generic on inclusivity when looking at disability housing needs
- Document needed to reflect housing needs for younger people as well as older people
- Seemed to have been written towards older people, did not reflect preschool, apprenticeships or post 16 education
- Live work units, plan is strategic

Having considered the report and discussed the content, it was agreed that the Chief Executive would take into account their comments when the final publication style, editorial corrections and minor amendments were made.

Therefore, the Committee

Resolved that their comments be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration.

21 **Council Priorities and Service Performance Report - Quarter 4**

The committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which provided details of the Council's service performance during Quarter 4.

A description of the Performance Management Framework and Performance Reporting was provided at section 2 of the report and advised of the six key strands of information now being focused on. The report also explained the Commissioning Framework and set out the relationship between Publica and the Council, along with their respective responsibilities.

The Chief Executive had received the report and had noted the progress made, whilst being mindful of the impact of the ongoing pandemic. Section 2.7 of the report highlighted the key issues experienced by the Council and its officers in that time.

Members considered the content of the report and discussed the various challenges encountered. It was noted that Planning applications had increased by 46% this year and this was reflected in the report.

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

Resolved that the report is noted.

22 **Committee Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report which gave members the opportunity to comment on the recent of the Work Programme for 2021/2022.

Following discussions, it was noted that:

An invitation was due to be extended to the Police to attend the next Committee meeting and give a verbal update. Members were encouraged to submit questions to the Chairman and Democratic Services by mid-August.

An invitation was due to be extended to Cottsway Housing Association to attend Committee meeting and give a verbal update. Members were keen to invite WODC Housing Associations to attend future Committee meetings, starting with Cottsway, followed by others at later dates throughout the year.

NHS Dental Service provision - Following the last briefing note from Oxfordshire CCG, officers had requested a further update on how the Council would address the NHS Dental practice shortfall.

The report on the preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan - Following last month's briefing note, Officers were informed that a further detailed briefing note was due to be issued in September.

Resolved that the updates be noted.

23 **Cabinet Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of the Democratic Services, which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 18 May 2021.

During discussions it was noted that:

Upgrade to WO public space CCTV provision & monitoring arrangements - Members agreed to hold a pre-meeting one week before 16 September 2021meeting, if required, to review the report and receive an update because this item was due to be considered by Cabinet on 15 September 2021.

24	**Members Questions**

Councillor Leverton wanted it noted that the Oxfordshire Plan was a long document to review. It was suggested that if there was a long report to review in the future, it could warrant a separate meeting.   All members were in agreement.

The Meeting closed at 9.40 pm

CHAIRMAN

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	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 16ᵗʰ September 2021**
Report Number	**Agenda Item 8**
Subject	**Afghan Resettlement Programme**
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Merilyn Davies, Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing, Group Manager Resident Services / Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Operations
Summary/Purpose	**Programme Update September 2021** To provide an update report on the preparations for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan.
	Update Report produced by Paula Massey, Enabling Manager and Coordinator for Refugee Programmes Any questions can be emailed to paula.massey@publicagroup.uk
Recommendation/s	That the report is noted.
Corporate priorities	Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/Consultation	No

Update Report

Afghanistan Resettlement Programme – Information Update as of 06 September 2021

Since the initial update 30 June 2021 West Oxfordshire District Council are now actively working to support families.

The National Picture

2 separate Afghan Resettlement Programmes.

Afghan Locally Employed Staff
Supporting families who have assisted the British Forces
3,300
Funding package agreed by the Home Office to cover 12 months support

Broader Afghan Resettlement
Refugees fleeing Afghanistan
20,000 over 5 years
5,000 this year
Financial package still to be agreed

6th September, the Prime Minister gave a statement to Parliament on the situation in Afghanistan confirming that armed forces, diplomats and civil servants in this country helped evacuate 15,000 people to safety in the UK and also helped 36 other countries airlift their own nationals.
The Prime Minister confirmed that the UK is formally launching a separate resettlement programme, providing a safe and legal route for up to 20,000 Afghans in the region over the coming years, with 5,000 in the first year.
He added that the government will shortly be writing to councils and the Devolved Administrations with details on funding for extra school places and long-term accommodation across the UK.

Funding for Afghan Locally Employed Staff
- Funding is for 12 months.
- Includes an additional payment for language teaching support English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) for adults.
- Where families do not travel and another family cannot be matched to the property, void costs can be claimed following the same criteria as with UK Resettlement Schemes (UKRS).
- Exceptional costs can be claimed, following the same criteria as with UKRS.
- An education tariff is not included. The expectation from Treasury is that other Government Departments (OGDS) pick up additional costs from existing budgets.
- There will not be separate payments for health provisions to clinical commissioning groups. The expectation from Treasury is that other government departments pick up additional costs from existing budgets.

- There is one tariff rate per person regardless of family size which includes provision for void and set up costs.
- Payment will be claimed in 3 instalments, using the same process as UKRS.
- The payment process will be the same for those entering temporary (bridging) accommodation (with local authority support) with the exception that rent payments will not be payable until the individuals have entered their longer term accommodation.

Accommodation				
Rent (up to 4 months or when in receipt of benefit)	£15 per person, per day			
Integration				
To provide integration support (includes element for void and set up costs for accommodation)	Per person rate			
	£10,500			
Cash support				
Weekly cash support rates (up to 4 months or when in receipt of benefit)	Single (under 25)	Single (25 or over)	Couples	Child (under 18)
	£59.20	£74.70	£117.40	37.75
ESOL provision £850 per adult (who requires it)				

This funding package was reached with the expectation that families in this cohort will integrate more quickly than families who arrive under UKRS and that the most intensive support is provided in the first few months and not for the full 12 months.

Oxfordshire
- Each District is currently working individually sourcing properties and providing wrap around support.
- Cherwell have 10 Ministry of Defence (MoD) properties and will be tendering for the management function. Family support contracted to Asylum Welcome.
- South and Vale have 2 properties with a further 2 in the pipeline. A specialist Officer has been recruited for this programme including wraparound support.
- No properties available in City.
- There is a well-attended Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Vulnerable Migrant Coordination Group, but this is not strategic but support focused
- There is a proposal to move towards a central coordination function across Oxfordshire and initial meetings have been held.

West Oxfordshire

- There is currently no dedicated resource to oversee the ongoing commitment needed and no wraparound support in place. This is being addressed, looking at a variety of options until a countywide approach is in place.
- Cottsway Housing have agreed to offer properties, when appropriately sized and located properties become available.
- A few private landlords have been in touch and advised of the gateway requirements, which are Gas Safety Certificate; Electrical Safety Certificate; Fire risk assessment (Fire protection measures and location and type of detectors); EPC compliance (or placed on exemption register); Not on Rogue Landlords database; No outstanding complaints against landlord/ not under enforcement action.
- The scheme does not support shared accommodation.
- We are looking for a minimum of 12 months' tenancy.
- Accommodation must be sustainable for a family past the initial 12 months of Government financial support and so the Council are looking for properties where the rent is within the Local Housing Allowance rates.
- For information Local Housing Allowance rates are:-

2021 Broad Rental Market Area weekly rates

Number of bedrooms	Cherwell	Oxford	Cheltenham
3 bedrooms	£207.12	£253.15	£195.62
4 bedrooms	£298.61	£364.77	£275.01

- The Leader of the Council has initiated an officer working group to assess the capacity and capability of the Council to deliver its fair share of accommodation and wraparound services to support the schemes.

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Name and date of Committee	**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny: Thursday 16 September 2021**
Report Number	**Agenda Item No. 9**
Subject	**Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc**
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Jeff Haine Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Email: Jeff.Haine@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager Tel: 01993 861686 Email: chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To agree the District Council's formal response to the current MHCLG public consultation *'Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc'* which is running for 12-weeks from 20 July 2021 – 12 October 2021.
Annex	Annex A – Suggested draft response
Recommendations	a) That the report be noted; and b) That the suggested draft response attached at Annex A be submitted as the Council's formal response to this consultation.
Corporate priorities	The consultation is the first of three proposed steps in the development of a new Spatial Framework Plan for the Oxford – Cambridge Arc, the area which spans the five counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Ultimately, the Arc Spatial Framework Plan will have the same status as the Government's National Planning Policy Framework and will have direct implications for various aspects of the Council Plan (2021 – 2024). The current consultation focuses on four key policy pillars including economy, place-making, connectivity and infrastructure and environment.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	There has been no previous public consultation. This initial consultation on the development of a vision for the Oxford – Cambridge Arc is the first of three core steps to producing the final Arc Spatial Framework.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. In 2016, the Government asked the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) to look at how infrastructure development in the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc can maximise the potential of the area.

1.2. The Commission's final report ([Partnering for Prosperity: A New Deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc](#)) was published on 17 November 2017 and recommended that the arc must be a national priority with its world-class research, innovation and technology able to help the UK prosper in a changing global economy.

1.3. The report also identified the need for urgent action including the need to address a chronic undersupply of new homes which could jeopardise growth, limit access to labour and put prosperity at risk.

1.4. One of the key recommendations of the report was the need for a long-term vision for the arc and its sub-regions with a strong, strategic planning framework integrating opportunities for jobs, homes and infrastructure and robust collective decision-making.

1.5. In its [response to the NIC report](#) in October 2018, the Government confirmed its support for the ambition to build up to one million high-quality homes by 2050 to maximise the economic growth of the Arc, requiring a step change in housing delivery, including engagement on how this can be accommodated through vibrant new and expanded settlements.

1.6. The government further supported the Commission's finding that in order to deliver the full economic potential of the Arc, there needs to be an integrated approach to the planning and delivery of infrastructure, homes and business growth.

1.7. To achieve this, the government designated the Oxford-Cambridge Arc as a key economic priority and in March 2019 signed a [joint declaration of ambition](#) with local authorities across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, the Arc's four local enterprise partnerships (LEPs), and England's Economic Heartland.

1.8. Importantly, the joint declaration recognised the potential development of a spatial vision or strategy for the Arc as a whole and subsequently, in February 2021, the government announced the development of a new Spatial Framework plan to help coordinate the infrastructure, environment and new developments within the Arc.

1.9. The government stated that the framework would be based on the following 10 core principles:

- *Collaborative – we will develop the Spatial Framework with local partners, including communities, local councils, businesses and universities.*

- *Adaptable – we will create a framework that provides certainty for communities, local councils and investors about where growth will happen, and the infrastructure that will support it. But it will also need to be flexible and adaptive to change as it happens.*

- *Long-term – we will plan to 2050 and beyond so that we create the foundation for long-term sustainable growth.*

- *Integrated – the Framework will be based on an integrated approach to planning which spans the economy, housing, environment and transport.*

- *Inclusive – the Framework will aim to bring benefits for existing communities and all places in the Arc – not just the highest growth centres.*

- *Digital-first – we will make better use of digital tools to support better, more collaborative long-term policy-making.*

- *Evidence-based – the Framework will be based on a robust and comprehensive evidence base, which we will make publicly available.*

- *Sustainable – the Framework must strengthen our ability to meet the government's commitment to combat climate change, support sustainable patterns of development, and support lasting improvements to biodiversity and the natural environment.*

- *Quality – we intend to set high expectations for the quality of new development and infrastructure, so that we can create the heritage areas of the future and enhance quality of life in all parts of the Arc.*

- *Add value – we will not duplicate local or national policies and plans, but we will take them into consideration in developing the Framework. Instead, the Framework will be genuinely strategic and focus on cross-boundary issues, policies and opportunities.*

1.10. The Arc Spatial Framework will have national planning policy status alongside the NPPF, thereby allowing it to have significant weight in the planning system for guiding local plan production and in decision making. It will indicate locations for growth but will not include site allocations, and it will not include detailed policies set elsewhere in national policy or local plans.

1.11. The timeline for developing the Arc Spatial Framework covers three core phases:

- Developing a vision for the future of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc – public engagement to shape a vision for the area, through consultation in summer 2021.

- Towards a *Spatial* Framework – The development of options for turning the vision into policy, based on engagement and initial evidence gathering and analysis. To be published for consultation in spring 2022.

- Draft Spatial Framework – draft Spatial Framework published for consultation in autumn 2022, with implementation of the final Framework shortly after.

2. CREATING A VISION FOR THE OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC

2.1. As the first of the three core phases outlined above, Government is currently consulting on a document entitled 'Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc'.

2.2. The consultation paper is 58 pages long and is accompanied by a separate Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report the intention being to subject the Arc Spatial Framework to a process of sustainability appraisal to help ensure that sustainability is embedded into the development of the Spatial Framework.

2.3. Section 1 of the consultation paper provides an introduction to the Arc including the area covered, the reasons for preparing a Spatial Framework Plan, the key issues raised through engagement to date and the proposed next steps for developing the plan.

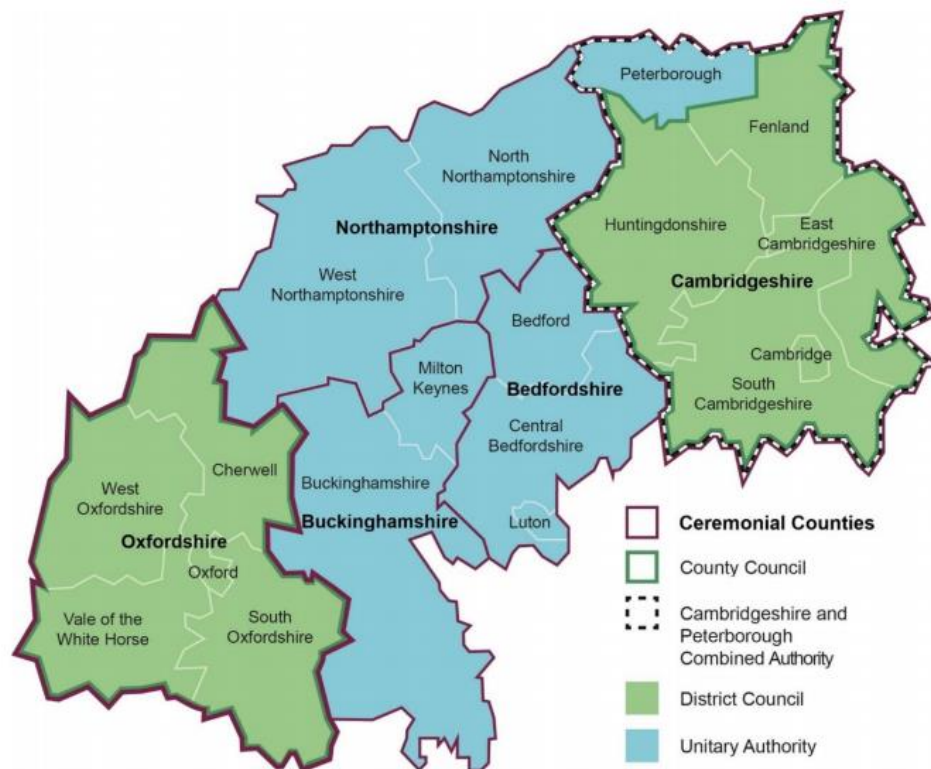2.4. Figure 1.1 below illustrates the geographical extent of the area covered.

Figure 1.1 – The Oxford-Cambridge Arc

2.5.   Section 1 of the consultation paper includes a number of open questions regarding the sort of place the Arc could be, the threats and opportunities that exist and the most important issues that the Spatial Framework plan needs to tackle. The District Council's suggested response to these questions is attached at Annex A.

2.6.   The majority of the consultation paper is then focused around four main 'policy pillars' including the environment, the economy, connectivity and infrastructure and place-making.

2.7.   For ease of reference, the overall 'ambition' for each theme is reproduced below.

The Environment

'**The government wants to support growth in the Arc in a way that is sustainable – by improving the natural environment and making sure it is protected, and can recover from harm. This will help us to meet our commitment to combat and build resilience to climate change.** We think there is an opportunity for the Arc to become a world-leader for environmental sustainability over the coming decades'.

The Economy

'**The government's priority for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc is sustainable economic growth.** We are putting sustainable economic growth first because we think that the Arc can be one of the **most** productive places in the world by creating new jobs, improving the standard of living and the quality of life for local communities. We want to support economic growth that is sustainable – economically, socially and environmentally. Taking this step will also help national prosperity as we build back better from the impacts of COVID-19'.

Connectivity and Infrastructure

'**We want the Oxford-Cambridge Arc to be a great place to live and work – now and in the future.** That means it will need to be better connected – by making it easier for walking, cycling, and public transport to become first choice for everyone in the Arc. It will also mean making places that reduce the need to travel in the first place. And it

means improving communities' access to the services they need – like a good quality, sustainable water supply and broadband, schools, cycle lanes and healthcare, as part of a great approach to place-making'.

<u>Place-Making</u>

'Place-making is the process of designing and creating great places to live, work, play and learn in. We think there is an opportunity for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc to be a world-leader in sustainable place-making and community living. We know that, as the Arc grows, new homes and places will be needed. Our ambition is to help ensure those new homes and places are great places to live by being more sustainable, beautiful and green, and have better access to the services and infrastructure they need. And we want to improve existing places and learn from those that are most valued by local communities as we think about the places of the future'.

2.8. Within each theme, the consultation paper provides some relevant contextual information, identifies how the Spatial Framework could potentially help, summarises the key issues raised through engagement to date and then asks a number of 'semi-open' questions regarding the importance of various issues which the Spatial Framework might address, for example in relation to the environment; net zero carbon, nature recovery, flood risk and air quality.

2.9. The Council's suggested response to the consultation questions is attached at Annex A.

3. NEXT STEPS

3.1. The current consultation will close on 12 October 2021. All comments received will be taken into account in developing the Spatial Framework's vision for the Arc to 2050. In spring 2022, the vision will be published as well as a public consultation on options for the policies in the Spatial Framework. This will subsequently feed into consultation on the draft Spatial Framework itself in autumn 2022.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. The report raises no specific financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The report raises no specific legal implications.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1. The report raises no specific risks.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1. The following documents are of relevance to this report:

- Partnering for Prosperity: A New Deal for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Arc (November 2017)
- Government response to 'Partnering for Prosperity: a new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes–Oxford Arc' (October 2018)
- The Oxford-Cambridge Arc: government ambition and joint declaration between government and local partners (March 2019)
- Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford Cambridge Arc: An introduction to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework (February 2021)
- Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (July 2021)

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Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc

West Oxfordshire District Council consultation response – key messages

1. Introduction – creating a vision

In March 2021 the Oxfordshire Growth Board endorsed a Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Strategic-Vision-full-document.pdf. The focus is on 'good growth' and this is guided by a set of principles. The Vision, the definition of 'good growth' and the guiding principles form the foundation for an overarching approach to long-term sustainable development for Oxfordshire and for developing plans, strategies and programmes for the county. The Oxfordshire Strategic Vision document is an important consideration in establishing the vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

The Oxfordshire Growth Board comprises the six councils of Oxfordshire and key strategic partners: Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Oxfordshire Skills Board, Oxford Universities, Homes England, DEFRA, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Network Rail and Highways England. It facilitates collaborative efforts to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits.

The Vision for Oxfordshire is one that recognises the county's unique location: '*what we do here matters, not just for the benefit of our residents and communities, but also for the wellbeing of the UK and communities across the globe.*

We are at the frontier in addressing and solving the most pressing challenges facing humanity. We want Oxfordshire to thrive so that the lives of current and future generations are improved.

To achieve this will require bold, collaborative and inclusive thinking to deliver real and lasting change in ways that build resilience and enhance environmental, social and economic wellbeing. We will draw on our world class economy, our spirit of discovery and Oxfordshire's global reputation to power this change through the adoption of clean and sustainable technology.'

The aim is to '*utilise the unique opportunities and assets in Oxfordshire to realise sustainable growth and shape healthy, resilient communities in which it is possible for all residents to thrive and which can be an exemplar for the rest of the UK and other locations internationally.*'

Sustainable economic growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc is emphasised by the government and reflected in the visioning document which also identifies how this will make 'a major contribution to national economic recovery as we seek to build back better…' However, there needs to be far more emphasis on 'Good Growth', especially on building back better and greener, on the need to address the climate and ecological emergencies (e.g. making a significant contribution towards climate adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity net gain and nature's recovery), on addressing health, wellbeing and inequalities and on

'embracing social, economic and environmental wellbeing to achieve a happier, healthier and greener future' (One Planet Oxfordshire: Our Shared Vision, Bioregional, 2019).

While accepting that the vision is high-level, there does needs to be recognition of the Arc as a place and of the character of the different areas of that place, reflecting both the challenges and opportunities of the local circumstances.

2. The Environment

Green spaces, nature and biodiversity

Section 2 deals with 'the environment'. Although not explicitly stated, the focus is specifically on the natural environment, excluding the historic environment. The questions on the environment are split into topics. While this helps to tease out different issues and priorities, it does miss the opportunity to address the interconnectivity of the issues within the natural environment and the implications of, and measures to tackle, the climate and ecological emergencies.

Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development identifies the importance of adopting a natural capital approach to development, recognising the significant contribution natural capital makes to quality of place, the health and wellbeing of communities, and their value in building resilience to climate change, reducing flood risk, increasing biodiversity and boosting economic productivity.

The OxCAM Arc provides an opportunity for the area to be a leader in achieving exemplar green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and nature based solutions. These need to be considered holistically, with an emphasis on multi-functional networks, allowing habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors, and on long term management.

The Enabling a Natural Capital Approach (ENCA) toolkit and the Environmental Benefits from Nature (EBN) should be important considerations.

It should be recognised that not all areas of green space are compatible with maximising biodiversity gain and nature's recovery. Green spaces should be considered as slightly separate from nature and biodiversity. While green spaces should certainly be biodiverse and contain natural habitats and natural play areas (which allows people to experience wildlife/nature and interact with birds, bees, hedgehogs, etc.), the vision for nature's recovery should be about habitats and ecosystems and the Lawton principles of more, bigger, better and joined-up.

Having access to every area of the natural environment is not necessary compatible with protecting and improving it. Some habitats and species just do not do well in urban environments, for example, skylarks, brown hares and adders - these will not use new habitats that are regularly disturbed by dog walkers and children. Off-site habitat creation (via biodiversity net gain mechanism) can have an important role to play, with the potential to deliver real benefits for nature.

Biodiversity net gain is a new way of assessing and measuring the biodiversity impact (e.g. on site), encouraging developers to do MORE on site than before (as well as factoring in the value of all habitats rather than just priority habitats) as well as providing new habitat off-site

where it will be less disturbed (and making real gains in terms of the nature recovery network).

Climate change resilience and net zero

Guiding Principle 1 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development relates to reversing the impacts of climate change by making climate action a top priority in decision-making.

The aim is that Oxfordshire will be carbon neutral by 2040, or earlier, and by 2050 will be moving towards a carbon negative future. Opportunities will be maximised to reverse the impacts of climate change, demonstrate leadership in carbon reduction, develop nature-based solutions to help mitigate the impacts of climate change, champion more sustainable ways to improve connectivity and support transformative technologies and sectors.

In terms of the OxCAM Arc, while overall the consideration of biodiversity and greenspace generally provides a cohesive set of principles which largely aligning with national ambition, there is far less emphasis on net-zero goals, or the existing energy landscape.

There currently appears to be a disconnect between research underway for the Oxford Cambridge Arc's Energy Sector Working Group to help them understand the breadth of the Energy Sector landscape across the region (including current operations and developing projects) and the implications for the spatial framework.

It is essential that the spatial framework seeks to provide clarity of definition for net zero carbon which will adequately meet our obligations under the Climate Change Act.

The emphasis should be on 'ultra-low energy' design, with energy demand reduction as the first and most important step to ensuring climate change impact is mitigated in design for growth. With temperatures increasing, mitigating overheating risk in new development is of an increasing concern and needs to be considered in design terms.

There also needs to be consideration to whole life carbon impact, cradle to grave emissions, which includes not only the operational energy use and associated emissions but also the embodied carbon impact of materials and products required through development of infrastructure and growth.

Links with a circular economy are particularly relevant and should be reflected within a definition a net zero carbon (refer to UKGBC and LETI definitions of net zero carbon development and associated KPIs)

There should be a focus on the need to remove any new carbon emissions first and foremost (both operational emissions and embodied), supplying all predicted and future energy demand through equivalent renewable energy within the region. AECB standards for water efficiency should be endorsed.

The Spatial Framework offers a huge opportunity for climate action, through e.g. actively lowering emissions, mitigating climate change, advocating fossil fuel free development and use of renewables and adapting to future climate change. An ecocentric, integrated approach

is advocated, whereby sustainability features are combined to maximise co-benefits. An ambitious approach is required.

Air quality and waste

Guiding Principle 2 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development relates to creating an economy that is 'clean … and sustainable' and Guiding Principle 3 relates to placing the overall health and physical and mental wellbeing at the forefront of decision-making, including providing better access to sustainable, inclusive and resilient active and low-carbon transport and improvements in air quality.

There are clear overlaps with issues identified for the Arc.

In terms of pollution, the focus is largely on air pollution and quality. Consideration should also be given to other potential forms of pollution, such as light pollution (and the issue of dark skies), noise pollution and potential contamination, especially of brownfield sites.

In terms of the sustainable use of natural resources and waste management further consideration needs to be given to construction and operational waste management, recycling targets, innovative or advanced waste collection systems, the use of sustainably sourced materials and the circular economy.

Water

Guiding Principle 4 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development which relates to enhancing our natural environment, specifically identifies the value of the water environment: the River Thames and other rivers, canals, reservoirs, lakes, ponds, wetlands and aquifers. The need to improve the quality of waterways and water bodies and reduce levels of water stress are identified.

Adoption of a natural capital approach would help to ensure an integrated approach to water management and flood risk (as well as clean air, sustainable land management, nature recovery, etc.), making sure issues are looked at and addressed in a coherent way and developments are more holistic in their design process. For example, consideration should be given to the interlinkages between SuDs and other sustainable features, such as water recycling, and water source heat pumps, biodiversity and healthy place shaping.

3. The Economy

Education and training

Guiding Principle 2 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development sets out to create conditions to support a world-leading and innovation-rich economy. As part of this approach, inequalities in employment opportunity and access to education, skills and training will be addressed, and life-long learning will be a priority. The aim is to build a skilled population which has a stake in the future prosperity of Oxfordshire, ensuring that growth is inclusive and supports the health and wellbeing of local communities, whether current or future generations.

The recognition of the importance of education and training for the Arc's economy is fully supported. It is essential that educational excellence is embedded throughout the education system, not just at universities and colleges. Skills need to be developed for all ages of children/young adults and from all backgrounds. There are some deprived areas within Oxford and other areas of the Arc where school attendance and educational achievement remain extremely low. There needs to be stronger links between schools and businesses and greater efforts to interest and inspire young people in the key and growing sectors. This is central to ensuring that all communities benefit from the Arc.

Jobs and businesses

Guiding Principle 7 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development relates to embracing technological changes to create better opportunities and outcomes for people, including increasing economic productivity. Guiding Principle 5 again emphasises the importance of embracing innovation but within the context of also reflecting and enhancing the area's valuable assets and recognising the diversity of the city, towns, villages and environment.

Guiding Principle 2 relates to creating the conditions to support a world-leading and innovation-rich economy which is clean, prosperous, diverse, inclusive, successful and sustainable – delivering outcomes for the environment, communities and public services.

These three principles highlight the interlinkages between the different topics and issues affecting Oxfordshire. These interlinkages are equally applicable to the Arc.

There is a tendency for there to be a focus on new jobs/sectors, with an emphasis on innovation, science and technology. That is understandable and clearly these are important growth sectors to be supported and encouraged. However, existing employment and business sectors also need to be considered and so too the need for an understanding and appreciation of the geography of the Arc. For example, much of the region is rural and of high environmental quality, a quality that both contributes to the local economy (e.g. through influencing locational decision-making by entrepreneurs and employees) and is dependent upon it (e.g. through viable and sustainable land management of farms, estates and open space).

The rural and green economy should form part of the vision for jobs and businesses in the Arc. For example, consideration should be given to the role of tourism, the diversity of the rural economy, including landed estates and farming (and their wider environmental and social role), plus the availability of local resources and raw materials (e.g. sand and gravel).

As part of the interconnectivity of issues, an important focus for the vision should be on sustainable and greener growth, including the circular economy and how jobs, businesses and innovation can tackle climate change and support the move to a zero carbon future.

4. Connectivity and Infrastructure

Infrastructure

The importance of infrastructure is a common theme running through the guiding principles of Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development. There is an emphasis on ensuring that the spatial, infrastructure and economic priorities are strategically aligned.

Infrastructure should be addressed in its widest definition, including education, health, movement, green space, communications and water and energy supply.

Keeping resources in use longer and minimising waste links with the use of a circular economy approach, for example, refurbishing buildings rather than demolition. Focusing on the use of local resources is also an important consideration.

New development

It is essential that supporting infrastructure is planned and delivered in conjunction with new development.

Local policies to require and deliver infrastructure as part of development proposals need to be supported by strong national policies.

Guiding Principle 8 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development expects all new development to be of the highest sustainable design and construction, one that improves the overall built environment and embeds healthy place-shaping principles, connecting communities and improving the local environment.

Green and active travel has an important role to play in addressing climate change and achieving net zero emissions and, at the same time, improving connectivity and enhancing the environment. Investment in new and improved infrastructure could provide attractive alternatives to the car, resulting in a shift in how people move around the Arc. The use of electric vehicles should be encouraged.

While focusing growth around areas with better transport links is supported in principle, it must be remembered that there may be localised constraints, such as AONB, SSSIs and limited nearby services and facilities, that makes growth in such a location unsustainable and inappropriate.

The importance of providing digital infrastructure needs to be highlighted, not least to help reduce the need to travel and provide the opportunity for home-working.

Infrastructure associated with energy provision needs particular attention in light of the climate emergency and the move towards zero carbon. A renewable energy strategy for the Arc, based on a detailed understanding of the energy sector, should be an important input into the spatial framework.

Getting around

Guiding Principle 1 of the Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development sets out to reverse the impacts of climate change, including championing more sustainable ways to improve connectivity. Principle 3 on improving health and wellbeing includes providing better access to sustainable, inclusive and resilient active and low-carbon transport. These are important components of achieving high quality development (Guiding Principle 8) through healthy place shaping and should be a fundamental element of the Arc's vision.

In addressing transport, movement and connectivity there are a number of issues that need to be considered, including:

- Assessing a wide range of solutions such as public transport improvements, first and last mile improvements, transport hubs (and connections to these) and technological advances which will develop cleaner and smarter options in the future;
- Measures to access public transport services such as flexible ticketing between the various types of public transport and what facilities should be made available (bike storage etc.);
- Taking into account the transport wider networks, such as the North Cotswolds Line and the planned upgrades;
- Making use of existing public rights of way, enhancing and extending them to increase connectivity within the built up area and into the countryside;
- Encouraging walking and cycling, informed by cycling strategies, to ensure connections are comprehensive and to identify current gaps/ safety issues etc.;
- Promoting electric vehicles and bikes, designing new developments with e.g. charging and safe storage for such vehicles/bikes, and minimising travel through the provision of home or communal office space; and
- Designing movement networks to be multifunctional, with multiple benefits.

5. Place-making

Location of growth

The Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development focuses on achieving 'good growth'. Part of this approach makes a commitment to development being sustainable, focusing on ways that enhance quality of place and at locations which enable people to live and work nearby, improving digital connectivity and avoiding unnecessary travel in the first place, but using opportunities to increase movement by sustainable and active modes of travel when needed.

'Good growth' forms the basis for the set of Guiding Principles, each of which contribute to the overall approach to Oxfordshire's development over the next 30 years, seeking to drive improvements to environmental, social and economic wellbeing in ways which build resilience.

'Making sure new developments are built in the most sustainable locations' is clearly very important and an approach that has underpinned much town and country planning. A focus on brownfield sites is also supported. However, is there a large supply of such sites within the Arc and are they in sustainable locations (or capable of being made sustainable)? On the assumption that most of the development will take place in greenfield locations, careful consideration will need to be given as to the criteria that makes it 'sustainable', particularly taking into consideration the climate and ecological emergencies and the emerging implications of the proposed planning reforms.

Homes in your area

Guiding Principle 6 of Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development sets out to deliver homes that met the needs of current and future generations, tackling the significant challenge of housing affordability by delivering more truly affordable homes both for rent and home ownership. The emphasis of this principle and that of Guiding Principle 3 is on healthy place shaping, including delivering homes that allow people to live healthily, happily and independently in their old age.

An important consideration needs to be on how the right homes* can be provided at speed in the right places, supported by the necessary infrastructure, and built to a high quality, meeting the best sustainable standards. (*including meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.)

Design of new developments and streets

The Guiding Principles of Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development form an inter-related set of equally important ground rules – the foundation of an overarching approach to long-term sustainable development, with a new emphasis on place-shaping.

Like Oxfordshire's approach, the Arc should be adopting a place shaping approach that embraces a more ambitious, radical, innovative and creative approach to designing new developments, streets, neighbourhood and communities.

6. Our commitment to engaging communities

Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development has three guiding principles that are particularly relevant in giving feedback on the issues of community engagement.

Guiding Principle 9 relates to helping people to help each other by supporting communities and individuals to achieve positive change for themselves.

Guiding Principle 10 sets out the importance of maximising the benefits of strong collaboration, creating the conditions where people feel involved and empowered, embedding a culture of meaningful involvement and enabling communities to inform and shape local decisions.

Guiding Principle 11 relates to proactive and positive engagement by fostering links with neighbouring areas to facilitate the delivery of good growth through beneficial relationships. For Oxfordshire this relates to ensuring that the strategic priorities inform regional and sub-regional priorities, including the emerging Oxford-Cambridge Arc. For the Arc itself, this engagement and collaboration should extend to those areas beyond the Arc boundaries. For example, here in West Oxfordshire on the western edge of the Arc, there are interconnections with surrounding districts, counties and regions, including Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, Swindon and the rest of the Cotswolds AONB.

	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 16 September 2021**
Report Number	**Agenda Item No. 10**
Subject	**Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2021-22 Quarter One**
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	All relevant Cabinet Members
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides details of service performance during Q1
Annexes	Annex A - Performance Indicator report
Recommendation	That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2021-22 Q1
Corporate priorities	Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity
	Healthy Towns and Villages: Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone
	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
	Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities
	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
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No

1.   BACKGROUND

1.1.   The Council monitors service performance each quarter as well as progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan at the end of Q2 and Q4.

1.2.   Performance in those service areas relating to the work of this Committee is provided in this report.

2.   PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - PERFORMANCE REPORTING

2.1.   A review of performance indicators is currently underway, and Portfolio Holders are having discussions with relevant managers about priority areas and finding metrics that would be most representative and provide assurance as to how the Council is performing.

2.2.   A selection of publicly available benchmarking data for the most recent period at that time (2019-20) was included in the 2020-21 Q4 Performance Indicator report on a trial basis. Some of the 2021-21 data has started to be released with the majority available by the end of December 2021. It is proposed that the benchmarking data is updated and reported on an annual basis.

2.3.   The Commissioning Framework also sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. 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.

2.4.   The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on service performance, and he has assessed it in line with the high level Commissioning Statement. He has noted the capacity issues and high workloads in some services which have contributed to a reduced level of operational performance in those services in Q1, as well as the actions that are being taken to improve performance. He has also noted the continued impact of Covid-19 on our communities, businesses, and customers as well as staff. He has drawn particular attention to the following:

   i.   In February 2021, the Government set out its 4 stage roadmap out of lockdown with the lifting of all restrictions on 21 June, which was delayed until 19 July. As infection rates have been high over the last few weeks, staff are being encouraged to continue to work from home;

   ii.   There were over 126,000 visits to the Council's leisure facilities in Q1 which is encouraging. Although some outdoor fitness classes re-started on 29 March, the Council's leisure centres re-opened on 12 April (Stage 2), with most activities and classes re-starting on 17 May. Some government grant funding has been made available to cover Council losses from waiving management fees, as well as costs incurred by leisure operators during the lockdown, and to support re-opening;

   iii.   A number of services have continued to support businesses to access grants, and carrying out 'test and trace'. Between the November 2020 lockdown and the end of Q1, around £20,344,734 has been distributed in both mandatory and discretionary grants to nearly 1300 businesses across the District. These schemes ended on 30 June 2021, with final payments to be made by the end of July 2021. However, the 'test and

trace' work carried out by the Benefits team has been extended to the end of September;

iv. The Council's business rates collection figure (in year) continues to be affected by the impact of Covid-19 on businesses, as is the case with other councils throughout the country. The Government supported certain businesses with 100% business rate relief last year, but there are still businesses which are struggling financially. At the end of June 2021, the relief was reduced to 66% which will run until the end of the financial year;

v. It is encouraging to see that the that the operations team has been targeting fly tipping at recycling banks and reminding both residents and businesses about their duty of care to dispose of waste responsibly.

3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

3.1. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Housing Support, Planning and Strategic Housing, Land Charges, and Leisure and Communities; and the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at **Annex A** with pages **11 to 19** of that Annex providing the further relevant information.

3.2. Overall, performance across all services was mixed due to high workloads and a shortage of resources in some services. The relevant services have commenced further recruitment drives.

3.1. Performance for services that relate to the work of this Committee was generally good. The Planning service achieved its targets for planning determination times with the effective use of extensions of time. Similar to other services, workloads are high in Planning, and working conditions during the pandemic have been a challenge. The service has been piloting a hybrid working solution over recent months which should help improve the efficiency of the service (whilst still respecting social distancing to protect staff). However, the time taken to complete statutory consultations has also created delays due to the working arrangements of consultees. The recent ending of the 'work from home' directive has already started to improve this position. Furthermore, the Council has agreed additional resource to increase the number and grading structure of planning officers to better balance workloads and resources.

3.2. Of the 10 targeted indicators, seven indicators achieved their targets (Green), two indicators achieved their targets 'within tolerance' (Amber), and one indicator did not achieve its target (Red).

3.3. The indicator that did not meet its target was 'Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days'. There was a shortage of resources in the team which has since been resolved, and performance for July has returned to the previous high standard of delivery with all land charges searches processed within the timescale.

3.4. A full report is attached at **Annex A**.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. None

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1. None

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1. None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1. None

WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:
April 2021 - June 2021

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	(Snapshot) Number of households in emergency accommodation under 28 days	Number of fly tips collected
Customer satisfaction – web	(Snapshot) Number of households in emergency accommodation 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 within timescales	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales
Percentage of telephone calls answered within 20 seconds	Percentage of minor planning applications determined within timescales	Residual household waste per household (kg)
Telephone abandon rate	Percentage of other planning applications determined within timescales	(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 Council Tax Support new 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 Council Tax Support change events	Number of visits to leisure centres	
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit changes of circumstances	Number of gym memberships	
(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay		

A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

A selection of readily available benchmarking data for the most recent period (2019-20) was included in the 2020-21 Q4 performance report on a trial basis. The 2020-21 benchmarking data has started to be released and will continue over the year until around December 2021. An annual exercise will be undertaken to update the CIPFA benchmarking charts and the Shire Districts' median /top quartile lines.

Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire district councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). The CIPFA NN Model is based on family groups; it adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between councils taking into account a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The standard model provides the 15 nearest neighbours to each council. In contrast, the all shire districts comparator group is a much larger dataset of 192 councils, and there will inevitably be a much greater variation between the councils in this group.

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. Although the CIPFA NN Model groups councils on the basis of similarity, these factors are external and based on 'place'. The model does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Therefore, benchmarking data should be viewed as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion. It is important to understand performance within context, and there will be a variety of internal factors that determine performance including costs, workloads and quality.
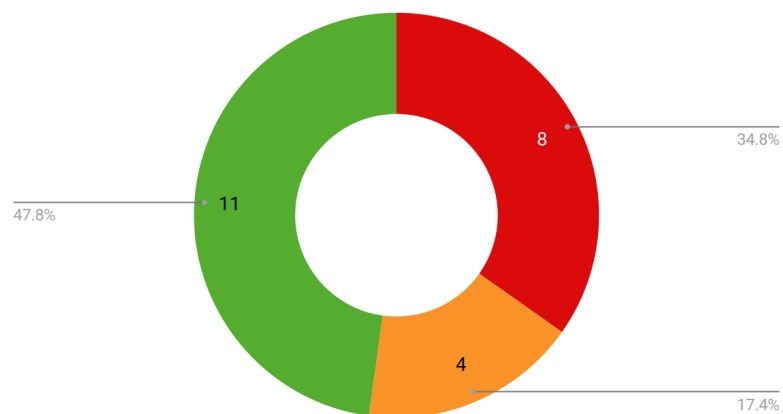
Note

The data benchmarks have been extracted from LG Inform, a benchmarking tool, which contains a range of routinely published data. The median and top (best 25%) quartile lines are based on annual outturns but applied to the quarterly data.

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

At a glance…

Summary of Performance

- 8 — 34.8%
- 11 — 47.8%
- 4 — 17.4%

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Over the last two quarters, performance has been mixed but is beginning to show a more positive outlook in some services. Although restrictions started to be lifted in March, the majority of staff have continued to deliver services from home which is still presenting challenges for the planning service. The service has been piloting a hybrid working solution over recent months which should help improve the efficiency of the service.

There has been a shortage of resources in some services to deal with increasing workloads due to the economic market e.g. planning applications and land charge searches; and there are backlogs in some services due to a number of reasons including the suspension of site visits due to the pandemic e.g. Food Safety; as well as backlogs that built up while implementing new systems e.g. Benefits team.

These challenges have been exacerbated by the difficulty to recruit in some services such as Planning and Food Safety, and further recruitment drives have commenced. Additional resource to increase the number and grading structure of planning officers has been agreed. The Benefits team was able to access some resources from Civica OnDemand, and further requests have been made. The service will be employing temporary staff to help reduce the backlog.

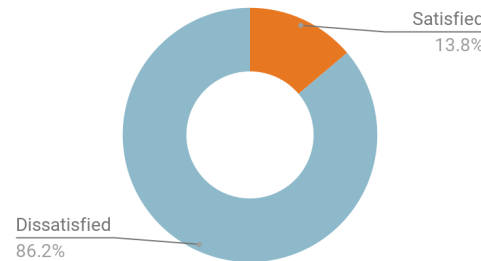| Indicators with targets	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	(green)
Customer satisfaction - F2F	No data
Customer satisfaction - website	(red)
% of calls responded to within 20 seconds	(red)
Abandoned call rate	(red)
CT collection rate	(green)
NNDR collection rate	(green)
Average days to process CTS new claims	(red)
Average days to process CTS change events	(red)
Average days to process HB change events	(red)
% HB overpayment	(orange)
Households in emergency accommodation under 28 days	(orange)
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	(red)
Leisure visits	(green)
Gym memberships	(green)
% high risk notifications assessed within time	(green)
% high risk food premises inspected within time	n/a
Residual waste per household (kg)	No data
% overall recycling rate	No data
Missed bins per 100,000	(red)
Parking enforcement	(orange)

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer satisfaction

Face to face - no surveys due to Covid19

Website - 123 respondents
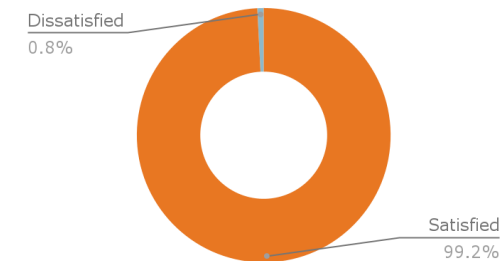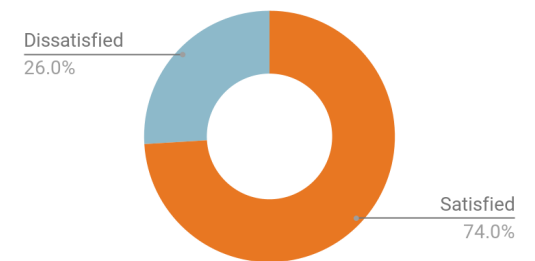
Satisfied 13.8%

Dissatisfied 86.2%

Phone - 370 respondents

Dissatisfied 0.8%

Satisfied 99.2%

Email - 335 respondents

Dissatisfied 26.0%

Satisfied 74.0%

What's the trend?

Customer satisfaction - face to face

Cotswold — Forest — West — Target

Customer satisfaction - phone

Cotswold — Forest — West — Target

Customer satisfaction - website

Cotswold — Forest — West — Target

Customer satisfaction - email

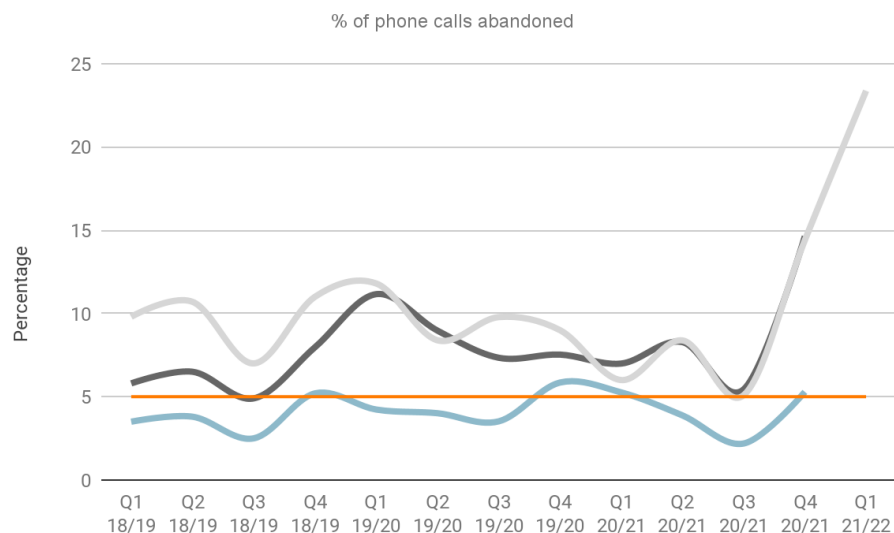Cotswold — Forest — West
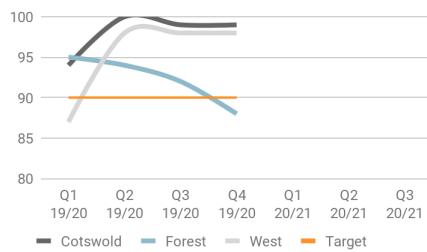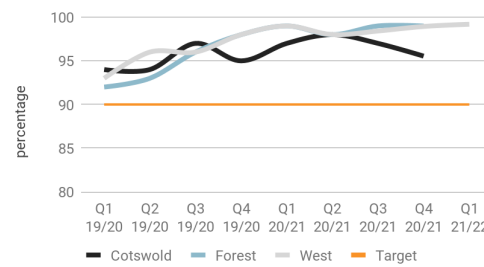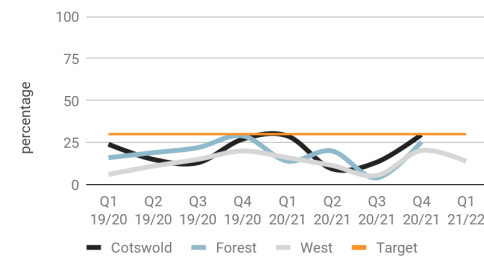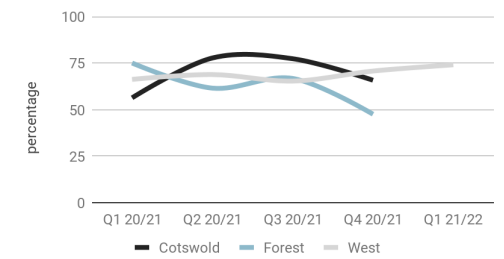
OBSERVATION

Due to Covid-19, the Council closed its reception areas in March 2020 and therefore face to face surveys were temporarily suspended. The nation emerged from the third lockdown on the 29 March 2021 in phased stages; and although Woodgreen and the Town Centre shop re-opened to customers from 12 April 2021, footfall is currently low. As 19 July marked the end of the lockdown restrictions, the service is considering re-commencing face to face surveys.

Overall, satisfaction ratings for services delivered via the phone continue to be high, while satisfaction for services via the website appears to be low. The number of feedback responses continues to be extremely low compared to the large proportion of visitors to the website. The 'Dissatisfied' feedback received this quarter was again analysed to establish the cause (website content issues, data processing issues, failure in service provision, user error etc.). These findings are being collated and will eventually feed into a new digital take up framework in which a range of channel shift data including web service interaction information will form a baseline which can then be continually monitored to give a more accurate picture of digital take up across our online services. This data should then enable us to understand where we can do more targeted feedback around particular online services to ultimately improve the online take up and change behaviours to a digital first approach

Telephone calls - response and abandonment

Legend: ▬ Target   ▬ Cotswold   ▬ Forest of Dean   ▬ West Oxfordshire

% of phone calls answered within 20 seconds

% of phone calls abandoned
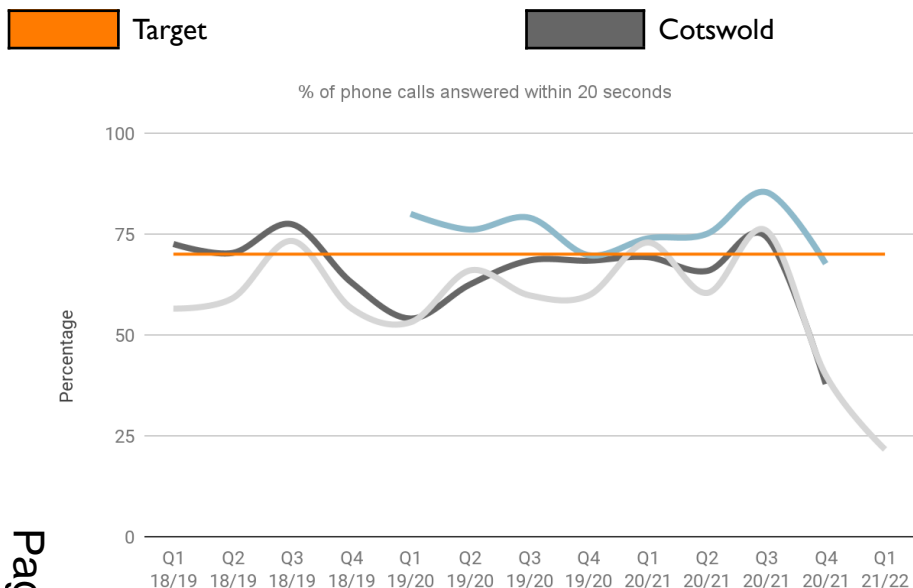
OBSERVATION

The service has reviewed its indicators to ensure that they are appropriate to customers' needs; the current thinking is that these indicators have become outdated and more emphasis needs to be placed on ensuring that satisfaction for our services remains high while also taking into account the benefits of channel shift and providing more options for accessing our services.

Performance for the two indicators has fallen over the last six months but has started to improve. The percentage of calls responded to within 20 seconds improved by over 86% in July, while the abandon rate improved by nearly 50%. The service has started work to improve working practices and reduce call waiting time. The manager is also undertaking process benchmarking with other councils which will help us to understand our performance in a wider context.

Workloads are generally higher in the fourth quarter due to normal annual billing processes which impacted on performance; and performance reduced further in Q1 due to staff on long term sick leave and phased return. We are aware that staffing resilience is an issue, and it is a challenge to maintain sufficient staffing levels due to high turnover as staff take secondments (often not replaced) or other opportunities to progress in the organisation. This means that the service has to undertake regular recruitment exercises; however, it takes around six months to train each advisor with significant support required from experienced staff

Revenues and Benefit

(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected & the difference between the percentage of council tax collected and the target

Legend: Target | Cotswold | Forest of Dean | West Oxfordshire
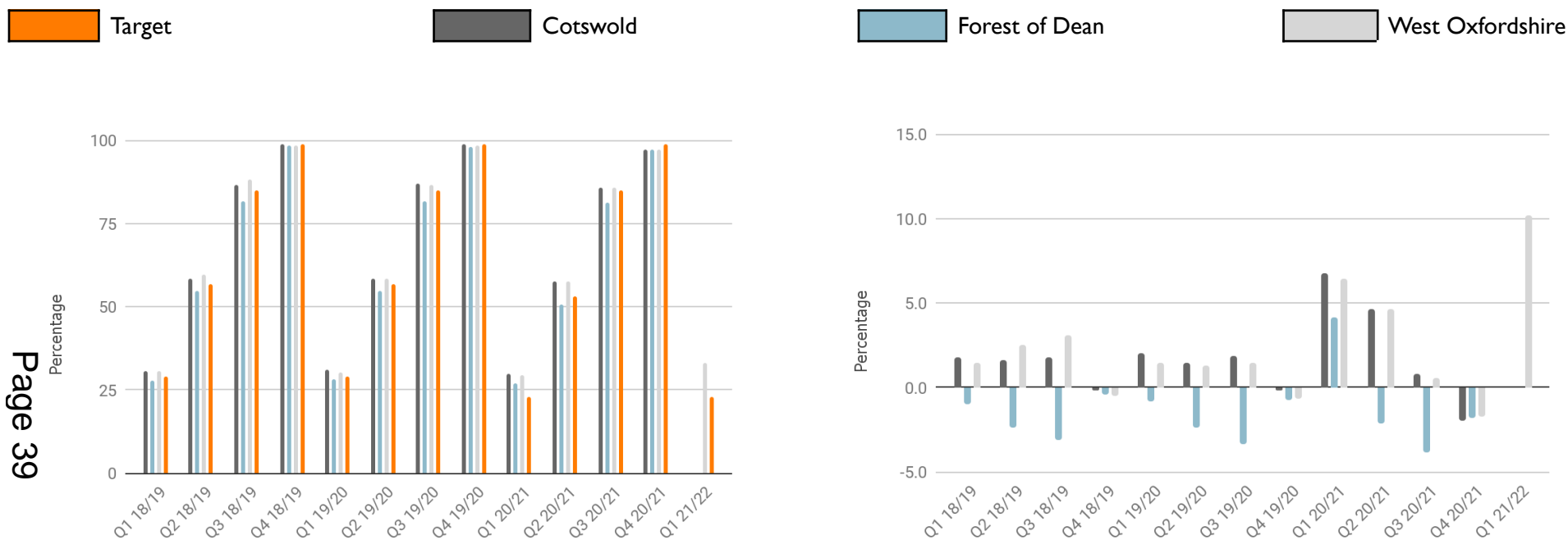
OBSERVATION:

The collection rate appears to be returning to more normal levels, and is up on the same period of the previous year, and historically.

The service continues to support residents, contacting customers by phone and email, as well as including a letter with reminders to encourage customers to contact the Council if they are experiencing problems with council tax payments.

Recovery action re-commenced at the beginning of Q1; and Magistrates Courts have re-opened for liability order hearings
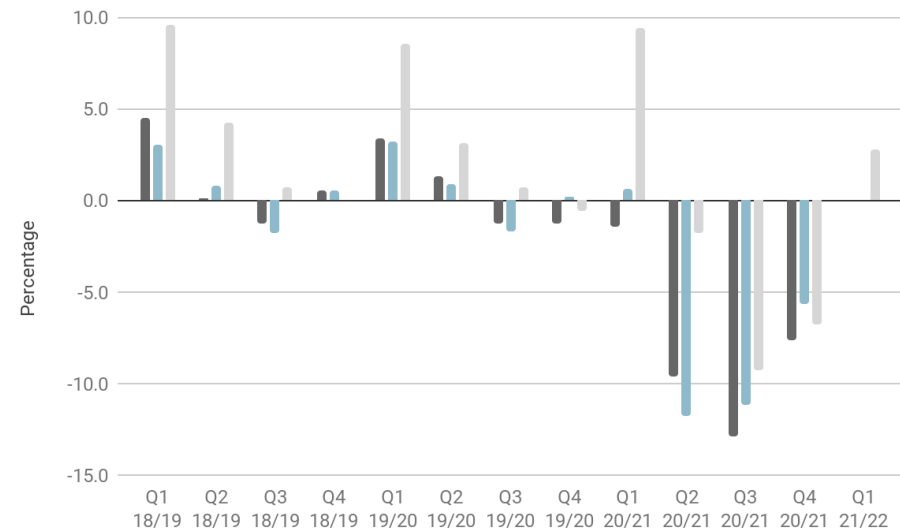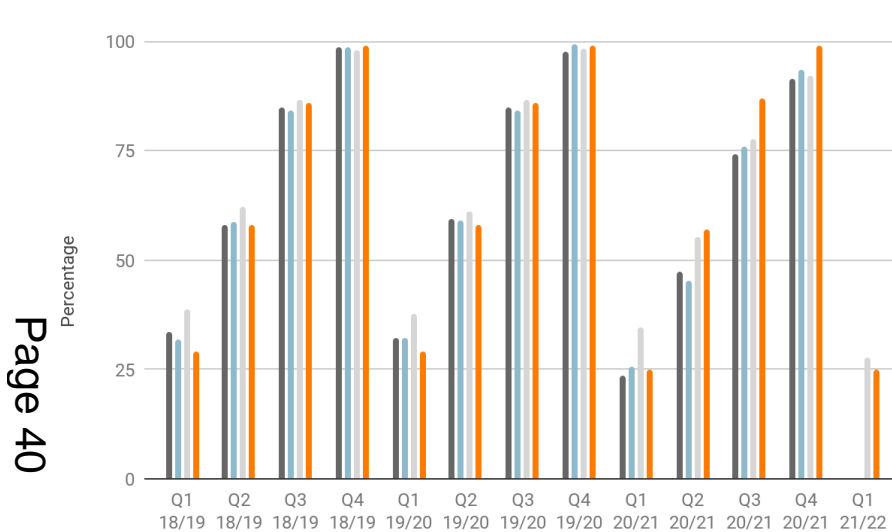
(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target

Legend: ■ Target ■ Cotswold ■ Forest of Dean ■ West Oxfordshire

OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q1, the collection of business rates continues to be lower than pre-Covid times. In addition, the Council has had to make some refunds due to changes in rateable value.

The service is continuing to support businesses; sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. The Magistrates Courts have re-opened for liability order hearings which will mean the Council can start to formal recovery action and enforce debts that are owed.

The Government has helped certain businesses with 100% business rate relief; the relief was reduced to 66% at the end of June 2021 for the remainder of the financial year. In addition, the window for applying for business grants closed at the end of June with final payments by the end of July 2021

(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and change events

Legend: Target — Cotswold — Forest of Dean — West Oxfordshire
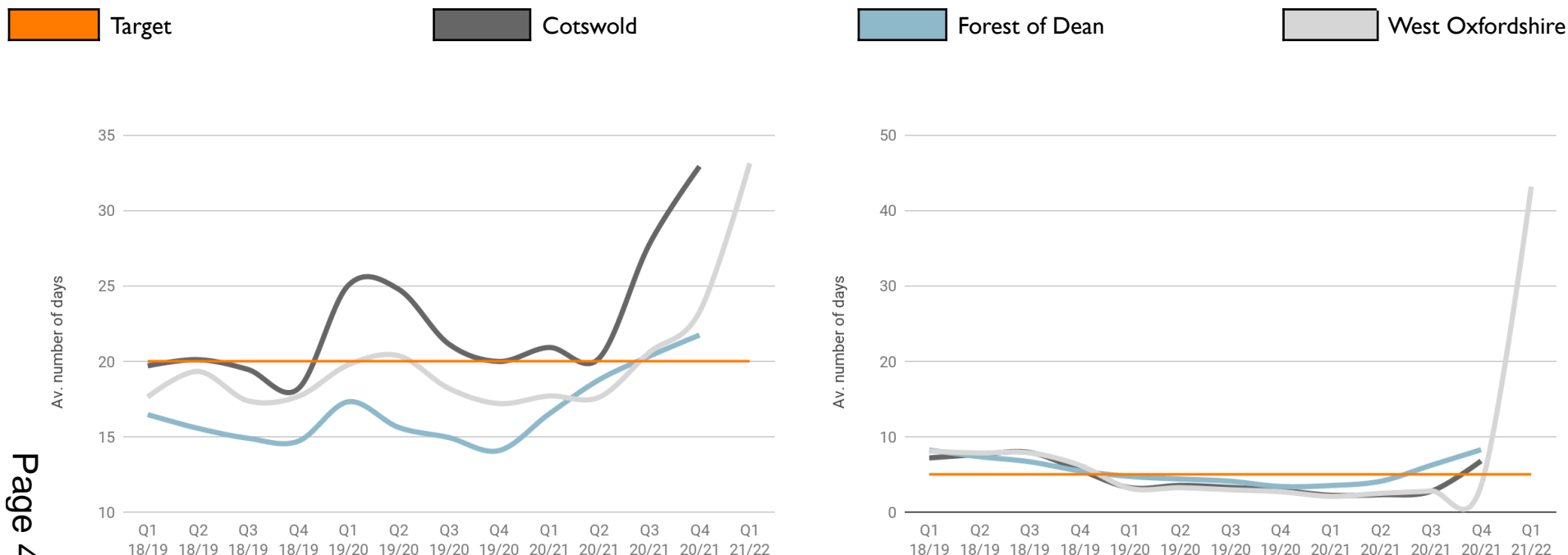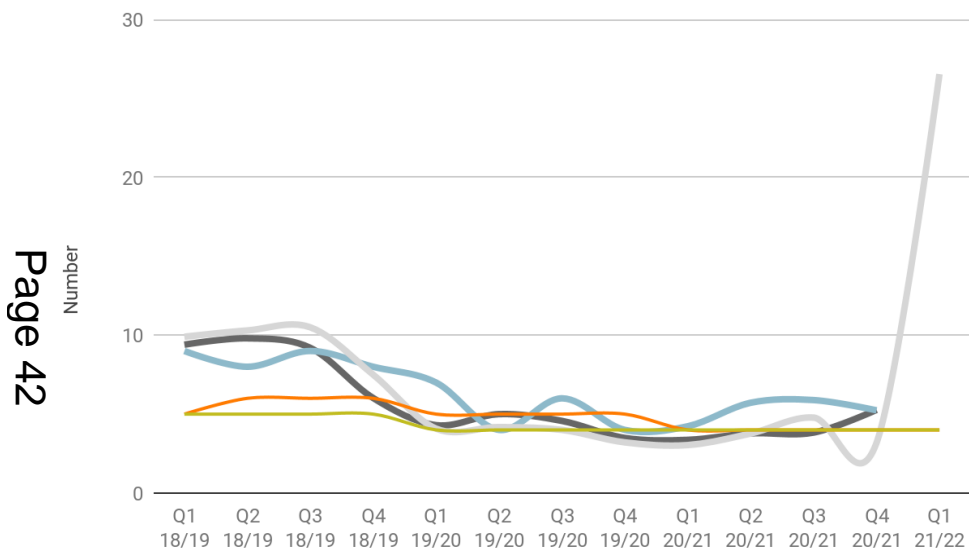
OBSERVATION:

Processing times have increased due to high workloads in the service due to a combination of reasons, as well as a backlog that built up during the implementation of the new revenues and benefits system. Since the start of the pandemic, Universal Credit claims have doubled which has resulted in a significant increase in CTS new claims and changes. In addition, the team has had to prioritise the administration of discretionary housing payments and providing welfare support to the Council's most vulnerable residents.

The backlog is being managed and cleared with the support of Civica OnDemand, and further resources have been requested; however, many councils are trying to access additional resources at this time. Furthermore, team members are still involved in systems work related to the new revenues and benefits system, as well as processing 'Test and Trace' claims which was due to finish at the end of June but has been extended to the end of September.

The aims of the new revenues and benefits system are to improve service delivery and make efficiencies but there are many steps to traverse. The Universal system has been implemented which allows resources to be directed to where it needs to be; and work continues on the open portal which will offer better facilities for clients to self-serve, which is expected to reduce service workloads and improve processing times

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

Legend:
- Target (orange)
- Cotswold (dark grey)
- Forest of Dean (blue)
- West Oxfordshire (light grey)
- Shire Districts' Median (olive)

Y-axis: Number (0, 10, 20, 30)

X-axis:
Q1 18/19, Q2 18/19, Q3 18/19, Q4 18/19, Q1 19/20, Q2 19/20, Q3 19/20, Q4 19/20, Q1 20/21, Q2 20/21, Q3 20/21, Q4 20/21, Q1 21/22
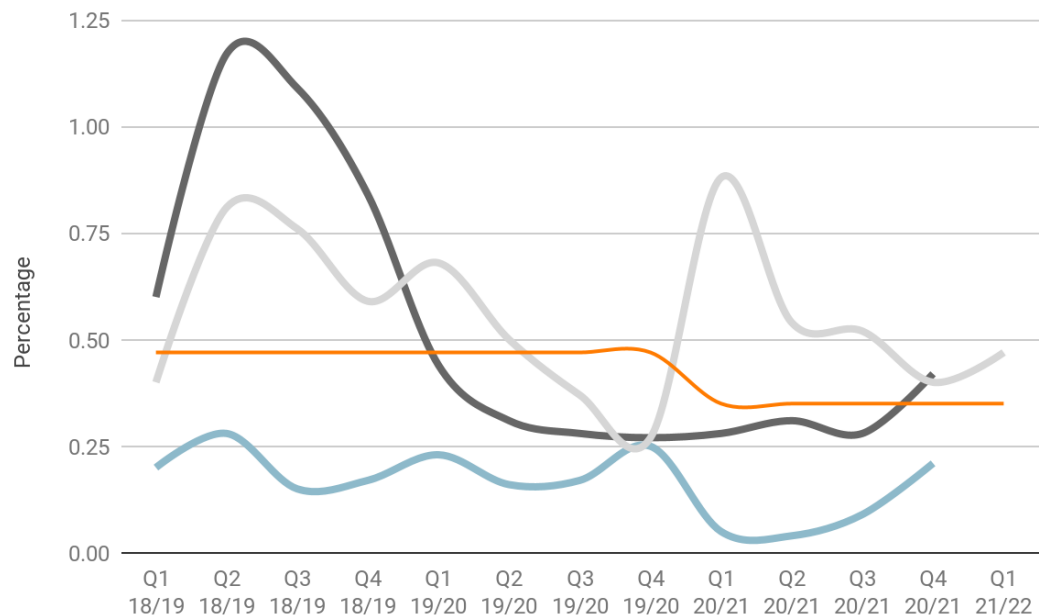
OBSERVATION:

Workloads are higher in Q1 due to end of year changes such as rent increases, pension amendments and earnings amendments; and additional workloads related to the implementation of the new revenues and benefits system, combined with Covid-19 related work, including processing 'Test and Trace' has continued to affect processing times. 'Test and 'Trace' was due to end on 30 June but has been extended to the end of September.

The Universal system, which allows resources to be directed to where they need to be, was implemented during the quarter, which created a software failure in the facility to automatically upload and apply changes of circumstances to system records. Around 80% of changes are applied in this way which makes the process much more efficient than manual handling. A software fix has now been applied and the automation reinstated which should be reflected in an improvement in performance in the second half of Q2.

The backlog is being managed and cleared with the support of Civica OnDemand, and further resources have been requested. The service will also be using temporary staff to process the simpler cases and help reduce the backlog

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

Legend: Target, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, West Oxfordshire

OBSERVATION:

Due to the high volume of HB change of circumstances, we take a sampling approach and target areas which we know have high error rates such as calculation of earnings.

Although the stringent target set by the service was not achieved, the nationally set target of 0.47% was, and therefore, the RAG status has been set to 'Amber'.

Overall, the Council has performed well considering; the backlog of HB change of circumstances that was created during the implementation of the new revenues and benefits system, and the potential for admin delay.

There was a spike in Q1 of the previous year due to a small number of errors relating to high value over payments in the preceding quarter

Housing Support

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

Legend: ■ Target ■ Cotswold ■ Forest of Dean ■ West Oxfordshire
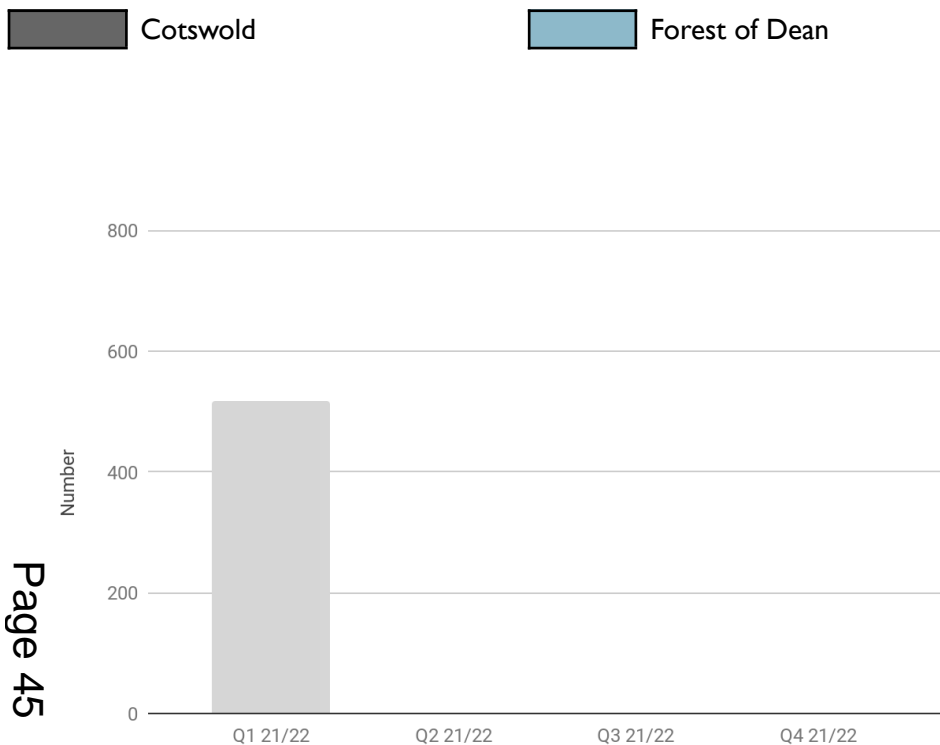

Over 28 days

Under 28 days
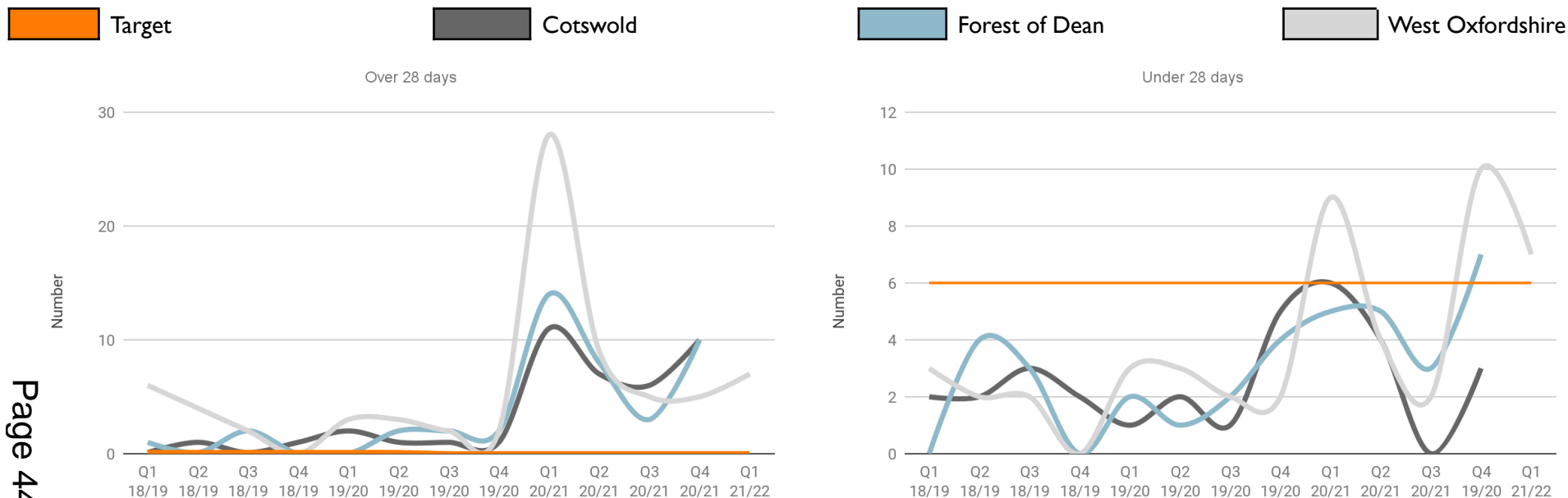
OBSERVATION:

During the national lockdowns, the number of households in emergency accommodation increased as councils were required to place all clients who were rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness into emergency accommodation, regardless of priority need, and who had approached the Council,. At the end of each lockdown, the numbers decreased, as exit plans were created to move households into more secure tenancies including housing association, supported accommodation, and private rented accommodation. Local Authorities are still being asked by the Government to ensure that anyone confirmed to be rough sleeping receives a swift offer of accommodation, however these numbers have now very much declined into a more manageable amount.

Currently, the number of households in emergency accommodation reflects the low availability of social housing stock due to low turnover and households not moving as much during the pandemic due to the Eviction Ban; and it also takes time for housing associations to prepare accommodation for new tenants. Void turnaround times are also increasing due to lack of building supplies/ materials as the effects of the pandemic continue on past the easing of restrictions as these often come from abroad. Placing clients in private rented accommodation is even more of a challenge as these properties are usually not affordable and have rents over and above allowable benefits. The majority of the households in emergency accommodation over 28 days tend to be single people who are difficult to move on due to the lack of one bedroom accommodation. Much progress has been made in the latter part of Q1, and into Q2 in finding alternative accommodation with the recruitment of specialist Temporary Accommodation Officers who are able to offer dedicated support and assistance with helping the clients move on successfully. These indicators have been set to 'Amber' in recognition of the challenging conditions.

The Old Court House, a property with 15 self-contained units is expected to become available in September 2021 and will help to reduce the numbers in emergency accommodation further.

(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties

Cotswold   Forest of Dean   West Oxfordshire

Chart — y-axis: Number (0 to 800), x-axis: Q1 21/22, Q2 21/22, Q3 21/22, Q4 21/22. A single West Oxfordshire bar at approximately 510 in Q1 21/22.

OBSERVATION:

The transition of the new Revenues and Benefits system from Northgate to Civica has presented the opportunity to cleanse the data including de-duplication, as well as streamlining the process for the three partner Councils. This work has identified inconsistencies in historical reporting; therefore, reporting will commence from Q1.

The new LTE officer (in post for three months) is contacting landlords/homeowners to ensure that the Council's data is accurate and up to date. Work is also being undertaken to segregate those properties where no further work is required; for example, Cottsway Housing has some older properties awaiting demolition,

Some properties such as retirement properties remain vacant.

Planning and Strategic Housing

(Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

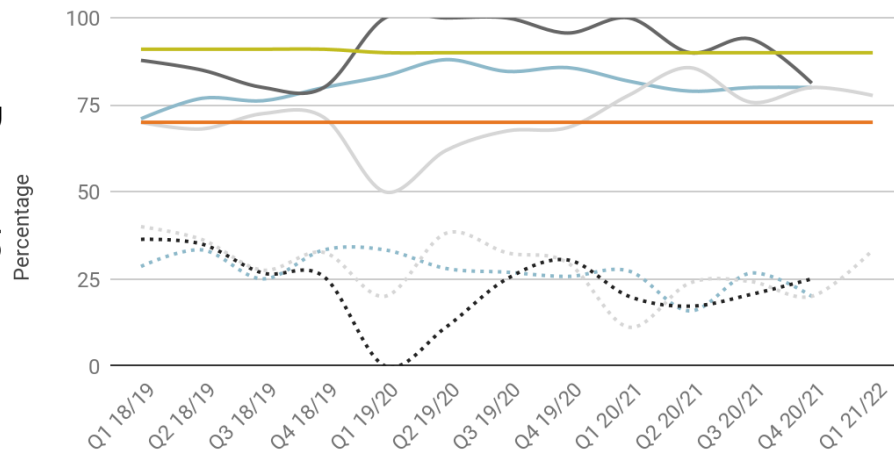% of all applications completed within an agreed timeframe

| ▮ Target | ▮ Cotswold | ▮ Forest of Dean | ▮ West Oxfordshire | ▮ Shire Districts' Median |

% of all application completed within 13 weeks

------------- Cotswold   ----------- Forest of Dean   ----------- West Oxfordshire

Note

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

OBSERVATION:

The service has reported that the increase in planning applications coming in over the last year is projected to continue due to an overstimulated market.

The increasing numbers coming through combined with reduced capacity caused by increased staff turnover and reduced efficiency in the planning process as a result of Covid-19 has created a backlog.

Given improvements made to processes and a gradual return to the office environment it is anticipated that the outlook should start to improve. Some staff have already returned to the office as not all aspects of the statutory process can be or are best achieved electronically; however, social distancing rules remain in place in the office. Site visits continue to be onerous, and due to high infection rates, staff are being cautious. On the other hand, response turnaround times from consultees such as the County and the Environment Agency have improved.

There are a number of improvement projects scheduled and underway which the Customer Experience Improvement Team (CEIT) will help to deliver alongside the planning service, which has already addressed the build up of applications awaiting validation and improved workflow in general. . Furthermore, approval has been given for additional resources and recruitment has commenced

(Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

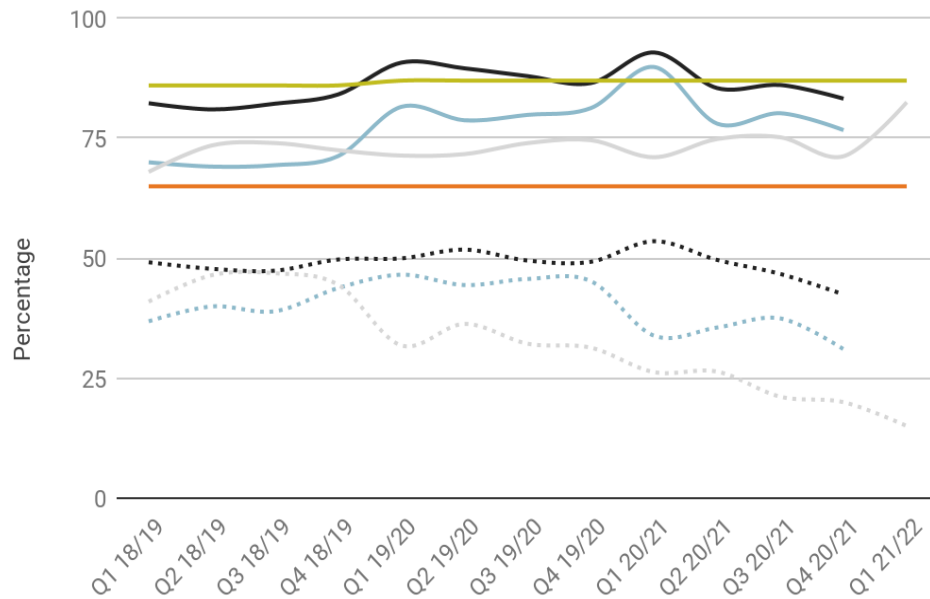% of all applications completed within agreed timescales

■ Target   ■ Cotswold   ■ Forest of Dean   ■ West Oxfordshire   ■ Shire Districts' Median

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

- - - - - Cotswold   - - - - - Forest of Dean   - - - - - West Oxfordshire

OBSERVATION:

86 minor applications were determined in Q1 compared to 76 in Q1 of the previous year.

Performance has improved this quarter. Case officers have high caseloads but are managing them carefully, and using extensions of time effectively.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

(Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

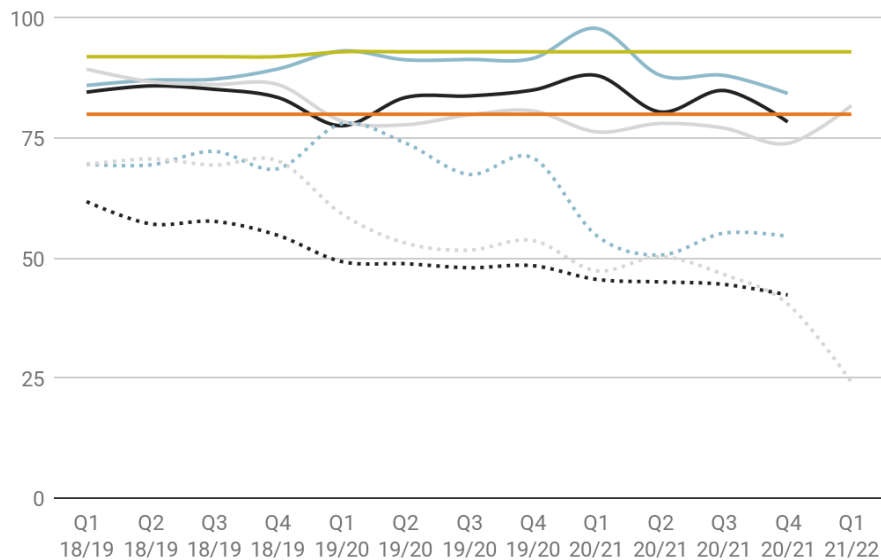% of all applications completed within agreed timescales

| Target | Cotswold | Forest of Dean | West Oxfordshire | Shire Districts' Median |

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

-------------- Cotswold   ------------ Forest of Dean   ------------ West Oxfordshire
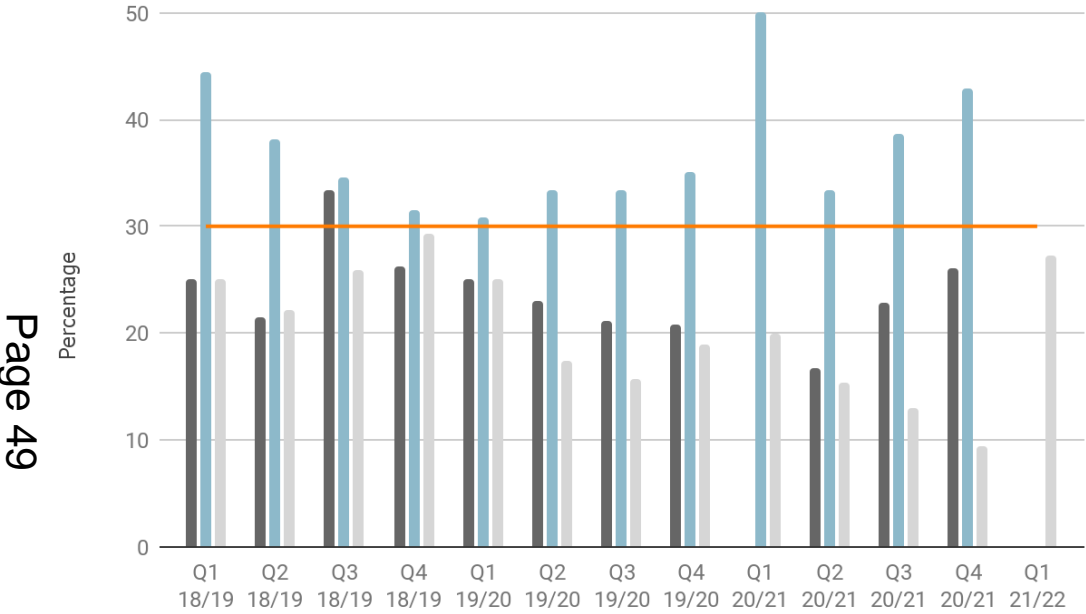

OBSERVATION:

330 other applications were determined in the quarter, around 100 more than in Q1 of the previous year.

Performance has improved this quarter. Case officers have high caseloads but are managing them carefully, and using extensions of time effectively.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

Percentage

(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed
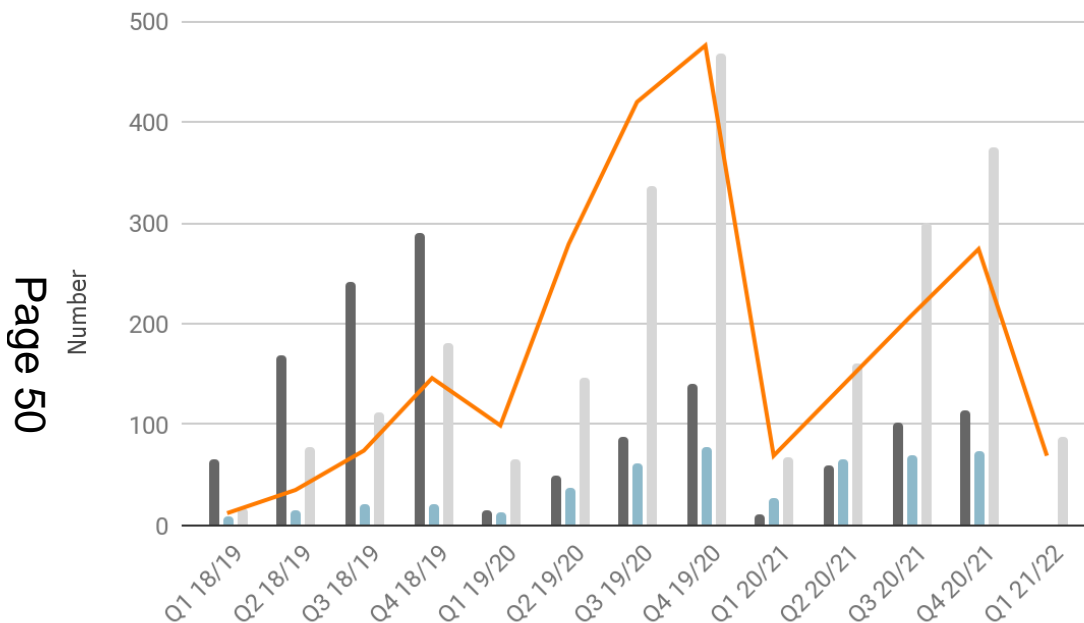

Legend: Target | Cotswold | Forest of Dean | West Oxfordshire

OBSERVATION:

Three out of 11 planning appeals were allowed in Q1

(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered

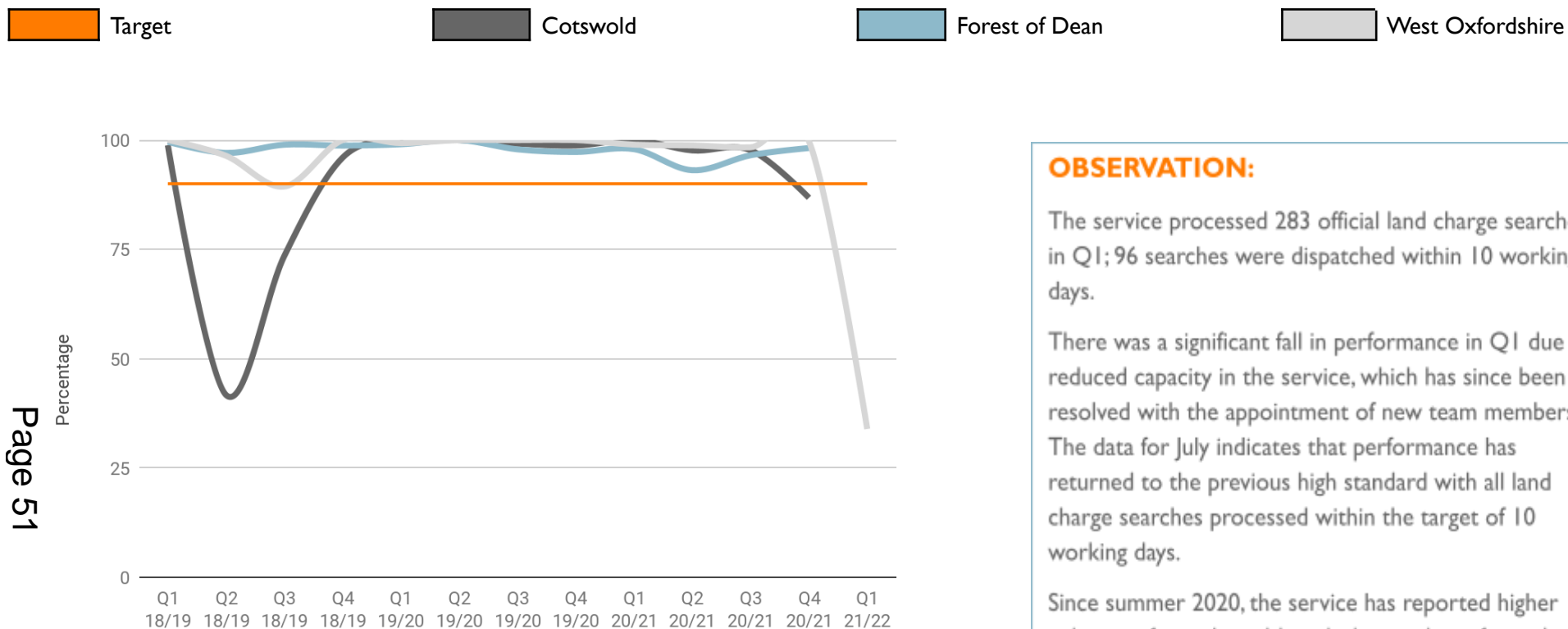Target   Cotswold   Forest of Dean   West Oxfordshire

OBSERVATION:

Eighty-eight affordable homes were completed; 53 for affordable rent and 35 shared ownership; which included 22 homes at the Pillars, Chipping Norton; 13 at Shilton Road, Burford; and eight at Burford Road, Minster Lovell; in addition to homes in Witney, Bampton and E. Carterton. Ten of the shared ownership homes at Witney and Minster Lovell are part of the WODC/Heylo scheme supported by Growth Deal funding.

Developers and Registered Providers are reporting challenges related to rising costs and availability of labour and materials, however, the forecasted number of completions through the year remains high

Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days

Legend:
- ▬ Target
- ▬ Cotswold
- ▬ Forest of Dean
- ▬ West Oxfordshire

Y-axis: Percentage (0, 25, 50, 75, 100)

X-axis:
Q1 18/19, Q2 18/19, Q3 18/19, Q4 18/19, Q1 19/20, Q2 19/20, Q3 19/20, Q4 19/20, Q1 20/21, Q2 20/21, Q3 20/21, Q4 20/21, Q1 21/22
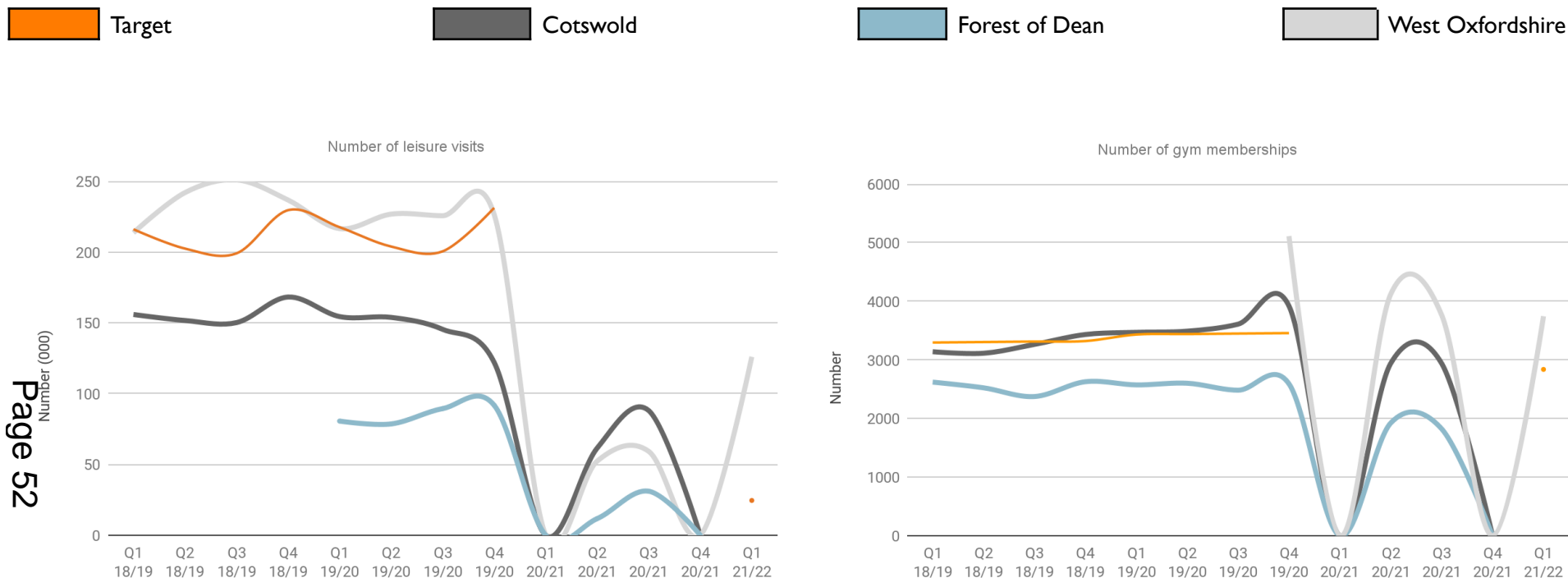
OBSERVATION:

The service processed 283 official land charge searches in Q1; 96 searches were dispatched within 10 working days.

There was a significant fall in performance in Q1 due to reduced capacity in the service, which has since been resolved with the appointment of new team members. The data for July indicates that performance has returned to the previous high standard with all land charge searches processed within the target of 10 working days.

Since summer 2020, the service has reported higher volumes of searches, although the number of searches reported in Q1 appears to indicate that they may be slowing. The 'stamp duty holiday' will be phased out from the end of June 2021

Leisure

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

■ Target	■ Cotswold	■ Forest of Dean	■ West Oxfordshire

Number of leisure visits


Number of gym memberships

OBSERVATION:

Since April 2021 leisure centres have been following the Government Roadmap and have been able to relax Covid measures, with the final date for relaxation of all measures set for 19 July 2021. The return of customers has been encouraging with many users feeling protected under the new Covid protocols (one-way systems, sanitiser stations, pre-booking etc.) The space available within the facilities has also helped to allow increased numbers without contravening social distancing requirements. As targets were set prior to the end of the last lockdown they were conservative, and we have seen a strong return in usage. The targets are set to increase each quarter during 2021-22, so it may become more challenging should there be further Covid restrictions. Gym memberships are lower than pre-Covid levels but show growth across the District with the exception of the Windrush, which is competing with the new PureGym in Witney that has attracted a number of users due to its budget pricing. Carterton Leisure Centre is looking positive and the re-opening of the trampoline park has also encouraged more users

Note: Gym memberships were frozen during the first and third lockdowns. No targets were set for 2020-21

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Environmental and Regulatory

Number of fly tips collected

| ■ Cotswold	■ Forest of Dean	■ West Oxfordshire
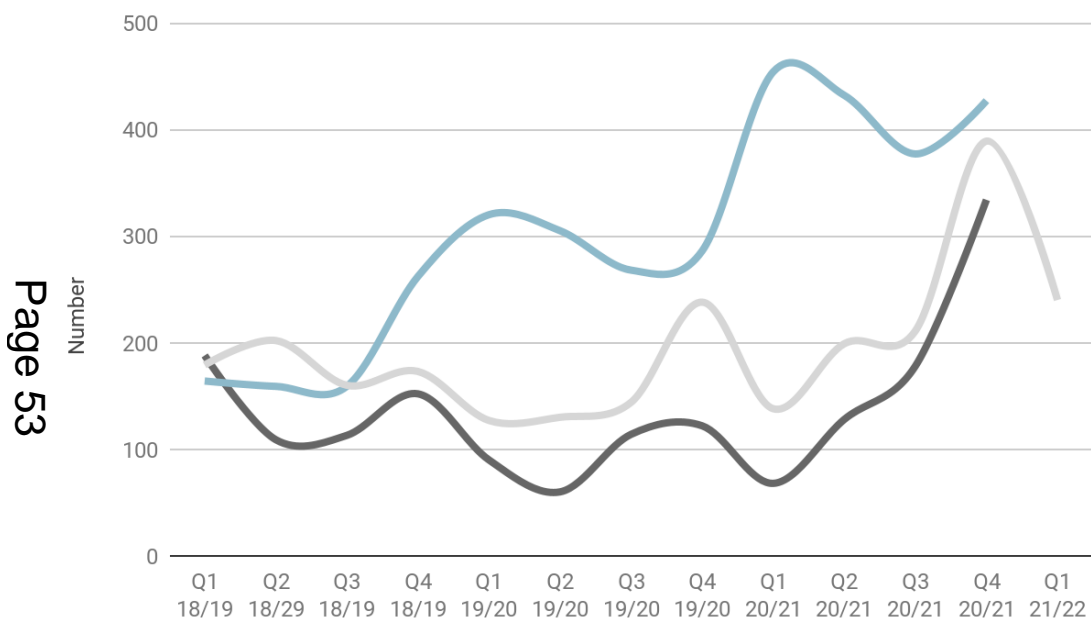
OBSERVATION:

An increase in fly tips has been reported nationally which coincided with the start of Covid-19, and this appeared to be reflected locally. In the most recent quarter, there has been a sharp decrease which again has coincided with the start of the lifting of restrictions in April 2021.

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)

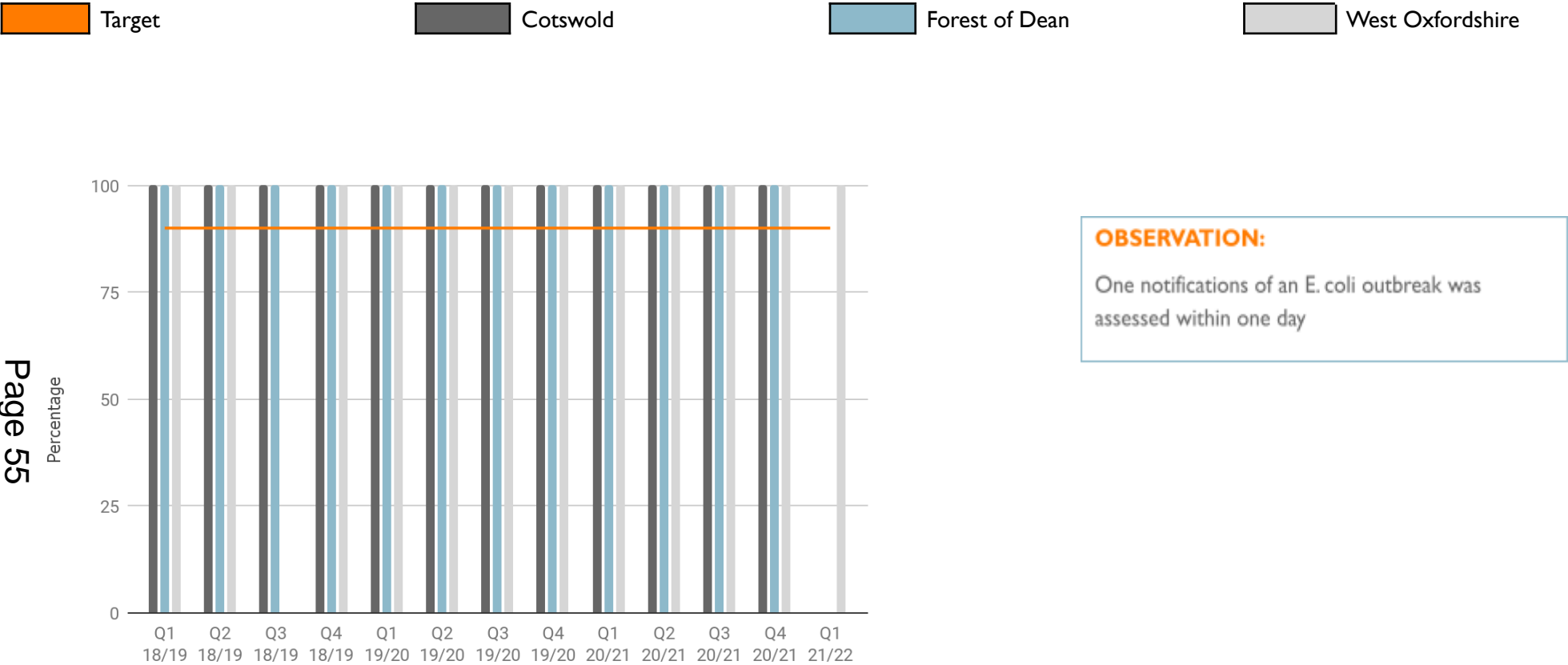Cotswold   Forest of Dean   West Oxfordshire
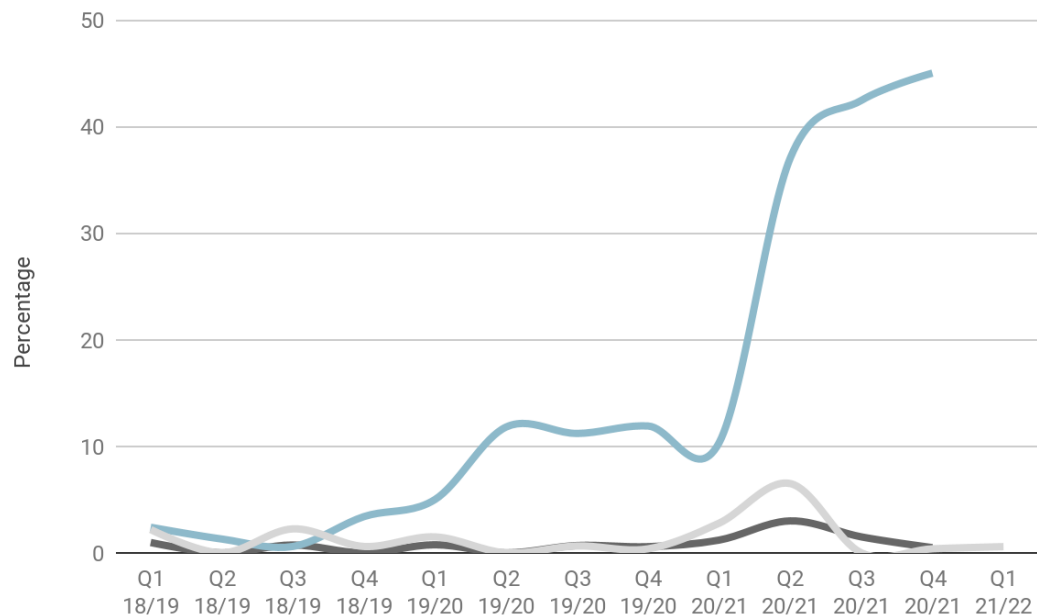
OBSERVATION:

In Q1, there were 342 notifications of fly tips, a significant decrease on the 521 notifications on the previous quarter. Two Fixed Penalty Notices were issued. In addition, officers have been focussing on tackling fly tips at bring banks. Eighty-nine warning letters were issued to residents and businesses who left inappropriate waste, reminding them of their duty of care.

West prioritises the removal of fly tips, and where evidence is available, it is investigated by officers. The Council will always take enforcement action if fly tipping is witnessed.

Cotswold and West operate a small multidisciplinary team. In contrast, at Forest of Dean, there is a dedicated Community Warden team
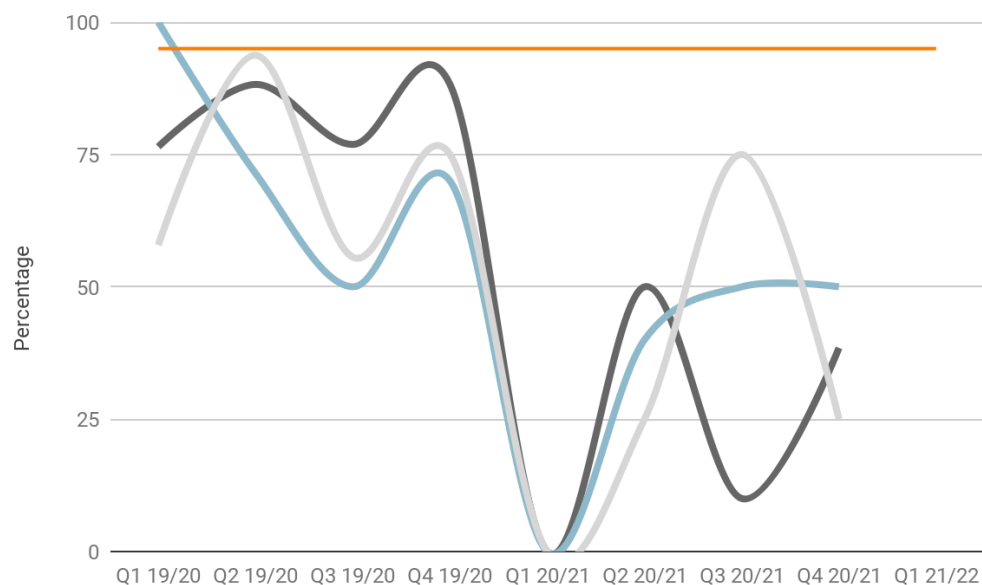
Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day

Target   Cotswold   Forest of Dean   West Oxfordshire

Percentage

OBSERVATION:

One notifications of an E. coli outbreak was assessed within one day

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales

Legend: ■ Target ■ Cotswold ■ Forest of Dean ■ West Oxfordshire
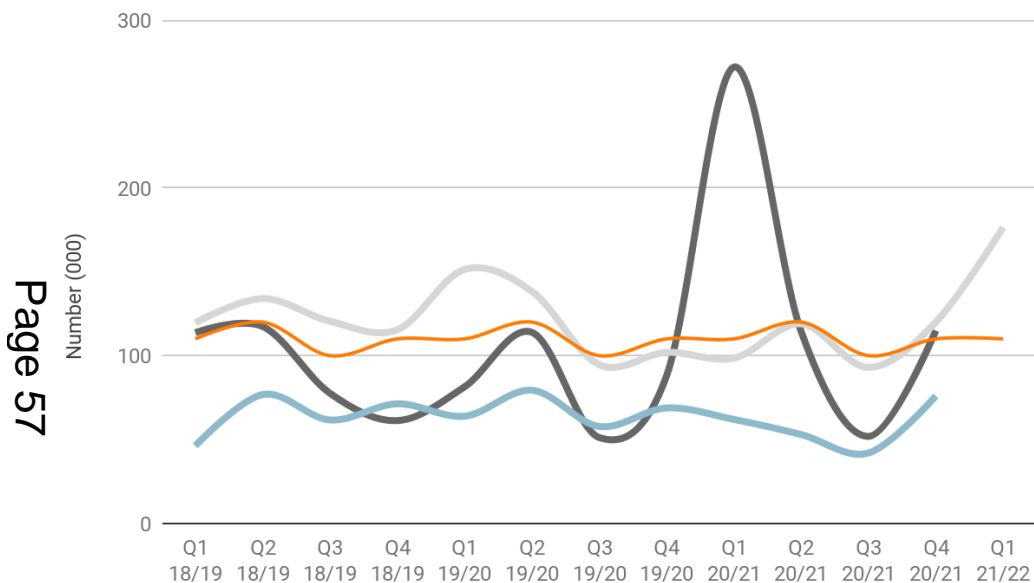
OBSERVATION:

No high risk premises were due a food inspection in Q1. There are two high risk premises (outstanding from previous quarters) which have received a remote inspection but require a site inspection. These inspections have been prioritised.

The FSA has put in place a recovery plan to ensure that both new businesses are prioritised based on risk; and the backlog of the highest risk categories (A's and B's) are cleared by 31 March 2022 and 30 June 2022 respectively. Although officers have cleared the majority of high risk inspections, a backlog of the lower risk categories has started to build up. In addition, reactive work/service requests have to be dealt with.

The service is experiencing some capacity and skills issues, and the recruitment of senior officers is proving difficult. There have been two recruitment campaigns over the last six months, and another one is underway targeted at newly qualified officers who will be trained up

Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections

Legend: Target | Cotswold | Forest of Dean | West Oxfordshire

OBSERVATION:

The number of missed bins has increased over the last quarter and is largely as a result of a loss of round knowledge from staffing issues related to positive Covid-19 cases, crew members working within the same bubble having to then self-isolate, as well as more recently, the 'pingdemic' which has affected crews more widely.

The staffing issues have been further exacerbated by the national shortage of HGV drivers. The use of agency staff and crew members who are unfamiliar with the allocated rounds will always unfortunately result in an increase in the number of misses.

Due to exceptional weather in May, there was insufficient capacity to transfer the large quantities of garden waste presented which resulted in an increase in the number of missed garden waste bins.

Performance is expected to improve from 16 August when crews will not have to self-isolate if double jabbed following contact with a positive Covid case, although they are advised to take a PCR test. In addition, the introduction of In-Cab technology in mid September should help to both provide a more accurate picture of the number of misses as well as reduce the number of misses by providing all crew members with assistance to find all of the properties on their particular round. Evidence has been seen elsewhere of missed collection reducing by 30% when In-Cab is introduced and so this coupled with reduced staff shortages primarily as a result of the pandemic, will benefit service delivery

Parking

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

| | Target | | Cotswold | | Forest of Dean | | West Oxfordshire |
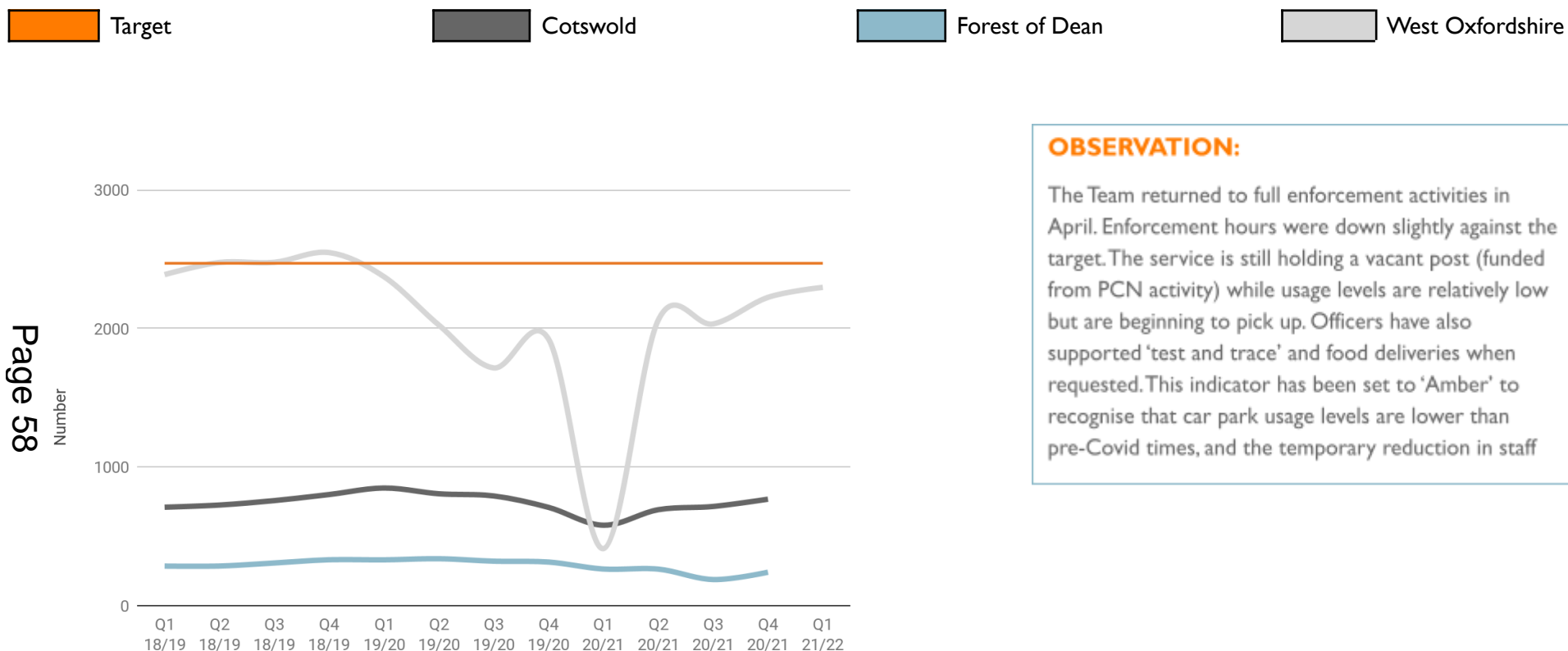
OBSERVATION:

The Team returned to full enforcement activities in April. Enforcement hours were down slightly against the target. The service is still holding a vacant post (funded from PCN activity) while usage levels are relatively low but are beginning to pick up. Officers have also supported 'test and trace' and food deliveries when requested. This indicator has been set to 'Amber' to recognise that car park usage levels are lower than pre-Covid times, and the temporary reduction in staff

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

Complaints decisions at Stage 2

Upheld
16.7%

Not upheld
33.3%

Partly upheld
50.0%
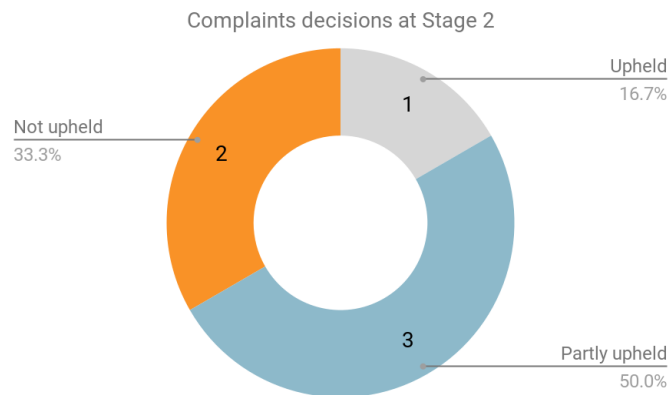
OBSERVATION:

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 new process has the following stages:

Stage 1: Acknowledgement and Assessment
Stage 2: Investigation
Stage 3: Appeal

The complaints shown below only include upheld or partially upheld complaints

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Revenues & Benefits	Inaccurate advice on Covid Business Grants resulting in the complainant feeling unfairly disadvantaged	On investigation, it was found that some information regarding the case had not been logged on the system resulting in inaccurate advice being given. An apology was offered, and the Grant Assessment Team processed the application as a matter of urgency	II	Upheld	5

	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee** **16 September 2021**
Report Number	**Agenda Item 11**
Subject	**Committee Work Programme 2021/2022**
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Andrew Beaney Chairman Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: andrew.beaney@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Democratic Services – democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Committee with an updated Work Programme for 2021/2022.
Annex	Annex 1 – Work programme for 2021/22
Recommendation	That the Committee manages its' 2021/2022 Work Programme and adds items which fall into their remit.
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 Committee's meeting in September 2020 it reviewed progress on its work programme for 2019/20 and agreed a programme for the remainder of 2020/21, having regard to the changes to the approach to scrutiny work adopted by Council on 22 October 2008.

2. MAIN POINTS

2.1. Below is the Work Programme for 2021/2022 for discussion and approval.

2.2. Members are asked to note the following amendments and/or updates to the work programme since it was last discussed:

Invitation extended to the Police to attend Committee meeting and give a verbal update – see notes on Programme schedule below

- Members are encouraged to submit questions to the Chair and Democratic Services.

NHS Dental Service provision

- Following the last briefing note from Oxfordshire CCG Officers requested a further update on how WODC were going to address the NHS Dental practice shortfall – awaiting update.

Re-Use of IT Equipment
- Following discussions with officers, clarification is needed on what the Committee agreed at the meeting in June. The minute reads "**RESOLVED**: That a detailed proposal be produced by officers to be presented to Council for consideration.
- This implies that officers are required to produce a report for submission directly to Council, however, it has remained on the Committee Work Programme for this month. Due to the amount of officer time involved it has not been possible to create a report for this month and officers are requesting clarity on what members agreed in June.

3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1. Not applicable

5. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

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

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

6.1. 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.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1. None

Economic and Social Committee – Work Programme 2021 / 2022

16 September 2021

	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
1	Report on preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan	Report	Jon Dearing – Mandy Fathers	16 Sept 2021	Briefing due in September 2021
2	Cottsway Housing in for an update and briefing on current WODC status	Verbal Update	E Poskitt	16 Sept 2021	Questions from Members forwarded to Cottsway in advance of meeting
-	REEMA North Site, Carterton update (Jon Wooden, Deputy Head Estates)	Deferred	Giles Hughes	25 November	Representative to attend the meeting - deferred
-	Upgrade to WO public space CCTV provision & monitoring arrangements	Deferred	Councillor MacRae / Andy Barge	January 2022	Members agreed to hold a pre meeting one week before 16 Sept 2021 meeting if required to review report/update as this item due at cabinet 15 Sept 2021- deferred from both meetings to January 2022
-	Re-use of IT equipment	Deferred	Phil Martin	Clarification needed on whether this is to go to Council or return to Economic and Social O&S	Deferred
3	Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21	Report	Giles Hughes / All relevant Cabinet Members	16 September	
4	Oxford Cambridge Arc – vision	Report	Chris Hargraves / Jeff Haine	16 September	Went to Cabinet 15th Sept

Economic and Social Committee – Work Programme 2021 / 2022

25 November 2021

	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
1	REEMA North Site, Carterton update (Jon Wooden, Deputy Head Estates)	Verbal Update	Giles Hughes	25 November	Representative to attend the meeting
2	Invite local Police in for status update	Verbal update	Chair	25 Nov 2021	Members encouraged to submit questions to Chair and/or Dem Services by mid-August. No questions received in time for September meeting – so deferred to November
3	Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21	Report	Giles Hughes / All relevant Cabinet Members	25 November	

Other Reports

Report Title	Frequency	Reason
Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21	Quarterly	Quarter 1 – September 2021 Quarter 2 – tbc Quarter 3 – April 2021 Quarter 4 – 8 July 2021
Upgrade to WO public space CCTV provision & monitoring arrangements	Verbal update – January 2022	Councillor MacRae / Andy Barge

Economic and Social Committee – Work Programme 2021 / 2022

Report Title	Frequency	Reason
RAF Brize Norton	As required	Business model for housing on site – last update given January 2020 and briefing note circulated February 2020. 21/01/2021 – GH / NL to find out if there is any update that can be delivered at the next meeting
Health Care Provision in Oxfordshire	Ongoing	To provide an update on the impact since Covid and how it will be looked at in recovery work, impact of PHE removal in September & how WODC can help with changes.
Housing Act and service update	Annual Update required	Report to be submitted to 26 July 2021 meeting.
Enforcement Powers in the Planning Act	Update required particularly on enforcement	Report to be submitted to 26 July 2021 meeting. Members fully in support of recruitment and workflow initiatives.
Domestic Violence	As requested	Presentation received at June meeting was comprehensive.
NHS Dental Services in WODC, especially Carterton	Ongoing	Initial Briefing Note issued 8 July. Members require further information on how WODC are going to address the Dental issue.

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	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 16 September 2021**
Report Number	**Agenda Item No. 12**
Subject	**Cabinet Work Programme**
Wards affected	All
Accountable members	Michele Mead, Leader of the Council michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Hughes, Business Manager – Corporate Responsibility and Interim Monitoring Officer Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 17 August 2021.
Annex	Annex 1 – Cabinet Work Programme published 17 August 2021.
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 August, covering the period to November 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 August 2021

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	15 September 2021		Considered by Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 November 2020
2.	Update on the Community Infrastructure Levy and decision to hold in abeyance in light of the government's planning reforms	Yes	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021	None	
3.	Consideration of 2021/22 Quarter One Performance Monitoring Report	No	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021	None	
4.	To agree the Council's response to the MHCLG consultation "Creating a vision for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc"	No	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021	Consultation document	
5.	Consideration of the traffic restrictions in Witney High Street implemented because of the covid-19 pandemic	No	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021	None	
6.	Consideration of 2021/22 Quarter One Financial Outturn	No	No	Cabinet	15 September 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
7.	Approval of Section 13A Council Tax Discretionary Policy	No	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021	None	
8.	Consideration of options for the future use of the Witney Town Centre Shop	Yes	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021 / 13 October 2021	None	
9.	Consideration of options for the future provision of legal services to the Council	Yes	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021 / 13 October 2021	None	
10.	Investment property in Poole - surrender and grant of new lease 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".	Yes	Yes	Cabinet	13 October 2021	None	
11.	Adoption of Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	No	No	Cabinet then Council	13 October 2021	None	consultation draft and consultation responses
12.	Approval of revised draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document for consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	13 October 2021	None	consultation draft and consultation responses

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
13.	Approval for the introduction of charges at the public conveniences at New Street, Chipping Norton	No	No	Cabinet	13 October 2021	None	Will first be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14.	Approval of charges for the delivery of waste and recycling containers	No	No	Cabinet then Council	13 October 2021	None	Will first be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
15.	Approval of the award of Enforcement Agent contract for external Bailiff services	No	No	Cabinet	13 October 2021	None	
16.	Allocation of funding to support option appraisal for site development - Hensington Road, Woodstock	No	No	Cabinet then Council	13 October 2021	None	
17.	Recommendation to accept updated Homeseeker Plus Policy following consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	10 November 2021	Existing Policy and consultation responses	
18.	Approval of policy for the use of the Internet and Social Media for investigations and enforcement	No	No	Cabinet	10 November 2021	None	Will first be considered by Audit and General Purposes Committee

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