



Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT:**  
**October 2020 - December 2020**

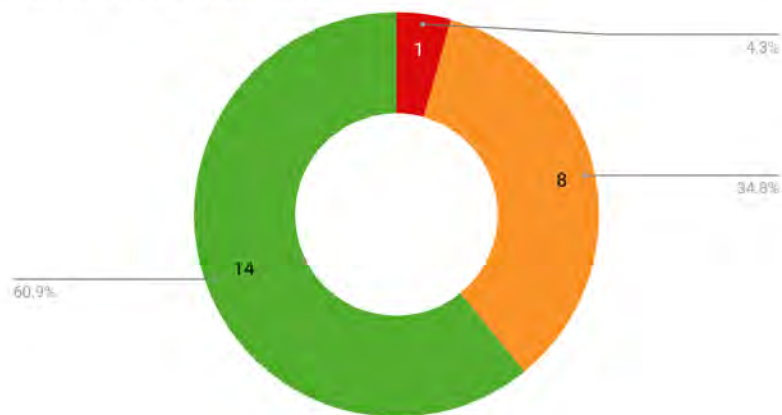
## KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS LIST

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

## KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

### At a glance...

Summary of Performance



### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Many services have been impacted by Covid-19, and have had to either cease or find new ways of working during multiple national lockdowns. Other services have experienced higher workloads to meet customer/client demand.

Overall, services are performing well but some services continue to be significantly impacted by Covid-19 such as business rates collection, leisure facilities and food safety inspections. In addition, the benefits team is working on the implementation of a new system which has reduced capacity in the service.

To comply with Covid-19 guidance and restrictions, the majority of staff are still working from home. Although many services have been able to deliver services 'virtually' and customer satisfaction for services delivered by phone remains high, other services such as Planning have found the process less efficient

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

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

### Customer satisfaction

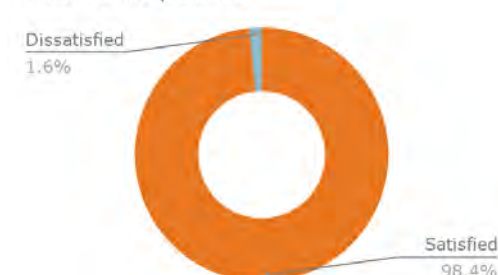
Face to face - no surveys due to Covid19



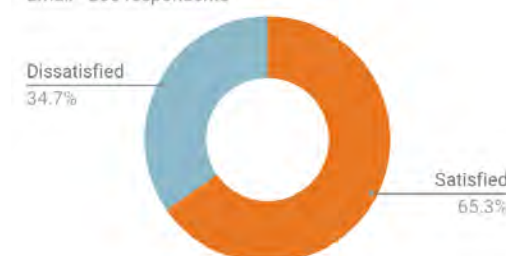
Website - 56 respondents



Phone - 952 respondents



Email - 200 respondents



### What's the trend?



### OBSERVATION

Due to Covid-19, the Council closed its reception areas; surveys are being conducted by phone, web and email.

The process of rating the website and leaving feedback is simple with a feedback button on every web page. Despite this, the number of responses to the website survey, although up on the previous quarter at 56 (from 44) remains an extremely small proportion of the 452,484 visitors, and is therefore unlikely to be representative. An analysis of website data for the three Councils has been completed to understand the issues and to determine whether satisfaction is with service provision or the website. The findings indicated that only 40% of responses included any qualitative feedback about potential improvements in council services, web content and navigability. Furthermore, an analysis of the qualitative feedback indicated that a significant proportion (40%) was about service provision or were categorised as user error e.g. mistyping a postcode. Although the website satisfaction survey is yielding some excellent information that can be used to remove errors or make improvements to content on the web platform, due to the extremely small numbers, it provides a poor basis upon which to determine customer satisfaction with the website. Therefore, this indicator has been set to 'Amber'. A new framework to measure the effectiveness of the Council's website and gather customer feedback is planned.

Satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone continue to be high.

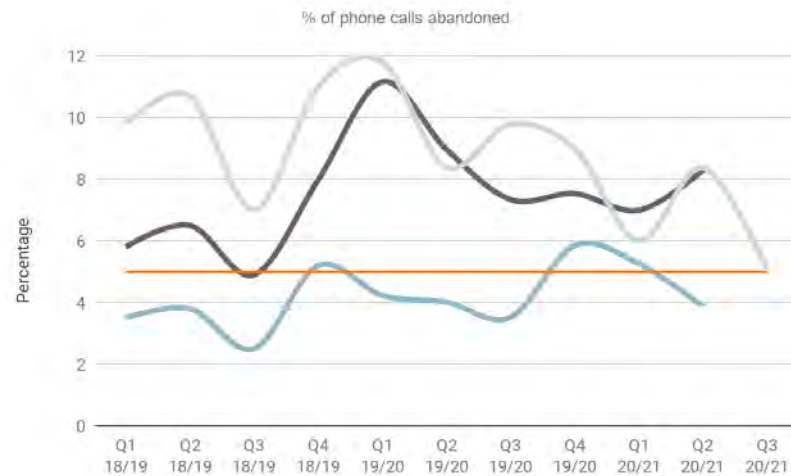
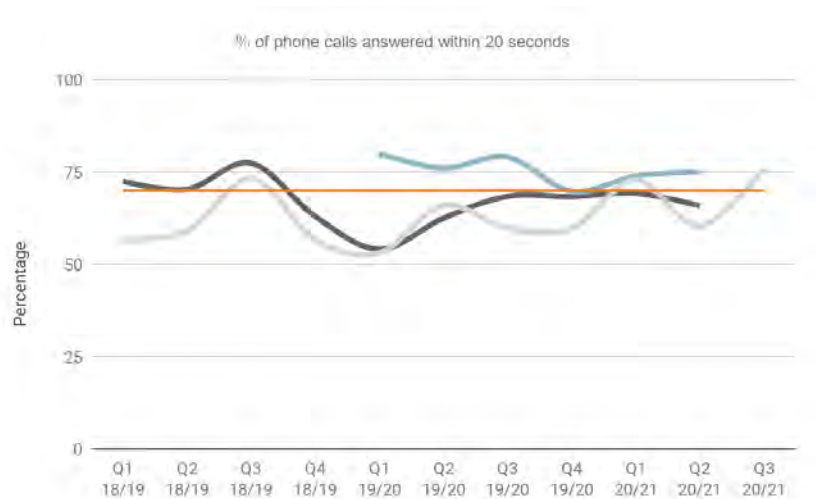
## Telephone calls - response and abandonment

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION

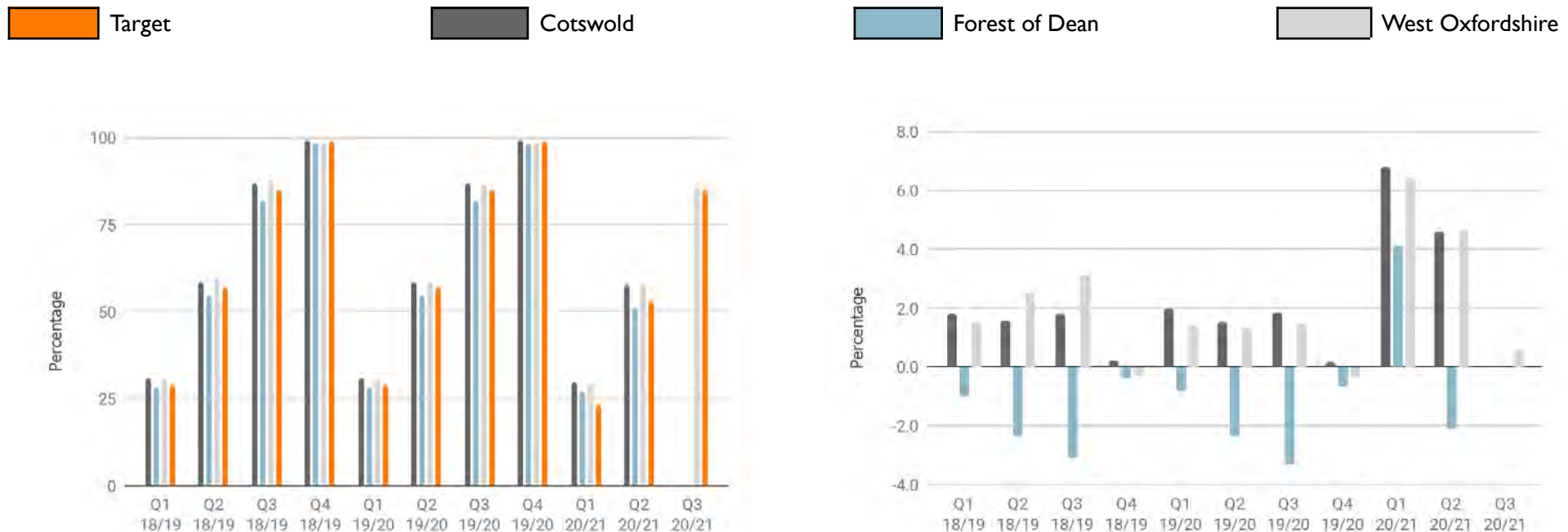
A good level of service was achieved this quarter; Q3 is usually a quieter quarter and the offices were closed between Christmas and New Year.

Historically, performance has always struggled to meet targets, even before the pandemic. For a large part of 2019/20 performance was affected by the implementation of the new CRM system and further enhancements that took time to 'bed in', as well as turnover of staff. There were higher workloads in 2019-20 Q4 including a spike in calls relating to garden waste renewals, and to Covid-19. The transfer of four staff who usually provide face to face services to the phones has helped to improve performance levels.

The impact of home working is continuously under review to ensure that any impact on performance is mitigated

## Revenues and Benefit

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



### OBSERVATION:

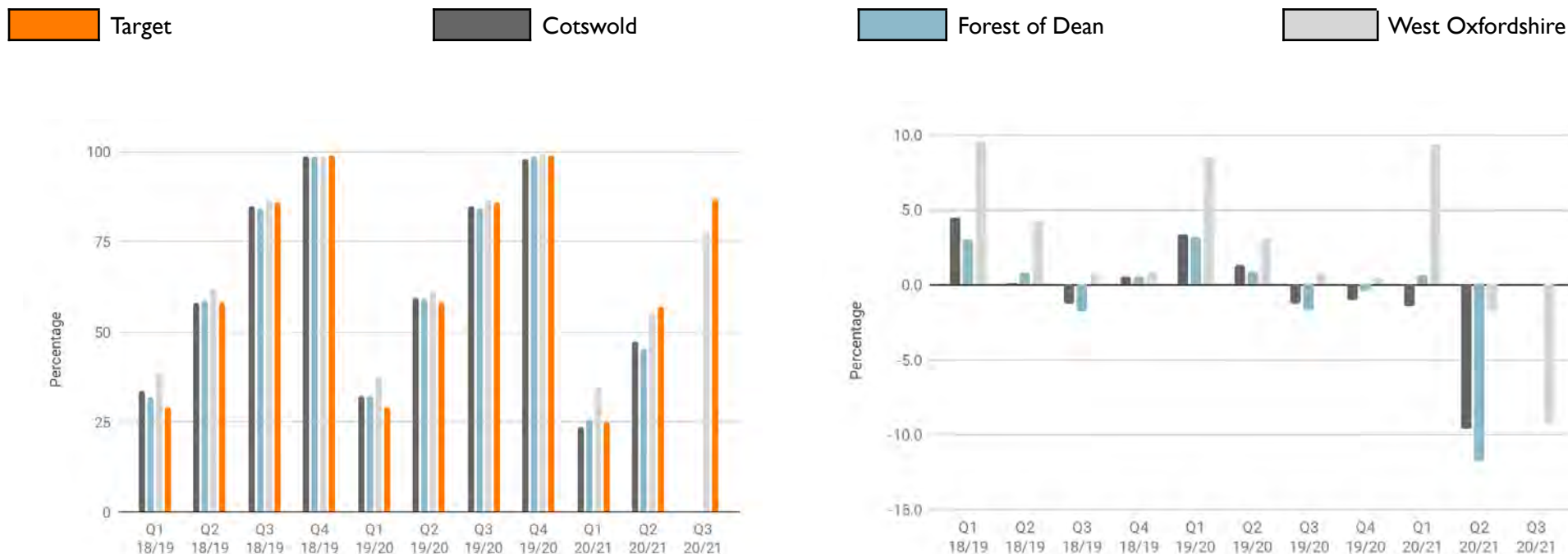
At the end of Q3, the collection rate was less than one percentage point lower than the previous year.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, all recovery action was paused initially following government guidance and Member decision; and the service worked with customers to re-align payment instalments. The service had the go-ahead at the end of September 2020 to re-commence recovery actions such as reminders and final payment letters. The service is 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.

Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21. The debt will be rolled over into the new financial year, and recovery action will continue.



## (Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target



### OBSERVATION:

The collection rate at the end of Q3 was over ten percentage points lower than previous years.

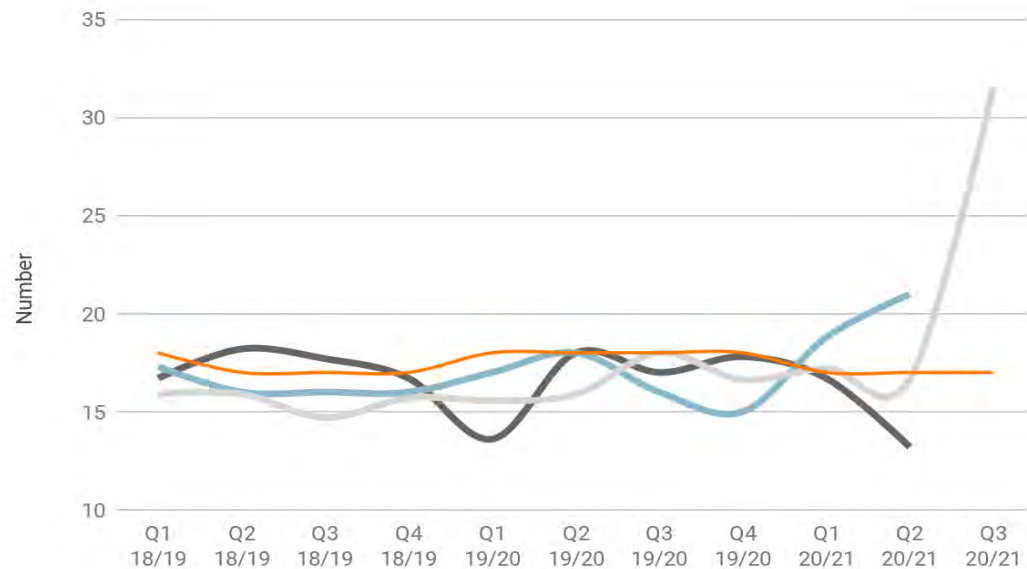
Due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions and two lockdowns, many businesses were closed in Q1, and part of Q2 and Q3. Following an initial pause in undertaking recovery action, the service is sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21, so the debt will be rolled forward into the next financial year.

The nation went into a third lockdown on 5 January; Covid-19 is having a major impact on business rate collection figures throughout the country. Government have gone some way in helping certain businesses such as retail with 100% business rate relief. Other businesses are able to apply for support grants but there is no requirement to use it to pay their business rates.

Note: central government funding to cover business rates relief is not included in the outturn

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

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

The Council continues to prioritise new claims. However, the number of new claims is falling as claimants are moved to Universal Credit (UC), therefore significant delays in processing a small number of claims can disproportionately affect the average processing time. During the quarter, one new claim was indexed incorrectly which resulted in the claim not being identified for processing. Other reasons for delays are driven by external factors such as chasing and waiting for evidence from the claimant; the number of claims made defective after the required calendar month has increased i.e. claims are started but not completed. Another example is when the claimant is claiming living costs through UC and housing costs through the Council; in this situation, the UC element must be assessed before the housing element but the processing time commences on receipt of the claim.

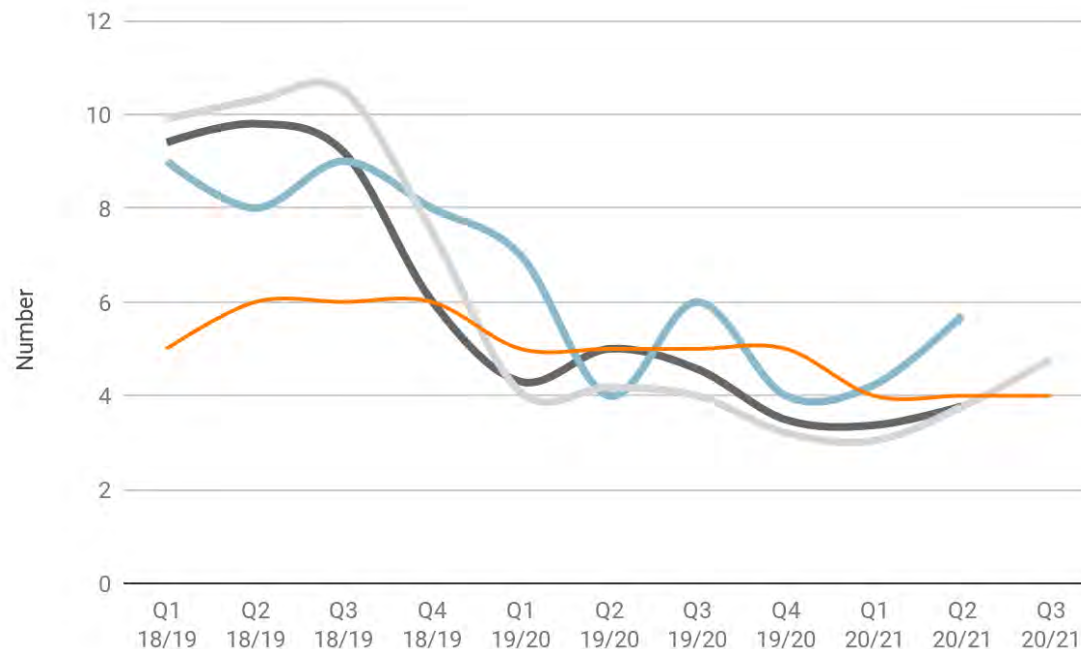
There is insufficient time to bring the average processing time back on target by the end of the year; a new revenues and benefits system went 'live' on 4 February, and staff have been supporting the data migration and related testing activities.

It is likely performance will continue to be impacted throughout 2021/22 as the next phase of the project is to streamline the process further by merging the three partner council systems into one system, and to implement the open portal to enable customers to self-serve which will include integration of the back office system



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

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

The average processing time has increased over the last two quarters due to increases in workload, and capacity taken out of the service to support the implementation of a new revenues and benefits system.

The number of Universal Credit claims has increased due to the impact of Covid-19, which in turn has resulted in an increase in changes that affect housing benefit and council tax support (the latter is not included in this indicator). In addition, the service continues to receive data loads from the DWP that require checking and the updating of records.

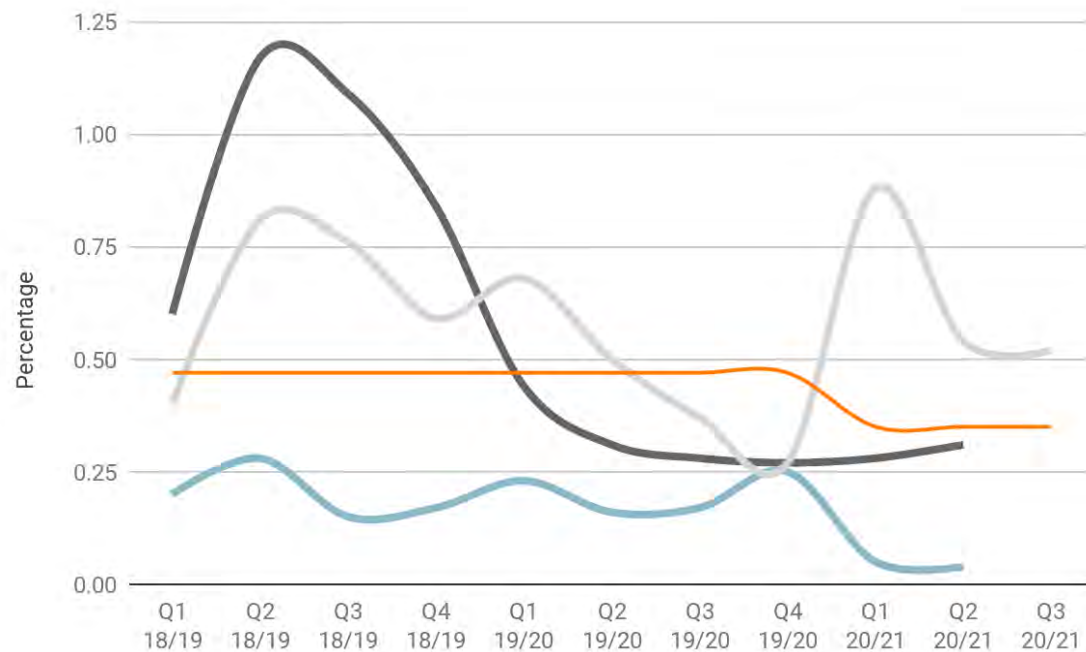
The new revenues and benefits system went 'live' on 4 February. The average processing time is expected to increase in Q4 as staff become accustomed to the new system; and deal with a backlog - there will be period of time when the old system is switched off and the new one switched on.

The service is accessing support on demand from an external source.

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

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

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



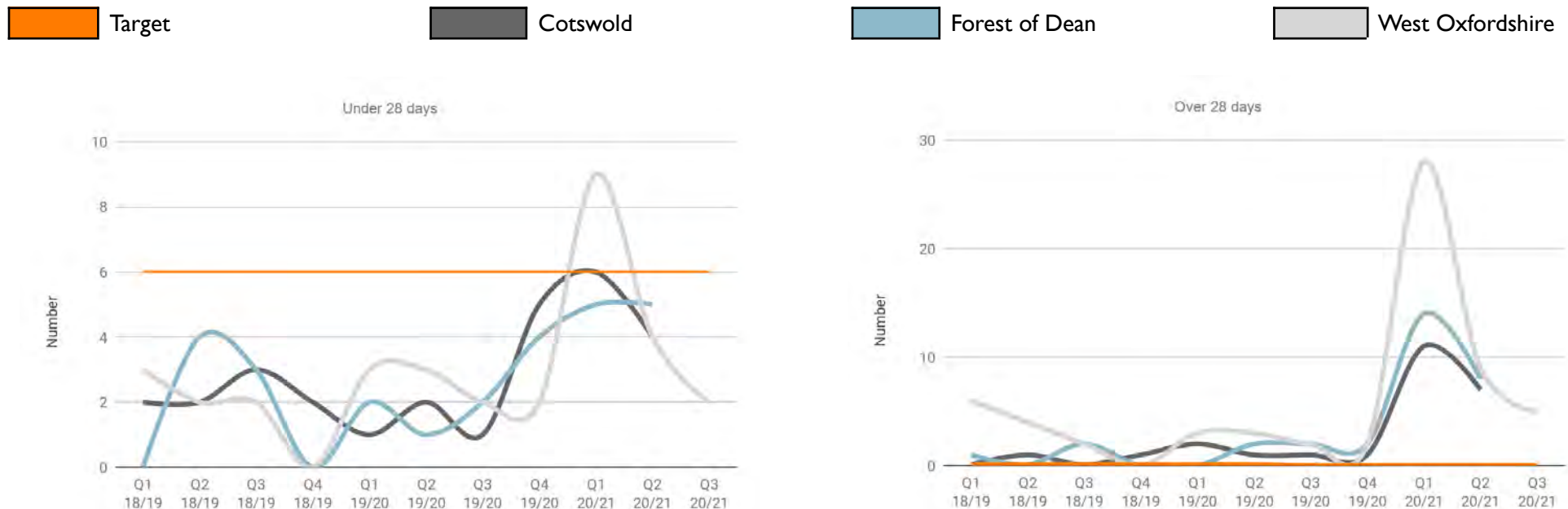
### OBSERVATION:

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

There was a small number of errors relating to high value overpayments in Q4 which were amended in Q1. We were expecting the spike to flatten out over the course of the year, and to achieve the annual target of 0.35%. This is no longer the case as the implementation of the new revenues and benefits system has created a backlog which will result in an increase in admin delay. External support on demand is being accessed to help manage workloads

## Housing Support

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



#### OBSERVATION:

At the beginning of the first lockdown, councils were required to place all clients who are rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness regardless of priority need who have approached the Council, into emergency accommodation, which resulted in a spike in numbers.

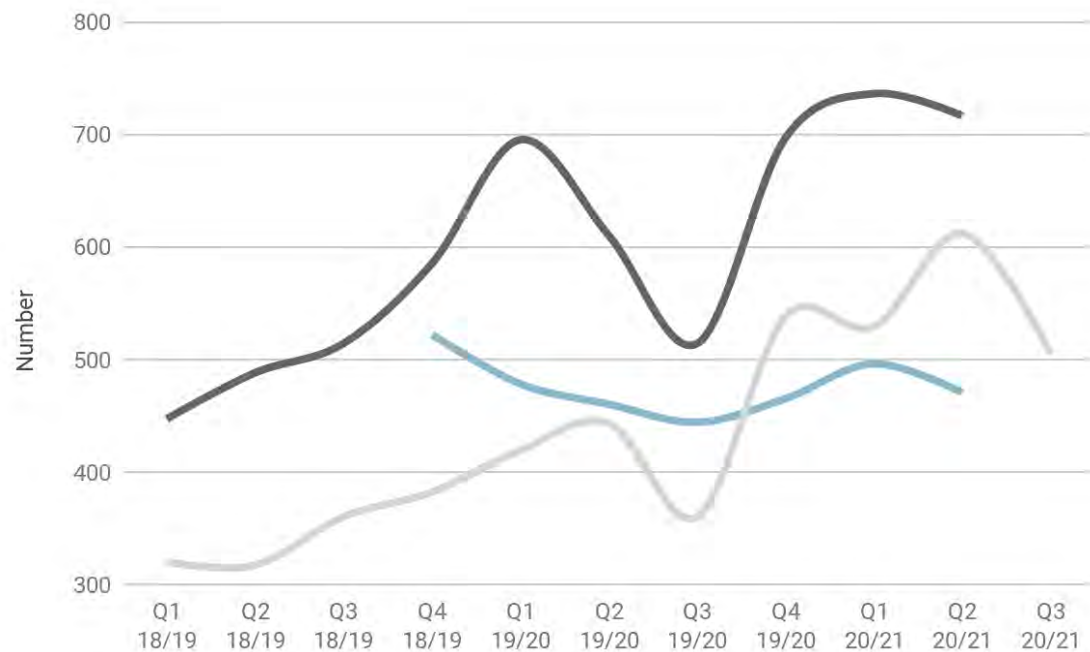
The number of households living in emergency accommodation has fallen over the last six months; the Housing team has been creating exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. In addition, some households and rough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

At the end of Q3, there were five households that had been in emergency accommodation for over 28 days. The households/individuals that remain in emergency accommodation for longer periods of time have more complex needs, and therefore, it is more difficult to source appropriate move-on accommodation. Therefore, this indicator has been set to 'Amber'.

With increasing Covid-19 infections in Autumn/Winter, a third lockdown commenced on 5 January. It is likely that the number of households in emergency accommodation will start to rise again.

## (Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

The number of long term empty properties decreased at the end of Q3 following an increase over the previous six months.

Cottsway has re-commenced the planned demolition of housing association properties, but there are still some retirement properties that have not sold.

Recruitment to the vacant LTE officer post has been approved. This post is responsible for monitoring properties and working with landlords to support them to bring their properties back into use. The new post will concentrate on those properties where the Council might be able to influence or take action, rather than on those properties that are being well maintained

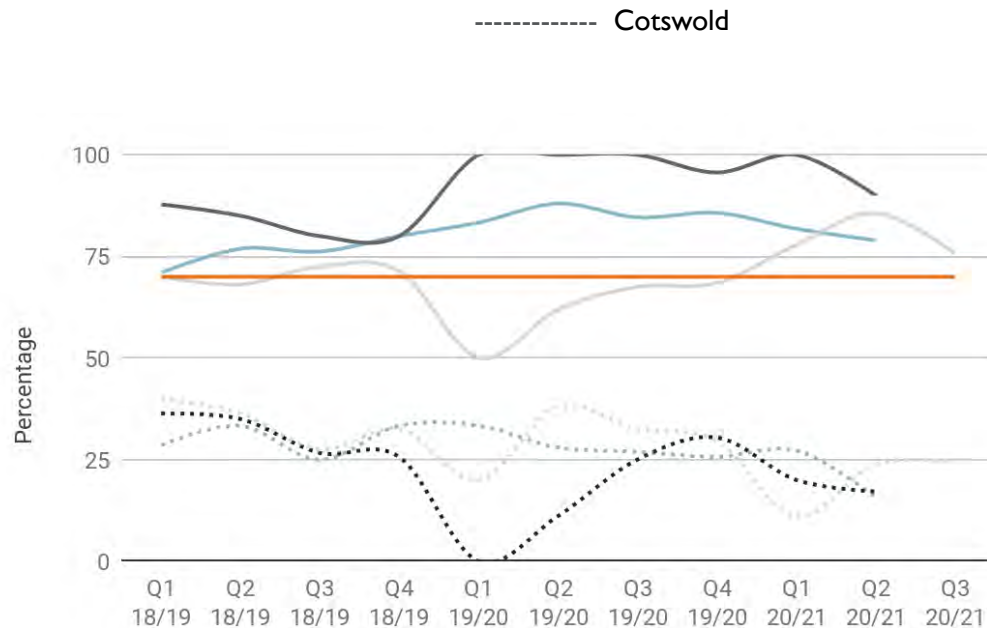
## Planning and Strategic Housing

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

% of all applications completed within an agreed timeframe



% of all application completed within 13 weeks



#### 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:

Twelve major applications were determined in the quarter; and 33 for the first nine months compared to 55 for the same period a year ago.

The service has reported that the number of applications received over the summer and then through to the end of December has been a record nationally and that trend is reflected locally. The increasing numbers coming through combined with reduced efficiency in the planning process as a result of Covid-19 is creating a backlog.

The Planning team has found home working and the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 has created additional burdens as not all aspects of this statutory process can be or are best achieved electronically. In addition, home working has reduced communication between officers, and therefore there is less support for officers which is affecting morale. Validating planning applications for accuracy has proved particularly problematic as a home based exercise as details of the application have to be cross checked against a number of plans and maps which can be achieved much easier using paper versions in the office. An increase in the time to validate the application will reduce the time for the planning officer to determine the application. Other tasks that are achieved more easily in the office include redacting and printing documents e.g. site notices.

The restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have resulted in additional preparation time required for committee meetings, and site visits which need to be unaccompanied and pre-arranged, often with a follow up online meeting or phone call.

Some consultees such as the County and the Environment Agency are struggling to meet response target dates which is also impacting on determination times.

Note: a new validation process has been designed and implemented at all three partner Council development management services over the Christmas/New Year period. Currently, staff are getting to grips with the new process, but once embedded should help increase resilience and performance generally

## (Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



Target



Cotswold



Forest of Dean



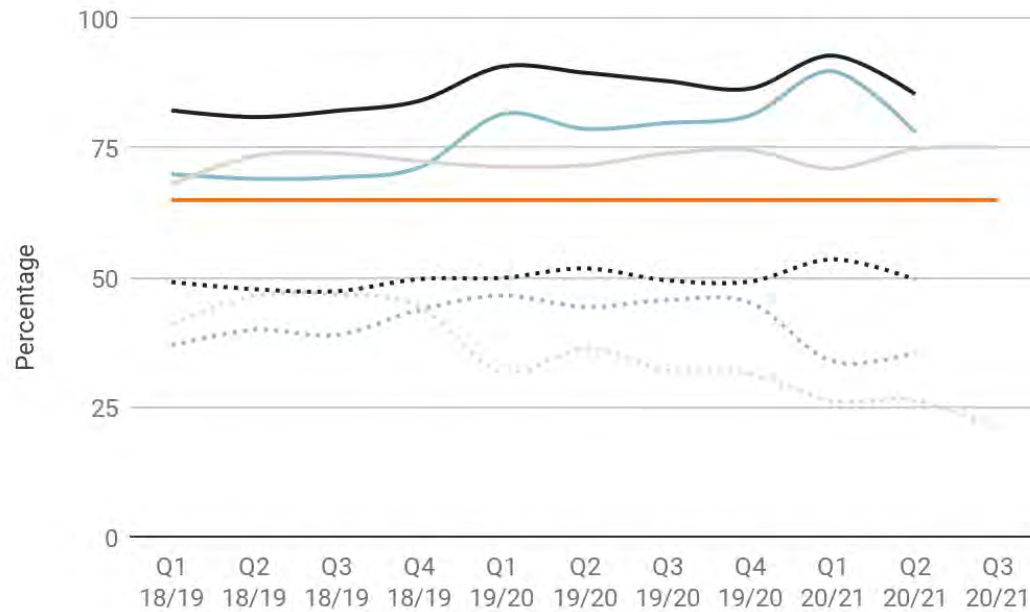
West Oxfordshire

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

Ninety-one minor applications were determined in the quarter; and 250 for the first nine months compared to 388 for the same period a year ago.

The challenging work conditions coupled with higher volumes of applications coming through is creating a backlog which will begin to impact on performance



## (Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



Target



Cotswold



Forest of Dean



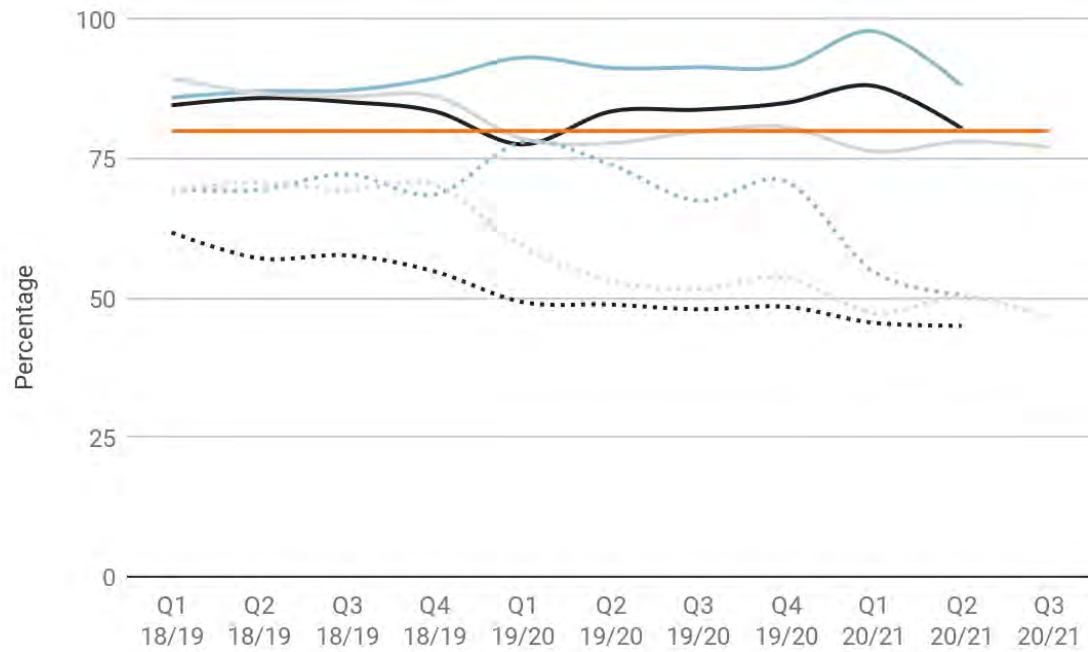
West Oxfordshire

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire



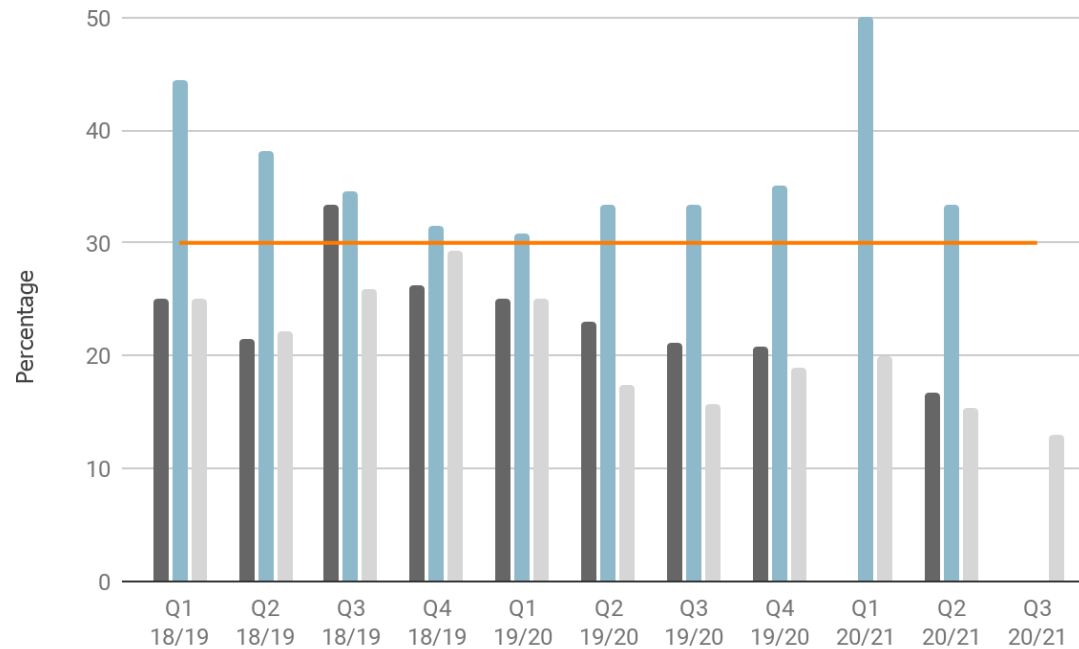
### OBSERVATION:

247 other applications were determined in the quarter, and 708 for the first nine months compared to 866 for the same period a year ago.

The challenging work conditions coupled with higher volumes of applications coming through is creating a backlog and is beginning to impact on performance

## (Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire

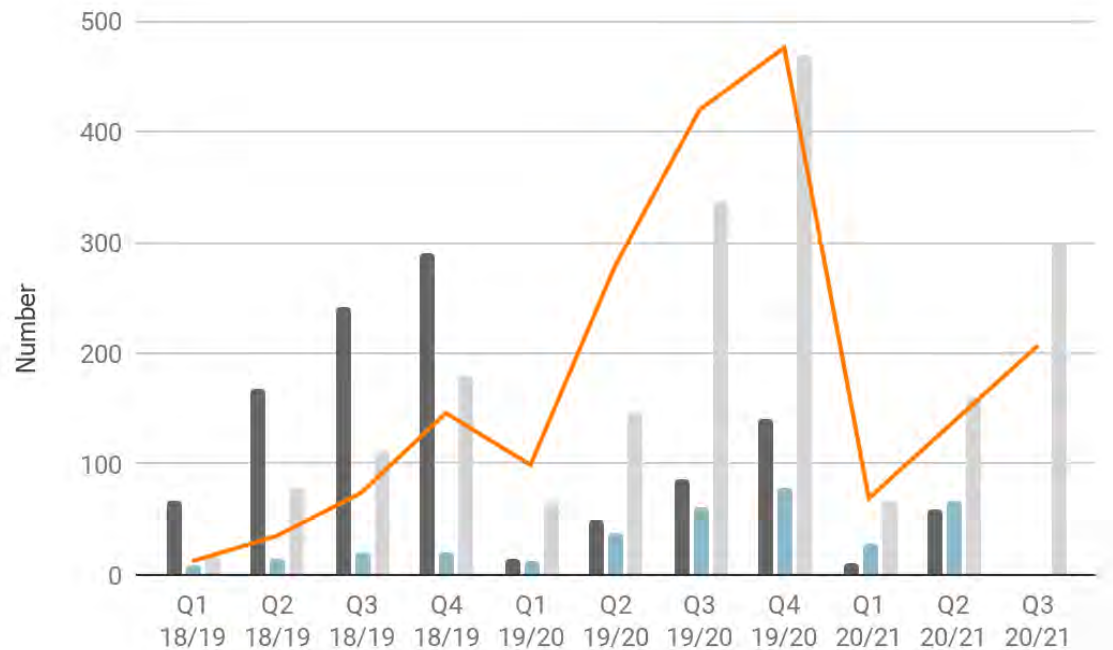


### OBSERVATION:

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

Cumulatively from 1 April 2020 - 31 December 2020, three of the 23 planning appeals were allowed

## (Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered



### OBSERVATION:

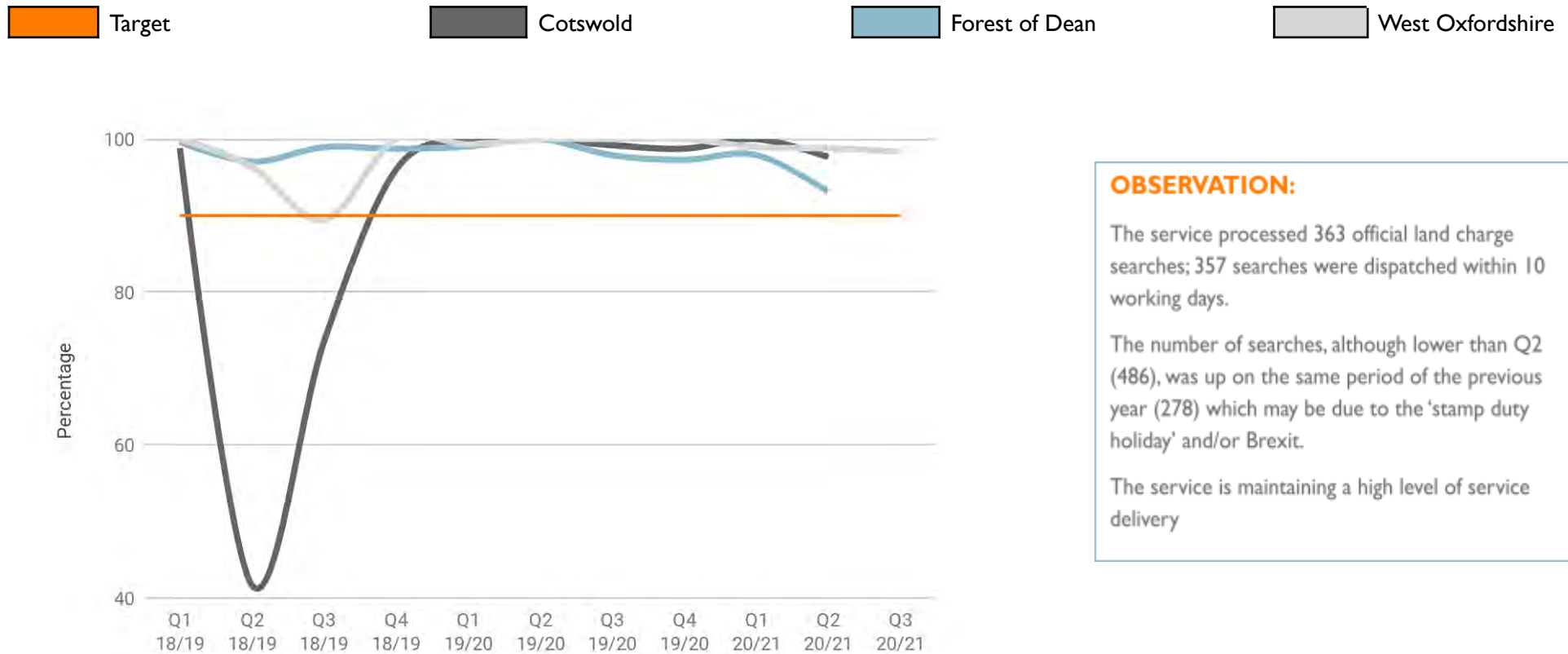
139 affordable homes were delivered in Q3 for rent (95) and low cost home ownership (44) including seven units of discount market sale at Corndell Gardens, Witney.

Cottsway reports that there have been material supply delays in the run up to the brexit agreement that have been exacerbated by some developers stockpiling and increasing demand. However, this has not caused a significant delay to completions to date. Cottsway has repurposed existing buildings on the Stanton Harcourt Airfield development; an administrative delay in obtaining warranty certificates for these properties should be resolved in Q4.

Sovereign has reforecast 14 of the 20 homes anticipated in Q3 and Q4 at Witney Road, Freeland to be completed in 2021/22.

For the first nine months of the year 300 affordable homes were delivered, exceeding the Local Plan target of 274

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



### OBSERVATION:

The service processed 363 official land charge searches; 357 searches were dispatched within 10 working days.

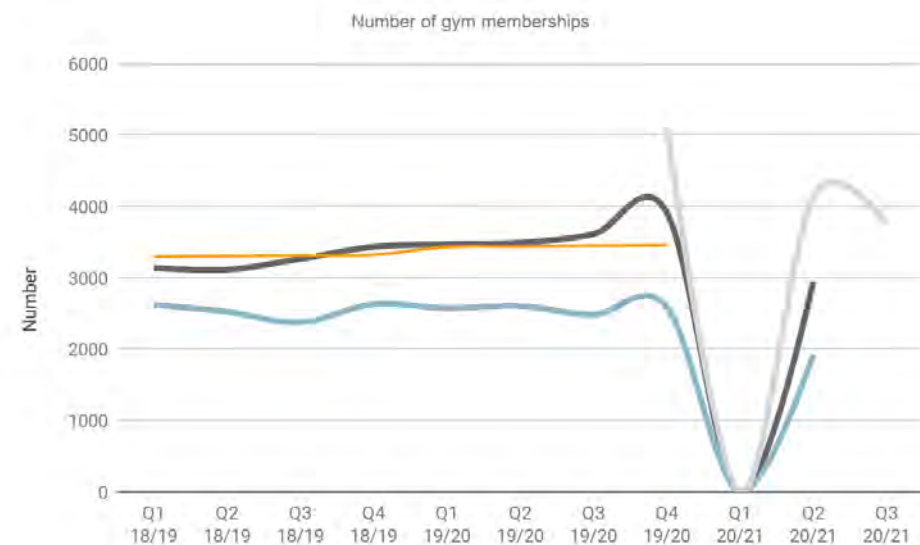
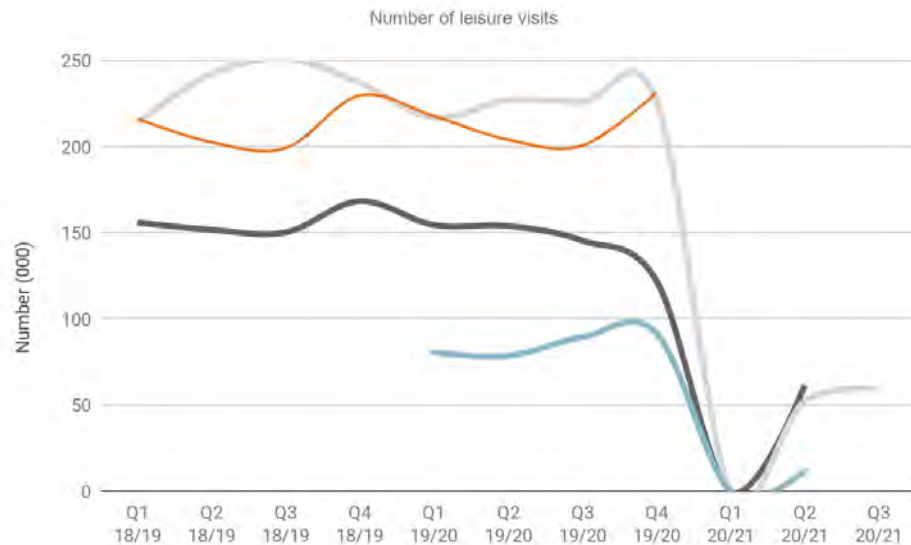
The number of searches, although lower than Q2 (486), was up on the same period of the previous year (278) which may be due to the 'stamp duty holiday' and/or Brexit.

The service is maintaining a high level of service delivery

## Leisure

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

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

Following the end of the first lockdown, a financial recovery package was agreed, and some of the Council's leisure facilities reopened from 25 July 2020 under Covid-19 protocols. These included adherence to the governments 'staying COVID-19 secure' declaration which is displayed at all facilities.

All facilities were reopened providing the core activities of gym, group exercise, and swimming with additional activities being restarted in line with government advice and in conjunction with Covid-19 protocols on social distancing, pre-booking, and enhanced cleaning.

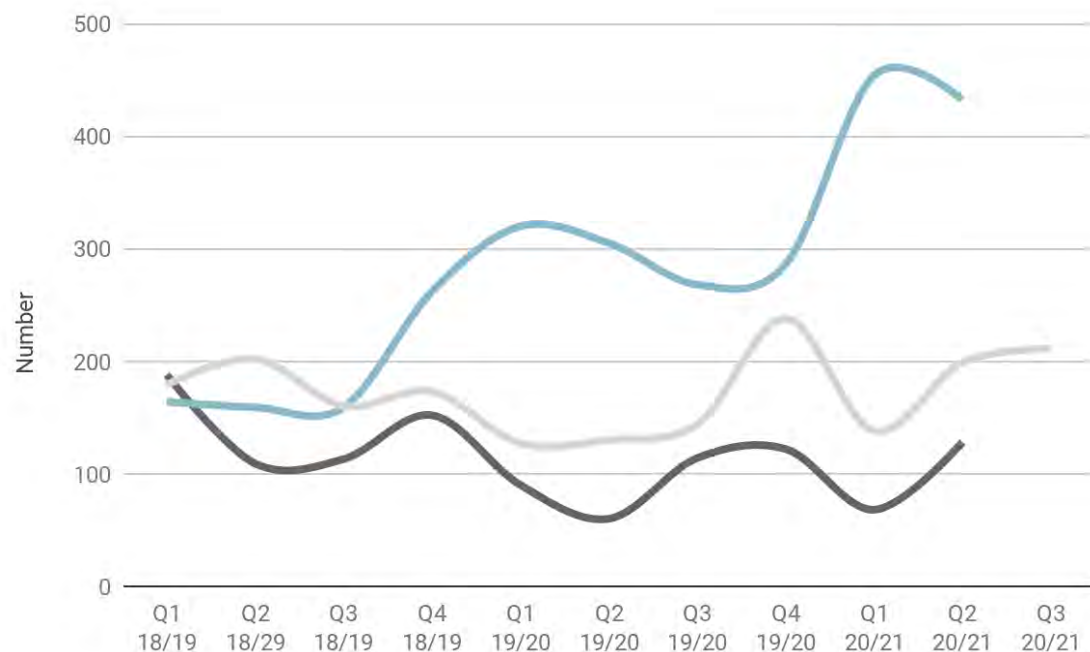
All leisure facilities were closed from 5 November - 2 December as the nation went into a second lockdown. Facilities were re-opened in the lead up to Christmas but as Oxfordshire went into tier 4 on 26 December 2020, all leisure facilities have remained closed from this date.

A contract variation and financial support package have been agreed to cover the period until March 2021

## Environmental and Regulatory

### Number of fly tips collected

Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

Due to Covid-19, increases in fly tips have been reported nationally, and there are signs that there may be a slight upward trend locally.

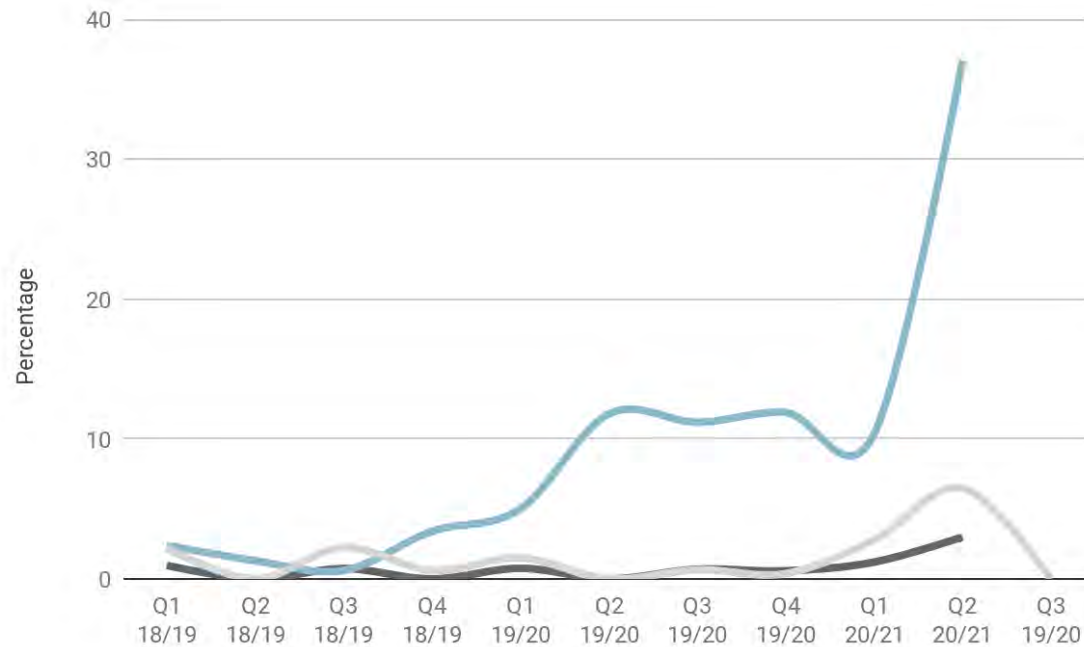
The fly tipping service has been redesigned based on customer and user need with the introduction of new on-line forms and web pages. The new process was introduced during Q3 and is still 'bedding in', and will make it easier and quicker for residents to report flytips. It will also reduce duplication and therefore create a more efficient and responsive service.

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



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

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**

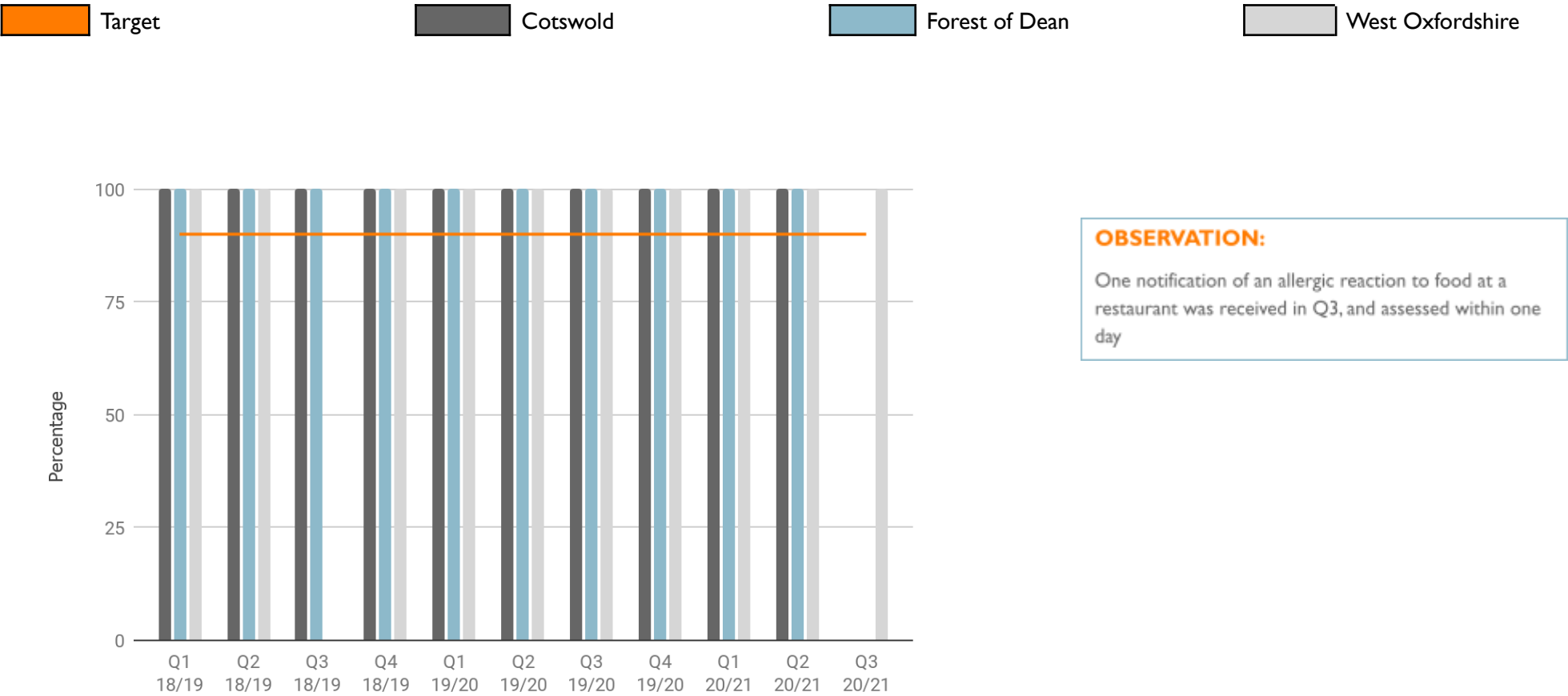
There was an increase in enforcement activity in Q2 following the implementation of a new enforcement pack allowing cautions to be issued via the post.

In Q3, there were 301 notifications of fly tips which did not result in any enforcement actions due to a short term loss of experienced resources in the team which is currently being resolved through a recruitment drive.

In addition, during the quarter the fly tipping service was re-designed for Cotswold and West. A 'support service triage' has been set up to free up specialist officer time to deal with the fly tips that can be investigated further. In Q3, fifteen fly tips were referred to ERS specialists for further investigation. The change in service will require time to 'bed in', and it is likely that the referral criteria will need to be broadened to ensure that a sufficient number of referrals come through for investigation.

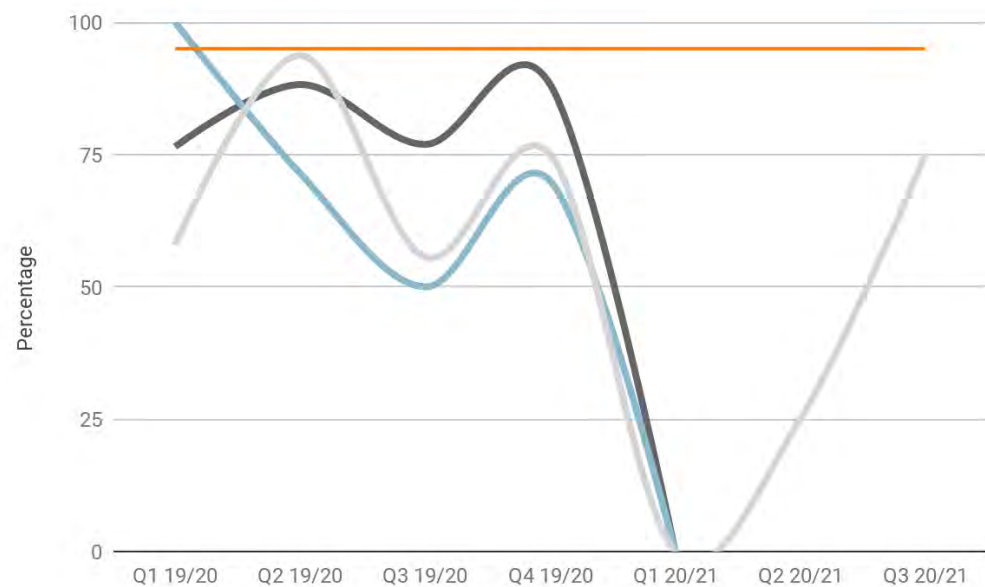
Cotswold and West operate a small multidisciplinary team. In contrast, at Forest of Dean, there is a dedicated Community Warden team, which has also implemented a new enforcement pack

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



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

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

This indicator has been set to 'amber' to recognise that the service has been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

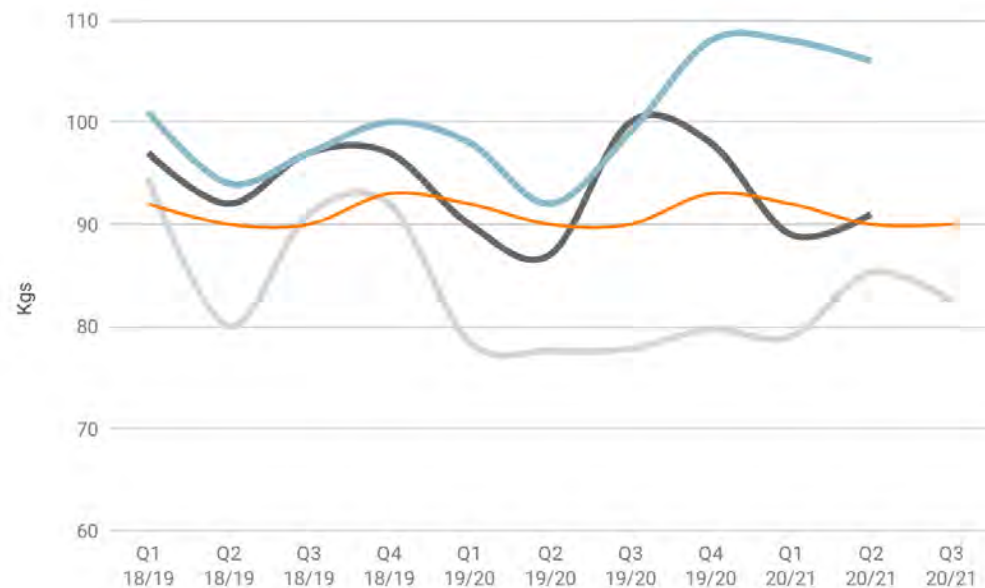
All site visits ceased from mid-March to 18 July due to Covid-19. The FSA issued guidance on 17 July advising that routine inspections in high risk food businesses should recommence, excluding businesses catering for vulnerable people where they have previously been assessed as good. All care homes have been contacted to ensure that the correct protocols are in place.

Eight high risk food inspections were due in Q3; although all eight premises received a remote inspection, only six premises received a site inspection within the 28 day timescale. In line with FSA guidance, the service is able to carry out remote inspections which are intended to highlight areas of concern, and if any should arise, those premises would receive a site inspection.

During each lockdown, no site visits could take place unless absolutely necessary. A backlog of other types of inspections is building up, and the service is awaiting further guidance from the FSA on how to deal with the backlog.

## Residual household waste per household (kg)

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

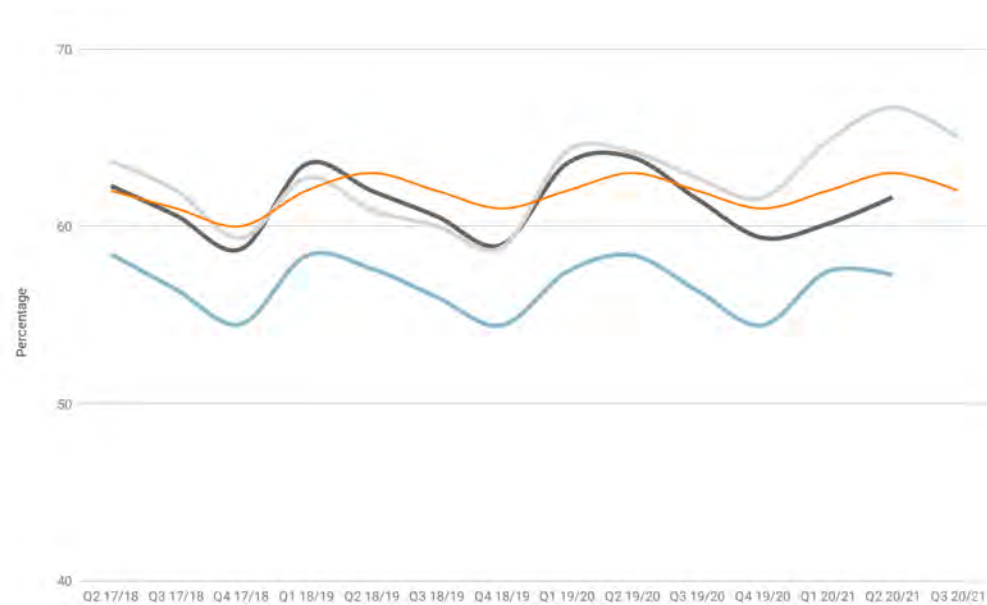
Due to the impact of Covid-19, all waste and recycling stream tonnages have increased, and reached a peak in October 2020 but appear to be slowly reducing again.

The amount of residual waste produced between April and December 2020 increased by 11.7% compared to same period of the previous year. All excess recycling and food waste is being collected at the kerbside if presented correctly. In addition, the crews were also collecting the additional side waste generated during the Christmas period.

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

## (Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

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

Dry recycling tonnages for the first nine months of the year were up nearly 36% on the previous year; garden waste tonnages were up nearly 17%, and food tonnages, just over 16%.

The combined recycling rate for the first nine months of the year was 65% compared to 62.72% a year ago; the increase is mainly driven by the increase in dry recycling.

The dry recycling rate was 28.2% (an increase of 2.6 percentage points compared to the same period a year ago), the composting rate was 27.2% and food waste sent for anaerobic digestion was 9.7%.

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

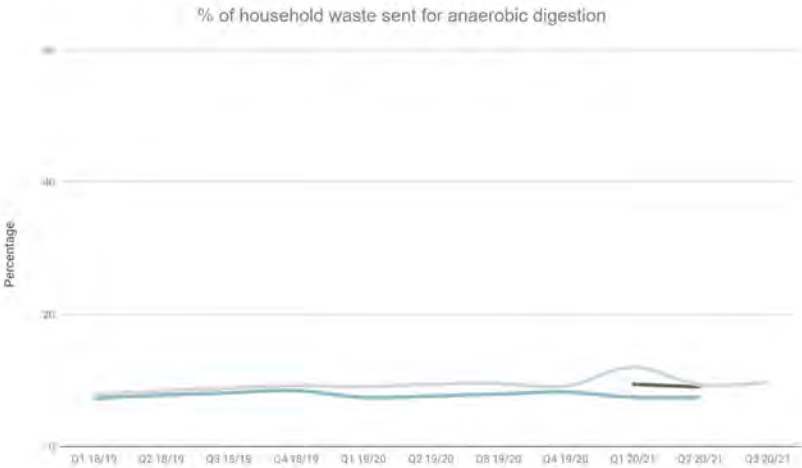
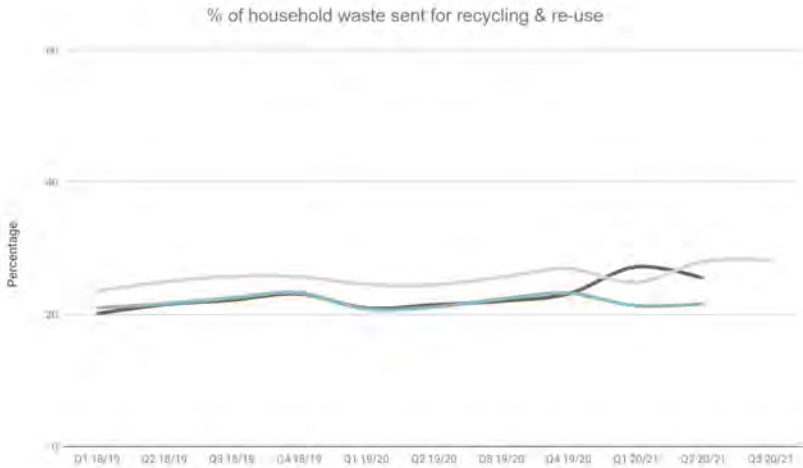
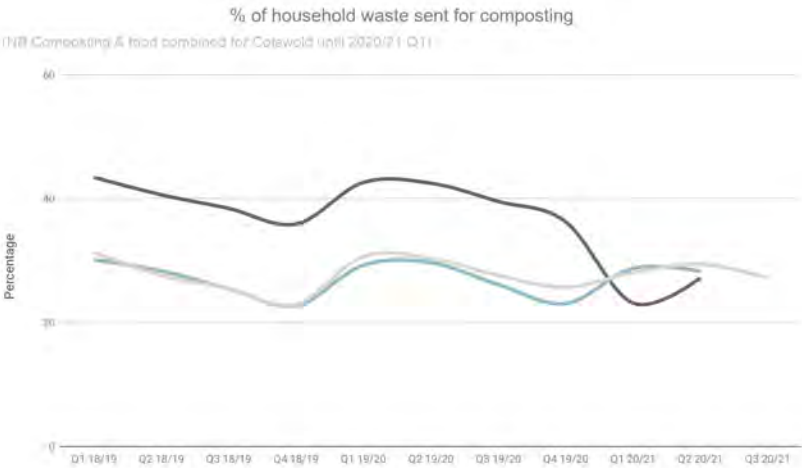
Note that the quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled by waste stream

Cotswold

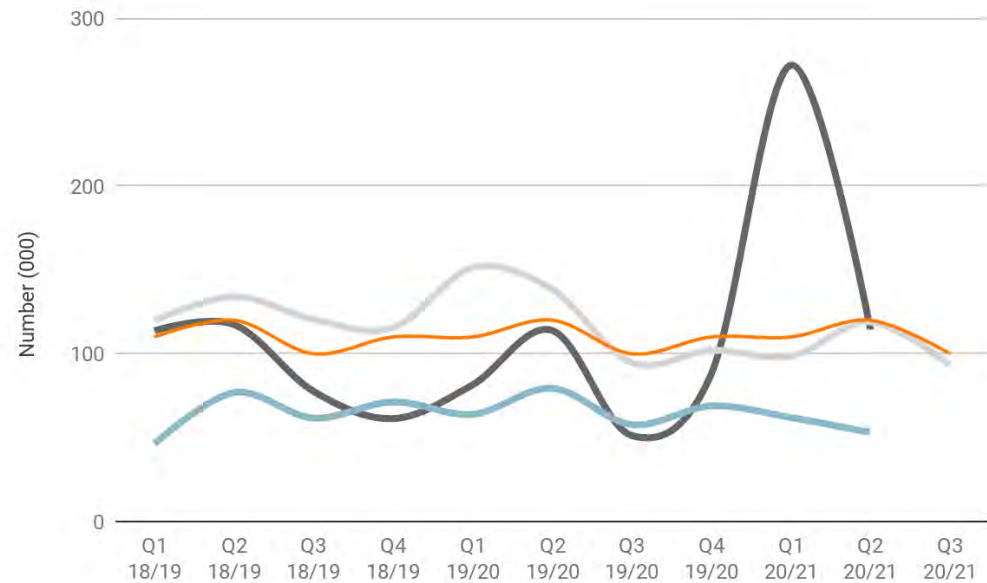
Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire





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



### OBSERVATION:

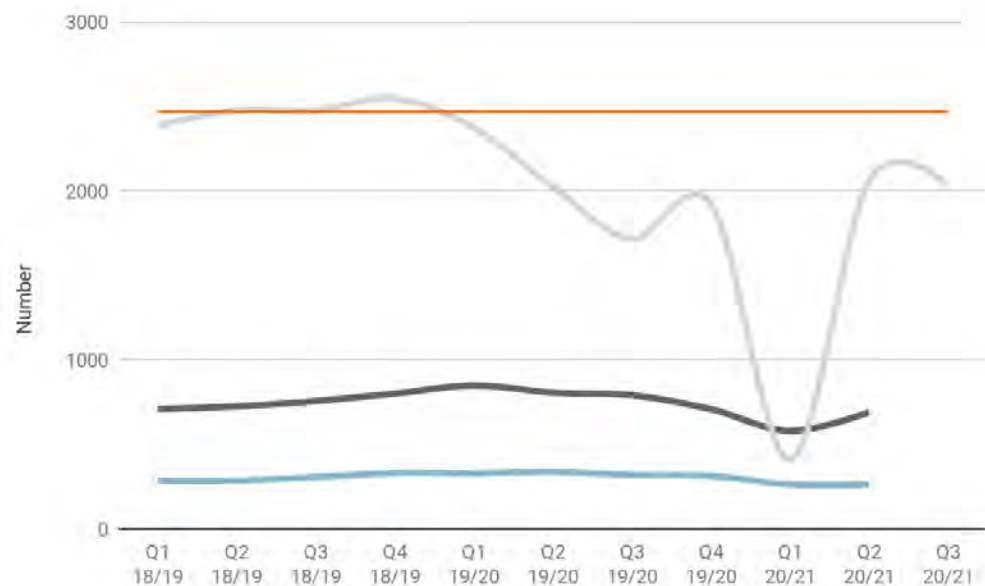
Overall, there have been improvements over the last year. Previously, the service experienced a high staff turnover in waste crews, and the lack of local knowledge amongst new staff and agency staff caused an increase in the number of missed collections.

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

## Parking

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

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

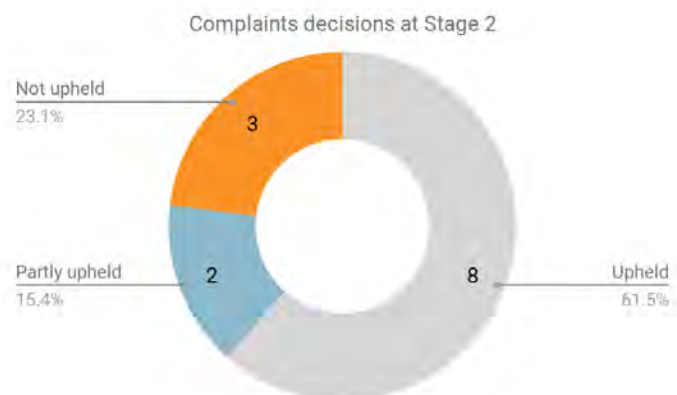
All enforcement activities were suspended on 23 March until 15 June 2020 due to Covid-19, and staff were redeployed to support communities.

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

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

This indicator has been set to amber to recognise that parking enforcement officers are undertaking a variety of duties

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



### OBSERVATION:

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

The 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

In Q3, there was a higher proportion of complaints upheld; there were seven separate complaints on one issue

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Housing	Complainant unhappy with the handling of a housing application	The investigation found that the complainant's original application was not acknowledged. Additionally, an issue with the application had not been communicated to the complainant, resulting in confusion and distress. Apologies were offered for both of these failures	II	Upheld	12 (on an extended timescale)
Development Management	Complaint about the handling of a planning application on a neighbouring property, and the Council's lack of response to emails	The investigation concluded that the Council had acted fairly with regards to the handling of the planning application. However, an apology was offered for the delay in response to the complainant's emails, and it was acknowledged that confusion could have been prevented had there been better communication between the Council and the complainant	Appeal	Partly upheld at Stage II  Partly upheld at Appeal	6 (Stage II) 10 (Appeal)

Development Management	Complaint about the handling of pre-application advice, and subsequent delay in processing the associated planning application	Upon investigation, it was found that the Council had handled the processing of the pre-application advice correctly. However, it was acknowledged that, due to a high workload as a result of the ongoing pandemic, there was a delay in processing the subsequent planning application. An apology was offered, and compensation of £75 to acknowledge the inconvenience caused by the delay	II	Partly upheld	8
Communication & Marketing	Seven complaints about comments made on religious celebrations on social media by a member of staff	The complainants were assured that the Council and Publica take these matters very seriously, and that the comments had been removed. HR is following the appropriate internal procedures in dealing with the member of staff, and communications are being prepared to ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities when using social media	II	Upheld	7

