

WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY 21ST JUNE 2018 AT 4.30 P.M.

**PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE, MARKET STREET, BROMSGROVE,
WORCESTERSHIRE, B61 8DA**

MEMBERS: Bromsgrove District Council: Councillor R. J. Laight
Bromsgrove District Council: Councillor P.J. Whittaker
Malvern Hills District Council: Councillor B. Behan
Malvern Hills District Council: Councillor J. Owenson
Redditch Borough Council: Councillor G. Prosser
Redditch Borough Council: Councillor J. Fisher
Worcester City Council: Councillor J. Squires
Worcester City Council: Councillor A. Feeney
Wychavon District Council: Councillor E. Stokes
Wychavon District Council: Councillor M. King
Wyre Forest District Council: Councillor J. Baker
Wyre Forest District Council: Councillor J. Smith

AGENDA

1. Election of Chairman
2. Election of Vice-Chairman
3. Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes
4. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.
5. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 15th February 2018 (Pages 1 - 10)
6. Previous Chairman's Report (Pages 11 - 14)
7. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring April - March 2018 & Annual Return (Pages 15 - 30)
8. Activity & Performance Data Quarters 1, 2, 3, and 4 (Pages 31 - 72)

9. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Staff Survey Results (Pages 73 - 92)
10. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report 2017/2018 (Pages 93 - 130)
11. Food Hygiene "Triple Five Scheme (Pages 131 - 134)
12. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

12th June 2018

WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY 2018, AT 4.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. J. Laight, P. Whittaker, B. Behan, H. Campbell, J. Baker (Vice-Chairman), J. Squires, A. Feeney, M. King, E. Stokes (Chairman), and J. Hart

Partner Officers: Ms. A. Davey, Worcester City Council, Mr. V. Allison, Wychavon District Council, Mr. P. Merrick, Malvern Hills District Council, and Mr. M. Parker, Wyre Forest District Council

Officers: Mr. S. Wilkes, Mrs. V. Brown, Mr. M. Cox, Ms. S. Garratt, Ms. K. Lahel, Mr. D. Mellors and Mrs. P. Ross

28/17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Clayton, Redditch Borough Council and Councillor J. Smith, Wyre Forest District Council.

Apologies for absence were also received from Ms. J. Pickering, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council.

29/17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

30/17 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 16th November 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 16th November 2017 be approved as a correct record.

31/17 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman took the opportunity to inform the Board that she had attended the Worcester City Christmas Food Festival on the 2nd December 2017.

She was extremely pleased to inform Board Members that, the traders at the event had spoken very highly of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) and officers from WRS were very welcomed by the traders.

32/17

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2018/2021

(It was noted that the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Business Plan was for 2018/2020 and not 2017/2020 as shown on page 13 of the main agenda pack).

The Board was asked to consider and approve the updated approach outlined in the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Business Plan 2018/2020.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS, introduced the report and in doing so informed Members that the Business Plan was initially developed in 2015 following on from the strategic procurement exercise. During the leadership training undertaken by the management team, it was determined that WRS required a plan to ensure both the viability of the service and its ability to operate within the budgets available from its partner authorities.

The plan, as attached, had become the high level document that would inform the development of the service for the foreseeable future.

The Business Plan was updated in 2017 following on from the changes made to the partnership arrangement and, given the development and experiences during the last year, it had been updated again with the new timescale taking the service through to just beyond the next general election.

The Business Plan showed how WRS would:

- Seek to provide a viable service within the projected partner budget allocations.
- Understand what a base level of service would look like for partners.
- Support other partners to maintain service levels above this, where this was desired.
- Provide details of plans to “Grow the Business” and increase income to maintain resilience in the face of continued austerity.
- Identify the risks and potential costs if the income generation strategy at the core of the plan began to fail to deliver the requisite levels of income in order to maintain the service.

Local government finance remained difficult. There was an on-going lack of certainty about what the business rates retention, seen by local government as the key source of local government income going forward, would deliver for the partners in Worcestershire.

The Municipal Journal headline of 12th January 2017, had read “Breaking Point”, which highlighted the difficulties faced by the sector

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and little if anything had changed during the following year to give comfort to local authorities.

Currently partners were not looking for further savings from WRS and the service was clear that significant efficiencies had been delivered.

Income generation would remain the key factor in the service's business strategy. It was possible that authorities might be encouraged to engage more with WRS and look more widely at contracting services to those who could offer expertise and resilience in service delivery. This would make the plan's challenging income targets more deliverable.

However, there was growing evidence that our current clients might be unwilling to engage with the service beyond their current commitments and some authorities were now focusing on the kind of income generation activities that WRS had chosen to follow some years' previously.

As we see more authorities adopting this strategy, we could see others entering into the market that WRS currently occupied, albeit they would be unlikely to be able to match WRS's scale individually. Support from partners at all levels, but particularly Director, Chief Executive and Leader level would be necessary in selling WRS in what remained a significantly more competitive environment.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS, continued and further informed the Board that the demise of Shropshire's outsourced regulatory team had meant that there were fewer serious competitors for WRS's services. However, the creation of Publica, a similar TECKEL company, seemed likely to emerge in the future as a serious potential key competitor.

By understanding WRS costs and with good support from the Host's (Bromsgrove District Council) Finance Team, it had enabled the service to forecast income needs going forward, even beyond this period of the plan; taking us up to the next general election.

On the assumption of cash standstill from partner authorities, the service would need to generate the best part of £500,000 in income by 2021, to continue to be able to offer the current service levels to partner authorities and clients. This would be challenging and there were growing concerns that going beyond the current levels of £300,000 to £350,000 per annum might be difficult.

If this was to be achieved, WRS would need to continue to build on income streams such as Primary Authority and work for other local authorities. WRS would need to maintain the levels of grant income currently achieved and would need to tap into new income streams such as pre-application advice, if the forecast income requirements were to be anywhere near achieved.

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This could only be achieved if the service retained its current flexibility to re-invest income in resources where necessary. The service would need to retain the current flexible and well qualified staff cohort and build on it where possible.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS, highlighted that adding functions to the WRS structure could provide one way of offering savings in overall cost by rationalising the management and delivery of these activities.

The revised Business Plan identified a number of areas where partner authorities currently had in-house or slightly different shared arrangements where there could be some benefit in considering adding these to the WRS platform. This was something that WRS Managers would need to discuss with officer members of the Board in the coming months as it was likely that business cases would have to be produced to demonstrate the potential benefits before partner authorities could make such decisions

Tables in the Business Plan outlined the levels of income required to achieve the budget allocated by partner authorities and also outlined the potential liabilities for partner authorities should it not be possible to achieve the required levels of income during the next three years. Calculations were based on the current contribution rates for each partner authority.

In February 2017, partner authorities agreed to cover initial shortfalls in income should they occur and, beyond this, there was a reserve of £173,000 maintained from the exit of Worcestershire County Council from the partnership; that Members could authorise to be used to cover overspends.

This should give Members confidence that monies were available to protect partner authorities from the need to cover large overspends in the near future should they arise and, if the income generation model was unable to continue too fully cover costs. It would allow time for the WRS Management Team and the officer members of the Board to identify potential alternatives for each partner authority to consider going forward.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS responded to questions from Members and agreed with the positive comments made, that WRS was a leader and therefore needed to stay in front of any potential competitors.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS explained that, in relation to some of the services that could be considered for addition to WRS, the approach that would be considered would be to look at the potential impact of pooling together the existing partner workforce in the same way as had been done for Environmental Health and Licensing functions; to create economies of scale that may offer greater

efficiencies. He added that whilst this may not be something that the partners may wish to explore in depth, in the current financial circumstances it was worth at least some initial consideration.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS, took Members comments on board with regard to the 'Savings' information, as detailed on page 37 in the report, and agreed to take the comments back to the Host Authority's Finance Team for future reports.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank officers for a comprehensive and informative Business Plan.

RESOLVED that the updated approach outlined in the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Business Plan 2018/2020, be approved.

33/17

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES SERVICE PLAN 2018/2019

The Board was asked to consider and approve the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Service Plan 2018/2019.

The Business and Relationships Manager, WRS, presented the report and in doing so informed Members that the Service Plan would help raise Members awareness of what the service was proposing for the relevant financial year. The Service Plan also provided a sign off that some central government bodies liked to see in relation to service delivery plans.

The service would continue to shape its work around the strategic priorities for local authority regulatory services, which were provided more than five years ago by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Regulatory Delivery Team.

A range of high level activities were identified within the plan, informing Members of the general focus of activity. Below this would sit a number of team plans that would be used to drive the actual business activities.

The plan was devised in the face of on-going financial uncertainty in local government generally. Working with businesses and other partners was a key theme for both generating income to mitigate financial risk; but also to ensure that outcomes were delivered that matched the priorities of partners and stakeholders.

The Business and Relationships Manager, WRS, highlighted that delivery for other local authorities was the key income generation strategy, supported by work for the private sector and specific grant monies.

Looking forward, it was likely that other authorities or groups of authorities may come into the market, creating a need for WRS to remain competitive and retain its particular expertise to sell.

The Risk Register, as detailed at Appendix D in the report, had been updated to reflect the fact that WRS had now fully developed their own IT database and the fact that both WRS accommodation and ICT hosting had been moved to Wyre Forest District Council.

Further detail in relation to the Food Hygiene work of the service had been included. This was one of the recommendations from the auditors following the recent Food Standards Agency visit in May 2017.

It was noted that there was a typographical numerical error on page 50 in the main agenda pack. Paragraph 2, the figure should read £3.025M and not £3025M.

Councillor J. Squires, Worcester City Council, commented that WRS provided an excellent service, but she was aware that maybe not all Members of the Board were fully aware of what services each partner authority had signed up for.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS, informed the Board that each partner authority had, under the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership agreement, signed up to a "Statement of Partner Requirements". He would take the comments on board and look at how best to cascade this information to Board Members.

RESOLVED

- (a) that subject to the typographical numerical error, as detailed in the preamble above being noted and corrected, the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Service Plan 2018/2019 be approved; and
- (b) that Members of the Board note the level of work to be undertaken by the service this year, in relation to their roles as local food authorities.

34/17

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE MONITORING APRIL - DECEMBER 2017

The Board considered a report which detailed the financial position for the period April 2017 to December 2017.

The Deputy Managing Director, Wychavon District Council introduced the report and in doing so informed the Board that, Appendix 1 to the report, showed projected outturn savings of £21,000 that would be refunded to partner authorities. It was appreciated that this was an estimation to the year-end based on current level of expenditure.

Members were further informed that if the April to December spend on pest control continued on the same trend for the rest of the year, there would be a projected overspend of £9,000. Officers would continue to analyse the overspend and the following was the projected full year overspend to be funded from each partner, this income was in the £336,000 income projected outturn:-

Redditch	£2,000
Wychavon	£3,000
Wyre Forest	£4,000

The Deputy Managing Director, Wychavon District Council continued and further informed Members of the actual bereavement costs April to December 2017 to be funded by partners, as detailed below. These costs were charged on an as and when basis. Due to the nature of the charges it was not possible to project a final outturn figure. This income had also been included in the £336,000 income projected outturn:-

Worcester City	£5,000
Redditch	£2,000
Bromsgrove	£2,000

Appendix 2 to the report detailed the income achieved by WRS during April 2017 to December 2017. At £247,000 the income achieved puts the service on target to slightly exceed the level required to meet the budget for the year. This projected over achievement of income was as a result of the hard work the team had undertaken in order to generate further revenue.

Grant funded expenditure was shown separate to the core service costs as this was not funded by the participating Councils.

The Head of Regulatory Services, WRS, responded to questions from Members with regard to "Supplies and Services" as detailed on page 77 in the main agenda pack.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the final financial position for the period April 2017 to December 2017, be noted; and
- (b) that partner councils be informed of their liabilities for 2017/2018 with regard to Pest Control and Bereavements, by Section 151 Officers.

35/17

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES INFORMATION REPORT - REVIEW OF WRS SERVICE COMPLAINTS

The Board received an information report on the review carried out on Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), Service Complaints.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, introduced the report and in doing so informed the Board that following a small number of high profile, from individual partner's perspective, complaints; there was some confusion as to whether it was partner authorities or WRS procedures that were followed. Therefore a review of the WRS complaints procedure and the complaints themselves had been requested by the Chairman of the WRS Board.

The report detailed the service complaint process, the number of service complaints, the reason for the service complaints and the Quality of Service.

There appeared to be a significant common theme in relation to complaints received with regard to the Dog Warden Service, as detailed on page 84 in the main agenda pack.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, continued and highlighted to the Board the processes followed with regard to stray dogs and the elements of those processes that had faced criticism, as detailed in the report.

Members were reminded that the rigorous approach followed by WRS, as reported to the Board in the regular Activity and Performance Data reports, had created a downward pressure on numbers of stray dogs in the County.

Officers had looked at possible solutions with estimated costs, as detailed on page 87 of the main agenda report.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, drew Members' attention to the conclusion of the review. That, based on the last three years, the maximum level of success would be preventing seven complaints (2 of the 9 complaints concerned the inability to collect dogs on a Friday evening which would not be resolved by these options). Partner authorities may consider that the benefit of providing such a service (as detailed in Possible Solutions, Options A and B, on page 87 in the main agenda pack), outweighed the cost in delivery or potential service disruption.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Technical Services Manager, WRS, for his detailed report.

RESOLVED that the information report on the review carried out on Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), Service Complaints, be noted.

36/17

ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE DATA QUARTER 3

The Board considered a report that detailed Worcestershire Regulatory Services Activity and Performance Data for Quarter 3, 2017/2018. The report focused on Quarter 3 but the data enabled a comparison with previous years.

The Community Environmental Health Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) introduced the report and in doing highlighted that WRS continued to tackle issues broadly across the County.

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The Community Environmental Health Manager, WRS, then drew Members' attention to some of the key points in the report, as detailed below:-

- Licensing and environmental health nuisances continued to provide greatest demand for the service which was understandable given their high profile and direct impact on the public.
- With one quarter left, the total number of food safety cases in Malvern Hills, Redditch and Wychavon had already surpassed the totals for the previous two years. Whilst this did not indicate an increase in non-compliance it did reflect an increase in food safety enquiries from businesses and the general public and a review of such cases may identify opportunities to reroute customers to alternative channels.
- The continuation of relatively high levels of nuisance work carried into Quarter 3, the high number of complex legal cases under investigation, the resignation of a member of staff to take up a new post in the Isles of Scilly and the number of staff on long term sick, had provided a challenge to resources in Quarter 3. WRS retained the services of temporary workers to cover the backlog of work and to keep up with food visits; and to address some of the food businesses identified during the Food Standards Agency audit in May 2017. This had helped to keep the service on track to achieve what was needed during the second half of the year.
- The change in weather in the autumn caused nuisance complaints to return to the usual levels through October and November although a large number were carried forward from the summer months.
- The report showed a falling trend in dog control issues across Worcestershire. This was achieved by taking action to re-home persistent stray dogs and working with owners to achieve better control; together with working alongside communities and individuals setting up their own ways of identifying stray dogs and getting them back to their owners.
- Business satisfaction remained excellent at 97.6%.
- Staff sickness was higher than in previous years at 6.27 days per full time equivalent (FTE). A large contributing factor to this had been a number of longer term health issues.
- The number of complaints against the service remained low but did increase with 9 in the third quarter taking the total to 18; however this was significantly exceeded by the number of compliments received.

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Officers responded to specific questions with regard to:-

- The fines awarded by the Courts in relation to recent cases where food businesses were prosecuted in relation to various pest infestations, with Board Members being informed that the fines paid to the courts were handed over to the Treasury, but any costs awarded by the Court in relation to the investigation or the costs of the partner legal departments went back to the relevant partner authority.
- Members were informed that an annual status report on air quality / Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) was currently being drafted. Members were further informed that detailed information on air quality and AQMAs could be found on the WRS website.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Activity and Performance Data report for Quarter 3, 2017/2018, as detailed at Appendices A and B to the report, be noted; and
- b) that Members use the contents of the Activity and Performance Data report for Quarter 3, 2017/2018, to report the relevant information to Members at each partner authority.

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WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD - 2018/2019
PROPOSED MEETING DATES

The Board considered the proposed meeting dates scheduled for 2018/2019.

RESOLVED that the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board meeting dates and meeting start time of 4:30 p.m. for the municipal year 2018/2019 be approved as follows:-

- Thursday 21st June 2018
- Thursday 4th October 2018
- Thursday 15th November 2018 – Budget Meeting
- Thursday 14th February 2019

The meeting closed at 5.25 p.m.

Chairman

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Supporting and protecting you

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board 21st June 2018

Chair's Report

Recommendation

That the Board notes the report.

Introduction

When the new legal agreement that came into effect on 1st April 2016, it was envisaged that the new operating arrangement for the partners would be reviewed at the end of 12-months to ensure that the arrangement is working in the envisaged way. Officer members of the Board felt it appropriate that this review be presented by the Chair of the Joint Board who oversaw this period. This gave the then Chair the opportunity to reflect on the events of her year chairing the Board. Going forward it was felt that the out-going Chair of the Board should be given the opportunity to highlight, from an elected member's perspective, the key events and elements delivered on behalf of partners by the service during the 12 months that they held the chair.

Report

This report gives an overview of the highlights that the Board covered during the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018. The Board received a number of information reports alongside the standard activity data and financial reporting, which has allowed members to get a better understanding of the day to day work of the Regulatory Service and to understand the issues faced by our officers in trying to protect the public in each of the districts and also supporting the local businesses to thrive and grow.

Financial Reporting

Bromsgrove, as host, has provided the Board with timely and concise budget information so that the Board can ensure the financial probity of operational delivery. Occasionally concerns have been expressed over the presentation of the data, but generally officers have rectified any faults raised by Board members. The host's officers continue to provide the level of assurance that the Board requires.

Income generation has become the basis for maintaining the level of



service delivery that we, as partner authorities receive. Improving the picture of income coming into the service will be important going forward so that members can continue to have a good oversight of the service's finances. I would urge Bromsgrove, as host, to ensure that this is delivered.

Officers have established a working group to consider changes to the way income is collected on behalf of partners, with the possibility of income being collected by the host rather than each individual partner. This is particularly relevant for Licensing fees and officers from WRS and the 6 partners are looking at systems that could allow a wider range of these payments to come into the authorities by electronic means via a single internet site. This could offer a more streamlined process for clients of the partner authorities and ease pressure on the administrative support of both WRS and partners. However, there may be other impacts on both the host and the shared service should this go forward, which need to be considered carefully. This is an area over which the Board may wish to keep a watching brief going forward.

Operational Reporting

The quarterly review of performance and activity data continues to provide members with a clear picture of operational activity in all district areas. One or two suggested improvements in presenting the data have been made and members should continue to ask questions to ensure that the picture provided is as clear as possible with the resources available. Constant change for its own sake is not something the Board should seek but continuous small improvements in the report and the suite of indicators is something the Board may wish to consider in the future.

The previous Chair encouraged the use of information reports at each Board meeting to help to engage members more in the workings of the service and these helped to paint a clearer picture of what officers are doing on the ground. This year we received reports on a wide range of areas. We heard about the excellent results of the audit of the service by the Food Standards Agency and how the innovative approach that the 6 partners have adopted was welcomed by the national body. We had an update report on Air Quality, highlighting the work of our team in helping to protect the health of local residents. The way our officers have engaged on this agenda is one of the best examples of why the shared service works so well. I hope that the elected member working group being supported by the team in Worcester City will benefit greatly from the expertise of the team.

We had an eye-opening report on the nature of statutory nuisance and an explanation of how the law works in this area. Members found the paper highly informative and left with a greater understanding of the limits to which our shared service can intervene in some of the cases that residents highlight to us. We heard about the work the service has done with the Worcestershire LEP on the creation of the organisation Worcestershire Food and Drink, which I understand continues as we



speaking, and also a review of the service complaints, particularly those relating to the Dog Warden service which offered us a clearer understanding of what the issues are that face the service in trying to discharge our duties in such an emotionally charged situation.

I would agree with the previous Chair that, whilst as a governance board we must be focused in the main on financial and strategic issues, it is important that we have a feel for what the service is doing and that we are able to reflect this back at each of the partner authorities in our role as senior elected members. A number of the reports in the past 12 months have given us just that.

Highlights

One of the highlights of the year was that we were finalists in the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's "Best Environmental Health Team" at the Institute's Awards. The CIEH is the professional representative body for Environmental Health Officers in the UK. The team showcased a number of their innovative approaches, including the use of intelligence, in the work that they do and were highly commended for this.

As Chair of the Joint Committee I attended the awards ceremony with a small group of staff. Seeing the other services in contention demonstrated how far we as partners have come in terms of the delivery of these service elements. We remain at the forefront of innovation in these areas from a local authority perspective. The eventual winner of the Award was a team of officers from local authorities along the route of HS2, working on the potential nuisance that could be created by this project assuming it goes ahead. Whilst this kind of co-operation on single issues is not uncommon, the kind of collaborative model we have in Worcestershire remains unique in terms of its scale.

I also attended the opening of the Worcester Victorian Fayre with members of the team and was asked to judge the best Food Stall at the opening of the event. This is an excellent example of how our regulatory team works with colleagues in the partner authorities to support community events, for the benefit of people attending from all over the County and the local businesses who make these events so successful.

On behalf of the Board I would offer my thanks to the team for the work they have done over the previous twelve months. We know that this team works very hard for all of the partners and it is their dedication that ensures we continue to provide residents with a superior service that addresses many of their day to day issues in these areas, keeping our communities safe and supporting a thriving local economy.

Contact Point

Councillor Emma Stokes
Chair of the Shared Service Partnership Board 2017/18



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**WRS Board
21st June 2018**

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring April – March 2018 & Annual Return

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

- 1.1 Note the final financial position for the period April – March 2018
- 1.2 Approve the 2017/18 refund of £57k to the participating Councils.

Council	Refund from 2017/18 £'000
Bromsgrove	8
Malvern Hills	7
Redditch	10
City of Worcester	10
Wychavon	13
Wyre Forest	9
	57

Contribution to Priorities

The robust financial management arrangements ensure the priorities of the service can be delivered effectively.

Introduction/Summary

This report presents the final financial position for Worcestershire Regulatory Services for the period April – March 2018. In addition a number of financial statements are appended to this report.

Background

During the financial year quarterly financial reports are presented for consideration by the Partners.



Report

The following reports are included for Board's attention:

- Revenue Monitoring Statement 2017/18 - Appendix 1
- Annual Statement 2017/18 - Appendix 2
- Annual Statement Analysis 2017/18 – Appendix 3
- WRS Income Analysis 2017/18 – Appendix 4
- Reserve Statement – Appendix 5

Revenue Monitoring

The detailed revenue report is attached at Appendix 1. This shows a final outturn refund due to partners of £57k, this represents 1.9% of the actual budget and is mainly due to:-

- Agency Staff required to cover vacant posts, maternity etc was lower than actual salary savings.
- Any grant funded expenditure is shown separate to the core service costs as this is not funded by the participating Councils.
- WRS managers set themselves an income budget of £254k for 2017/18, through the hard work and successes that WRS achieved with generating income this year, the total income generated from all sources including additional spends by partners this year was £325k.
- As requested by this Board Appendix 1 details explanations relating to the variances.

The 2017/18 refund of £57k, is proposed to be refunded back to partners as below:

Bromsgrove	£8,342
Malvern Hills	£7,336
Redditch	£10,048
Worcs City	£9,629
Wychavon	£13,306
Wyre Forest	£8,790

The refund to partners takes into account the adjustment for the overspend on Pest Control and all other charges to partners.

All partners have been advised of all recharges and refunds for completion of their statement of accounts.

Financial Implications

None other than those stated in the report



Sustainability

None as a direct result of this report

Contact Points

Jayne Pickering – 01527-881400

Background Papers

Detailed financial business case



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	Full year Budget	Budget 12 Months to	Expenditure to	Variance
	Mar 18	Mar 18	Mar 18	
Direct Expenditure	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employees				
Salary	2,478	2,478	2,370	-108 Due to maternity, vacant posts, sick
Agency Staff	0	0	65	65 To cover maternity, sick etc
Employee Insurance	40	40	46	6
Sub-Total - Employees	2,518	2,518	2,481	-37
Premises				
Rent / Hire of Premise	54	54	53	-1
Cleaning	1	1	1	-1
Utilities	0	0	0	0
Sub-Total - Premises	55	55	53	-2
Transport				
Vehicle Hire	13	13	4	-8
Vehicle Fuel	8	8	3	-5
Road Fund Tax	1	1	1	-0
Vehicle Insurance	5	5	5	0
Vehicle Maintenance	3	3	4	1
Car Allowances	87	87	69	-18
Sub-Total - Transport	116	116	85	-31

	Full year Budget	Budget 12 Months to Mar 18	Expenditure to Mar 18	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Direct Expenditure				
Supplies and Services				
Furniture & Equipment	30	30	51	22 Calibration of equipment £11k / Hire of equip Stoke Pound 8k
Clothes, uniforms and laundry	3	3	0	-2
Printing & Photocopying	17	17	22	5
Postage	11	11	12	1
ICT	40	40	50	10 EDRMS test version
Telephones	23	23	12	-11
Training & Seminars	24	24	20	-4
Insurance	4	4	4	0
Third Party Payments				
Support Service Recharges	100	100	100	0
ICT Hosting	44	44	44	0
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	296	296	316	20
Contractors				
Dog Warden	145	145	132	-13
Pest Control	46	46	56	10 Income of £12k received from Severn Trent for Sewer Baiting, this is included in the Income figure
Taxi / Alcoh & Other Licensing	65	65	85	20 £6k overspend on taxi tests, £3.3k is rchgd to Worcs City and included in the income figure. £10k overspend in other licensing contractors, which is the riding school/animal inspections, this is fully recovered as part of the licensing process from the license holder Inspection and included in the income figure.
Other contractors/consultants	3	3	4	1
Water Safety	5	5	5	-0
Food Safety	2	2	3	1
Environmental Protection	12	12	59	47 Bereavement Costs rchgd to partners £26k. Works in Default / Professional Advice charged to relevant partner £19k, these recharges are included in the income figure.
Grants / Subscriptions	11	11	11	0
Advertising, Publicity and Promotion	6	6	2	-3
Sub-Total	294	294	357	63

	Full year Budget	Budget 12 Months to Mar 18	Expenditure to Mar 18	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Direct Expenditure				
Income				
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-254	-254	-325	-71 See Append 4 for breakdown of income
Sub-Total	-254	-254	-325	-71
Total	3,025	3,025	2,968	-57

Percentage saving from original budget (Excl County) £5,057 in 2010-11 41.32%

Grant Funded Spend	Spend 17-18	Remaining Reserve Balance	Funded By
Health & Well Being	19	25	Primary Care Trust
Worcs Works Well	7	37	Public Health Dept
LEP	22	67	Worcestershire Local Enterprise
Better Business For all		10	Regulatory Delivery
County Buyout		173	
Grant Income	-47		
Total	0	312	

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Return For Year Ended 31st March 2018

Accounting Statements For Worcester Regulatory Services

	Year ending	
	31st March 2017	31st March 2018
	£	£
1 Balances brought forward	114,249	230,125
2 (+) Income from local taxation and / or levy	0	0
3 (+) Total other receipts	3,649,786	3,559,112
4 (-) Staff costs	2,640,799	2,643,657
5 (-) Loan interest / capital repayments	0	0
6 (-) All other payments	893,112	858,844
7 (=) Balances carried forward	230,125	286,736
	0	
	0	
	0	
8 Total fixed assets and long term assets	542,409	542,409
9 Total borrowings	0	0

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services Overall Income Received 17-18

Income from Partners	£
Budget	3,025,000
Refund of Savings	-57,451
Pension Deficit	126,014
Bereavement/ Public Burials	26,174
Marlpool - Redditch	1,250
The Plough - Wyre Forest	1,749
Pest Control Overspend - Wychavon	2,951
Pest Control Overspend - Wyre Forest	4,689
Pest Control Overspend - Redditch	2,579
Gladmans - Wyre Forest	8,928
Tanhouse Lane - Malvern	2,190
Easemore Road - Redditch	1,880
Drovers Way - Wychavon	2,700
Lear Case - Malvern	3,171
Gull Programme - Worcs City	2,024
Taxi Tests - Worcs City	3,382
	<hr/> <hr/> 3,157,229

Grant Income	£
LEP	60,000
Healthy Eating	19,174
Better Business For All	9,995
Worcestershire Works Well	15,000
Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting	12,075
Waitrose Worcester Project	36,520
	<hr/> <hr/> 152,764

Other Income	£
Stray Dog Income	67,200
County - Mgmt / Admin / Legal etc	53,609
External Intelligence Support	15,247
Transcription Work	758
Tewkesbury BC / Stratford Upon Avon - Planning Support W	23,183
South Gloucs, Gloucs City & North Warwickshire Contamina	36,255
Glous City - PPC Work	4,137
Primary Authority work	17,006
Risk Assessments of Water Supplies / Burials etc	919
Vet Fee Inspection Costs Recovered	17,712
Food Training Courses / Certificates / Food Hygiene Rating	11,411
Licensing - Pre-App Advice	642
Licensing - Victorian Fayre	700
Ad-Hoc	340
	<hr/> <hr/> 249,119

Total Box 3 Accounting Statement	<hr/> <hr/> 3,559,112
---	------------------------------

Regulatory Services Employees 17-18

Box 4	£
Employees Related Costs	2,643,657
	<hr/> <hr/> 2,643,657

Regulatory Services Other Costs 17-18

Box 6	£
Premise Related Cost	52,692
Transport Related Cost	85,376
Supplies & Service	720,777
	<hr/> <hr/> 858,844

Regulatory Services Fixed Assets 17-18

Box 9	£
ICT Project	0
Dog Warden Vans	38,000
Refurb of Dog Warden Vans	7,300
	<hr/> <hr/> 45,300

Regulatory Services Borrowings 17-18

Box 10	£
Total Borrowings - Finance Lease	<hr/> <hr/> 0

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services Income Received 17-18

Income from Partners	£	
Bereavement/ Public Burials		26,174
Marlpool - Redditch		1,250
The Plough - Wyre Forest		1,749
Pest Control Overspend - Wychavon		2,951
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Lear Case - Malvern		3,171
Gull Programme - Worcs City		2,024
Taxi Tests - Worcs City		3,382
		63,666
		63,666
Grant Income	£	
Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting		12,075
		12,075
		12,075
Other Income	£	
Stray Dog Income		67,200
County - Mgmt / Admin / Legal etc		53,609
External Intelligence Support		15,247
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Vet Fee Inspection Costs Recovered		17,712
Food Training Courses / Certificates / Food Hygiene Rating		11,411
Licensing - Pre-App Advice		642
Licensing - Victorian Fayre		700
Ad-Hoc		340
		249,119
		249,119
Total WRS Income		324,860
		324,860

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services 17-18

Earmarked Reserve	Balance 1st April 2017	Transfers Out 2017/18	Transfers In 2017/18	Balance 31st March 2018
Worcs Works Well	28,737	-6,812	15,000	36,926
LEP	28,240	-21,515	60,000	66,726
County - Exit Fee	173,147			173,147
Better Business For All	0		9,938	9,938
Total Earmark Reserves	230,125	-28,326	84,938	286,736
Conditional Reserve - Health Eating	44,082	-18,674		25,408
Total Earmark Reserve & Conditional Reserve	274,207	-47,000	84,938	312,144

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Supporting and protecting you

WRS Board 21st June 2018

Activity and Performance Data Quarters 1, 2 3 and 4

Recommendation

That the Board notes the Report and that members use the contents of the activity data in their own reporting back to fellow members of the partner authorities.

Background

The detail of the report focuses on Q4 but the actual data allows comparison with previous quarters and previous years.

Contribution to Priorities

Board members have asked the service to provide data on activity levels to help reassure local members that WRS continues to tackle issues broadly across the county

Report

Activity Data

The total number of interventions at premises for food safety across the County for the year was 1,332. A high proportion (97.6%) of these premises in all districts is broadly compliant, indicating that the vast majority of food businesses are well run.

The number of health and safety complaints and enquiries fell in the fourth quarter such that demand was lower than in previous years through February and March. Health and safety activity continues to be intelligence led and the high level of enforcement activity continues. Investigations this financial year have included a fatality which resulted in a custodial sentence for the operator of a builder's merchant. In addition we have investigated a number of serious cases including a child who was seriously injured when shop furniture toppled onto them and a woman who suffered a serious brain injury when a large metal pole fell on her from height.

The number of accident reports rose in Quarter four but overall has remained slightly lower than the previous two years.

The poor weather in quarter 4 kept nuisance complaints at a relatively low level. The team investigated 2,387 nuisance complaints in 2017/18 covering light, noise, odour and smoke. 1,739 of these related to noise nuisance which places the greatest demand on the service. Amongst these nuisance investigations were a number of challenging service requests



requiring complex investigations.

Members often receive requests for assistance from constituents where their neighbours or nearby businesses are causing them a nuisance. In response to a request from the Members, the team produced a special edition of the Members' Eye Bulletin aimed at helping members to understand the legal basis for their respective local authority's activities in relation to statutory nuisance and explaining where we have to draw the line in relation to our investigative activities.

As air quality continues to steal the headlines nationally, local air quality continues to be of importance. Following several detailed investigations in Worcester City the decision was taken in January to declare the political boundary of the city as an air quality management area. In similar circumstances Wychavon district council decided to declare a significant part of Wychbold along the A38 and M5 as an air quality management area. Both declarations were due to exceedances of Nitrogen Dioxide caused by road traffic.

Next steps will see WRS undertaking source apportion work associated with the identification of vehicle types which contribute the most to the problem, along with the exploration of air quality improvement options.

In other parts of the County improvements in air quality have been observed in Hagley and Port Street, Evesham over a period of years, partly down to improvement in vehicle emissions through technological development and highway improvements. Consequently both management areas have been revoked. Further details can be found on WRS website.

WRS has been investigating the current environmental risk status of the Pinches landfill sites in Bromsgrove. Following an initial desktop survey Ground Gas solution Ltd has been employed to undertake expert monitoring. It is envisaged that monitoring should commence late April 2018 and provide us with some greater detail as to the risks that this historic landfill site presents with regard to potential gas migration.

WRS have received a series of permit applications over the year with several from waste management companies in relation to SWIP's (Small Waste Incineration Plant). It is believed that changes in the waste industry have instigated the need for companies to dispose of certain waste streams (waste wood) though the process of incineration as export to non EU countries has now become unviable. WRS remains the UK regulatory lead in this sector and has provided guidance nationally to other authorities in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

Businesses' interest in primary authority relationships continues to grow in this sector and WRS are in the process of finalising formal partnerships with CEMEX and Weinberger. This will make WRS a provider of assured advice to two international companies with multiple sites and major investments in the UK with work scheduled to commence on the 1st May 2018, a first for the minerals sector.



Dog control work in quarter 4 continued with two press releases trying to encourage good dog ownership.

The licensing statistics show that applications under the Licensing Act and Hackney Carriage and Private Hire taxi legislation have remained fairly consistent across all four quarters during 2016/17 and in line with previous years. Complaints and enquiries showed a small peak in January but fell to normal levels for the rest of the quarter.

Performance

Full details of the end of year performance are included in the Annual Report. For completeness, they are also included with this activity data. Members are reminded that indicators reported either quarterly or six monthly are cumulative across the year so the out-turn figure is a cumulative one.

Customer satisfaction figures at the end of Q4 are 75.4% which is slightly down on the overall satisfaction for the previous two years. This may be reflective of increased public expectation of the service which is not borne out in the law's ability to offer solutions.

Business satisfaction ended at 97.7%, again on a par with last year and 72.2% of customers feel better equipped to deal with problems after speaking with us which is again marginally down on last year.

Staff satisfaction this year is covered in a separate report that members will see follows on from this report.

The cumulative number of sick days per staff member is 12.45 days per FTE which is double last year's 5.95 days per FTE. To understand this better, all members of staff who recorded sickness have been grouped by the total of sick days recorded during the year. These have been broken down into:

- 21 days plus
- 10 to 20 days
- 10 days or less

Nine members of staff fell into the group taking 21 days or more sick-leave during the year. Three members of staff required significant surgery either relating to a non-work related injury or for other medical reasons. Three members of staff have been suffering from stress due to either domestic issues exacerbated by the pressures of work or issues that have occurred at work. A further two have chronic medical conditions that mean they are likely to have more than the average number of sickness days. One staff member has been through the 4 stage process for dealing with sickness absence and has been dismissed on capability grounds. This decision was upheld by one of the Host's Directors at an appeal hearing.



Agenda Item 8

The three having had surgery are now fit and well and back at work. We are aware of one or two other staff who may be scheduled surgical interventions during 2018/19, so we are planning for this eventuality.

Of the three officers with stress related issues, one has returned to full-time work successfully now, one opted to take early retirement and the third is in discussion with their Team Manager and Senior Practitioner about their future. The two with long-term chronic conditions have been to see occupational health and the service is making adjustments to help them to avoid some of the issues that can exacerbate their conditions.

These 8 individuals accounted for well in excess of 60% of the absence in the service, and a significant proportion of those days amongst this group related to the officer who was dismissed (42%).

Of the remainder, a significant proportion of the illnesses between 5 and 10 days occurred from October onwards and resulted from the influenza virus that went through the teams over the winter. One of the problems with staff being keen not to cause problems to their colleagues is they do tend to come into work when they are feeling under the weather and if that happens to be the beginnings of the flu as happened several times over the winter, this of itself creates a problem.

In response to this difficult year, Team Managers have been asked to review the records and identify those officers who have hit the intervention trigger in the sickness policy and to speak to them informally about their record, unless the trigger was caused by a single bout of influenza. The Bromsgrove District council sickness policy has two potential trigger points for a rolling 6 month period, these being:

- 3 periods of sickness
- 1 period of 6 days or more

Managers have also been asked to tighten up on monitoring for staff hitting trigger points going forward. The Head of Service has arranged for a regular HR presence from Bromsgrove at Wyre Forest House and each Team Manager will meet with the HR officer on a monthly basis to look at any HR issues including any sickness related ones, particularly those hitting the trigger point. This accompanied by a general re-enforcement of the need to do return to work interviews should also create a downward pressure on short-term illness.

In respect of income generation, total income was £325,000 which expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (17/18) is at a very healthy 10.7%. In summary, with the exception of sickness, performance overall has been maintained and is broadly comparable with last year. (See appendix B Table of PIs).



Contact Points

Susan Garratt: Licensing and support Service Manager
01562-738037
susan.garratt@@worcsregservices.gov.uk

Background Papers

Appendix A: Activity Report (separate document)
Appendix B: Performance indicators Table



Agenda Item 8

Appendix B: Performance Indicator Table

Indicator	Reporting period	Q 1	Q2	Q 3	Q4/ Outrun																
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	1.7%	75.6%	7.5%	75.4%																
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	98.4 %	97.7%	97.6 %	97.7%																
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	NA	NA	NA	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>District</th> <th>% Broadly Compliant</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bromsgrove</td> <td>98.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Malvern Hills</td> <td>97.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redditch</td> <td>96.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcester City</td> <td>98.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wychavon</td> <td>97.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wyre Forest</td> <td>97.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcestershire</td> <td>97.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	District	% Broadly Compliant	Bromsgrove	98.7%	Malvern Hills	97.0%	Redditch	96.7%	Worcester City	98.0%	Wychavon	97.8%	Wyre Forest	97.2%	Worcestershire	97.6%
District	% Broadly Compliant																				
Bromsgrove	98.7%																				
Malvern Hills	97.0%																				
Redditch	96.7%																				
Worcester City	98.0%																				
Wychavon	97.8%																				
Wyre Forest	97.2%																				
Worcestershire	97.6%																				
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	Annually	NA	NA	NA	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bromsgrove</td> <td>1.3% (7)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Malvern</td> <td>3% (14)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redditch</td> <td>3.3% (11)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcester</td> <td>2% (9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wychavon</td> <td>2.2% (14)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wyre Forest</td> <td>2.8% (13)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcestershire</td> <td>2.4% (68)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Bromsgrove	1.3% (7)	Malvern	3% (14)	Redditch	3.3% (11)	Worcester	2% (9)	Wychavon	2.2% (14)	Wyre Forest	2.8% (13)	Worcestershire	2.4% (68)		
Bromsgrove	1.3% (7)																				
Malvern	3% (14)																				
Redditch	3.3% (11)																				
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Wychavon	2.2% (14)																				
Wyre Forest	2.8% (13)																				
Worcestershire	2.4% (68)																				
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	6-monthly	NA	81% NB: all other licenses in this category that fell due for renewal within the period were issued before the expiry of existing licenses	NA	87.7% NB: all other licenses in this category that fell due for renewal within the period were issued before the expiry of existing licenses																
6 % of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service	6-monthly	NA	Total number of vehicles countywide: 1484	NA	Total number of vehicles countywide: 1536																



Agenda Item 8

Number of vehicles found to be defective by district and the percentage this represents of the fleet county-wide			Number of vehicles suspended during Q1/ Q2 21 Bromsgrove 9 Malvern 0 Redditch 3 Worcester City 8 Wychavon 1 Wyre Forest 0 Percentage 1.42% of fleet up to 6 months.		Number of vehicles suspended during Q3/ Q4 13 Bromsgrove 0 Malvern 0 Redditch 1 Worcester City 11 Wychavon 0 Wyre Forest 1 Percentage 2.2% of fleet for the full year
7 % of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	72.5 %	73.3%	74.1 %	72.2%
8 Review of register of complaints/compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	3/32	9/75	18/111	25/138
9 Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	1.19	3.77	6.27	12.45
10 % of staff who enjoy working for WRS	Annually	NA	NA	NA	See new report
11 % of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	6-monthly	NA	District %	NA	District %
			Bromsgrove 4.7		Bromsgrove 6.73
			Malvern Hills 3.2		Malvern Hills 4.94
			Redditch 7.0		Redditch 8.65
			Worcester City 3.7		Worcester City 8.19
			Wychavon 2.9		Wychavon 4.97
			Wyre Forest 5.8		Wyre Forest 8.29
			Worcestershire 4.3		Worcestershire 6.78



Agenda Item 8

12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	District	Rate	NA	District	Rate
				Bromsgrove	1.98		Bromsgrove	2.82
				Malvern Hills	1.62		Malvern Hills	2.39
				Redditch	2.34		Redditch	3.61
				Worcester City	1.99		Worcester City	3.13
				Wychavon	1.75		Wychavon	2.46
				Wyre Forest	2.3		Wyre Forest	3.23
				Worcestershire	2.01		Worcestershire	2.93
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA	5.2% £158,000 as a proportion of £3,025,000	NA	10.7% £325,000 as a proportion of £3,025,000		
14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population (Calculation will offset income against revenue budget)	Annually	NA	NA	NA	£5.10 per head of population (£2,968,000/ 582,000)		



Worcestershire
Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

Activity Report 2017/18

intelligence@wocrsregservices.gov.uk



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Malvern
Hills
District
Council
www.malvern hills.gov.uk

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
making
a
difference
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Worcester
CITY COUNCIL

WYCHAVON
DISTRICT COUNCIL
good services, good value

Wyre Forest
District Council

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WRS Summary

Air Quality
Contaminated Land
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Environmental Permitting
Food Safety
Health and Safety
Information Requests
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Public Health

Local Authority Summaries

Bromsgrove District Council
Malvern Hills District Council
Redditch Borough Council
Worcester City Council
Wychavon District Council
Wyre Forest District Council

Foreword

Welcome to the final set of activity data for 2017/18. As you saw in the previous reports, the first half of the year was very busy with very high numbers of nuisance cases. These eased during quarter 3 and the cold weather in quarter 4 helped to hold the numbers down, allowing more focus on some of the proactive work like Food Hygiene inspection. Planning worked dipped during February but numbers began to climb again through March towards the new financial year. Health and Safety complaints remained relatively low while food safety complaints rose back to pre-Christmas levels but not above the norm.

The Dog Control graphs continue to show the downward trend we'd all like to see. These can be particularly difficult cases for our Duty Officers as dog owners are invariably very emotional about their pets and are seldom happy with the fact that they must pay the costs to the local authority and the fine introduced some years ago by Government. Sometimes members express concerns about the costs, but it is only the partners' robust policy approach to those who allow their dogs to stray, especially those who persistently manage to lose their dogs that has yielded these successful results. As always, we hope you find this report informative and, if you've any questions about the overall figures or figures for your won district, please contact either myself or the relevant Team Manager. Your member services teams have all of our details.



Simon Wilkes
Head of Regulatory Services

WRS Headlines

Quarter 1

Feed The Bins, Not The Gulls

During June, Worcester City launched the 'feed the bins, not the gulls' campaign. A significant part of this campaign was implemented by WRS including; management of the contract to undertake the egg replacement work in the city centre, exploring the potential deterrent to nesting that red rooves may present and liaison with residents and businesses wishing to take their own action or complain. Red Kite Pest Control have replaced gull eggs for rubber dummy eggs in nests on city centre rooves for many years but this has been widened to include new properties this year. The advice issued to businesses has changed to reflect the work they can do to reduce the suitability of their own rooves for nesting as well as action they can take to reduce the impact of the gulls such as car ports to prevent gulls leaving mess on cars and advice to eateries on preventing food being taken.



National Licensing Week

During National Licensing Week (June 19th to 23rd) Licensing Officers and Officers of the Gambling Commission made a number of visits to licensed Gambling premises (Betting Shops, Adult Gaming Centres and Bingo Halls) across the County. The results of which only showed minor infringements of licence conditions which were easily rectified. These results showed that the majority of these types of premises are well run with little disorder.

Taxi Enforcement

The countywide Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle enforcement program has begun with the Bromsgrove District; this being the first of many enforcement exercises planned across the county in the coming year. A number of vehicles were taken off the road until faults were rectified - as they were found to be not fit for the purpose of carrying passengers; further exercises are planned and will be carried out shortly.

Best Bar None

Licensing Officers have participated in the steering group to introduce the Best Bar None scheme in Bromsgrove; with a number of the Licensing Officers attending the opening launch. All Licensing Technical Officers will be undertaking a specialised training programme to become Best Bar None assessors in early September.

Licensing Appeals - Worcester City

There have been two appeals in the courts for taxi related matters. The first was an appeal by an applicant who had been refused a licence to drive hackney carriage and private hire vehicles as he did not meet the Council's medical requirements set out in Policy. In short, he did not meet the DVLA Group 2 standards adopted by the majority of Councils as is best practise and was therefore refused a licence. The decision of the Council Sub-Committee was upheld by the courts. Costs of £400 were awarded against the appellant in this case.

The second was an appeal by an existing licensed driver against the decision of the Council's Licensing Sub Committee to revoke his driver's licence. A decision had been made to revoke the licence based on the fact there had been a recent complaint of abusive behaviour towards a Council staff member, and also concerns over his lack of compliance and cooperation with Licensing officers regarding the poor condition of his hackney carriage vehicle. Records also showed a history of non compliance and abusive behaviour including an earlier revocation of his licence in 2014, which had been overturned by the Magistrates Court. The licence holder unsuccessfully appealed against the Council's decision to revoke his licence to the Magistrates Courts on 30/01/2017 (the licence holder failed to attend). Once again the appeal was dismissed on 14/07/2017 at the Crown Court and the decision of the Council Sub-Committee upheld. Full costs of £870 were awarded against the appellant in this case.

The judge hearing the case was quite scathing of the licence holder stating that he was wholly unfit to hold a licence and had a cavalier attitude towards the rules. Although this case had been a long time coming (issues first identified from 2015 onwards), the outcome was certainly welcomed by everyone who had been involved.

Food Safety Audit

In May we were audited by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). Whilst for legal reasons the audit focussed on Wyre Forest District Council the auditors accepted that our working practices applied across all the Districts. The physical audit took place over two days with the FSA piloting a new approach which was more of a critical friend than the previously arduous audits known to many local authorities. The audit outcome has been very positive with a strong acceptance of our new ways of working. The full report will be published on www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/auditreports

Food Safety Prosecutions

Grillicious Pizza and Grill in Mount Pleasant, Redditch, who had been visited by officers several times and ignored advice, was recently prosecuted with fines and costs of nearly £9,000 imposed; a sign of the impact of the Sentencing Guidelines which came into force in 2016. A rat infested Wychavon distribution warehouse, Mayfair Holdings, was fined over £4,000.

Food Hygiene makes the news

The local press, particularly the Worcester Evening News, are now regularly running stories on low scoring businesses. We both welcome and encourage this as it can help drive up safety standards as the businesses which have featured all reported a drop in sales. The good news is that they have also given coverage to business improvements.

Fire Safety Checks

WRS officers have been working with the Fire Authority on a project making fire safety checks on people living over food businesses, both tenant and owner-occupied. This predates the Grenfell House incident. Regrettably, the Fire Authority has had to take enforcement action in a large number of premises.

Congratulations to our Environmental Health Student

Our student, Evesham based Lisa Maskell, who was on placement with us for three years and helped develop the Healthier Choices Food Award, achieved a First Class Masters Degree in Environmental Health from Birmingham and was promptly offered a job at Selfridges!

Worcestershire Food and Drink

There is continuing development of the Worcestershire Food and Drink Project, funded by the Worcestershire LEP. We recently commissioned a stand alone website through Worcester-based Source Design and Print and are working with Hale Events, organisers of The Food and Drink Trade Show at the Three Counties Showground, to make an even better experience for our local food businesses in 2018. We are also working with Visit Worcestershire to promote our Level 4 and Level 5 rated food businesses on their new website from January 2018.

Café owner fined

The owner of a café in Redditch has been fined for breaches of food safety and hygiene regulations. Keith Robert Troth pleaded guilty at Redditch Magistrates Court on Thursday May 11 for failing to ensure food was protected against contamination, lacking the required procedures for cleaning and food control, and failing to keep premises clean and in good condition. The case was brought after a routine food hygiene inspection at Mr Troth's Cerrones Café in Oxleasow Road in October last year had found mouse activity and a build-up of dirt and debris. The court heard that Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) had carried out the inspection while the café was open and serving food on 5 October 2016. Mouse droppings were found in food preparation areas and on the counter top next to dishes of cooked food and a drinks machine. Mouse activity was also noted in storage areas, including on open lids of food storage containers, and a pack of blue paper rolls containing chewed up paper and mouse droppings was also found. A build-up of dirt and debris had also indicated a lack of cleaning procedures. Magistrates took account of Mr Troth's limited finances, lack of any previous convictions and early guilty plea in fining him £500 for four offences, and awarding costs of £1,000 plus a victim surcharge of £50.

WRS Headlines

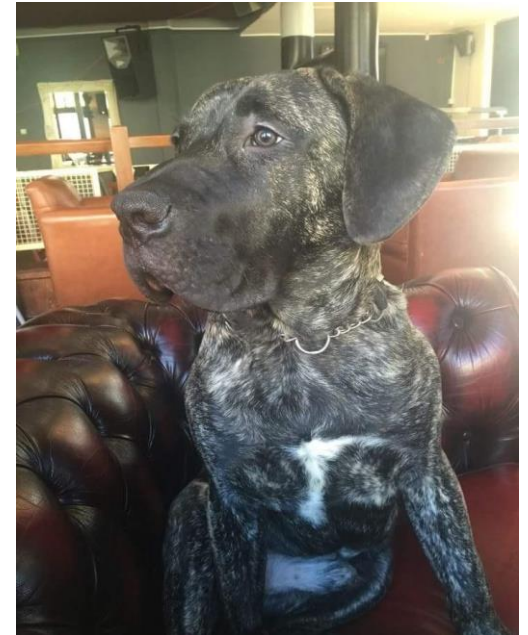
Quarter 2

Hopwood woman prosecuted over emaciated dog in her care which had to be put down

Following an investigation by WRS Officers a successful prosecution was brought against Mrs Jaspal Boparia, aged 47, of Washhill Lane and her ex-husband Mr Ranjit Boparia, aged 46, of Shoemith Close, Barwell, Leicester. They were sentenced on September 19 at Redditch Magistrates court. The case was reported by both the Bromsgrove Advertiser and Bromsgrove Standard. Mrs Boparia pleaded guilty to an offence under Section 4 of the Animal Welfare Act for failing to provide a suitable diet which resulted in the dog being caused unnecessary suffering. She admitted to reporting the dog as a stray, even though he was in her care, after she noticed he had stopped eating and she could not afford to take him to the vet.

Page 44
Mrs Boparia was given a 12-month community order with 80 hours unpaid work and was also ordered to pay a total of £1,310. The court decided Mrs Boparia would not be given a banning order. Mr Boparia, the owner of the dog which he had handed over to his ex-wife in the Autumn of 2016, knew the dog was not eating but failed to take steps to prevent the dog's condition deteriorating. Mr Boparia was already subject to a banning order following an offence at the end of last year which prevented him from owning a dog for a period of five years. Having pleaded guilty to an offence of failing to take steps to prevent the dog from suffering Mr Boparia was fined £333 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £33 and £2,447 in costs.

Worcester Regulatory Services (WRS), which brought the prosecution, was first alerted to the situation of Blue on January 11 after receiving a call from Mrs Boparia stating she had taken in a stray dog. The dog was collected by the Dog Warden who described him as being emaciated, skin and bone, with no muscle tone and in all round very poor condition. The dog received immediate treatment by the vet but over the following the next few days the dog's temperament deteriorated and he became a risk to staff so the decision was made that he be put to sleep. WRS will provide advice and assistance to dog owners in rehoming dogs where they are unable to cope or their circumstances change and anyone can call the Dog Wardens on 01905 822799.



Grimley Raceway Injunction

WRS and Malvern Hills District Council have been successful in securing an injunction to control activities at a motor-racing track at Grimley, near Worcester. The track, used for stock car and banger racing, has been going for more than 50 years and attracts people from all over Britain. The deal, reached between Malvern Hills District Council and the owners, will allow racing to continue on a permanent basis while reducing the noise impact on nearby residents.

Court action was first taken in December 2015 which resulted in the owners agreeing to undertake work to reduce the impact of noise levels. However, when this did not happen an interim injunction was applied for to halt racing while the matter went to court. A temporary compromise was reached earlier this year which allowed racing to resume subject to certain restrictions. This has led to both sides agreeing a permanent deal, which was ratified by a judge at a hearing at Walsall County Court on Tuesday. Under the terms of the order, the raceway will be allowed to hold nine meetings a year and there must be at least 20 to 27 days between each event. Only one race can be held on a Bank Holiday in any single year, no racing can take place before 1pm or after 6pm, except for Bonfire Night, and engines cannot be started or repairs made before 11am or after 6pm. Restrictions have also been placed on the type of announcements that can be made over the public address system and the type of vehicles that can be used in races. A noise management plan must also be submitted to the council each year and council staff or other experts must be allowed on site to ensure the order is being complied with.

Phil Merrick, the council's head of economy and communities, said: "We've always said we were supportive of the raceway but that had to be balanced against our legal obligation to protect our residents from excessive noise. We're delighted we have been able to reach an agreement which imposes some tough restrictions on the operation of the racetrack while ensuring racing can continue at Grimley in the future."



FSA Audit

Members will recall the report presented to last joint board highlighting the audit of Wyre Forest District Council's food safety work. The final report has now been published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and is available to view via the link below.

<https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/2017/auditreports/wyre-forest-district-council/wyre-forest-dc-assurance-audit>

Licensing Update

The countywide Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle enforcement program began with the Bromsgrove District; this being the first of many enforcement exercises planned across the county in the coming year. The conclusion of this part of the planned programme resulted in nine vehicles being suspended; various faults were found such as low tyres, white indicators, ball joints damaged, obscure windscreen, windscreen wipers not working to name but a few. These vehicles were taken off the road until faults were rectified; further exercises are planned in other districts and will be carried out shortly.

Page 45
 There has been a lot of background work carried out with regards to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing. Licensing Officers have been investigating some of the issues arising from the relaxation of regulation on cross border hiring. Namely an Operator in one district can legally transfer a booked job to another Operator in another area who can then send a fully licensed vehicle and driver to complete the booking. Licensing Officers are working with each district to review Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policies to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose. One of the suggested improvements in this area is the introduction of National Standards for vehicle inspections; Officers will be liaising with inspection garages, districts and the trade to see if this would be beneficial.

Licensing has also been working in partnership with West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner's preferred training provider to deliver face to face Child Sex Exploitation training/awareness to all taxi drivers. Plans are in place for piloting this scheme/training session with the Redditch and Worcester City taxi trade during the early part of next year; with a wider roll out across the county thereafter. Initially this training will be provided on a free voluntary attendance basis; upon completion, a review of effectiveness, delivery and take up will be reported back to each Licensing Committee in the early autumn next year.

Officers from the Licensing Team have recently been involved in joint inspections on betting premises licensed across the county. Visits were conducted with officers from the Gambling Commission, including one of our former Trading Standards team who moved to the Commission in 2014. The purpose of the inspections was to assess compliance with premises licence requirements, alongside the requirements of the Gambling Commission's "Licence Conditions and Code of Practice" (LCCP) document. Levels of compliance with the requirements of legislation, regulations and the LCCP were generally very good, with one of two minor issues being dealt with in dialogue with the relevant premises licence holders. Further joint working across the county has been arranged.

WRS Headlines

Quarter 3

Licensing Update

The Licensing Team launched a pre-application assistance service this quarter. The pre-application service aims to assist applicants when dealing with Councils and help take the headache out of submitting licensing applications. We can determine the correct level of advice required for the applicants individual needs and help applicants to understand Council's policies and make sure that they submit their application correctly, in turn helping them to reduce any unnecessary and often costly delays. Since the launch of the service a number of enquiries have been received and officers are assisting with the completion and submission of a variety of different types of application.

In November, seven members of the licensing team achieved the BIIAB Level 2 Award in Assessment of Licensed Premises (Social Responsibility). This qualification is a pre-requisite for assessing premises that apply to accreditation schemes such as "Best Bar None". Licensing officers have been part of the steering group supporting the launch of Best Bar None in Bromsgrove and are now in a position to carry out assessments on the premises that have applied for accreditation.

Licensing officers once again assisted at the Victorian Christmas Fayre in Worcester. Officers were on hand across the period of the Fayre and carried out checks on those selling alcohol as well as assisting with the management of pedlars that visited the city centre during the Fayre to sell their wares.

Licensing officers have also assisted in a high profile case in Redditch that reached the national media and centered on the legality of playing bingo for cash in residential homes. Officers provided advice and guidance to council staff and the residents of a residential home where bingo is played on a regular basis. Thanks to our officer's intervention, all parties now have a greater understanding of the ways that bingo can lawfully be played for small cash prizes in residential settings such as care homes and retirement complexes.

The Licensing Team were involved in a multi- agency scrap metal enforcement exercise this quarter. Officers accompanied by the Police and representatives from the Environment Agency visited scrap metal dealer sites in the south of the county to ensure compliance with the relevant sections of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013. It was a high profile exercise which made the local press and Officers were also joined by Lord Faulkner of Worcester who was instrumental in the passing of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013. On the whole compliance was found to be high at all three of the sites visited.

WRS Headlines

Quarter 4

Promotion of Good Dog Ownership

During January and February the Dog Wardens issued a couple of press releases aimed at providing dog owners with advice and preventing animal cruelty through neglect and inability to pay vet fees. The campaign focused on two specific dogs which were the subject of cruelty through neglect and mistreatment. In the former, regarding Doodlebug, who is an elderly Labrador, she was in pain, emaciated, could hardly walk and wasn't microchipped, was found just before Christmas. The press release went out after the period for any owner to come forward lapsed in the new year. We assumed that vet bills associated with the dog's eye problems and diabetes that was diagnosed were too expensive leading to the dog being abandoned. Whilst we can not pay the vet bills of owner's dogs, we are able to provide advice and guidance to dog owners to charities that can assist or provide alternative solutions if the owner is unable to afford to care for their dog.

The second press release in February related to 'Bosley' a stray boxer picked up in the Bromsgrove area by a member of the public who was distressed by the dog's condition. It is clear the dog had been in a serious dog fight. The focus of this press release was to ask members of the public to report any welfare concerns such as breeding for dog fighting or animal cruelty. As always we also asked the public for any information on the owners of Bosley and Doodlebug (both renamed by the Dog Wardens). To date we have had no one come forward.

Licensing Update

During quarter four, licensed drivers have been made aware of the implementation of sections 165 – 167 of the Equality Act 2010 and reminded of their responsibilities towards all passengers with disabilities. It is hoped that a media campaign to raise awareness amongst the public can be undertaken this spring to support this. The campaign would include reference to the implications of sections 165 – 167 as well as highlighting how any issues can be reported.

As a result of this change to the law, drivers of designated wheelchair accessible taxi and private hire vehicles are now obliged to:

- Transport wheelchair users in their wheelchair
- Provide passengers in wheelchairs with appropriate assistance
- Charge wheelchair users the same as non-wheelchair users

The new powers only apply in those areas where the licensing authority has decided to maintain a list of designated vehicles under section 167 of the Equality Act 2010 and where the driver is driving a vehicle included on the list of designated vehicles maintained by the licensing authority. Licensing Officers are working with all districts in this regard. New internal vehicle plates have been designed showing the vehicle licence number to the outside and to the inside information about how to compliment the driver or how to make a complaint – giving WRS contact details and the relevant licence number of the vehicle.

Licensing continues with its vehicle inspection improvements across the County with consultations on the adoption of “National Vehicle Inspection Standards” being carried out in a number of districts. WRS Officers are currently working with neighbouring authorities who are looking to standardise a set of conditions which would be attached to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle, Driver and Operator Licences, it will be interesting to see how this work develops.

Licensing Officers have, in conjunction with West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioners preferred training provider, been delivering a free awareness raising campaign to taxi drivers in relation to CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) across the County. A number of training sessions have already been delivered in Redditch, Worcester and Wyre Forest with further sessions in Wychavon, Bromsgrove and Malvern Hills being rolled out over the next few months. It is planned to report uptake and attendance to each Licensing Authority later in the year.

Since the launch of the pre-application assistance service last quarter a number of enquiries have been received and officers are assisting with the completion and submission of a variety of different types of application. Verbal feedback from those customers who have used the service thus far shows that the service has been well received. Officers can determine the correct level of advice required for the applicants’ individual needs and assist in helping the customer to understand Council’s policies and navigate both application forms and process, in turn helping them to reduce any unnecessary and often costly delays.

Work is being carried out on the “Statement of Gambling Principles” (Gambling Act 2005) which is due for review by each District Council this year; Officers have been working closely with the Gambling Commission to ensure a consistent approach across the County and as part of this process each Licensing Authority has to produce a “Local Area Profile” in relation to Gambling. It is envisaged that the “Local Area Profile” will be a countywide profile with both documents in place by January 2019 in line with statutory deadlines.

Environmental Health Projects

During 2017/18 WRS were involved in two significant projects that focussed on health and well-being, namely the ‘Healthier Choices Food Award’ and ‘Worcestershire Works Well’.

customers who are looking to lead a healthier lifestyle. The accreditation scheme, developed by WRS, has been in operation since August 2015 and currently comprises 26 businesses across the County. The scheme is available to restaurants and catering businesses that have achieved level 4 or 5 under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) and also promotes local produce which ties in with the 'Worcestershire Food & Drink' initiative discussed late in this assessment.



Worcestershire Works Well is a partnership incorporating Worcestershire County Council, WRS, Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce, Wellness Works and the Sport Partnership. It is designed to improve workplace health and well-being in Worcestershire. The main role of WRS within this partnership is to promote and market the scheme and provide advice to local businesses. Funding is provided for WRS to undertake this work and this is expected to continue during 2018/19.



Environmental Health Projects

Page 50 WRS were delighted to be highly commended in the "Outstanding Environmental Health Team" category of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's 2017 Excellence Awards. The awards, which took place in November, enable the professional body to celebrate excellence and innovation in service delivery and showcase new approaches to improving the level of service to business and local communities.

The award submission focussed heavily on innovation and transformation work within the Community Environmental Health, Technical Services, Duty Officer and Intelligence Teams, including:

The self-help package for nuisances

The carrying out of contract work for other authorities.

Trying to resolve problems at the first point of contact through the Duty Officer system

LEP work on the Worcestershire Food and Drink Association project

The Healthier Choices Food award

Working closely with legitimate businesses and their relevant trade bodies including business seminars

Self-help for Planning Officers

The development of our Environmental Health Intelligence Team and tasking within the service

Air Quality & Contaminated Land

As air quality continues to steal the headlines nationally local air quality continues to be of equal importance. Following several detailed investigation in Worcester City the decision was taken in January to declare the political boundary of the city as an air quality management area. In similar circumstances Wychavon district council made the decision to declare a significant part of Wychbold along the A38 and M5 as an air quality management area. Both declarations were due to exceedances of Nitrogen Dioxide caused by road traffic.

Next steps will see WRS undertaking source apportion work associated with the identification of vehicle types which contribute the most to the problem along with the exploration of air quality improvement options.

In other parts of the County improvements in air quality have been observed in Hagley and Port Street Evesham over a period of years partly down to improvement in vehicle emissions through technological development and highway improvements. Consequently both management areas have been revoked. Further details can be found on WRS website.

WRS has been investigating the current environmental risk status of the Pinches landfill sites in Bromsgrove. Following an initial desktop survey Ground Gas solution Ltd has been employed to undertake expert monitoring. It is envisaged that monitoring should commence late April 2018 and provide us with some greater detail as to the risks that this historic landfill site presents with regard to potential gas migration.

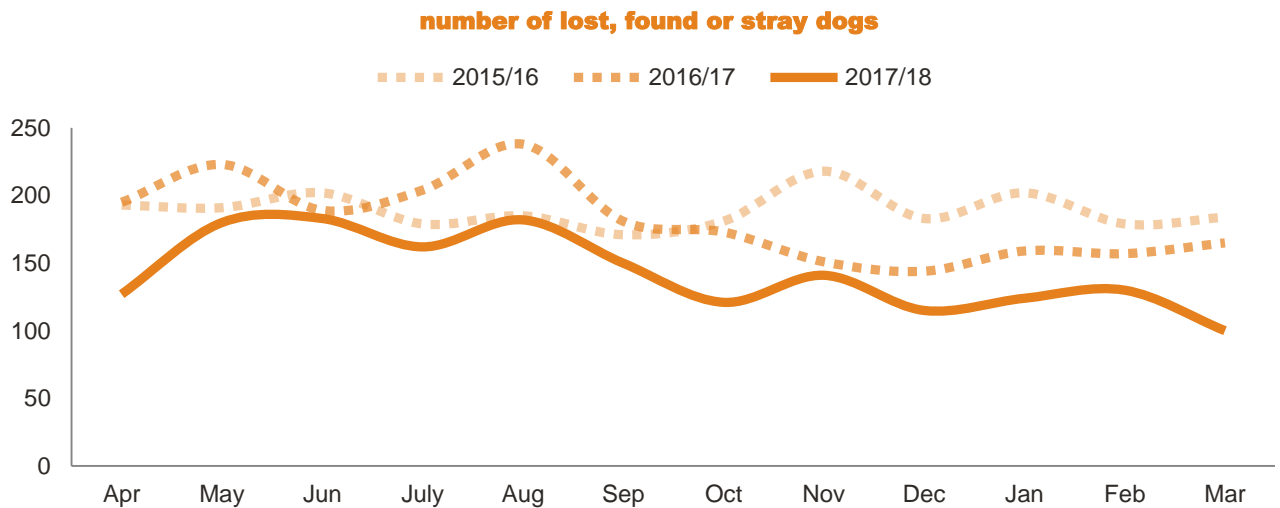
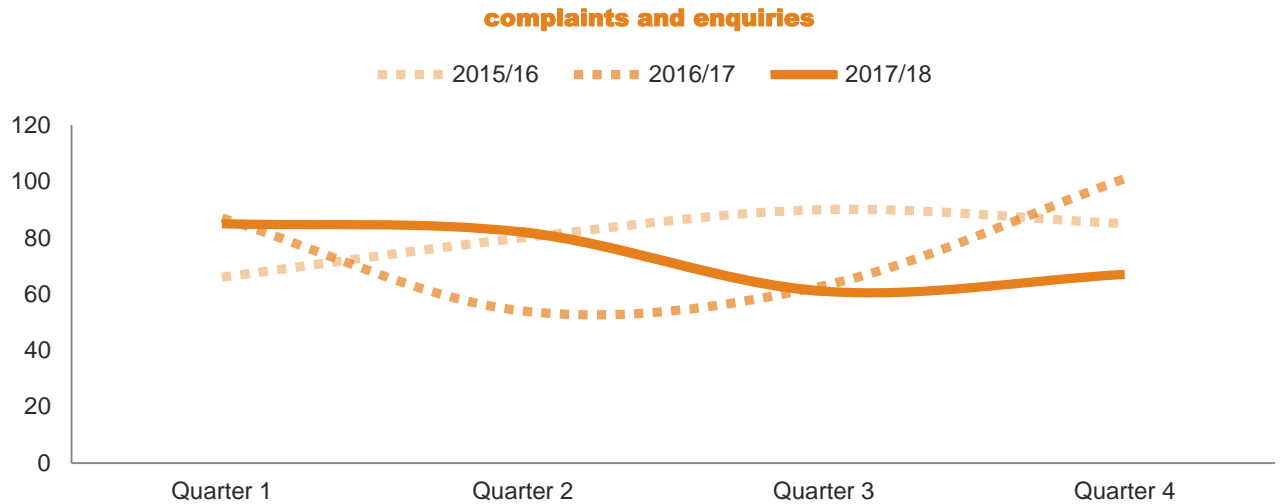
Dog Control

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to dog control. Types of cases recorded under this category include fouling and persistent straying, dangerous dogs and welfare. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of dogs recorded by WRS as lost, found or seen straying.

Comments

Dog control statistics include work carried out by WRS on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Brough Council.

Historically, the general trend in numbers of stray dogs reported is reducing and this would appear to continue this financial year. In order to ensure we are utilising Officer's full capacity with reduced stray numbers, we have been exploring the provision of dog services to other public organisations such as social services and housing associations. We have been asked to collect, detain, kennel and rehome dogs during this period which is reflected in the increase in service request numbers. Whilst the number of service requests has generally remained consistent over the year, work has continued behind the scenes to explore the commercial opportunities and identify potential client organisations.



Environmental Permitting

Compliance in this sector remains high which is a credit to the industries of Worcestershire and their overall commitment to ensuring that the environment is protected in accordance with the law.

WRS have received a series of permit applications over the year with several from waste management companies in relation to SWIP's (Small Waste Incineration Plant). It is believed that changes in the waste industry has instigated the need for companies to dispose of certain waste streams (waste wood) though the process of incineration as export to non EU countries has now become unviable. WRS remains the UK regulatory lead in this sector and has issued guidance nationally to other authorities in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

Business interest in primary authority relationships continues to grow in this sector and WRS are in the process of finalising formal partnerships with CEMEX and Weinberger. This will make WRS a provider of assured advice to two international companies with multiple sites and major investments in the UK, with work scheduled to commence on the 1st May 2018. A first for the minerals sector.

Food Safety

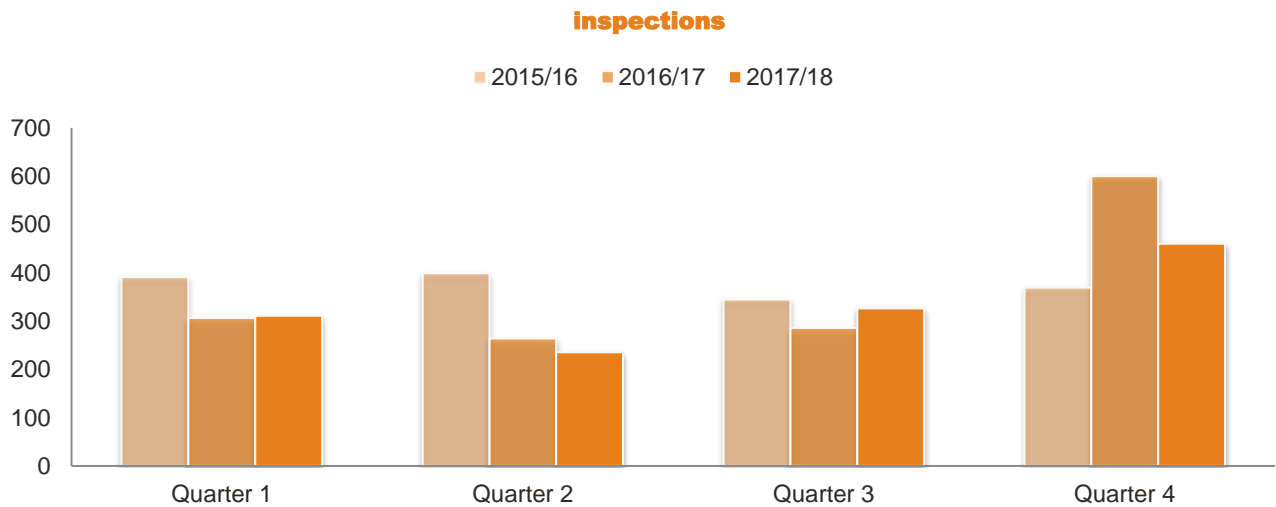
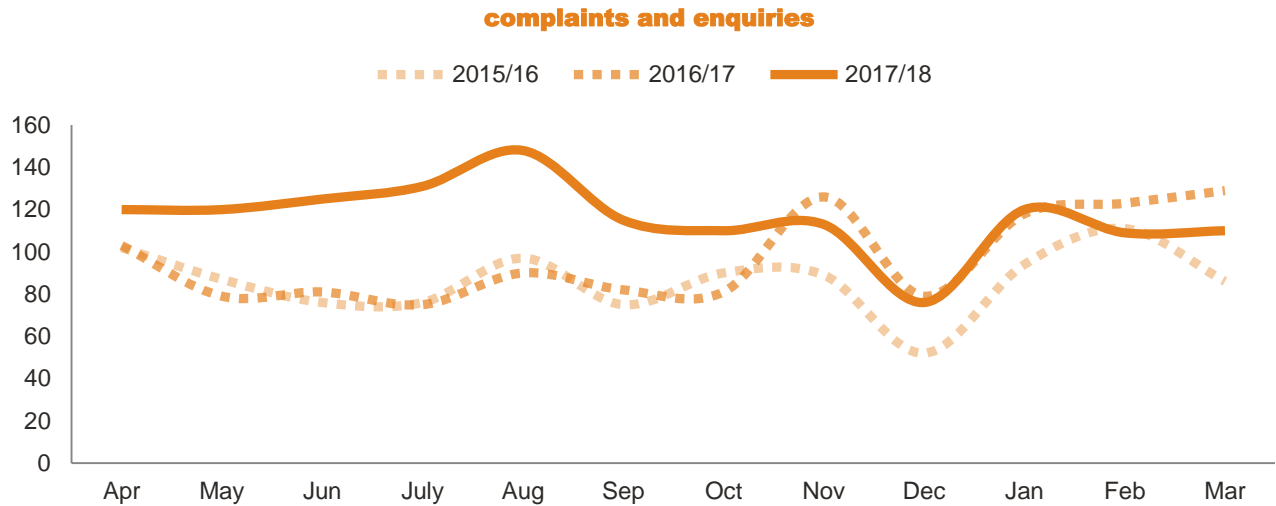
The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to food safety. Types of cases recorded under this category include hygiene of premises complaints, complaints about food products and requests for business advice. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of inspections carried out by WRS at premises included in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).

Comments

Following the spike in food safety and hygiene complaints in the first half of the year, numbers returned to those more typically expected during quarter four, though overall exceeding the numbers in previous years.

We retained the services of our temporary workers into quarter four to keep up with programmed food visits and continued to address those food businesses identified as being outstanding during our audit by the Food Standards Agency. This served to keep us on track and achieve our food interventions programme.

460 interventions were carried out in quarter four bringing total interventions to 1,332 across the county for the year. A high proportion (97.6%) of premises in all districts are broadly compliant, indicating that the vast majority of food businesses are well run. In addition all significant actions as reported following our Food Standards Agency audit have now been completed.



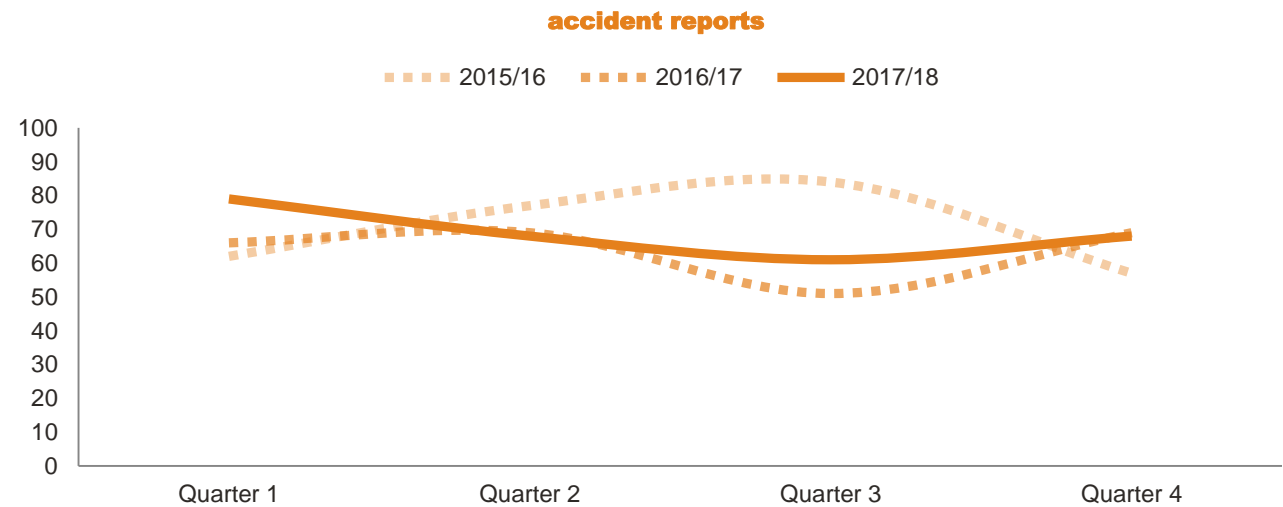
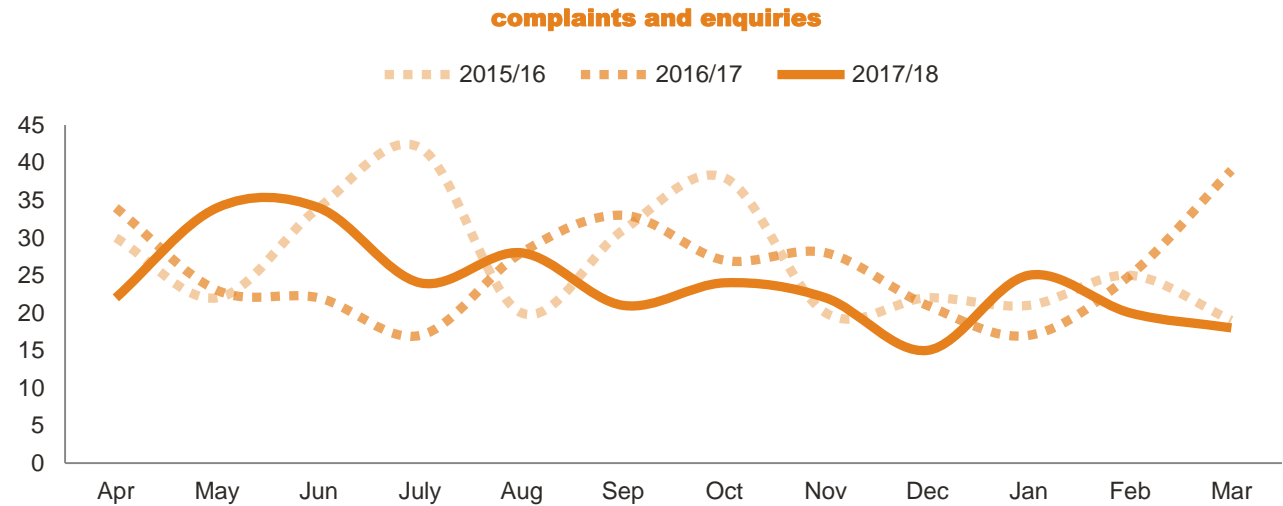
Health and Safety

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to health and safety. This includes requests for business advice. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of notifications received by WRS relating to accidents.

Comments

The number of complaints and enquiries rose in the fourth quarter but remained broadly in line with expectations based on previous years. Health and safety activity continues to be intelligence led and the high level of enforcement activity continues, with several formal actions pending. A fatality was successfully prosecuted in March in conjunction with the Crown Prosecution Service.

The number of accident reports increased from quarter three but overall these have remained at similar levels to 2016/17.

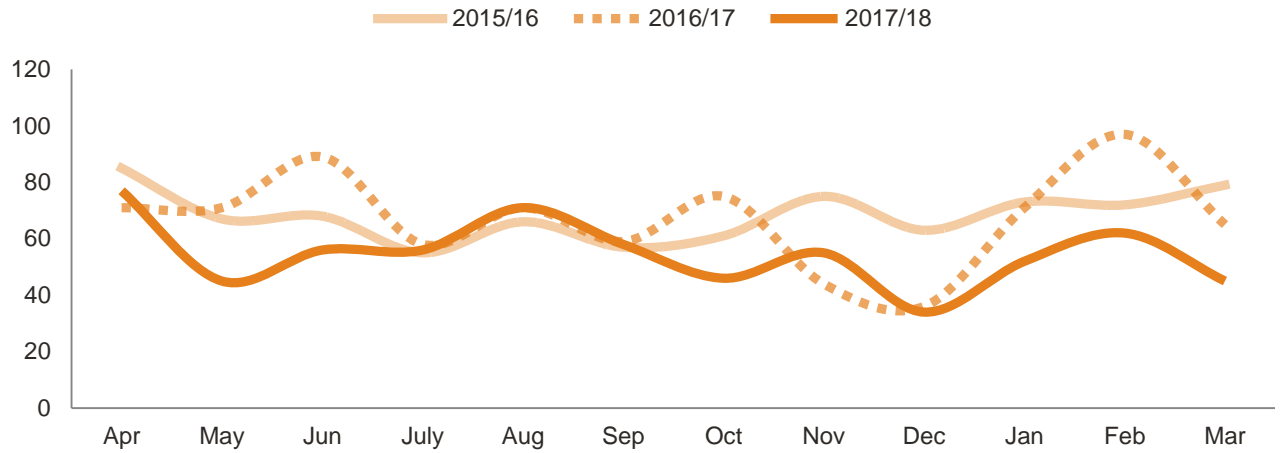


Information Requests

The chart (right) shows the number of information requests recorded by WRS over a three year period.

Information requests relate to the following:

- Environmental Information Requests
- Freedom of Information Requests
- Requests for information under the Data Protection Act 1998 (generally received from partner agencies)



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Comments

The usual winter lull in information requests was evident this year and the traditional increase will be experienced during quarter 4 followed, albeit at a level lower than in previous years. A programme of proactive publication of information has commenced based on routine FOI requests which is hoped will enable a reduction in partner authority requests but permit an increase in capacity to undertake additional commercial work in responding to requests for client organisations. Much work was also done during quarter 4 in relation to the new GDPR which came into force on 26th May. The Management ETam has been supported in this by the Host's Information

Licensing

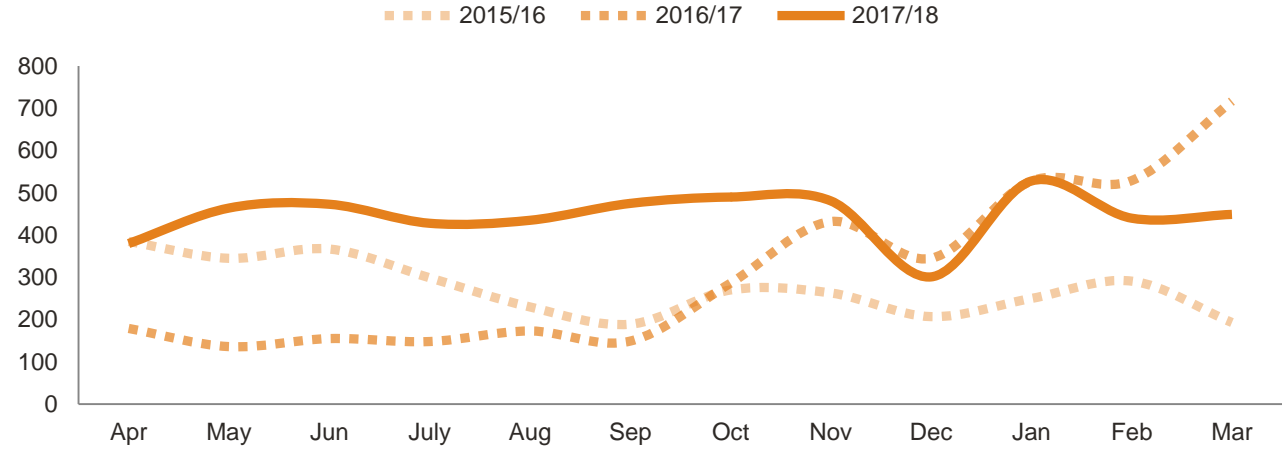
The chart (top right) shows the number complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to licensing. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of licensing applications.

Licensing complaints, enquiries and applications relate to the following:

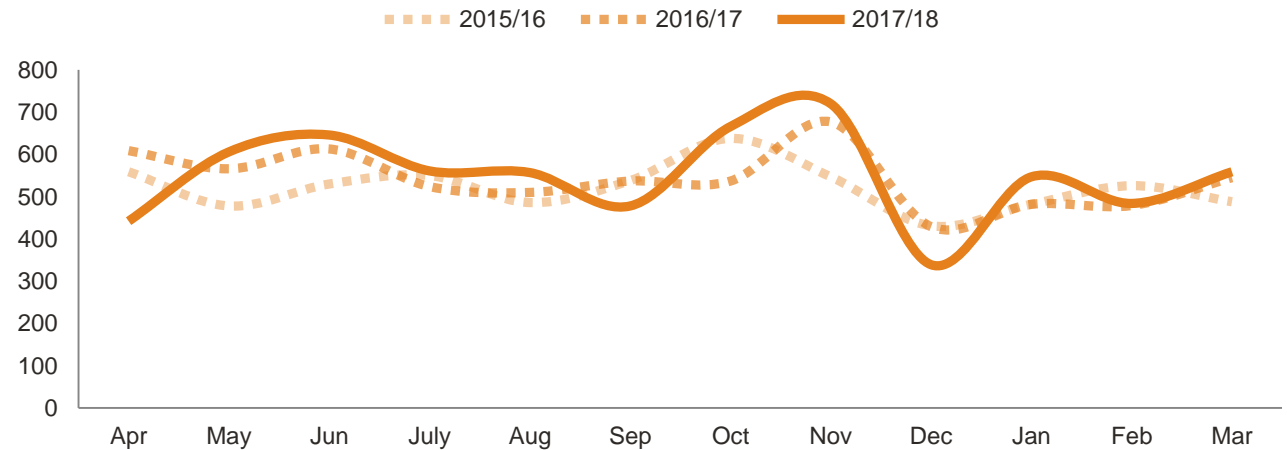
- Alcohol and entertainment
- Animals
- Caravans
- Gambling
- Scrap metal
- Sex establishments
- Skin piercing
- Street trading
- Taxis

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complaints and enquiries



applications



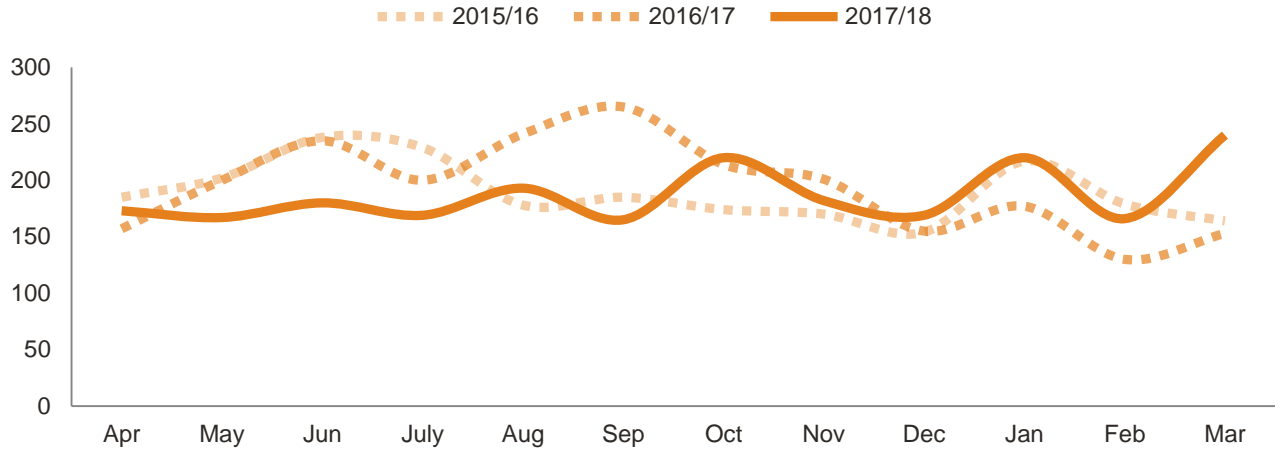
Agenda Item 8

Planning

The chart (right) shows the number of planning requests received by WRS over a three year period. The majority of these requests are consultations but can also include requests to discharge conditions.

Planning requests relate to the following:

- Air Quality
- Contaminated Land
- Environmental Permitting
- Food
- Health and Safety
- Nuisance / Noise



Comments

The number of planning cases referred to WRS has increased by 8.8% since the previous quarter with an overall increase of 3.6% compared with 2016 and 2017. Applications across the county have remained stable over the last 3 years with an overall average of 2282 cases per year. Equally planning consultation work for Gloucester City has remained the same as 2016-17 but an increase of 22% has been observed in Tewkesbury accounts for a overall increase of 4% in total application dealt with by the service in 2017-18.

WRS Draft SPD remains out for consultation with planning departments with positive responses received. It is envisaged that implementation will take some time dependant on each authorities process of adopting SPD's in relation to their strategic planning work.

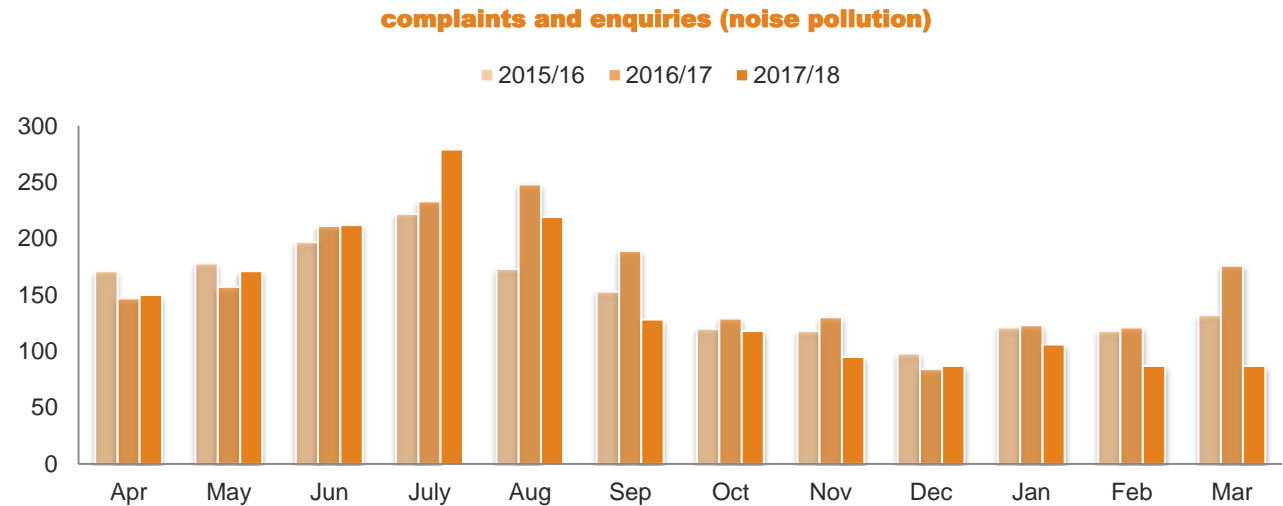
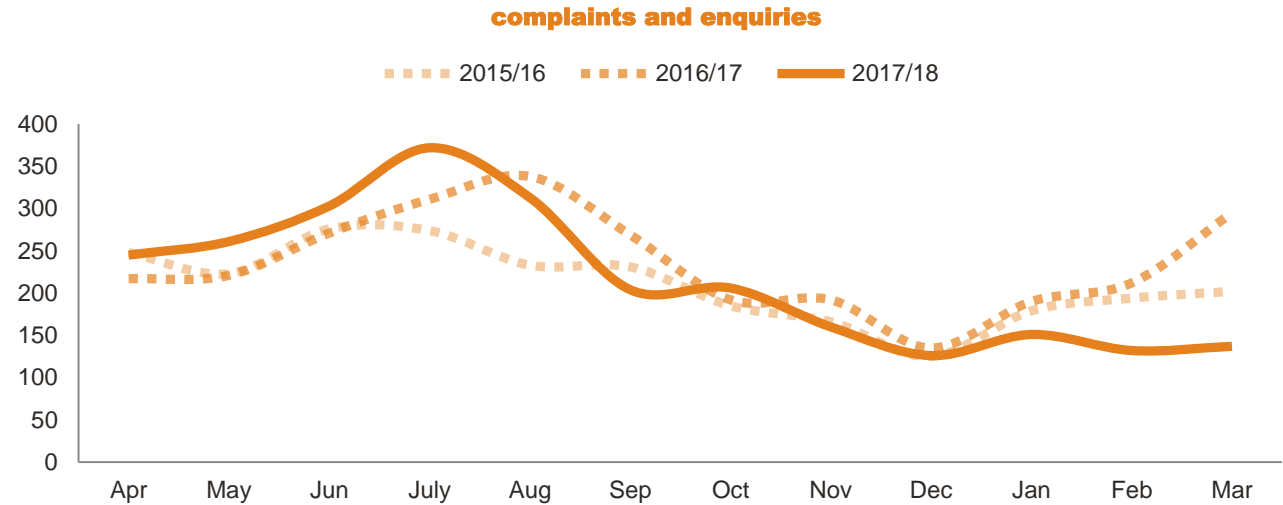
Pollution

The chart (right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to pollution. Types of cases recorded under this category include contamination incidents, air pollution (smoke, fumes and gases), light pollution and noise pollution. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries relating to noise pollution.

Comments

Overall for 2017/18 the pattern and volume of demand remained in accordance with expectations based on previous years. This pattern was mirrored in respect of complaints and enquiries specifically for noise nuisance.

377 nuisance cases were received during quarter four bringing the total for the financial year to 2,387 (covering light, noise, odour and smoke). Noise remains the most common issue raised with a demand of 280 for quarter 4 giving an annual number of 1,739.

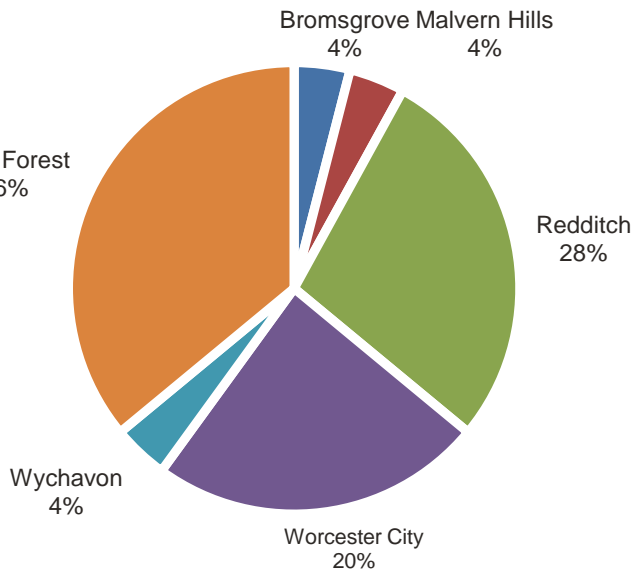


Noise Pollution

The table (right) shows the top 25 wards within Worcestershire with the highest number of noise pollution cases. Population and incident rates are also shown and reflect the recent boundary changes in Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest. The chart (left) shows the top 25 wards by district, for example, 20% of wards highlighted in the table are located within Worcester City.

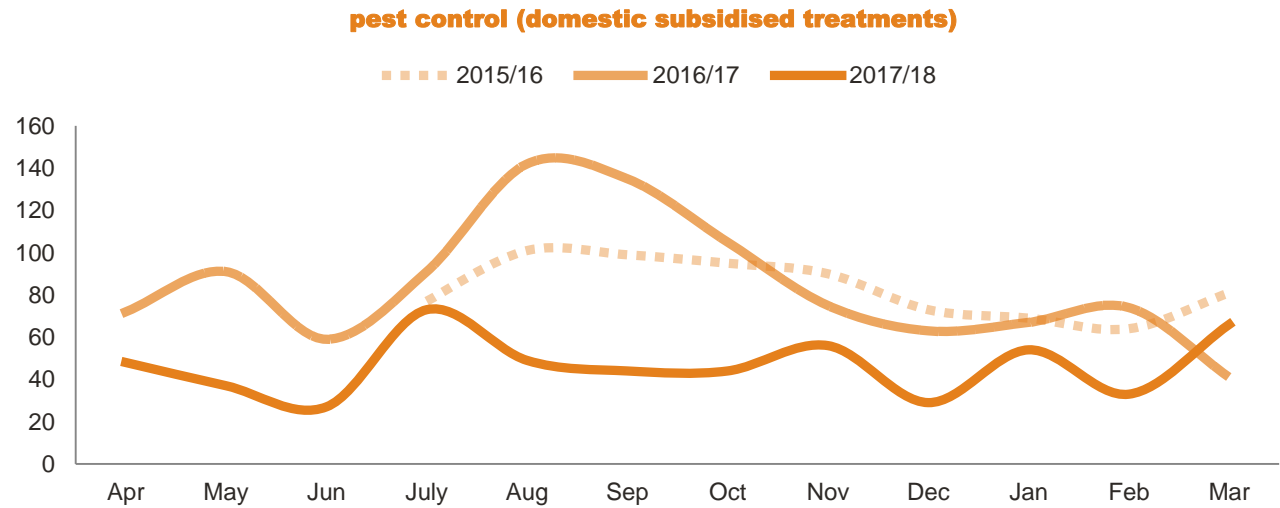
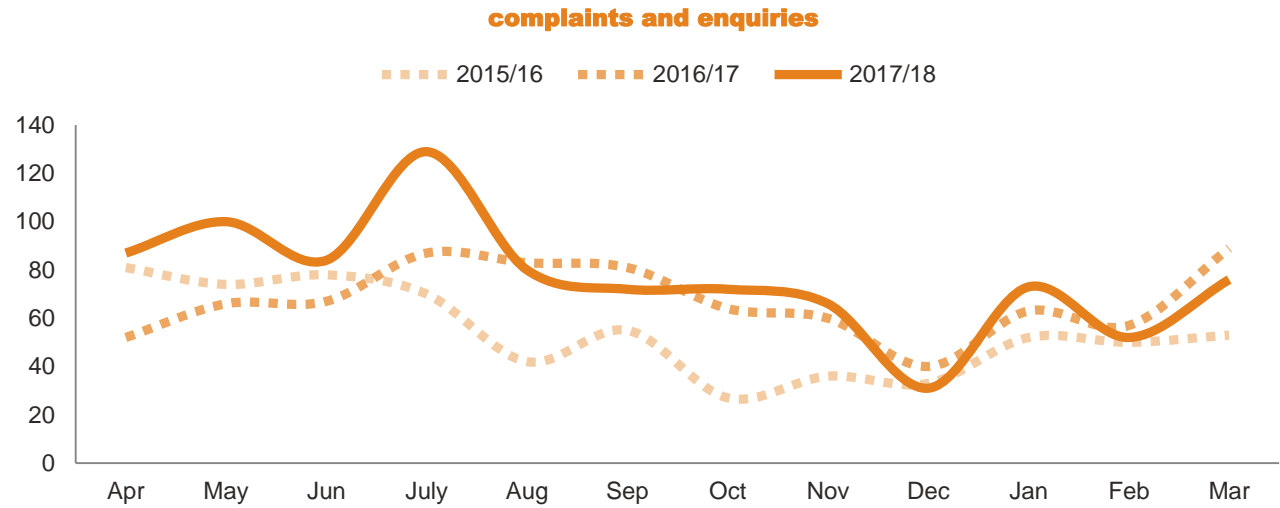
Ward	Total	Population	Rate (%)
Cathedral	45	10,835	0.42%
Greenlands	45	9,122	0.49%
Batchley And Brockhill	40	8,553	0.47%
Blakebrook And Habberley South	39	9,000	0.43%
Bedwardine	35	8,279	0.42%
Abbey	33	6,197	0.53%
Bewdley And Rock	31	8,542	0.36%
Mitton	27	9,752	0.28%
Nunnery	27	8,087	0.33%
Astwood Bank And Feckenham	27	6,042	0.45%
Foley Park And Hoobrook	25	9,914	0.25%
Broadwaters	25	9,108	0.27%
Areley Kings And Riverside	25	8,261	0.30%
Aggborough And Spennells	25	8,685	0.29%
Bengeworth	24	6,793	0.35%
Franche And Habberley North	23	9,783	0.24%
Warndon	23	5,934	0.39%
Arboretum	23	6,195	0.37%
Winyates	23	8,360	0.28%
Central (Redditch)	22	6,494	0.34%
Headless Cross And Oakenshaw	21	8,538	0.25%
Upton And Hanley	21	4,186	0.50%
Offmore And Comberton	17	9,695	0.18%
Saint Stephen	17	5,233	0.32%
Charford	17	3,707	0.46%

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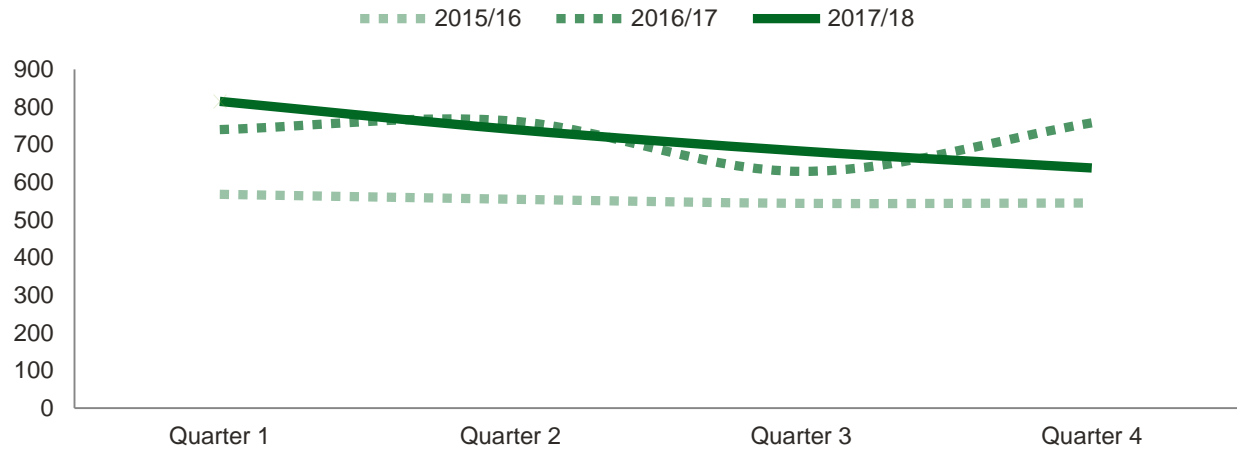
Public Health

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to public health. Types of cases recorded under this category include accumulations, public burials and pest control. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of subsidised pest control treatments have been carried out by contractors at domestic properties in four Worcestershire Districts (Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wychavon and Wyre Forest). Malvern Hills and Worcester City do not offer subsidised pest control service.

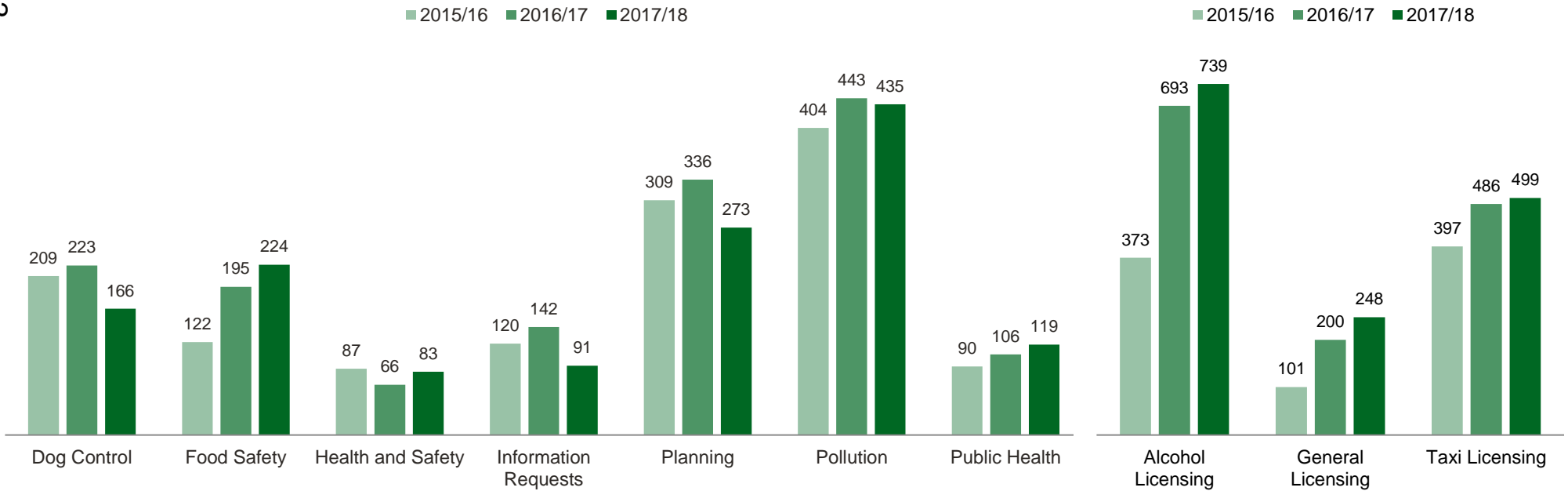




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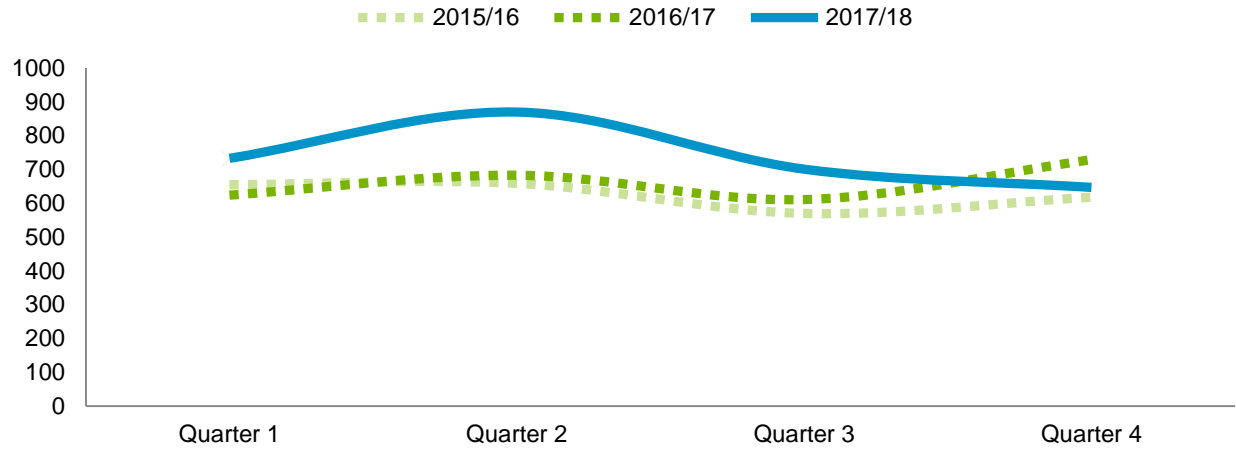


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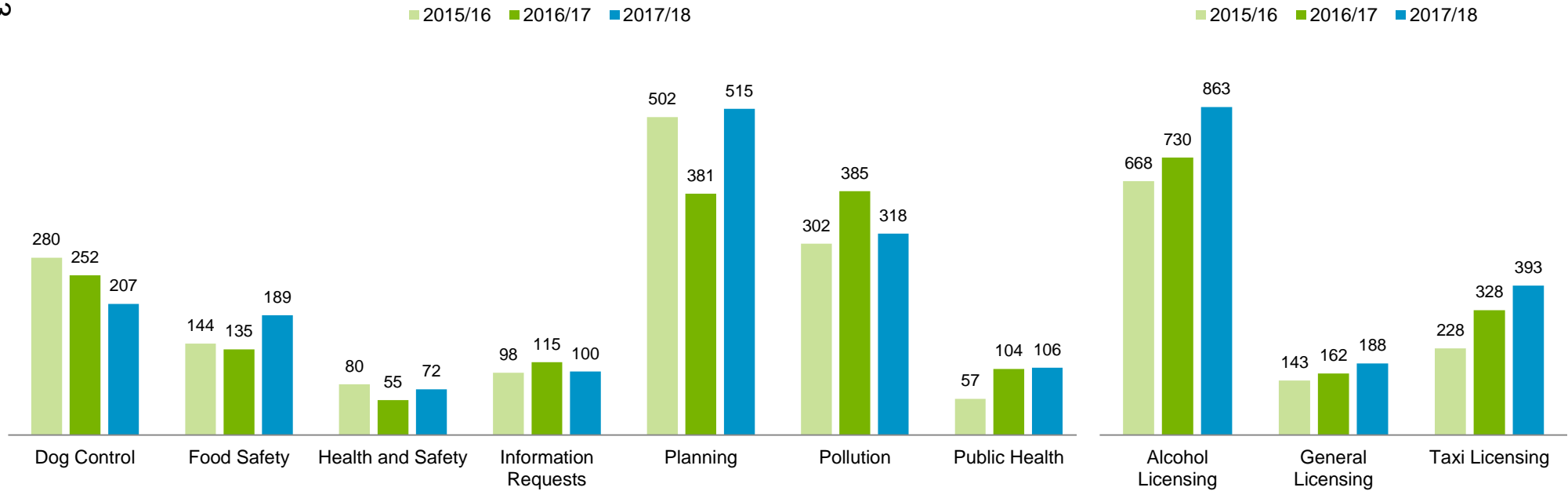


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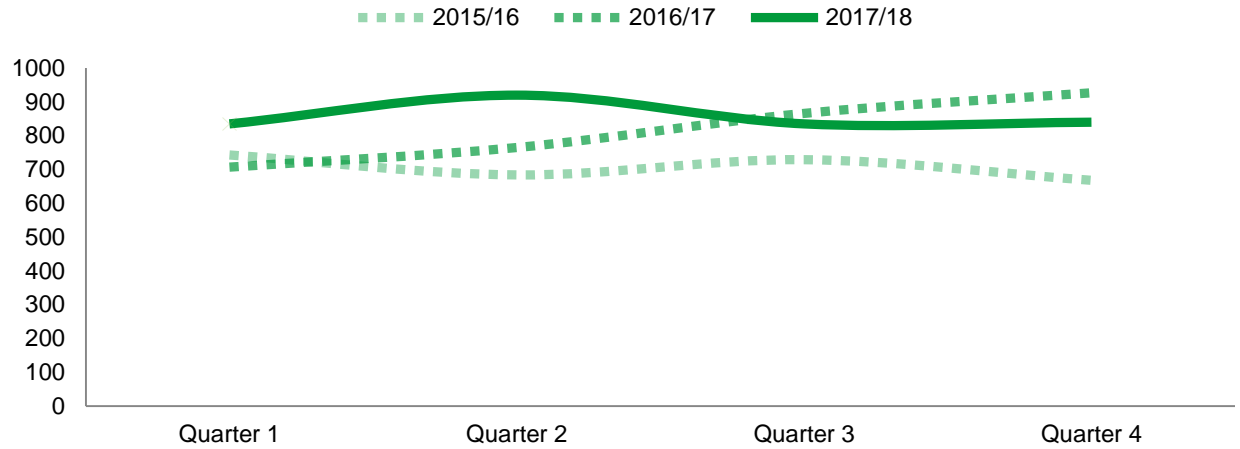


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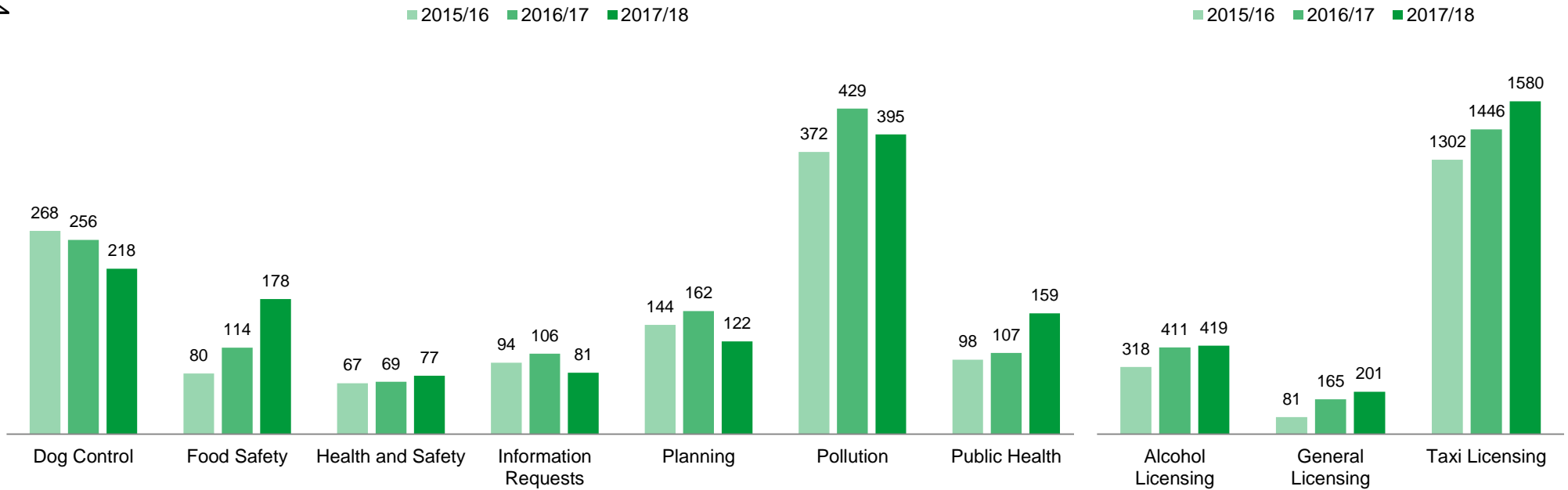


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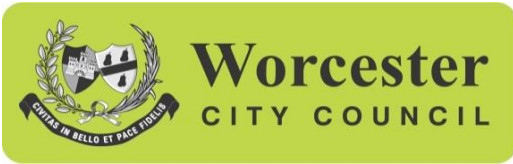
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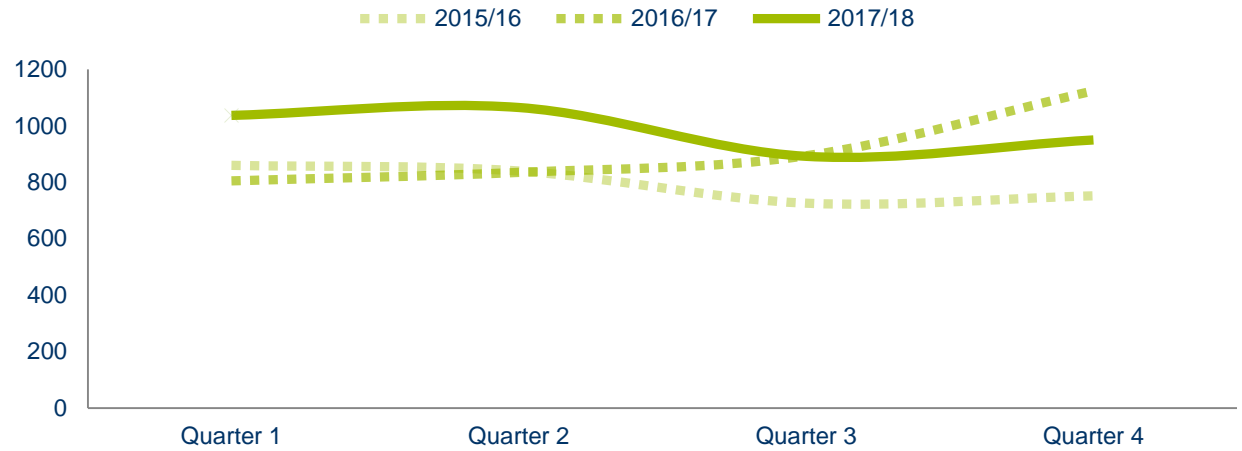
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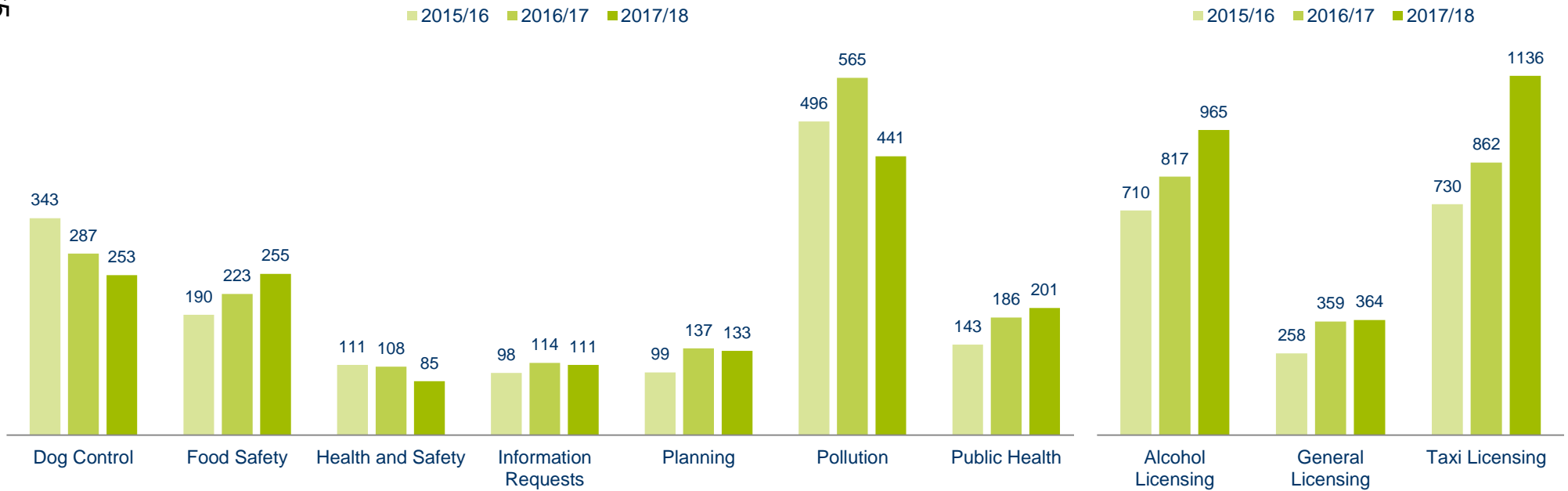
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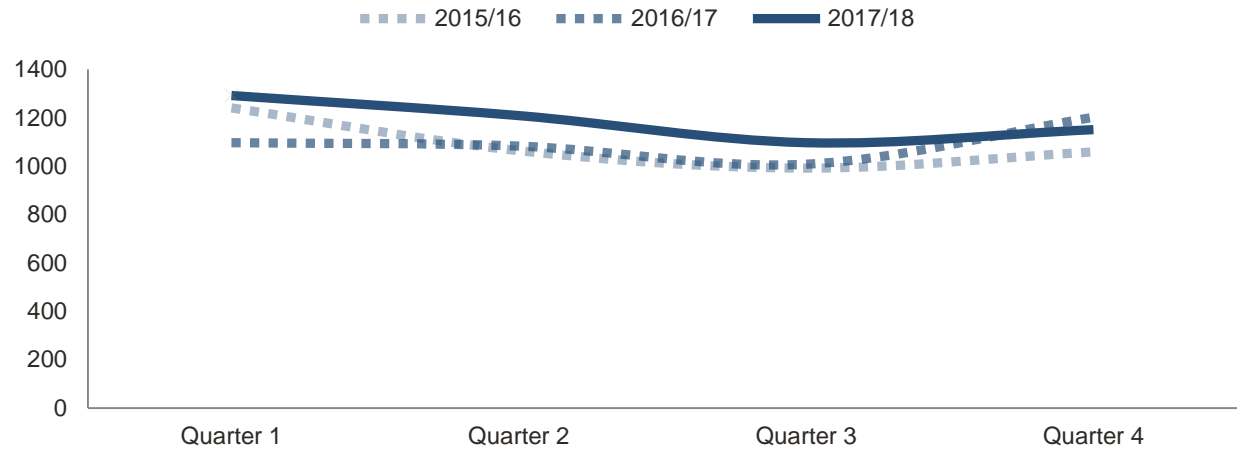


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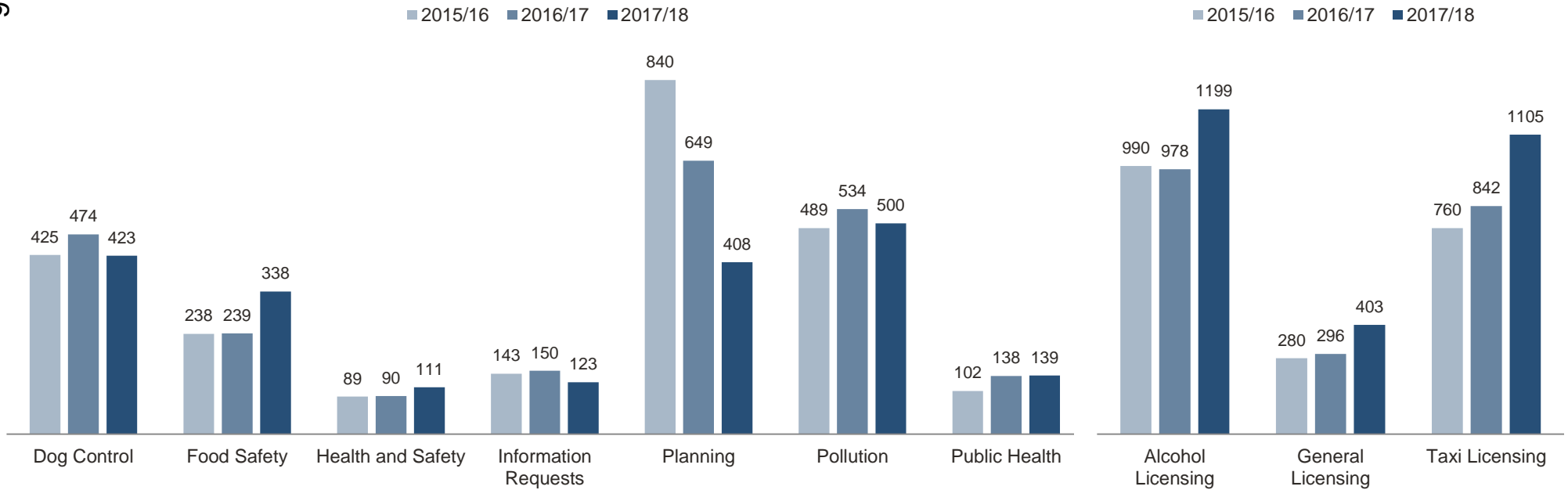


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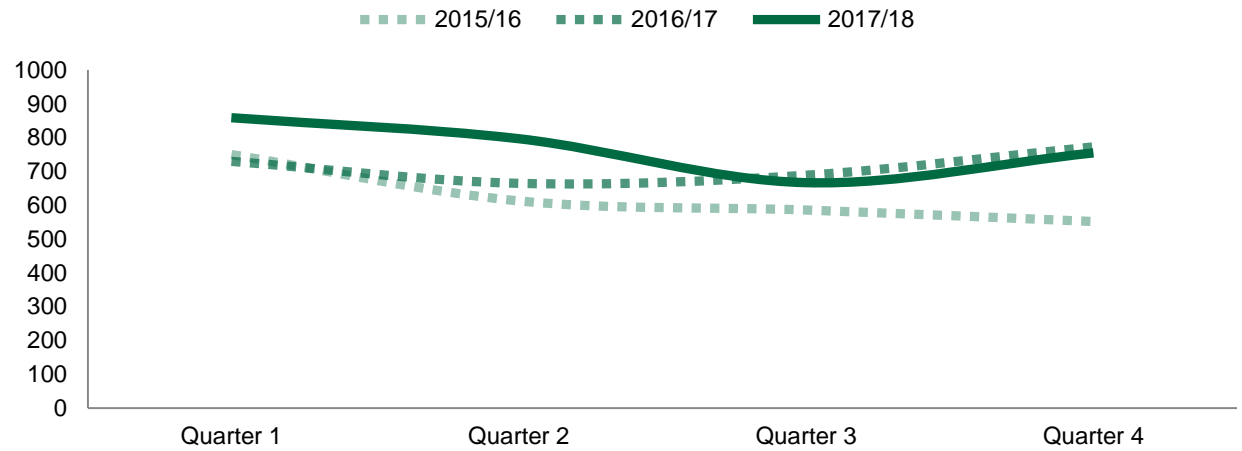


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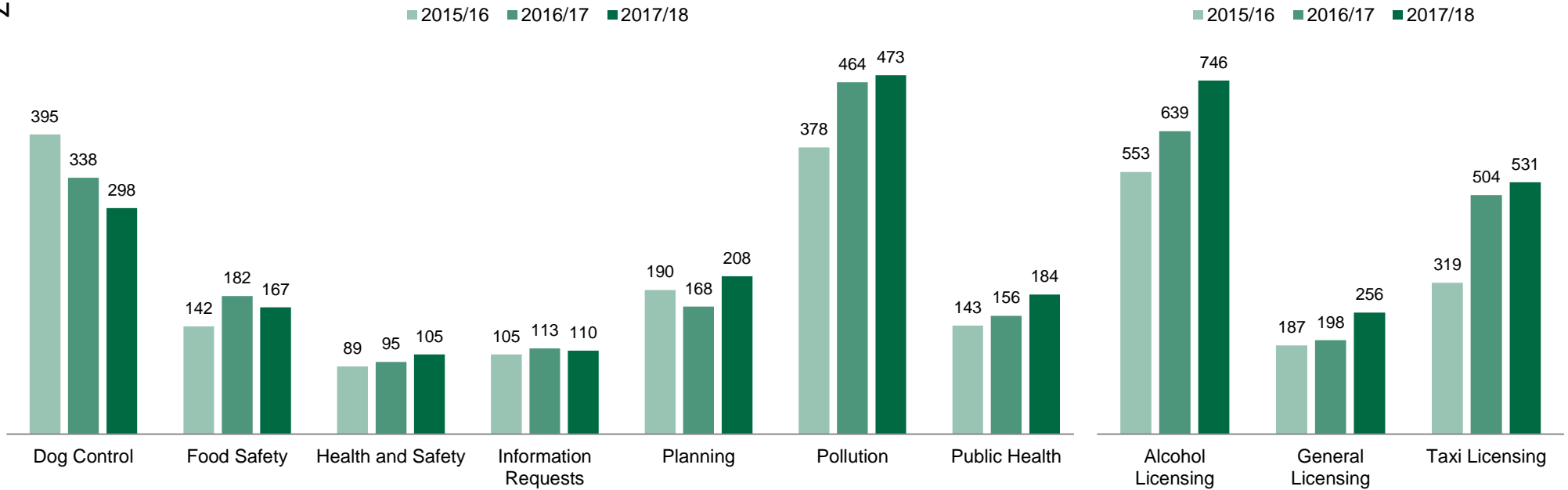


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Cheltenham Borough Council

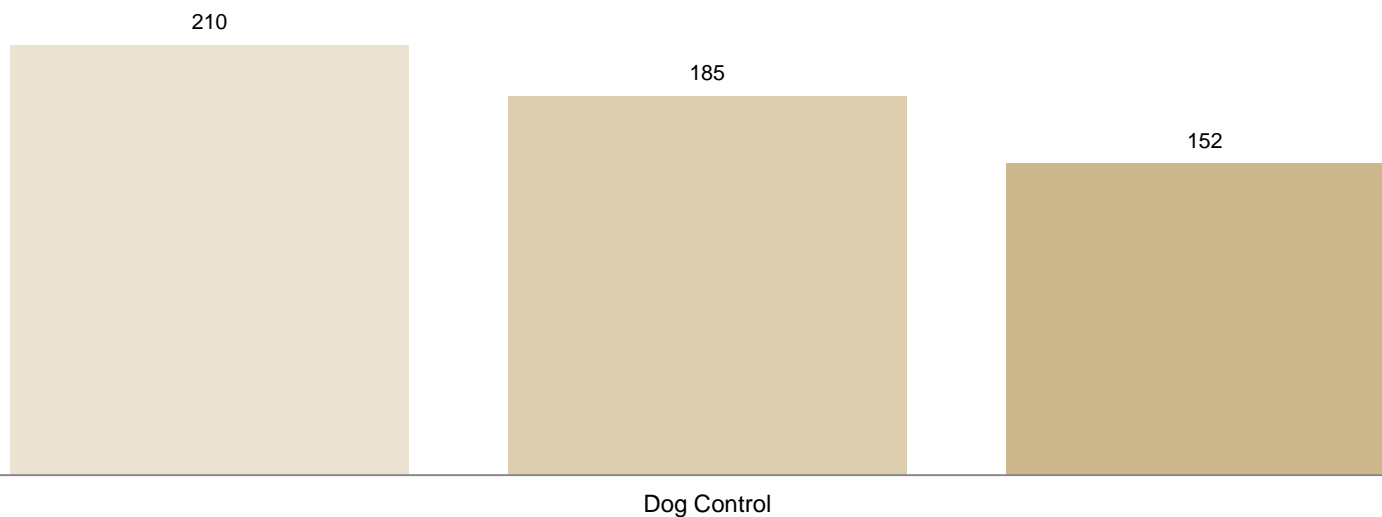


The dog control work WRS undertake for Cheltenham Borough Council is part of a three year contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities (from 2017) to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was renewed following delivery by WRS for the previous 3 years and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Cheltenham Borough Council, utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities.

The numbers of stray dogs are reducing annually as is consistent with trends in Worcestershire.

Note: The chart (below) show the total number of cases recorded against the function undertaken by WRS. Whilst the totals for 2015/16 and 2016/17 reflect the entire financial year, the total for 2017/18 is a 'year to date' figure and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.

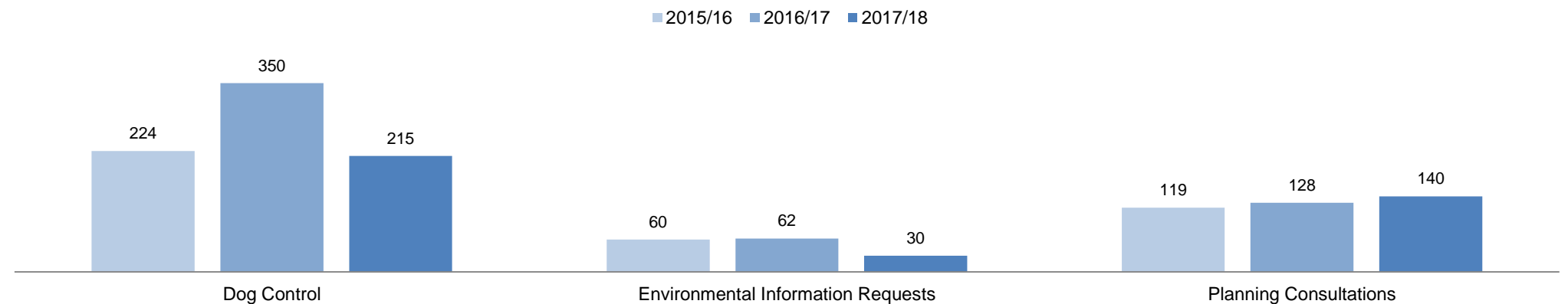
■ 2015/16 ■ 2016/17 ■ 2017/18



The dog control work WRS undertake for Gloucester City Council is part of a three year contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities (from 2017) to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was renewed following delivery by WRS for the previous 3 years and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Gloucester City Council, utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. As with other Gloucestershire and Worcestershire authorities the numbers of stray dogs are reducing annually. The number presented here shows the numbers in 2015/16 were particularly low. Gloucester City changed their procedures during that year whereas previously dogs were automatically returned to owners for free where the owner could be easily identified and found. Only where this could not be done were the dogs recorded as strays and passed to WRS (at which point are recorded by WRS). As suspected earlier in the year, the numbers of stray dogs for this year are lower than the 2016/17 high. It is believed that numbers will continue to drop as the message gets about that it costs to get your dog back if you let it stray and those owners who refused to pay had their dogs rehomed.

Whilst requests for advice on Planning Consultations (for Contaminated Land) were particularly low during quarter 2, figures recovered during quarters 3 and 4. In addition to the above, we also undertake some Environmental Permitting work for Gloucester that is part of their ongoing inspection programme. During this period WRS completed all the inspections due this year and provided full fee calculations for the coming financial year to Gloucester City for billing.

Note: The chart (below) show the total number of cases recorded against each of the functions undertaken by WRS. Whilst the totals for 2015/16 and 2016/17 reflect the entire financial year, the total for 2017/18 is a 'year to date' figure and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



South Gloucestershire Council

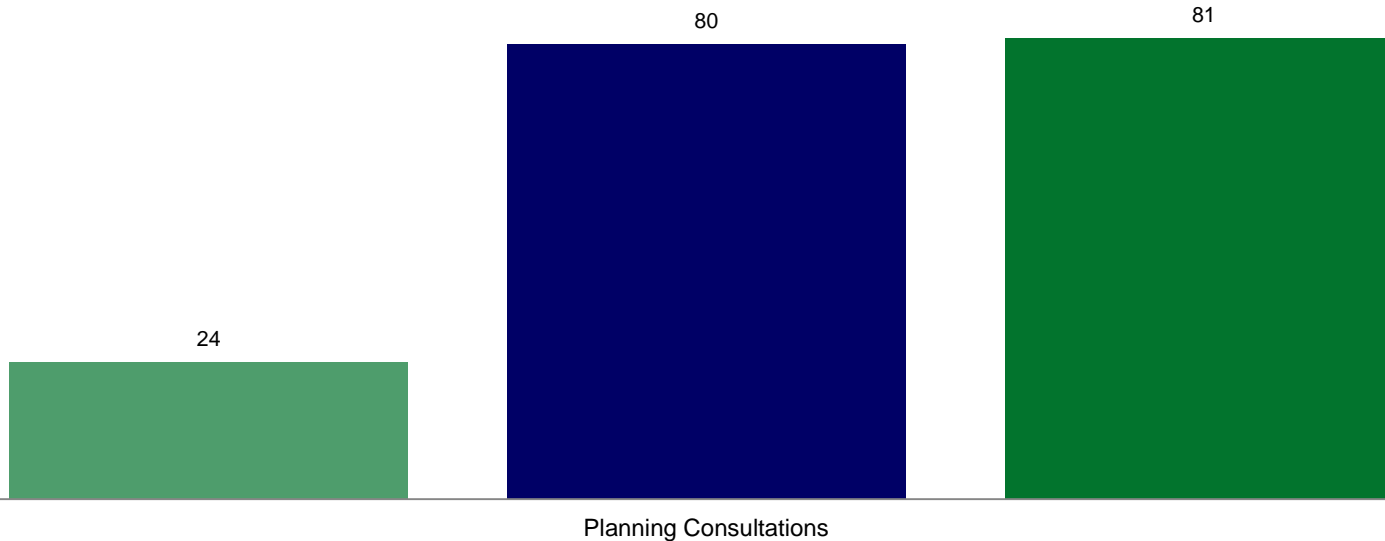


South Gloucestershire being located on the outskirts of Bristol was subject to significant contaminative industries and activities historically. Pressures on brownfield development recently have presented the authority with a large volume of planning applications on significantly contaminated and complex sites. For a number of years now WRS has been asked to assist with this work focusing on the complex sites, so whilst numbers of referrals remain low (and lower than last year) they continue to be time consuming and complex. The expertise the Partner Authorities pooled with the formation of WRS has enabled us to provide a high standard of service during this period. The figures below show a consistent level of assistance that WRS has provided to South Gloucestershire Council for the last two years.

Note: The chart (below) show the total number of cases recorded against the function undertaken by WRS. Whilst the totals for 2015/16 and 2016/17 reflect the entire financial year, the total for 2017/18 is a 'year to date' figure and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.

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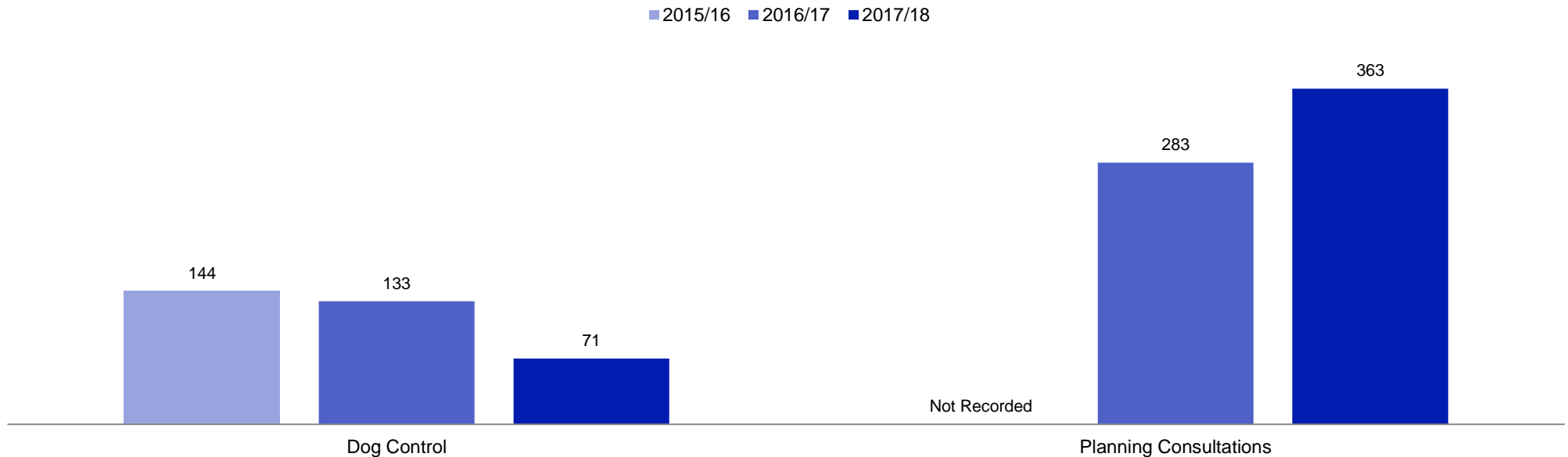
■ 2015/16 ■ 2016/17 ■ 2017/18



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The dog control work WRS undertake for Tewkesbury Borough Council is part of a three year contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities (from 2017) to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was renewed following delivery by WRS for the previous 3 years and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Tewkesbury Borough Council, utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. As predicted, the number of dogs collected or reported as strays are significantly lower than previous years. This follows the national trend in dogs being reported to Dog Wardens as discussed previously. The number of planning applications that WRS are requested to provide nuisance or air quality advice on continue to be high. The increase in consultations made to WRS demonstrates the importance that Tewkesbury place on our role with this work.

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Note: The chart (below) show the total number of cases recorded against each of the functions undertaken by WRS. Whilst the totals for 2015/16 and 2016/17 reflect the entire financial year, the total for 2017/18 is a 'year to date' figure and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



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Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Supporting and protecting you

WRS BOARD 21st June 2018

WRS Staff Survey Results

Recommendation

That members note the report

Introduction

Historically one of the performance indicators reported to members has been the satisfaction of staff working at WRS. This has previously been generated by an in-house survey and has yielded various results over the years but has generally shown reasonable levels of satisfaction with working for the organisation. The internal survey has also helped us to identify a number of ways to support staff in certain areas, by responding to feedback in the survey where it was appropriate.

This year, Redditch and Bromsgrove chose to employ an external consultancy (Martin Reddington Associates,) to undertake its staff survey and the Chief Executive offered WRS the facility as the staff are all Bromsgrove employees. The Head of Service at WRS felt that this would be an opportunity to try something different and to get a professional analysis of the results. The service had limited influence over the questions being asked as there is a set framework that the consultancy uses. Hence, one cannot directly compare these results with previous ones. However, having an independent review ensures no unintended bias in the results can be reported, so on balance it was felt that this exercise could helpfully replace the normal performance indicator at least for this year.

Report

The framework used by the consultancy is called The Employment Deal Diagnostic (TEDD,) and treats the relationship between the employee and employer as a transaction or deal. The consultant states in their report that:

“The following results show employees’ perception of various elements that play a part in the employment deal. These cover:

- the balance of the employment deal for the organisation as a whole and for Worcestershire Regulatory Services,
- the quality of the conversations that are taking place for the



organisation as a whole and between managers and individuals. The report also highlights the way in which employees describe the organisation in their own words.”

From the results, the report aims to help managers identify potential ways to improve the relationship, which should yield improvements in performance.

The consultancy’s review model focused on 6 areas with each aspect of the model being scored and rated Red, Yellow or Green, with the scores/ colours defined as:

- (50 or less) Red: Relatively poor score/outcome – a clear signal to take steps to improve
- (51–74) Yellow: Moderate score/outcome – capable of improvement
- (75 +) Green: Good score/outcome to be celebrated

The six aspects covered in the questionnaires are outlined below with their actual colour rating and score:

- The Balance of the Deal (Yellow score, -16,)
- Conversation Practice (Yellow score, 72,)
- Workplace Tensions (Yellow score, 66,)
- Job Pressure (Yellow score, 72,)
- Organisational Personality (Green score, 47.*)
- Overall Satisfaction (Yellow score, 59)

*NB: for the Organisational Personality score in relation to how directive the organisation is, low was deemed good, hence for this aspect the score below 50 is a positive thing.

Interpretation

1. Balance of the Deal

This looks to balance off the Employer’s contribution to the relationship (employee’s psychological contract with the employer, organisational support offered,) as perceived by staff against the Employees contribution (engagement with their job, perceived capability, engagement with the organisation.) A score of -16 suggests a slight bias in favour of the employer and provides a good basis on which to build. The analyst clearly indicates that excessive positive or negative scores need to be avoided as both lead to inefficiency and increases in cost. The score for WRS suggests that some improvements on the employer side may need to be offered to provide slightly more balance. Options to support this are discussed further in this report with a focus on staff perceptions of resources and line manager support.

2. Conversation Practice

Conversational practice scores for WRS are at the high end of the moderate range. This suggests that, generally, WRS staff are engaging in good, high quality and performance-focused conversations with their line managers, which provide solutions to their normal



problems in the workplace.

Comments would suggest, however, that this is not a universal finding, so steps will need to be taken to improve performance where this is not happening. Hence, more focus on the line manager relationship will be needed as this can help to enhance these scores going forward. This aspect has been discussed within the Management Team and noted, with Senior Practitioners and Managers accepting that they need to find ways of being more available to staff where and when support is necessary. The analysis indicates that it is also the quality of interactions that matters, so some focus also needs to be made on helping to find practical solutions with staff.

Whilst we want to avoid a culture of “presenteeism,” we do need to ensure staff feel they have someone to speak to when issues arise and that they will feel they have support in resolving them. With this in mind, it may be that staff need to accept that a telephone conversation with their manager may need to be the short term fix to a problem ahead of a longer face to face discussion at a later date.

3. Workplace Tensions

The analyst indicates that, in this survey, the tension of having to do “more-with-less” is expressed via comments regarding the disparity between customer demands or expectations and the reality of what can be delivered with the available resources. The score is toward the higher end of the moderate range, suggesting that this tension is challenging and if allowed to rise unchecked could lead to harmful effects on wellbeing and performance. Examples quoted by the staff include:

“The biggest tensions are often linked to the debate on whether the service has sufficient resources or whether we need to change our approach to the day job,” and

“Demand exceeding (reduced) capacity.”

This highlights the capacity issues that we have raised with members and officers of the Board before. The positive response of allowing managers to re-invest income and of invest-to-save recruitments, where income is likely to support additional posts in the medium term, should help to hold these tensions or hopefully reduce them.

4. Job Pressure

The analyst accepts that job pressure can make a positive contribution towards performance levels and that it can help to maintain motivation and inspire employees to be innovative in the face of challenges. The job pressure score is currently at the upper end of the moderate range. The analyst raises concerns that increasing job pressure may begin to manifest itself in a number of negative ways with the potential for performance to deteriorate. They state that this is already evident in



some of the data with the following quote being a not uncommon sentiment,

“...pressure of an ever-increasing workload and the daily feelings of being unable to cope”.

The analyst recommends that management finds a way to demonstrate its recognition of the intense pressure staff experience. Given that managers are already aware of this and do tell staff routinely that we understand, it is difficult to see beyond further communication, what can be done to ease this pressure. The use of invest to save approaches bringing in additional capacity may help ease this tension as well as the workplace tensions mentioned above.

5. Organisational Personality

This has been given a green by the analysis, particularly in relation to the organisation not being overly directive hence giving staff the space to act in a professional manner.

Other descriptions of the service such as conversational, innovative, capable, trustworthy and supportive are all scoring in the moderate range (60-68,) matching other aspects of the profile. This is positive and should help to identify areas to improve the collective communication between managers and staff.

6. Satisfaction

This is the perceived measure of the score for the Employer contribution in the “balance of the deal.” At 59, it is one of the lower scores. In relation to the first element of this (the Psychological Contract,) the analysis suggests that staff’s role autonomy (i.e. their ability to make decisions for themselves,) is making a positive contribution to this score, however, further work needs to be done on what it describes as the perceived “obligations and promises” from the employer and also there appears to be significant variance in reported perceptions of line manager relationships.

For the first area (obligations and promises,) they talk about IT equipment and other materials to do the job, yet the quote they cite from staff (“Increasing demands from partner councils and insufficient resources available to properly meet these,”) almost certainly relates to staffing resources. There has seldom been a time where we have decided not to purchase materials or equipment to support staff in their work. Hopefully the invest-to-save approach to new staff capacity already mentioned and an increased recognition of the pressure staff are under will begin to improve this.

The variation in line manager performance is more concerning and will be discussed in more detail by the management team going forward at their monthly meetings. We will look to ensure all staff feel supported and this has already been included in the PDRs for all managers and Senior Practitioners.



Key Drivers to Performance

In the final part of the report, the analyst uses a statistical technique known as Key Driver Analysis (KDA) to help focus on those features of the employment relationship that have the greatest impact on how employees contribute at work. The analyst identifies the specific questions from the questionnaires relating to these aspects and the free text comments made by officers in relation to them.

These scores are all in the moderate zone (61-73,) which the analyst regards as very positive given the impacts of change that the staff have been through over the years since the service was created and the levels of associated resource changes. It does, however, highlight the risk that further falls in these scores are likely to be reflected in worsening performance and increasing sickness levels.

Some positive steps have been identified already in this report that may improve scores in these areas. Ironically given that Systems Thinking has led to a significant reduction in the numbers of process control systems, the lowest score in this section related to the question "Compliance with internal procedures often makes it difficult to do things better." We will look at this going forward as to whether it is the processes or the lack of detailed guidance that officers find a hindrance.

Conclusion

The survey was undertaken by over 50% of the staff, so whilst it is below the level that we would like, it is likely to be representative of both experience and feelings across the service. The analyst has provided independent evidence to support the assertions made by managers around the impacts of current workloads on staff. It suggests that whilst performance is probably currently good, there are signs that further pressures and the lack of recognition of the existing pressures may result in a worsening of performance in the future.

Having said this, the report remains positive and the scores are mainly in the moderate range (60-74,) indicating that work can be done to improve things. Some of the suggested responses from managers include:

- Recognition by managers and partners of the pressures on staff and their positive performance in the circumstances,
- The use where possible of steps to reduce those pressures or at least to not add to them by following invest-to-save principles rather than assuming more can be done with less or the same,
- Continuing to review processes to ensure that they provide the right supporting mechanisms and do not hinder performance.
- Continuing to review processes for marginal efficiencies that can reduce the burdens on staff,



- Ensuring managers are available in the right way and at the times when their staff need support,
- Improving the engagement of managers with their staff and the performance of some in relation to the focus of their conversations around performance,

These steps would begin to demonstrate to staff that partners (including their employing authority,) appreciate the pressures they are under and are taking what steps they can in the current financial climate to support them. At the same time, managers and Senior Practitioners need to find ways to enhance the day to day support of staff and provide systems that will help to reduce the feeling of pressure created by workloads that are well beyond the historical experience of those working in these professions.

Financial Implications

Whilst there are no specific financial implications, the report does highlight that reduced performance inevitably leads to greater costs on the organisation and from there to the partners.

Sustainability

The report suggests that its methodology helps to identify staffing issues that might impact on the sustainability of services. Whilst it is currently on a sustainable footing, the pressures identified have the potential to undermine some aspects of service delivery and risk the long-term sustainability of the service.

Contact Points

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01562-738088

Background Papers

Appendix 1: Martin Reddington Associates Report on WRS





The Employment Deal



**Worcestershire Regulatory
Services
2017
Feedback Report**



Examining the expectations and beliefs of the workforce about their employment relationship

About this report

This feedback report is based on your employees' responses to The Employment Deal Diagnostic (TEDD®) survey they took part in during the period 06 to 30 November 2017. The results are set out based on the TEDD® model as described on pages 6 and 7.

This survey shines a light on workforce performance by measuring the 'deal' between Worcestershire Regulatory Services and their employees. Think of it as both parties making *contributions* in a number of ways that reflect the quality of the relationship between employer and employee.

The following results show employees' perception of various elements that play a part in the employment deal. These cover:

- the balance of the employment deal for the organisation as a whole and for Worcestershire Regulatory Services
- the quality of the conversations that are taking place for the organisation as a whole and between managers and individuals
- you will also see words used by staff in Worcestershire Regulatory Services to describe the organisation

The results illustrate the *performance recipes* that underpin workforce performance and provide opportunities for *conversations for change* to make improvements.

Executive Summary

This page provides an overview of some key metrics drawn from the report.

Key: **Sustain:** Good score/outcome to be celebrated (75 +)

Monitor: Moderate score/outcome – capable of improvement (51 – 74)

Improve: Relatively poor score/outcome – a clear signal to take steps to improve (50 or less)

OVERALL MEASURES

Response Rate: 37 employees responded to the survey, representing 52% of those invited to respond

- **Balance of the Deal** – perceived fairness and value of the employment deal (-16)
- **Overall Satisfaction** with the employment deal (59)
- **Conversational Practice** – quality of conversations to find solutions to workplace challenges and get things done (72)
- **Workplace Tensions** – competing challenges in the workplace, such as *more-with-less* (66)
- **Job Pressure** – perceived excessive pressure in the workplace (72)
- **Organisation Personality** – strongest disposition is *Directive* (47)

KEY DRIVERS

These are identified as the elements of the employment deal that are most important to employees. Three major themes emerged for WRS:

Theme 1: Psychological contract (PC)

This highlighted the importance of trust in the line manager, flexible working practices and having access to adequate tools and resources.

Theme 2: Job Pressure

This highlighted the importance of recognising the pressures that staff face in the knowledge that if levels rise unchecked, it will lead to a fall in employee contribution and associated issues such as rising sickness absence.

Theme 3: Workplace Tensions

Linked to theme 2, this highlights the challenge between expectations and the reality of what can actually be delivered with the available resources. At present, staff are responding positively to it, but it should not be allowed to rise unchecked.

KEY THEMES

Increasingly organisations rely on good will and high levels of motivation and performance from staff, in terms of ‘going the extra mile’ and ‘engagement’ with organisational objectives and values.

In this context, trust, reciprocity and the overall quality of social exchange relationships are becoming increasingly important features of the employment deal.

The evidence set out in this report provides an opportunity for Worcestershire Regulatory Services to undertake *conversations for change* in relation to how it can improve the perceived balance of the deal and quality of conversational practice across the organisation, in the knowledge that this will support sustainable employee contributions. Three key themes emerged from the evidence.

Theme 1: Psychological contract

The psychological contract is a defining feature of the relationship between an employee and employer. It constitutes a set of obligations and promises between the two parties. Three facets of the psychological contract were found to have the biggest impact on employee contribution at WRS:

❖ Role autonomy

This captures the extent to which employees feel they have power to shape their working practices in order to achieve their performance targets. Free text comments provide evidence of this through references to “*flexible working*” and the sense of ‘*freedom to plan one's own work schedule*’

❖ Obligations and Promises

The quality of the employment relationship is shaped by the reliable delivery of obligations and promises by the employer. For example, the expectation that as an employee you will have access to equipment, tools and IT systems essential to one’s job role. An emergent theme in the narrative analysis as well as being a key driver of employee performance is the perception of inadequate tools/equipment amongst employees. The comment below demonstrates how insufficient resources is undermining performance objectives.

Increasing demands from partner councils and insufficient resources available to properly meet these

❖ Trust in line manager

Line managers are central agents in providing trust-worthy leadership. Trust promotes openness and enables employees to feel secure and confident to share ideas for creative problem solving. There is a great difference in attitude and sentiment between those employees working with trusting and supportive managers and those who are not. This can be seen in the positive comments for example, *'I have a very good working relationship with my manager' and 'very approachable to discuss operational tasks'*. Those with more problematic line managers draw attention to the disconnect and lack of trust in the relationship for example:

Managers disinterest in the feelings of their staff

Would be nice to see my line manager but oh ... never in or working from home....

Theme 2: Job Pressure

Job pressure can make a positive contribution towards performance levels. It can help to maintain motivation and inspire employees to be innovative in the face of challenges. At the moment job pressure is in the upper end of the moderate range (72) - nonetheless, if job pressure continues to grow, it can begin to manifest itself in a number of negative ways. Eventually performance levels will deteriorate. This is already evident in some of the data, for example, *'pressure of an ever-increasing workload and the daily feelings of being unable to cope'*. A recognition of the intense pressure staff experience is highly recommended.

Theme 3: Workplace Tensions

Working under the climate of austerity means employees are being required more and more to negotiate a number of tensions including shortages of resources, staff cuts, increased volume of work, but at the same time having to deliver similar or improved levels of service to the pre-austerity era. In this survey, the *more-with-less tension* expressed via comments regarding the disparity between customer demands, expectations and the reality of what can be delivered with the available resources is toward the higher end of the moderate range. This tension is challenging and if allowed to rise unchecked could lead to harmful effects on wellbeing and performance. Examples include:

The biggest tensions are often linked to the debate on whether the service has sufficient resources or whether we need to change our approach to the day job

Demand exceeding (reduced) capacity

TEDD® - The Balance of the Deal'©

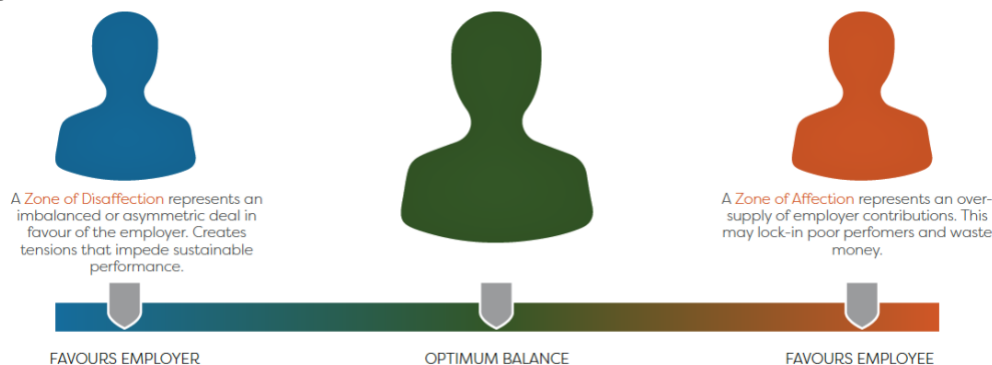
TEDD® (The Employment Deal Diagnostic) is about understanding engagement as a process and not as a fixed state. New research stresses that engagement is encouraged and experienced through the employment relationship. A high-quality employment deal is one where there is a balanced, reciprocal exchange of contributions. Our representation of the employment deal is shown in figure 1. The features associated with both employer and employee contributions are used to assess the value and fairness of the deal in the eyes of the workforce. The definitions of the various elements can be found in the Glossary of Terms at the end of the report.

Figure 1 – The Employment Deal



The extent to which an employment deal is perceived to be balanced or imbalanced has significant ramifications for sustainability – see figure 2.

Figure 2 – The Balance of the Deal



We find this balance is often weighted in favour of the employer, which shows as a negative 'score' in our analysis. The index scores associated with the elements of the Balance of the Deal for Worcestershire Regulatory Services are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Balance of the Deal compared by Service Area	Psychological Contract	Perceived Organisational Support	Employer Contribution	Job engagement	Capability	Organisational Engagement	Employee Contribution	Balance of the Deal	Satisfaction	Number of Responses
All Bromsgrove & Redditch & WRS	55	54	54	82	77	71	77	-23	59	465
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	58	59	59	78	76	70	75	-16	59	37

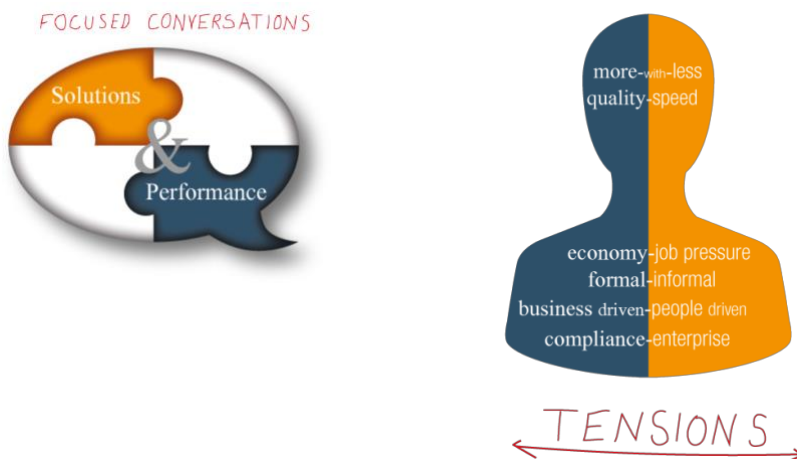
Key: **Sustain:** Good score/outcome to be celebrated (75 +) **Monitor:** Moderate score/outcome – capable of improvement (51 – 74) **Improve:** Relatively poor score/outcome – a clear signal to take steps to improve (50 or less)

The balance of the deal results for WRS reveal less asymmetry or imbalance when compared with the overall Bromsgrove & Redditch scores. A balance of -16 is encouraging and suggests the employment relationship is not in a distressed state, but rather a good platform to build on. In particular, the perception of the employer contribution at WRS is significantly better than for Bromsgrove & Redditch as a whole.

Bringing ‘the deal’ to life (Conversational Practice)

The TEDD® model views the organisation as a ‘conversational arena’, recognising the importance of day-to-day conversations between managers and their teams in managing performance. Such conversations can be viewed as ‘pathways to performance’. Our representation of conversational practice is shown in figure 3.

Fig 3: Conversational Practices (adapted from Francis and Reddington, 2010; Reddington and Francis 2012, Francis, Ramdhony, Reddington and Staines, 2013)



Our approach illuminates the importance of *solutions and performance focused conversations* – see Glossary of Terms for more information at the end of this report. The index scores associated with conversational practice, workplace tensions and job pressure for Worcestershire Regulatory Services are shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Conversational Practice compared by Service Area	Conversational Practice	Conversational Practice (Solutions)	Conversational Practice (Performance)	Job Pressure	Workplace Tensions	Number of Respondents
All Bromsgrove, Redditch & WRS	66	68	65	67	63	465
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	72	72	72	72	66	37

NB: The scores for job pressure and workplace tensions are reverse logic – i.e. the higher the score the higher the pressure and tensions people are reporting/experiencing.

Key: **Sustain:** Good score/outcome to be celebrated (75 +) **Monitor:** Moderate score/outcome – capable of improvement (51 – 74) **Improve:** Relatively poor score/outcome – a clear signal to take steps to improve (50 or less)

Conversational practice scores for WRS are at the high end of the moderate range. This suggests that WRS staff are engaging in good, high quality solutions and performance focused conversations. More focus on line manager relationship can help to enhance these scores in the future. It should also be noted that both reported job pressure and workplace tensions are higher in WRS than Bromsgrove and Redditch as a whole. A cautionary note about this is contained in other areas of this report.

Personality of Worcestershire Regulatory Services

TEDD® uses a number of lenses to uncover the myriad of factors shaping workplace social dynamics. One method is to invite employees to imagine the organisation as a human being by asking the question ‘*if your organisation came to life as a person what word would you use to describe it?*’ Personality questions are extremely valuable because they give insight into the perception of corporate personality. Employer branding has implications for retaining and attracting employees as well as sustaining engagement levels. It denotes whether the internal view held by employees corresponds with the external proposition offered by the employers.

The personality profile of the organisation is depicted by a range of ‘human dispositions’ - see table 3 below. The numbers represent the mean score for each disposition.

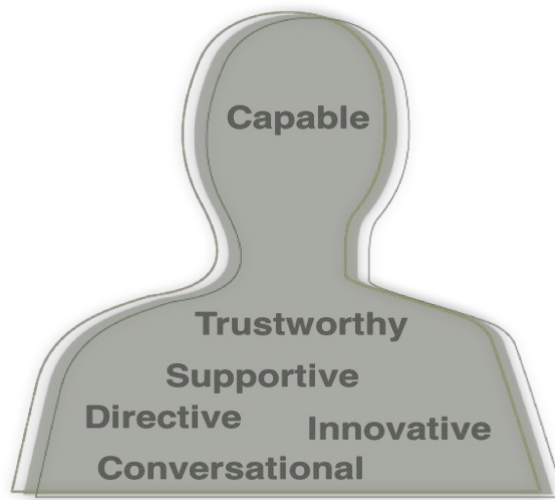


Table 3: Scores for Personality of the Whole Organisation (as perceived through the eyes of staff at Worcestershire Regulatory Services)

Conversational (Respectful, Good listener)	Innovative (Inspiring, exciting)	Capable (Competent, Resilient)	Trustworthy (Honest, Reliable)	Supportive (Compassionate, Appreciative)	Directive (Authoritarian Controlling)
66	60	68	66	67	47

Note: Directive is reverse logic, so a lower score is preferred

Key: Sustain: Good score/outcome to be celebrated (75 +) Monitor: Moderate score/outcome – capable of improvement (51 – 74) Improve: Relatively poor score/outcome – a clear signal to take steps to improve (50 or less)

The low *Directive* score allows the other human dispositions to flourish. The personality profile overall is at the upper end of the moderate range and is in keeping with the other results for Balance of the Deal and Conversational Practice.

Personality of Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Each respondent to the survey was asked the question: *If Bromsgrove & Redditch Councils and Worcestershire Regulatory Services came to life as a person, what word would you use to describe it?* The responses from WRS employees are shown below in table 4:

Table 4. Free text comments		
Positive	Negative	Neutral
Ambitious Hard working Honest	Complicated Controlling Domino Hamstrung Stressful Unfair	

Key Driver Analysis

A statistical technique known as Key Driver Analysis (KDA) has been used to help focus on those features of the employment deal that have the greatest impact on how employees contribute at work – see table below. The outcomes of the KDA should be used to guide the action planning process, as taking effective action in the identified areas will contribute positively toward enhanced employee contribution. This information should be used in conjunction with the other forms of analysis set out in this document.

- S** **Sustain:** Good score/outcome to be celebrated and sustained.
- M** **Monitor:** Moderate score/outcome – capable of improvement.
- I** **Improve:** Relatively poor score/outcome – a clear signal to take steps to improve.

Table 5. Key Driver Analysis – top 6 items having most impact on Employee Contribution across Bromsgrove & Redditch Councils and Worcestershire Regulatory Services

1. I feel able to strongly influence my performance objectives	63
2. I am provided with the tools needed to do my job	65
3. I trust my line manager to act in my best interests	69
4. I constantly experience excessive pressure in my job	67
5. Compliance with internal procedures often makes it difficult to do things better	61
6. I am often required to do more with less resources	73

Note: Key drivers 4,5 & 6 are reverse logic, so lower scores are preferred

Narrative Analysis – Bringing key Drivers to Life

The TEDD survey included some free-text questions. All free text responses were analysed using natural language processing techniques and assigned to the Key Drivers – these examples show how the key drivers reveal themselves in the employee feedback. In table 6, each key driver is matched with free text responses (both positive and negative sentiment) to show how the drivers reveal themselves in practice. This provides useful insights into what really makes the difference to engagement and performance.

Table 6: Free text comments matched with key drivers
KEY DRIVER 1: I feel able to strongly influence my performance objectives (63)
<p><i>Freedom to plan one's own work schedule</i></p> <p><i>Flexible working</i></p> <p><i>The flexibility of work/working hours.</i></p> <p><i>WRS is a flexible employer and understands the need for work life balance. However, this isn't always as achievable due to work load</i></p>
Key Driver 2: I am provided with the tools needed to do my job (65)
<p><i>Increasing demands from partner councils and insufficient resources available to properly meet these</i></p>
Key Driver 3: I trust my line manager to act in my best interests (69)
<p><i>I have a very good working relationship with my manager</i></p> <p><i>Very approachable to discuss operational tasks</i></p> <p><i>Managers disinterest in the feelings of their staff</i></p> <p><i>Would be nice to see my line manager but oh ... never in or working from home....</i></p>
Key Driver 4: I constantly experience excessive pressure in my job (67)
<p><i>Pressure of an ever-increasing workload and the daily feelings of being unable to cope</i></p>
Key Driver 5: Compliance with internal procedures often makes it difficult to do things better (61)
<p><i>The biggest tensions are often linked to the debate on whether the service has sufficient resources or whether we need to change our approach to the day job</i></p>

Key driver 6: I am often required to do more with less resources (73)

Demand exceeding (reduced) capacity

Fewer staff to do more work

Lack of resources - people and time

Key drivers Commentary

The scores for the items driving employee contribution (Key Drivers) are mostly in the moderate zone. This is a positive outcome given the burdens and stresses of austerity on employees. The key driver “*I am often required to do more with less resources*” has score of 73. This is at the higher end of the moderate scale and the free text commentary provides greater insight into the increasing difficulties employees are faced with on a day to day basis. If this tension continues to rise it will lead to a fall in employee contribution and associated issues such as rising sickness absence.

One way of managing workplace tensions is by focusing on improving performance focused conversations with line managers. Our research reveals significant correlations between conversational practice, line management style, capability and tensions. Tensions and pressures shape and are shaped by conversational practice. The higher the quality of conversational practice, the more capable a person perceives themselves to be and consequently the lower tension levels experienced. Performance focused conversations are powerful in that they can act as buffers to offset the negative effects of higher workloads, increased pressure, insecurity and turbulence within the organisation. The buffering role of line managers is accomplished through a supportive management style that allows people to speak openly about factors affecting performance, and which offers praise and recognition for their efforts in a challenging environment.

Glossary of Terms

Employer Contributions represent the ‘offerings’ from the employer and take various forms such as pay and benefits, stimulating work, career progression, job security, affording genuine concern for employees’ wellbeing, articulating a clear vision for the future of the organisation and providing support of various kinds in the workplace. Our model organises these contributions into two main categories – *Psychological Contract* and *Perceived Organisational Support*

Psychological Contract is a defining feature of the relationship between an employee and employer. It constitutes a set of obligations and promises between the two parties. TEDD examines an employee’s global impression of whether or not employer ‘promises’ are kept, how fair they are perceived to be, and trust in whether they are likely to be delivered in the future (Guest, 2014).

Perceived Organisational Support is an expression of the quality of delivery of a range of elements such as feeling supported, recognised, and valued for contributions. It also covers the cultivation of an environment in which employees feel empowered to speak up and voice their opinions about their work and wider organisational aims.

Employee Contributions describe what employees feel they are bringing to the employment deal. These include:

Job Engagement which is defined as the individual’s physical and mental commitment to their job.

Capability measures an individual’s confidence and competence to undertake their role.

Organisational Engagement covers a combination of organisational citizenship behaviours such as speaking positively about the organisation to friends and family, recommending the organisation as a place to work, engaging in helping behaviours and constructive challenge.

Solutions-focused conversations - conversations that are about ideas. These *generate the potential* to reach working arrangements that strengthen resilience, employee wellbeing and performance. Through surfacing of multiple perspectives, shared meanings and understandings are generated about how to get something done (actionable knowledge).

Performance Focused Conversations – conversations about *realising the potential* of solutions, focused conversations through the achievement of fair and transparent performance targets such as the delivery of services to customers at the right quality and cost.

Tensions and Job pressure - conversations are interwoven in nature and laced with workplace tensions - for example the competing challenges of doing ‘more-with-less’, time pressures affecting quality of service delivery. Another significant factor shaping conversational practices is *job pressure* - a measure of constant, perceived excessive workload.

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WRS Board
21st June 2017

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report 2017/18

Recommendation	That the Board note the Annual Report for 2017/18 and agree that a copy be forwarded to each Chief Executive of the 6 partner authorities and also to the wider elected member base in their areas.
Contribution to Priorities	Not applicable
Summary	Under the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Service Level Agreement, the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Lead Finance Officer for the host authority, Bromsgrove District Council, are required to submit to the Joint Board an annual report that covers the performance of the shared service and provides a summary of the finances. This report covers the period from 1 st April 2017 to 31 March 2018. If endorsed by the Joint Board, a copy will be forwarded to each Chief Executive of each member authority and the authors would request that members use their usual channels within their authorities to distribute the report to the wider elected member cohort.
Report	<p>Under Clause 11 of Part 1 of the Shared Services Partnership Agreement, the Joint Board is required to receive a report at its annual meeting which will be held no later than 30 June. The report covers the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. The annual report is co-signed by the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Lead Financial Officer for the Host Authority as required by the legal agreement.</p> <p>The report covers the performance of the service for that period, both in terms of KPIs and highlights of activity, a short summary activity report appearing at Appendix 5. This has been reduced somewhat as the Committee now receives a separate Activity Data report, which covers these aspects in much more detail. Some detail of the performance indicators has been covered in the Activity Data Report.</p>



Generally performance has remained good. Food business compliance rates remain high. Taxi license renewals are dealt with in a reasonable time in the main. The taxi fleet appears to be generally in good order, although the results from enforcement exercises suggest some driver/ operators need to pull their socks up in terms of maintaining vehicles. Complaints against the service are significantly exceeded by compliments and we understand the main issue for complaints, which relates to paying for the cost of stray dogs.

The indicators for licensed premises and noise complaints have been in place long enough now for us to establish good base-lines. The former shows that generally licensed premises in the County are well managed. The figures can now be used, along with intelligence, to focus enforcement resources in a proactive way to tackle any individual problem premises, although these are few and far between. Most complaints relate to minor nuisance issues, usually created when a venue introduces a novel activity like live music to diversify its activities. The rate of noise complaints is relatively low and probably reflective of the general environment in Worcestershire.

The Annual Report also gives a summary of the financial position, the key achievements and covers issues relating to human resources. There are also sections on risk management and equalities.

The Annual Report will be published on the WRS website and will be shared with other partners e.g. Worcestershire LEP. A press release will be sent out to accompany the publishing of the report.

Putting the report into the public domain meets the requirement in the Regulators Code, made under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, which requires local authorities to publish summary information about their regulatory activities each year.

Financial Implications

The financial implications are contained within the Annual Report.

Sustainability

N/A

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Background Papers

WRS Annual Report 2016/17



ANNUAL REPORT

2017/18

Making Worcestershire a healthy, safe and a fair place to live where businesses can thrive.

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INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report has been produced for the Joint Board in accordance with clause 11.1 of Part 1 of the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Agreement. The report covers the progress and performance of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) for the period 1st April 2017 up to the 31st March 2018 and reports operational activity by the relevant service elements for the financial year. The report summarises key performance data for WRS and provides a summary of the financial position. The report also meets the requirement of the Regulators Code, which requires local authorities to publish a summary of their regulatory activities on an annual basis.

Whilst none of the Partner Authorities requested budget adjustments during this year, inflationary pressures have been felt and continue to create pressures on the budget, which have been relieved by increasing income streams. The year still saw excellent work activity with very good results across a range of service areas, high levels of performance and some good outcomes from Court cases alongside a wide range of other project work being delivered.

WRS managers continued to work along the lines identified in the comprehensive 3-year Business Plan 2017-2020, adopted in February 2016, which defined the strategic approach to be taken for service delivery and for delivering the identified savings for partners for the period. The amount of support that income generating activities was able to give the WRS budget was significantly increased on last year, which was due primarily to maintaining and developing existing relationships rather than any substantial increase in new opportunities. This led to the new Business Plan for the period 2018-2021, which was adopted in February 2017, highlighting some of the potential issues faced by the service if new sources of income could not be developed and some of the threats as more local authorities consider income generation as a potential opportunity. It also highlighted the potential impacts of the proposed 2% per annum pay rises over the next 3 years and, what was at the time, the looming spectre of increasing inflation which may have diminished somewhat at the time of writing. It highlighted how close to the originally envisaged minimum service we have moved in recent years. This has been highlighted in some of the feedback from the staff survey, with a significant proportion of respondents reporting that they are working at capacity or a little beyond.

The cash-limited budget for Worcestershire Regulatory Services was set at £3.025M in 2016/17. WRS have continued to explore and develop opportunities to generate income, focusing on supplying services to other local authorities. Much of the bidding for work has succeeded because of a clear understanding of our cost-base. We continued to refine this during 2017/18 and as managers' experience of competing for work increased their comfort with taking some risks has also grown. We have reported previously that providing expertise in the most complex and technical areas of Environmental Health has been fruitful with our neighbouring districts as they struggle individually to maintain knowledge in such areas. The client authorities have largely continued to request such services, like Air Quality, Contaminated Land, Environmental Permit inspections and all of the associated administration. The service has also looked more widely at contracts that we might have the skills to discharge perhaps outside of our role for the partners. We've also looked at how partners' resources might help with our bids and this has been fruitful in the contract we have for dealing with Birmingham City Council's out of hours dog service, working with Telecare at MHDC.

Whilst increasing the range of services delivered we have been successful in maintaining key arrangements with clients. Key to the success of this work has been to review charges, ensuring as well as recovering our costs they remain competitive and encourage greater commitment by the client. The level of service delivered is also important, which is why continued investment in staff is key so that they have the necessary skills and expertise in the rapidly changing field of technical specialisms.

Our three strategic priorities, developed from our partners own priorities remain the focus of what we do:

- Supporting the Local Economy
- Improving Health and Well-being
- Tackling and Preventing Crime and Disorder

We continue to support legitimate businesses where we can and, at the same time, tackle rogues and criminals to protect the public, particularly the vulnerable and honest traders. Central to this approach was and remains the availability of accurate data and intelligence sharing. Our intelligence unit coordinates and analyses intelligence obtained by WRS officers and external agencies, helping managers to target WRS resources more effectively and to forge links with other enforcement agencies and partners to share intelligence and target enforcement action. The continued co-location of the County Council's Trading Standards team with WRS helps to support this approach as well as providing an income stream to cover the cost of various support services that WRS provides to this team.

Simon Wilkes
Head of Regulatory Services

Jayne Pickering
Lead Financial Officer

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR WRS IN 2017/18:

WRS were delighted to be highly commended in the “Outstanding Environmental Health Team” category of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health’s 2017 Excellence Awards.

The awards, which took place in November, enable the professional body to celebrate excellence and innovation in service delivery and showcase new approaches to improving the level of service to business and local communities.

The award submission focussed heavily on innovation and transformation work within the Community Environmental Health, Technical Services, Duty Officer and Intelligence Teams, including:

- The self-help package for nuisances
- The carrying out of contract work for other authorities.
- Trying to resolve problems at the first point of contact through the Duty Officer system
- LEP work on the Worcestershire Food and Drink Association project
- The Healthier Choices Food award
- Working closely with legitimate businesses and their relevant trade bodies including business seminars
- Self-help for Planning Officers
- The development of our Environmental Health Intelligence Team and tasking within the service

Other highlights included the culmination of some very involved prosecution cases mentioned further on in this report. Progress on the Worcestershire Food and Drink project was also good and we hope to see this launched mid-2018.

PERFORMANCE

Our ability to report performance has improved throughout the years with the refinement of the IDOX UNiform management information system. The corresponding demand and activity data provided to Joint Committee members has continued to provide a clear picture for them of the work being undertaken by WRS.

Our key performance measures continue to focus on customer satisfaction and the positive compliance of businesses. The vast majority of higher risk businesses have been subject to inspection or some other form of suitable intervention and the key priorities of each partner council have been fulfilled. Business and consumer satisfaction have remained high in spite of changes made in some areas to service delivery. Previous year’s results appear in brackets in the relevant box providing a comparative view of performance over time.

	Measure	Figure	Commentary
1	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to non-business customers satisfaction	75.4% (78.9%, 78.2%, 77.4%)	Based on an average score for 6 questions relating to the interaction of the service with non-business customers. Over 25% non-business customers replied to our questionnaires. 83.0%% found their contact with WRS helpful and 88.4% found the information and advice provided easy to use. Both slightly lower than last year. Only 67% felt that the length of time to resolve their problem was satisfactory (worse than last year by 10%) and 77.3% (again, slightly worse than last year,) felt that the speed of initial response from WRS was satisfactory. This has been shared with Managers who will continue to encourage staff to make decisions quickly in relation to the progress that can be made on service requests. As we said in our edition of Members Eye on Nuisance last year, some of these matters can be difficult to resolve quickly and public expectation seems to be increasing at a time where resources are held and the law is not changing to meet their desires.
2	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to business customers satisfaction	97.7% (97.1% 97.9%, 97%)	Based on an average score for 9 questions relating to the interaction of the service with business customers. Over 500 businesses replied to our questionnaires. Of those who responded, 97.6% felt that their business had been treated fairly and 98.5% of customers felt staff were polite in their dealings with them and informative. Some 98.7% of customers found the information and advice we provided easy to understand and 98.2% found their interaction with us helpful. The lowest scoring response for businesses this year related to speed of response and even this was 94.9% satisfied.

3	% Food businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	<p>Bromsgrove 98.7% (99.1%, 97.1%, 96.4%)</p> <p>Malvern Hills 97.0% (97.7%, 97%, 97.6%)</p> <p>Redditch 96.7% (97.6%, 95.1%, 96.1%)</p> <p>Worcester City 98.0% (98.6%, 98.2%, 96.4%)</p> <p>Wychavon 97.8% (98%, 99.1%, 97%)</p> <p>Wyre Forest 97.2% (98.1%, 96.6%, 96.1%)</p> <p>Worcestershire 97.6% (98.2%, 97.4%, 96.8%)</p>	<p>This focuses on food hygiene interventions and the number of premises where there are no significant non-compliances and the food produced in such premises can be considered safe. A very high proportion of premises in all districts are broadly compliant, indicating that the vast majority of food businesses are well run. There is a slight fall in all areas this year but this is not at a level that would indicate problems. Not all of the premises are visited every year, with the majority of premises in this group of visits having last been inspected in 2015/16.</p>
4	% of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	<p>Bromsgrove 1.3% (7) (0.9%, 2.9%, 3.6%)</p> <p>Malvern Hills 3% (14) (2.3%, 3%, 2.4%)</p> <p>Redditch 3.3% (11) (2.4%, 4.9%, 3.9%)</p> <p>Worcester City 2% (9) (1.4%, 1.8%, 3.6%)</p> <p>Wychavon 2.2% (14) (2%, 0.8%, 2.3%)</p> <p>Wyre Forest 2.8% (13) (1.9%, 3.4%, 3.9%)</p> <p>Worcestershire 2.4% (68) (2.4%, 2.6%, 3.2%)</p>	<p>Food premises scoring 2 or below on the Food Hygiene Rating System are deemed to be at risk of not producing safe food and are subject to further intervention until such time as they meet requirements or face formal action. There has been a slight increase this year but, unlike the previous year, none of the premises identified required closure and many quickly cleaned up their act and improved. The local press are interested in low scoring food businesses and feature this work quite regularly. It encourages the businesses to sort themselves out and, by the time the story is in the public domain we are able to tell the public of how well the business has responded and that things are much improved.</p>
5	% of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	87.7%	<p>This is a new measure for 2017/18 and looks at how quickly driver licenses are renewed. This is one of the licensing processes where generally no additional paperwork is required before someone is re-licensed so generally this is one where the WRS team is in most control over timescales. This is our baseline measure and the team will be looking at whether this can be improved going forward.</p>

6	% of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service	34 = 2.22% BDC 9 5.62% MHDC 0 0.00% RBC 4 0.88% WC 19 5.99% WDC 1 0.31% WFDC 1 0.65%	Based on 1528 vehicles operating in the County during vehicle stop checks and garage inspections; some 34 vehicles were found to be defective whilst in service. This is the same number as last year, but above the 11 identified in 2015/16. This shows that enforcement and improved communication between inspecting garages are yielding what is needed and this level offers a more realistic indication of the scale of the issue. District percentage figures are based on the numbers of vehicles registered in that district.
7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	72.5% (73.8%, 76.8%, 74.2%)	This focuses on non-business customers. It is a specific question asked to members of the public in the questionnaire to test if the information and support provided to them by WRS is likely to help them deal with their own problems in the future. The measure is down slightly but in line with the figure achieved 5 years ago, so this may simply indicate natural variation amongst customers. Officers have noted increasing expectations of what can be achieve for customers so this too may have influenced the figure.
8	Review of register of complaints and compliments	25 complaints (31, 17, 24, 47, 70) 138 compliments (103, 51, 57, 36, 24)	This is our longest running performance indicator in this format, hence the long list of previous year's figures. There has been a slight decrease in complaints this year (31 recorded last year), against an increased number of compliments (103 recorded last year). The biggest area for complaint remains the fact that people have to pay to recover their stray dogs, particularly the costs associated with weekend kennelling fees. Members will recall the report to Board which considered this.
9	Staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	12.45 days per FTE (5.95, 2.3, 3.9, 7.7, 9.5)	This is the highest figure in 5 years. A full analysis of the sickness figures is included in the report. Two thirds of the time lost is down to long term illness but the winter flu virus hit particularly hard this year resulting in a significant increase in short term illness too. Managers have been told to focus this year on bringing down the level to something more manageable.

10	% of staff who are satisfied with working for WRS	<p>A new approach was taken to the staff survey this year and, rather than continue our own WRS took the opportunity to follow the same route as Redditch/ Bromsgrove. A separate report has been prepared.</p> <p>Previous scores were: (80%, 85%, 77%, 82%)</p>	<p>A summary of the report to Joint Board for June 2018 is included further on in this report, however, members are asked to refer to the contents of this committee report for the full detailed information.</p>																												
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Bromsgrove</td> <td>6.73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(3.8%, 7.9%, 6.6%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Malvern Hills</td> <td>4.94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(3.6, 3.6, 3%, 3.3%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redditch</td> <td>8.65%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(2.7, 8.1%, 10%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcester City</td> <td>8.19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(5.8, 9.4%, 8.6%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wychavon</td> <td>4.97%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(4.0, 5.5%, 3.6%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wyre Forest</td> <td>8.29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(5.8, 9.4%, 7%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcestershire</td> <td>6.78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(4.4%, 6.9%, 7%)</td> </tr> </table>	Bromsgrove	6.73%		(3.8%, 7.9%, 6.6%)	Malvern Hills	4.94%		(3.6, 3.6, 3%, 3.3%)	Redditch	8.65%		(2.7, 8.1%, 10%)	Worcester City	8.19%		(5.8, 9.4%, 8.6%)	Wychavon	4.97%		(4.0, 5.5%, 3.6%)	Wyre Forest	8.29%		(5.8, 9.4%, 7%)	Worcestershire	6.78%		(4.4%, 6.9%, 7%)	<p>Linked to the Crime & Disorder agenda and introduced following discussions with elected members, this measure is now in its third year and, whilst there is an across the board increase, it still shows that generally premises across the County are well run and controlled by their operators. Looking at the figures over 4 years, it would suggest that 2016/17 was a blip in terms of improved performance and that 2017/18 saw a return to a pattern similar to the previous two years.</p> <p>Complaints about premises generally relate to minor issues, mainly to do with noise. Many pubs are trying to diversify, offering music and other entertainment, which is within their license conditions, but sometimes this is not welcomed by some living nearby. Simple precautions can result in resolution of most of these issues.</p>
Bromsgrove	6.73%																														
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	(4.4%, 6.9%, 7%)																														
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Bromsgrove</td> <td>2.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(3.0, 2.7, 3.1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Malvern Hills</td> <td>2.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(3.0, 2.3, 3.9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redditch</td> <td>3.61</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(4.1, 3.7, 3.5)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worcester City</td> <td>3.13</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(4.2, 4.0, 2.9)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wychavon</td> <td>2.46</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(2.7, 2.6, 2.5)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wyre Forest</td> <td>3.23</td> </tr> </table>	Bromsgrove	2.82		(3.0, 2.7, 3.1)	Malvern Hills	2.39		(3.0, 2.3, 3.9)	Redditch	3.61		(4.1, 3.7, 3.5)	Worcester City	3.13		(4.2, 4.0, 2.9)	Wychavon	2.46		(2.7, 2.6, 2.5)	Wyre Forest	3.23	<p>We continue to report the County average and this is the third year we are able to report data by individual districts. Overall, 2017/18 looks like it was an average to quiet year for noise complaints although, as we have said previously, the complexity of the issues appears to have increased and the tolerance in some quarters is reduced.</p> <p>Where we can resolve domestic noise issues this is generally achieved through mediation between the parties concerned.</p> <p>1,739 noise complaints were investigated 2017/18.</p>						
Bromsgrove	2.82																														
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		(3.4, 3.0, 3.0) Worcestershire 2.93 (3.4, 3.1, 3.8)	
13	Total Income	10.7% Note: £325,000 as a % of £3.025M	The second half of the year didn't quite yield what we had hoped for but this is still an impressive figure for the workforce. Given the need to continue to build income it bodes well for the future.
14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population.	Based on outrun cost of £2.968M against the current population estimate of 582,000 the service cost is: £5.10 per head	This is the amount spent by the partners following the off-setting of cost with income, then divided by the most recent mid-year estimate offered on the County Council's website. It is difficult to benchmark this figure as WRS functions are not all of those reported in the relevant part of the RO return to the MHCLG.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Strong management of performance is vital for the success of this service, ensuring that customers are satisfied and partners are reassured by the cost effective delivery of the service on their behalf. Whilst everyone must accept responsibility for managing performance, the WRS management team is committed to driving performance forward so that a high standard of service delivery can be maintained.

Management team meetings are used to review performance against the service plan and to highlight any issues of concern. Senior practitioners (first line managers) are invited to attend these meetings to ensure a two way flow of information between management and staff. This arrangement was introduced at the behest of senior practitioners and is working well. Teams have their own detailed plans that sit below the service plan signed off by Joint Board. Progress against this is monitored by Team Managers and Senior Practitioners.

The Management team also looks to the strategic direction of the service and ensures that the operational and financial resources available to partners are used in the most efficient manner to achieve both their individual strategic aims together with WRS priorities.

Continued refinement of our IT platform ensures our ability to report to Joint Committee on our performance measures remains accurate. There is still work to do to use the system more effectively, but Uniform is now operating well across all functions.

There are a wide range of bodies to which the service must report data (e.g. Food Standards Agency, Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Health and Safety Executive, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Gambling Commission etc.). All statutory reports are submitted so as to ensure that WRS continues to meet its partner's statutory obligations. It was hoped that the central bodies would accept a single data return for all partners but it now appears that all Departments continue to require individual returns for each partner. WRS provides these as necessary. A short summary of activity data is included at Appendix 5 to avoid duplication with the wider and more detailed set of activity data that is provided in the final Activity Data Report for 2017/18, which members will receive at the same meeting where this Annual Report is presented.

Internal Audits

An Internal Audit of the Environmental Permitting regime took place towards the end of the financial year and the draft report has been sent to the team for review. As always, the audit team were welcomed as critical friends and they have identified a number of small improvements that can be considered by the service.

The auditors continue to keep an interest in the progress of the project considering how licensing income is handled. Some discussion has taken place precipitated by the need to move to better on-line application processes. A commercial body has done a presentation to the Licensing managers and the s151 officers and the potential solution could offer a means for WRS/ Bromsgrove to take income for partners through a single streamlined portal. This would offer customers a much simpler mode of application and reduce administrative burdens as the system would populate the licensing back office system with all of the information required. This approach would help to resolve the auditor's long standing issue with being able to reconcile specific payments with specific licenses but some discussion needs to be had around where the risks around potential falls in licensing income sit.

SERVICE DELIVERY HIGHLIGHTS

There have been a number of highlights throughout the year to showcase the work of our teams and illustrate the breadth of their responsibilities.

Community Environmental Health Team

This has been another busy year for the team in respect of legal cases, with some 14 case investigations either in the Court system or in the final stages of investigation. The following cases were determined in 2017/18:

Date	Defendant	Authority	Offence	Outcome (Fine/costs)
11.5.17	Cerrones Café	RBC	FSH Regs 13	Fine £500
25.5.17	Grillicious Pizza	RBC	FSH Regs 13	Fine £6,000
17.11.17	Zety Ltd	WFDC	H&S	Fine £12,460

5.2.18	Paradise Balti	WFDC	FSH Regs 13	Fine £20,000
5.2.18	Canaan Chinese Takeaway	WFDC	FSH Regs 13	Fine £1,175
9.2.18	White Lion Hotel	MHDC	H&S	Fine £34,000

Nuisance

The team investigated 2,387 nuisance complaints in 2017/18 covering light, noise, odour and smoke. 1,739 of these related to noise nuisance which places the greatest demand on the service. Amongst these nuisance investigations were a number of challenging service requests requiring complex investigations. The team are very skilful in resolving these issues informally, meaning that of all these cases, only 21 Abatement Notices were required.

Members often receive requests for assistance from constituents where their neighbours or nearby businesses are causing them a nuisance. In response to a request from Members, the team produced a special edition of the Members' Eye Bulletin aimed at helping members to understand the legal basis for their respective local authority's activities in relation to statutory nuisance and explaining where we have to draw the line in relation to our investigative activities. This was distributed to all Members across the County.

Food Hygiene

During the year we completed 1,332 food hygiene inspections across the county which is slightly lower than last year. A high proportion (97.6%) of premises in all districts are broadly compliant, indicating that the vast majority of food businesses are well run. 2.4% of food businesses across the county do however have a score of 2 or below (out of five) on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Such businesses are deemed to be at risk of not producing safe food so are subject to further intervention until such time as they meet requirements or face formal action. Whilst the majority of businesses are supported to achieve compliance, formal action has been taken in respect of a number of premises and those cases that have come to court are included in the table above. In addition thirteen Hygiene Improvement Notices were served due to conditions which put public health at risk.

Two auditors from the Food Standards Agency visited the service on 24th and 25th May 2017. Their focus was on the broad delivery of food hygiene interventions by the service on behalf of Wyre Forest District Council. The Agency can only audit against individual local authorities, it cannot audit the service as a whole. We were however, able to reference work for other partners where we had not done a particular activity on behalf of Wyre Forest, which was helpful in demonstrating the broad competence of the service.

Over the two days, the auditors worked with the Food Lead Officer for the service and the Database Administrator to review records of inspection and sampling activities. They seemed very impressed with the levels of reporting that we were generating from the system. Officer training records were reviewed to ensure that the

competency requirements were being addressed. Officer authorisation processes and the scheme of delegation was also part of the review process. The Community Environmental Health Manager was also engaged with the process and the Head of Service was present for the initial and closing meetings on each day, demonstrating to the Agency the seriousness with which we take these matters.

Generally the auditors were happy with what WRS was achieving and that the service was delivering the required official food controls regime in the spirit of the Directive and in a manner that fitted with the Food Standards Agency's current policy direction of travel, focusing on supporting legitimate traders and using information and intelligence to tackle the rogues and those who are less willing to meet standards.

Healthy Food Choices

We continue to promote our very own food award which aims to contribute to health improvements in local communities and raises the profile of participating businesses. The scheme is linked to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, so only those businesses that have achieved a level 4 or 5 are eligible, further promoting the highest hygiene standards in food businesses. It also provides an income stream which is re-invested in the service.

Working in partnership with the LEP

WRS has been recognised by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills as a positive, innovative and pioneering service which is leading in work to reduce regulatory burdens on business. We continue to work closely with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership to build on the initial phase of a regulatory exemplar project to deliver on the Worcestershire Food and Drink initiative. Worcestershire has some superb locally produced food and drink, made and served by the some of the most enthusiastic and passionate people in the industry. This project, in partnership with local business, aims to promote the wide variety of produce Worcestershire has to offer and boost Worcestershire's economy. Several successful events have been held around the county and the Worcestershire Food and Drink Association website is in its final stages of development. Through this groundwork the Association now boasts over 50 business members and we are about to enter a transitional phase before the organisation becomes self-supporting.

Primary Authorities

The Community Environmental Health Team continues to support five local businesses through Primary Authority Agreements through which we provide assured, paid for, advice and expertise.

Health & Safety at Work

Whilst proactive health and safety inspections no longer form part of the work programme due to service changes and Central Government's drive to reduce the regulatory burden on business, the investigation of several serious accidents arising from work activities continued to put pressure on resources. Health and safety investigations can be complex and take months, and sometimes years, to bring to completion. Investigations this financial year have included a fatality which resulted in a custodial sentence for the operator of a builders' merchant. In addition we have investigated a number of serious cases including a child who was seriously injured when shop furniture toppled onto them and a woman who suffered a serious brain injury when a large metal pole fell on her from height.

Technical Services Team

Environmental Permitting

Local authorities are required to permit certain industrial processes which require payment of an annual fee by the affected companies for compliance inspections. WRS works hard to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses by advising and assisting the operators in compliance and coming out of the regulatory regime. Compliance remains high within regulated industry sectors, however some slipping of standards has been observed concerning waste wood burning.

WRS became aware of incentives through the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme to install wood burners to burn wood. There are a large number of companies taking advantage of the financial rewards this brings and with it. There has been confusion and complications concerning the permitting regime, the waste regulation scheme and potential fraud. Since WRS first identified difficulties in this industrial sector we have been working with central government, the Environment Agency and neighbouring authorities to provide clarity on regulation, highlight issues of concern and investigate potential wrong doing.

The regular inspection and the enforcement work described above is generally well received by the wider business community and this is demonstrated by the number of discussions WRS are having with large companies on potential Primary Authority relationships where WRS would provide assured advice for a fee. The discussions are continuing but it is hoped early in 2018/19 we will be able to report on a signed contract on one or more of these.

Local Air Quality Management

WRS have continued to undertake all the statutory reporting on behalf of the six Worcestershire Districts. For three of the Districts there have been significant changes to the Local Air Quality situation. In Wychavon, a detailed assessment undertaken identified an improvement in air quality for Port Street, Evesham such that the AQMA could be revoked and, at the same time, a deterioration in air quality at Worcester Road, Wychbold such that an AQMA is required to be declared. Both were consulted on. A detailed assessment of the air quality in Kidderminster Road, Hagley AQMA identified that there was no longer a requirement for an AQMA in that location and steps were commenced to revoke that AQMA with several Committee discussions and support to Local Members provided.

In Worcester City a number of additional locations were identified that required declaration of an AQMA or incorporation into a single larger AQMA. The Licensing & Environmental Health Committee decided to declare a citywide AQMA which WRS consulted on. Alongside this, WRS have facilitated the commencement of a Task & Finish Group for Air Quality Measures. The first meeting was in December 2017 and determined six measures that would be explored in greater detail for potential application in Worcester City. This work will continue into 2018-19.

Dog Warden Service

Following an investigation by WRS Officers a successful prosecution was brought against Mrs Jaspal Boparia, of Washill Lane and her ex-husband Mr Ranjit Boparia, of Shoemith Close, Barwell, Leicester. They were sentenced on September 19 at Redditch Magistrates court. The case was reported by both the Bromsgrove Advertiser and Bromsgrove Standard. Mrs Boparia pleaded guilty to an offence under Section 4 of the Animal Welfare Act for failing to provide a suitable diet which resulted in the dog being caused unnecessary suffering. She admitted to reporting the dog as a stray, even though he was in her care, after she noticed he had stopped eating and she could not afford to take him to the vet.

The Bromsgrove resident, Mrs Boparia was given a 12-month community order with 80 hours unpaid work and was also ordered to pay a total of £1,310. The court decided Mrs Boparia would not be given a banning order. Mr Boparia, the owner of the dog which he had handed over to his ex-wife in the Autumn of 2016, knew the

dog was not eating but failed to take steps to prevent the dog's condition deteriorating. Mr Boparia was already subject to a banning order following an offence at the end of last year which prevented him from owning a dog for a period of five years. Having pleaded guilty to an offence of failing to take steps to prevent the dog from suffering Mr Boparia was fined £333 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £33 and £2,447 in costs.

Worcester Regulatory Services (WRS), which brought the prosecution, was first alerted to the situation of Blue on January 11 after receiving a call from Mrs Boparia stating she had taken in a stray dog. The dog was collected by the Dog Warden who described him as being emaciated, skin and bone, with no muscle tone and in all round very poor condition.

The dog received immediate treatment by the vet but over the following the next few days the dog's temperament deteriorated and he became a risk to staff so the decision was made that he be put to sleep. As well as Animal Welfare investigations, WRS Dog Wardens have continued to collect the county and North Gloucestershire District's stray dogs. Together with the WRS Duty Officers, owners are reunited with their dogs as quickly as possible. During 2017-18, our facilities, knowledge and skills were used to greater extent with an increased number of ad hoc contracts to provide assistance with dog issues delivered.

Licensing

The main highlight of last year is the completion of all districts Licensing web page project. All the partner web-pages are in the new format and are being updated on a quarterly basis. These web improvements are a huge stride forward in helping us manage the information and guidance documents.

The team supported the launch of Best Bar None in Worcester City in 2016/17 and has continued with the recent launch in Bromsgrove District of this scheme, aimed at supporting the trade to improve its offer to the public. Well managed, well-run premises mean less need for intervention from local regulators and the Police. If successful we hope that the trade and West Mercia Police will consider this more widely in suitable town centres in the County. All Licensing Officers received training in how to "assess" premises who take up this prestigious award.

Licensing Officers conducted the periodical Zoo inspection this year at West Midlands Safari Park with relevant agencies, DEFRA appointed Vets, Environmental Health Officer, District Vet and Licensing Officers.

Because they are part of a larger team of officers working together, our officers have developed skills and knowledge that staff in smaller authorities cannot sustain. This has led to WRS taking up important roles in regional liaison forums and spreading our influence more widely. One of our officers continues to Chair the influential Neighbouring Authorities Working Group for licensing (NAWG) and represents the West Midlands Region at Local Government Association Licensing Policy Forum. This means that WRS officers are able to influence decision makers in Government on behalf of the profession and local government in general.

Licensing contributes to the safeguarding of vulnerable children by continuing to raise awareness of child sex exploitation amongst the licensed taxi trade and premise licence holders. We continue to be at the forefront of raising awareness of these real dangers by:

- Providing CSE Awareness Training sessions across the County.
- The Licensing Manager sits on the Children's Exploited, Trafficked and Missing Operational Group.
- Ensuring our own staff and Local Councillors are given awareness training.

- Including within all Taxi licensing information/handbooks information relating to this subject matter and the “see something say something” campaign.
- Ensuring that raising awareness of CSE is on all Taxi Forum Agendas across the County.
- All websites have been updated with the CSE awareness campaign and information.
- That a regular review of the systems we have in place are working, to ensure that any accusations against licensed taxi drivers are dealt with immediately and, where necessary, that the licence is suspended pending a formal hearing.

The protections put in place for children also help ensuring the safety of vulnerable adults, many with learning difficulties, who use licensed drivers and vehicles for regular transport.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Budget 2017/18

Monthly financial monitoring reports are provided and finances are regularly considered by officers from the partners ahead of each Joint Board meeting. Bromsgrove DC operates a robust ordering and authorisation process to ensure the transparency and accuracy of costing. Good management of costs, income generation and the management of vacancies led the service being able to return £57,000 to partners, 1.9% of overall budget. This was achieved mainly due to the level of income generation during the year.

The draft outrun budget for 2017/18 is included as Appendix 3, along with the proposed budget for 2018/19 onwards at Appendix 4. The outrun position is subject to final audit, although the budget has now reduced so far that this is no longer a statutory requirement for specific audit of the WRS accounts. Hence, this will be done as part of the overall audit of Bromsgrove District Council’s accounts. There are no firm plans from any partners for further savings in the immediate future, so the operating assumption for the time being is a standstill budget for 2017/18 onwards, with increasing income targets set to balance the budget. This income is to come from all sources, from sewer baiting grants from Severn Trent to contracted work for dog warden activity and everything else in between. This target during the forthcoming period is stretching but achievable and is uppermost in the minds of the management team. The service has a reserve of £173k from the departure of the County Council from the partnership so partners should not be concerned that problems with income generation would create an immediate problem. The reserve provides a cushion and time to consider alternative approaches if necessary.

Increasing income generation

WRS continues to deliver on funding from the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership in developing the fledgling Worcestershire Food and Drink Association. This project, in partnership with local business, aims to promote the wide variety of produce Worcestershire has to offer and boost Worcestershire’s economy. Several successful events have been held around the county and the Worcestershire Food and Drink Association website is in its final stages of development. Through this groundwork the Association now boasts more than fifty business members and we are about to enter a transitional phase before the organisation becomes self-supporting.

In terms of commercial contract work, the largest income generation area was the Dog Warden Service provision for Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Gloucester City Councils. This was helped by the extension of the service provided to other organisations including Social Services and Housing Associations. This has successfully utilised the existing Dog Wardens and contractors to make better use of resources and benefit from economies of scale. The next two significant income generators

were contaminated land advice to planners and service requesters in Gloucester City, South Gloucestershire and North Warwickshire Council areas and Air Quality/ Planning consultation support in Tewkesbury. We also provided Industrial permitting inspections for Gloucester City, which made up the remainder. There are a number of significant points concerning the work this year. The team has managed to maintain high standards of service for new clients, existing clients and the Partner Authorities; with the volume of commercial work has increased. This has enabled income to be either reinvested where required or contribute to monies provided back to Partners at the end of the year.

WORKFORCE PLANNING AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The WRS structure has now been in place since October 2015 with Simon Wilkes as the Head of Service with a team of four Managers looking after different areas of the service. David Mellors as Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager covering all of the responsibilities of his Community Environmental Health team, (Food Safety, Health and Safety and Statutory Nuisance, with some other minor areas) and the Trading Standards remit (Weights and Measures, Food and Agricultural Standards, Product Safety, Fair Trading, Animal Health) on a contractual basis since the County's departure from the partnership in 2016. Mark Cox continues to head up the Technical Services Team covering Technical Pollution (managing Planning, IPPC, Contaminated Land, Air Quality), Dog Wardens and Pest Control. Susan Garratt also continues in the role of Licensing and Support Services Team Manager. In 2016, Kiran Lahel was appointed as the new Business and Relationship Manager looking after partnerships, the intelligence team and more recently the first contact team of Duty Officers.

Staff turnover remains low, although occasionally a member of staff will decide to move onto pastures new.

At the 1st April 2018, the total staff establishment was around 67 FTE. All staff participated in the Personal Development Review (PDR) process last year and this has been fed into a personal training plan for each officer and an overall training plan for the service. The latter allows us to look at opportunities for running training in-house (bringing the trainer to us) where there is sufficient need, which is significantly more cost effective than going to external providers.

WRS Officers receive two performance reviews per annum through the service's formal PDR system. The annual detailed review and 6-monthly progress check is designed to identify development needs and discuss how each person contributes more widely to the service's key strategic priorities and service delivery. All PDR reports are countersigned by the next level of management to ensure consistency, openness and transparency and ensure that nothing is missed.

Staff Survey

Below is an extract summarising a full report that will be presented to the WRS Joint Board in June 2018.

Historically one of the performance indicators reported to members has been the satisfaction of staff working at WRS. This has previously been generated by an in-house survey and has yielded various results over the years but has generally shown reasonable levels of satisfaction with working for the organisation. The internal survey has also helped us to identify a number of ways to support staff in certain areas, by responding to feedback in the survey where it was appropriate.

This year, Redditch and Bromsgrove chose to employ an external consultancy (Martin Reddington Associates,) to undertake its staff survey and the Chief Executive offered WRS the facility as the staff are all Bromsgrove employees. The Head of Service at WRS felt that this would be an opportunity to try something different and to get a professional analysis of the results. The service had limited influence over the questions being asked as there is a set framework that the consultancy uses. Hence, one cannot directly compare these results with previous ones. However, having an independent review ensures no unintended bias in the results can be reported, so on balance it was felt that this exercise could helpfully replace the normal performance indicator at least for this year.

The survey was undertaken by over 50% of the staff, so whilst it is below the level that we would like, it is likely to be representative of both experience and feelings across the service. The analyst has provided independent evidence to support the assertions made by managers around the impacts of current workloads on staff. It suggests that whilst performance is probably currently good, there are signs that further pressures and the lack of recognition of the existing pressures may result in a worsening of performance in the future.

Having said this, the report remains positive and the scores are mainly in the moderate range, indicating that work can be done to improve things. Some of the suggested responses include:

- Recognition by managers and partners of the pressures on staff and their positive performance in the circumstances,
- The use where possible of steps to reduce those pressures or at least to not add to them by following invest-to-save principles rather than assuming more can be done with less or the same,
- Continuing to review processes to ensure that they provide the right supporting mechanisms and do not hinder performance.
- Continuing to review processes for marginal efficiencies that can reduce the burdens on staff,
- Ensuring managers are available in the right way and at the times when their staff need support,
- Improving the engagement of managers with their staff and the performance of some in relation to the focus of their conversations around performance,

These steps would begin to demonstrate to staff that partners (including their employing authority,) appreciate the pressures they are under and are taking what steps they can in the current financial climate to support them. At the same time, managers and Senior Practitioners need to find ways to enhance the day to day support of staff and provide systems that will help to reduce the feeling of pressure created by workloads that are well beyond the historical experience of those working in these professions.

Staff Sickness

During 2017/18 staff sickness reached 12.45 days per FTE, which is by far the highest level in the past 5 years and may be a record overall for the service.

To understand this better, all members of staff who recorded sickness have been grouped by the total of sick days recorded during the year. These have been broken down into:

- 21 days plus
- 10 to 20 days
- 10 days or less

Nine members of staff fell into the group taking 21 days or more sick-leave during the year. Three members of staff required significant surgery either relating to a non-work related injury or for other medical reasons. Three members of staff have been suffering from stress due to either domestic issues exacerbated by the pressures of work or issues that have occurred at work. A further two have chronic medical conditions that mean they are likely to have more than the average number of sickness days. One staff member has been through the 4 stage process for dealing with sickness absence and has been dismissed on capability grounds. They have appealed against this decision and the appeal is pending.

The three having had surgery are now fit and well and back at work. Hopefully no-one else will need to have similar procedures in the next 12-months, although this is difficult to predict with an aging workforce. Of the three officers with stress related issues, one has returned to full-time work successfully now, one opted to take early retirement and the third is in discussion with their Team Manager and Senior Practitioner about their future. The two with long-term chronic conditions have been to see occupational health and the service is making adjustments to help them to avoid some of the issues that can exacerbate their conditions.

These 8 individuals accounted for well in excess of 60% of the absence in the service, and a significant proportion of those days amongst this group related to the officer who is appealing their dismissal (42%).

Of the remainder, a significant proportion of the illnesses between 5 and 10 days occurred from October onwards and resulted from the influenza virus that went through the teams over the winter. One of the problems with staff being keen not to cause problems to their colleagues is they do tend to come into work when they are feeling under the weather and if that happens to be the beginnings of the flu as happened several times over the winter, this of itself creates a problem.

In response to this Team Managers have been asked to review the records and identify those officers who have hit the intervention trigger in the sickness policy and to speak to them informally about their record, unless the trigger was caused by a single bout of influenza. The Bromsgrove District council sickness policy has two potential trigger points for a rolling 6 month period, these being:

- 3 periods of sickness
- 1 period of 6 days or more

Managers have also been asked to tighten up on monitoring for staff hitting trigger points going forward. The Head of Service has arranged for a regular HR presence from Bromsgrove at Wyre Forest House and each Team Manager will meet with the HR officer on a monthly basis to look at any HR issues including any sickness related ones, particularly those hitting the trigger point. This accompanied by a general re-enforcement of the need to do return to work interviews should also create a downward pressure on short-term illness.

ACCOMMODATION

WRS remain located at Wyre Forest House , Finepoint Way, Kidderminster with the contract up for renewal on the 23rd March 2020. The use of flexible and mobile working is generally now the norm, with staff frequently using home as their start and finish point for work in the field. Officers will come into the office two or three days per week to liaise with managers and colleagues or for meetings, and on the other days they work flexibly. The touch down points retained in each of the councils have provided an excellent venue for licensing surgeries and these have been welcomed by the taxi trade in particular. This move has also enabled staff to strike a better work/life balance which is essential for good morale.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION (SERVICE DELIVERY)

Training has now been rolled out to all WRS officers on the Intelligence Operating Model modified to incorporate Environmental Health functions. This has seen a rise in intelligence logs. We rolled out the training to colleagues in the region during 2017 as an income generating activity. It was generally well received, particularly in unitary authorities where EH and Trading Standards work alongside each other. The Intelligence Unit within the service has helped to both direct the work of the

service and to provide information for managers and members on outputs. This will continue to develop during the coming years, even following the departure of Trading Standards from the partnership

Whilst WRS has traditionally undertaken strategic tasking in the form of business planning, the tasking and coordination process was not routinely employed at a tactical level until 2016. Each operational team now has a tactical tasking group that convenes to review on-going activity, consider proposals for new 'project based' work and assess the level of available resource. This approach ensures a range of factors are considered when allocating resource including risk, priorities and available intelligence. This change of thinking is of critical importance as the service places a greater emphasis on taking 'evidence based decisions' and moves towards an intelligence led approach.

In addition to tasking, a service wide tactical assessment is now produced on a six monthly basis and statistical bulletins on a quarterly basis. Other intelligence products have also been commissioned including problem profiles on noise pollution and food hygiene. Training has also been provided to both managerial and operational staff on the components of an intelligence model and the process of developing raw information into finished intelligence (the intelligence cycle) with further training scheduled during 2018.

RISK MANAGEMENT

WRS recognises that the development of policy, delivery of service priorities and the management of its services for six partners attract risk. In reviewing its service risks and the effects of management strategies and policies WRS seeks to:

- Identify, assess and manage risk
- Safeguard the services assets and equipment
- Focus on the delivery of its service to its customers

The Service aims to ensure that Risk Management becomes a natural component of its management process and that when and where appropriate; risks are avoided, reduced, transferred or retained. As part of these arrangements, a WRS risk register has been developed that can be integrated with the partners individual risk registers. This register will be maintained and reviewed periodically to assess current risks and identify forthcoming priorities. The current risk register appears as Appendix 2.

A Business Continuity Plan has been produced to assist WRS Management in managing the effects of any disruptive event or situation. This was adopted at the WRS Management Team meeting on May 16th and will be reviewed annually. A copy has been circulated to officer members of the Joint Board so that this can become part of each partners' arrangements.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

WRS is committed to equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. The service links in with the host Authority's adopted Equality Standard for Local Government as a framework to help embed equality and diversity into everyday aspects of its work.

THE NEXT STEPS

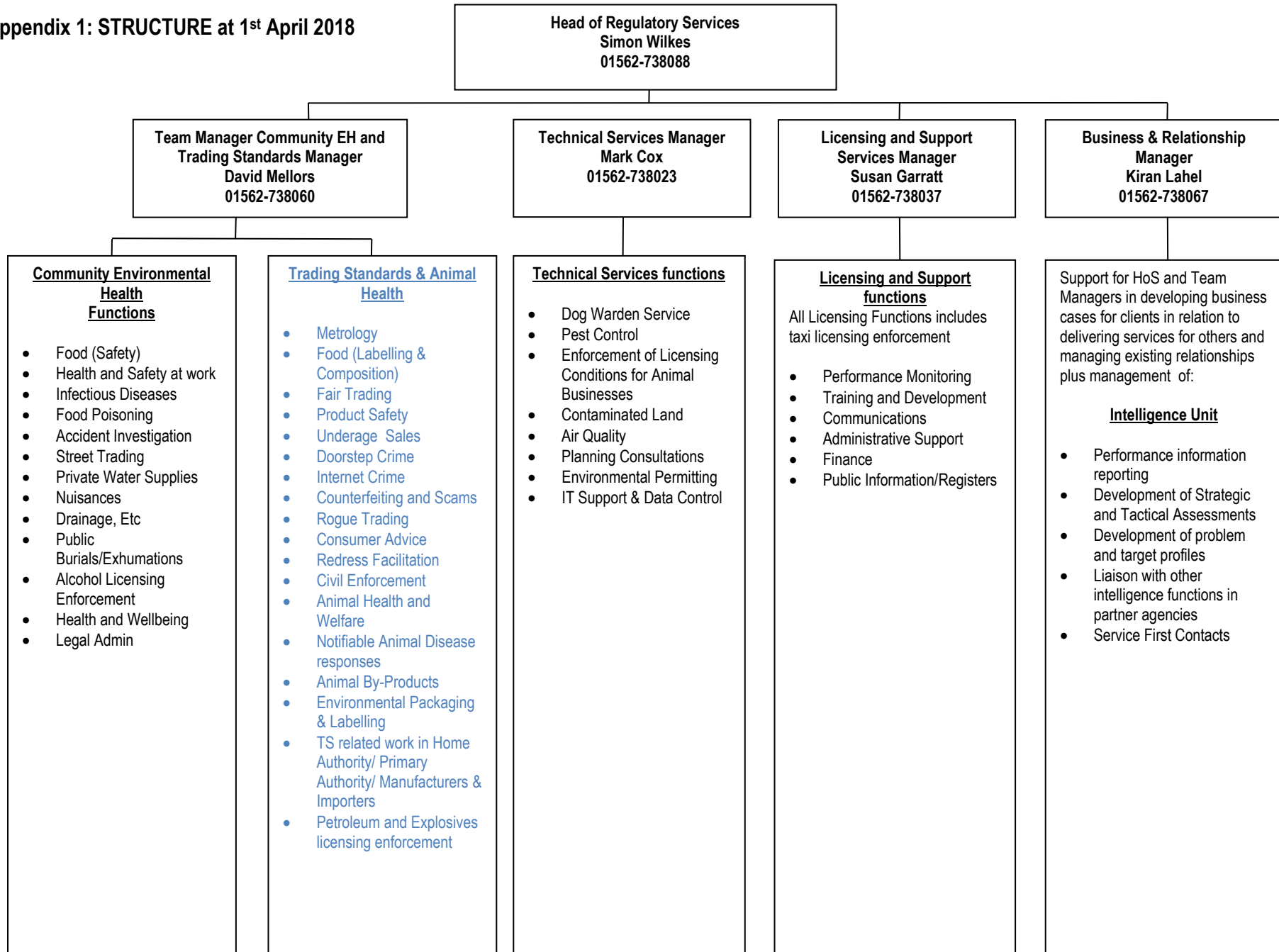
As we head into the next period the service's principle challenge remains maintaining a service delivery model that meets all our partner's requirements as well as creating sufficient efficiency to increase the income derived budget contribution. The development of IT based solutions to promote self-help/ channel shift and increasing the ability of our in-house Duty Officers to resolve problems at first point of contact are key threads in our proposals for increasing efficiency and delivering the service at lower cost. However, the law of diminishing marginal returns does mean that efficiencies will only take us so far in dealing with the inflationary pressures on the service.

As we will continue to be in an ever changing environment, communications with staff will remain a key element of strategy for maintaining performance, so we will maintain our various channels of communication to keep them informed of developments and involve them in the change process.

Key Milestones for 2018/19

- Continued delivery of the WRS Business Plan and our annual operational service plans
- Continue to maintain existing income streams and look at ways of generating income for the service particularly looking to deliver a whole service area for a client either as a contract or potentially a new partner.
- Increase income from grants and other forms like Primary Authority arrangements
- Following our philosophy of continuous improvement, continue to review operations to improve marginal efficiencies,
- Continue the process of channel shift by increasing the customer's ability to use self-help, do transactions on-line and monitor progress of their piece of work on-line.
- Continue to work closely with County Council Trading Standards colleagues by maintaining links that help to support both WRS and the trading standards service to the benefit of local people

Appendix 1: STRUCTURE at 1st April 2018



Appendix 2 – WRS Risk Register

Risk Description	Consequences	When is this likely to happen	Current Position			Control measures
			Likelihood	Impact	Matrix RAG Status	
Loss of Data through IT failures	Disruption to Service Provision. Inability to produce records and data.	On-going	Low	High	Green	Wyre Forest ICT has effective processes and business continuity plans in place. WFDC upgraded VMWare
Issues with the WRS database system	Impact on work planning. Self-help may not enable savings required	On-going	Low	High	Green	Initial implementation is completed. Further development of the system will be treated as business as usual, with priority going to public access and self-help/ self-service to continue the channel shift process. Service website remains key access point. Tested disaster recovery of our Uniform back up and fail over to the business continuity server.. EDRMS upgrade completed proposed 2018..
Effective and efficient Business Continuity arrangements in place	Disruption to service if e.g. Major Power failures or other reasons that access to Wyre Forest House is not possible.	On-going	Very Low	Medium	Green	Staff are equipped for mobile/home working. Touchdown stations available in partner council locations. Working from WFDC depot successfully tested over Christmas period.
Maintain our capacity to achieve service delivery	Disruption to service e.g. Major staff sickness (e.g. flu pandemic) or Unable to recruit or retain suitably qualified staff.	On-going	Low	Medium	Amber	In such event, service priorities to be managed and partners informed of any changes to service. Consultants are available to provide short term cover and this has worked well where we have used them to cover peak demand periods. However, having taken on contracts with additional authorities the demand has increased and neighbouring authorities have lost the ability to be able to assist with technical specialisms. We are active within regional and sub-regional groups to share resources if required. Effective training and development processes are in place to ensure recruitment and retention of staff. There is increased training budget pressure, reduced technical knowledge in neighbouring authorities and increased importance in maintaining heightened skills for contractual obligations and commercial edge. Regular inventory and maintenance of equipment. In future budget for replace may be an issue but would be a relatively small amount for partners to share.
Pest contractors cease	Disruption to service.	On-going	Low	High	Green	New framework contract has 6 pest control suppliers

operations.	Negative media coverage. Increased public health risks					so the loss of one allows work to be moved to the others.
Effective and efficient contract arrangement for dog control	Disruption to service if no kennels available. Negative media coverage. Increased public health risks	On-going	Low	High	Amber	Budget available to buy in use of other private sector providers in short term. Contracts tendered. The Dog Warden contracts are robust but we have one less kennel contractor but an additional three District Councils that we provide the service for. Work for other Public Sector clients are restricted to one kennelling provider raising the risk this element poses.
Hosting support does not deliver necessary financial and HR support to ensure efficient management	Efficiency of management reduced; staffing issues remain unaddressed and performance suffers	On-going	Low	High	Amber	Some continuing issues around access to the financial system from Wyre Forest house, meaning managers are reliant on host finance officers for financial reporting. ICT team from WFDC and BDC continue to work to resolve the issue
One or more partners continue to be under great financial pressure and may consider alternatives to the partnership to deliver their service	Creates reputational issues for remaining partners and increases the need to manage overheads. Difficulties in delivering highly varied levels of service	On-going	Low-Medium	High	Amber	New legal agreement limits variations in contribution before partners have to move to contractual relationship. Leanness of organisation minimises overheads and focuses resource at the front line. Growth strategy should generate income to support partners in the future. Some reputational damage and perceived loss of commercial skills from the County Council withdrawing from the partnership.
Robust arrangements in place in relation to obtaining legal advice and monitoring legislative changes.	Loss of cases is costly and damages reputation.	On-going	Low	Medium	Green	Continued close working with BDC legal team and other partners who don't use BDC for advocacy. Technical and legal training days for staff. Difficulty in keeping informed of Case Law developments. Membership and attendance of Officer Technical Groups outside the County would assist.
Service provision complies with Government requirements	Adverse comments following audits e.g. FSA Intervention by Government bodies i.e. FSA, whilst highly unlikely, is damaging to reputation.	On-going	Low	High	Amber	Limited detail of what statutory minima are. LGA clearly aware of impact of budget reductions on regulation and has made it clear Government cannot expect what it had previously. Fewer interventions/ audits by government. Service has developed systems that follow the principles of the requirements of bodies like FSA so can show some level of compliance. WRS principle of moving away from rigid inspection programme of Food Standards Code (as approved by WRS Joint Board) to intelligence led interventions is compliant with Food Safety Act albeit not as FSA would be able to sanction. Environmental reporting for Local Air Quality Management, Pollution Prevention and Control and Private Water Supply Inspections to Defra and DWI have received positive responses with no issues of concern raised.

<p>Failure to deliver external contract work at the level expected by the business or local authority with whom we have the contract</p>	<p>Damage to reputation, loss of future income streams, financial impact of paying damages</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Ensure contract negotiations are clear on performance criteria and these are clearly recorded in the final documentation. Monthly reviews against performance criteria. Select staff to ensure competence of those undertaking work outside Worcestershire. Maintain strong links with the customer's monitoring staff. Intervene early with corrective action</p>
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Appendix 3: Detailed out-turn for Regulatory Services 2017/18

	Full year Budget	Expenditure to Mar 18	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Salary	2,478	2,370	-108
Agency Staff	0	65	65
Employee Insurance	40	46	6
	2,518	2,481	-37
Rent	54	53	-1
Cleaning	1	1	0
	55	54	-1
Vehicle Hire	12	4	-8
Vehicle Fuel	8	3	-5
Road Fund Tax	1	1	0
Vehicle Insurance	5	5	0
Vehicle Maintenance	3	4	1
Car Allowances	87	68	-19
	116	85	-31
Furniture & Equipment	30	51	21
Clothes, uniforms and laundry	3	1	-2
Printing & Photocopying	17	22	5
Postage	11	12	1
ICT	40	50	10
Telephones	23	12	-11

Training & Seminars	24	20	-4
Insurance	4	4	0
Third Party Payments			
Support Service Recharges	100	100	0
ICT Hosting	44	44	0
	296	316	20

Dog Warden	145	132	-13
Pest Control	46	56	10
Licensing	9	22	13
Other contractors/consultants	3	4	1
Water Safety	5	5	0
Food Safety	2	3	1
Environmental Protection	12	59	47
Taxi Tests	30	36	6
Grants / Subscriptions	11	11	0
Advertisng, Publicity & Promotions	6	2	-4
CRB Checks	25	27	2
	294	357	63

Income			
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-254	-325	-71

Income Total	-254	-325	-71
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Total Budget / Spend	3,025	2,968	-57
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Appendix 4: 3-year budgets 2018/19 to 2020/21

Account description

Budget 2018/19 Budget 2019/20 Budget 2020/21

Employees

	£000's	£000's	£000's
Monthly salaries	2,574	2,643	2,711
Training for professional qualification	2	2	2
Medical fees (employees')	2	2	2
Employers' liability insurance	16	16	16
Employees' professional subscriptions	3	3	3
Sub-Total – Employees	2,597	2,666	2,734

Premises

Rents	52	52	52
Room hire	2	2	2
Sub-Total – Premises	54	54	54

Transport

Vehicle repairs/maint'ce	3	3	3
Diesel fuel	8	8	8
Licences	1	1	1
Contract hire of vehicles	4	4	4
Vehicle insurances	3	3	3
Van Lease	9	9	9
Fares & Car Parking	5	5	5
Car allowances	82	82	82
Sub-Total – Transport	115	115	115

Supplies & Service

Equipment – Purchase, rental & maintenance	19	19	19
Materials	9	9	9
Clothing, uniforms & Laundry	2	2	2

Training fees	22	22	22
General insurances	30	30	30
Printing and stationery	18	18	18
Books and publications	2	2	2
Postage/packaging	11	11	11
ICT	40	40	40
Telephones	21	21	21
Taxi Tests	30	30	30
CRB Checks (taxi)	25	25	25
Support service recharges	100	100	100
Support service recharges – ICT	44	44	44

Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	373	373	373
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Contractors

Consultants, contractors fee's, SLA's	223	223	223
Advertising (general)	3	3	3
Grants and subscriptions	11	11	11
Marketing/promotion/publicity	2	2	2

Sub-Total – Contractors	239	239	239
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Income

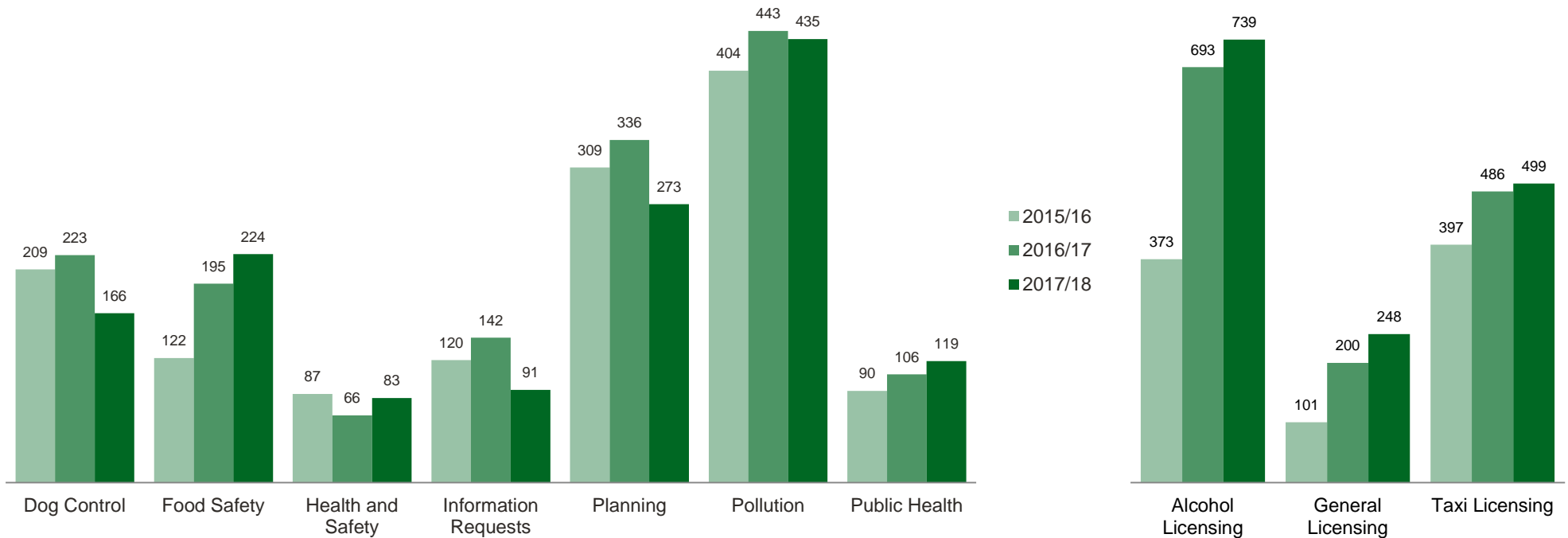
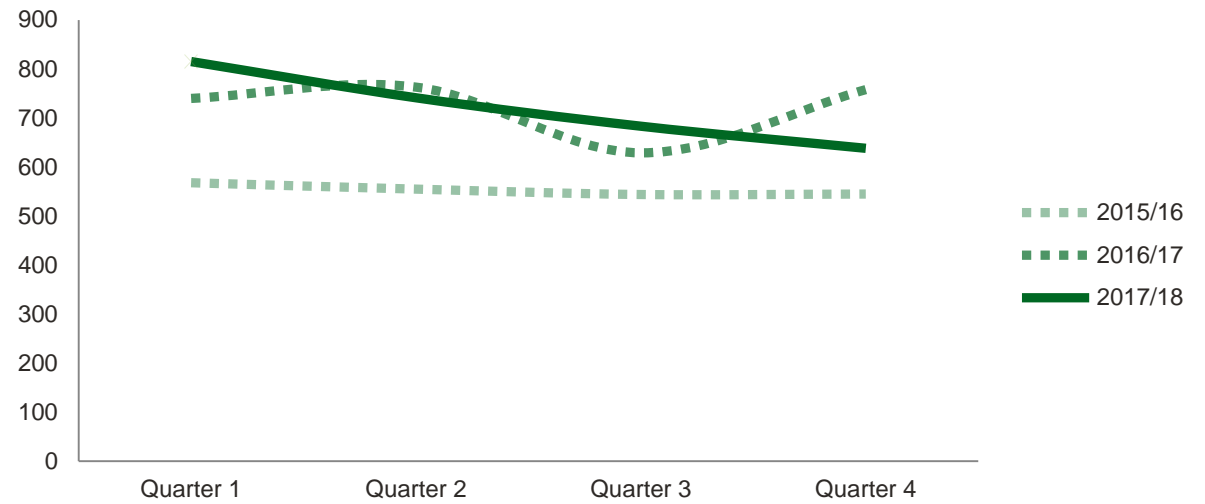
Sources including Grants, nuisance work, food training, contaminated land, stray dogs, sewer baiting etc	-327	-327	-327
Additional Income to be found due to unavoidable salary pressures	-26	-95	-163
Sub-Total – Income	-353	-422	-490

DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP BUDGET going forward	3,025	3,025	3,025
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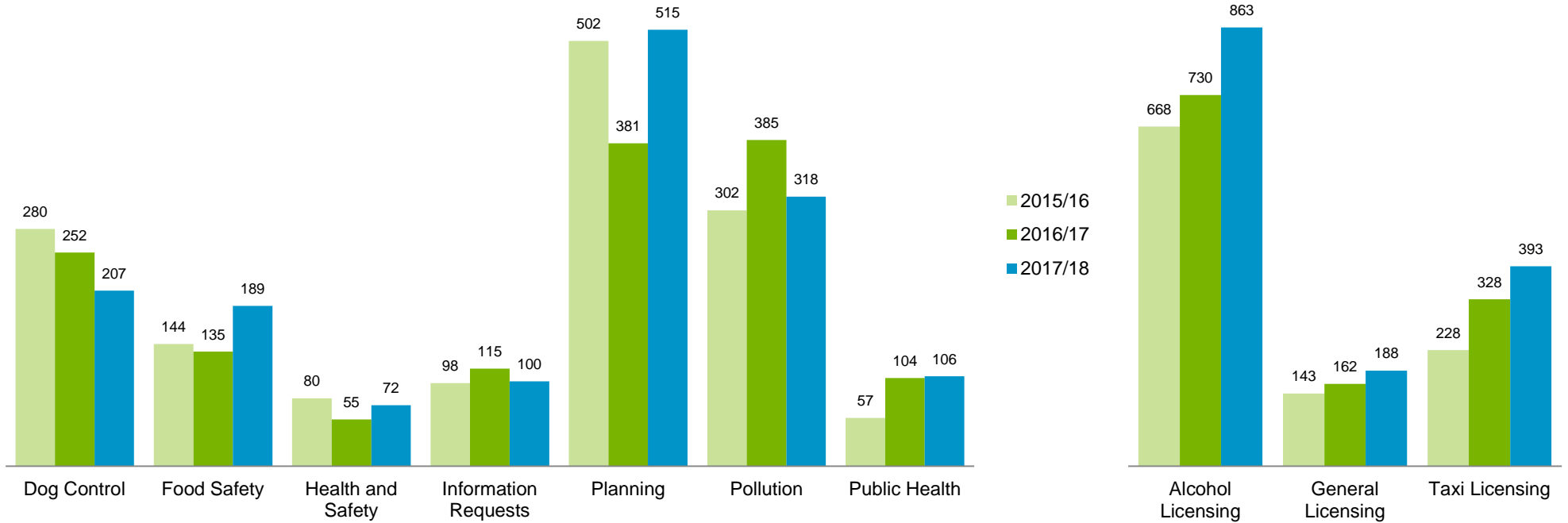
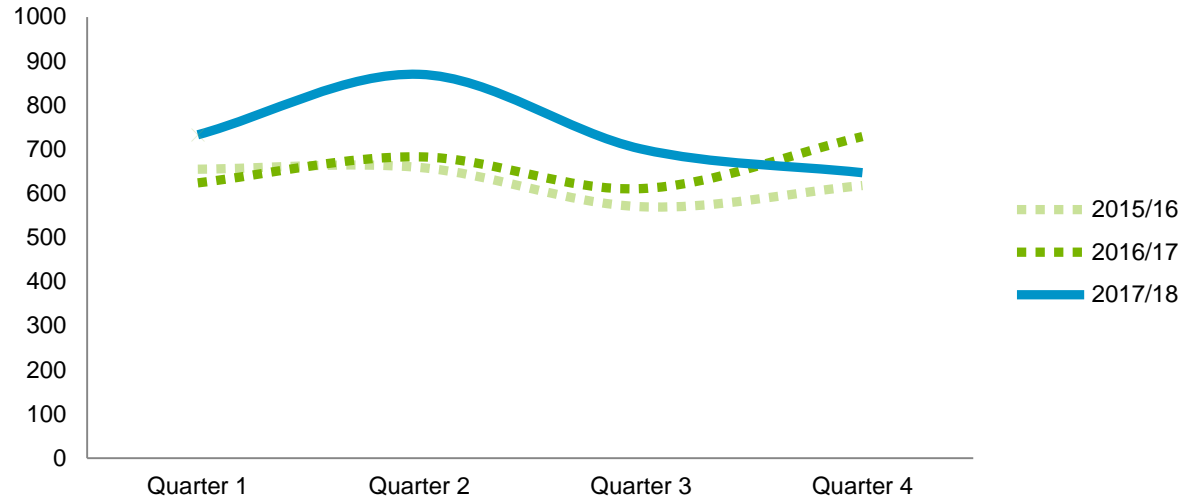
Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners



The data on this page relates to **Environmental Health** and **Licensing** complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of **Bromsgrove**.

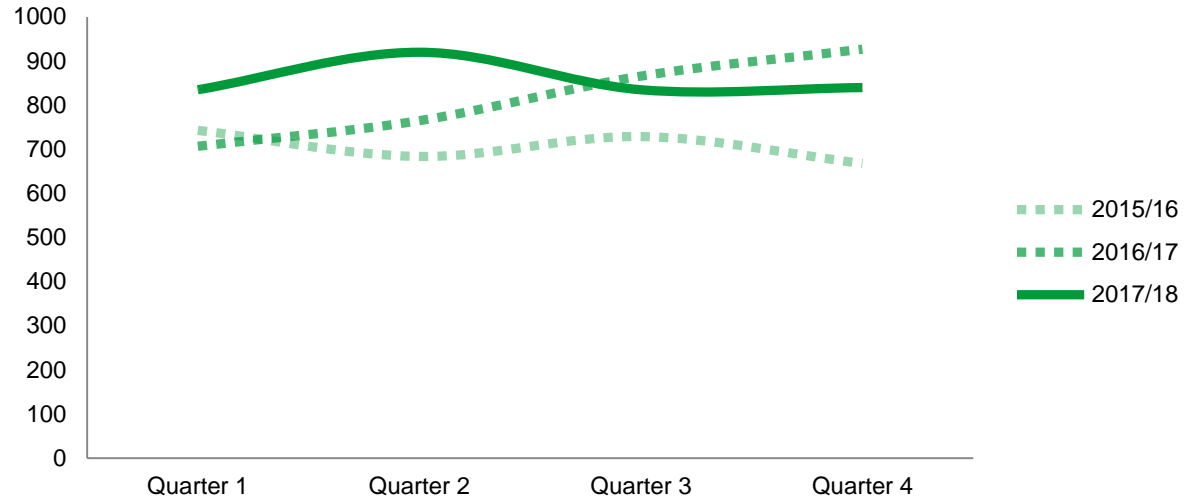


The data on this page relates to **Environmental Health** and **Licensing** complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of **Malvern Hills**.

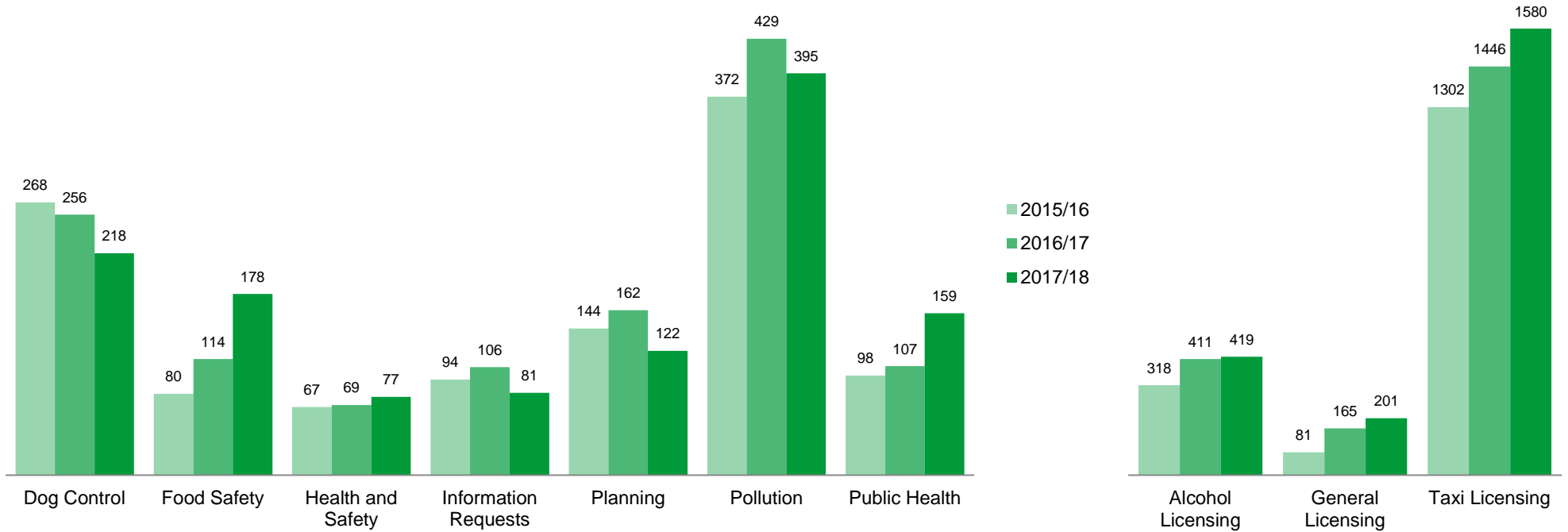


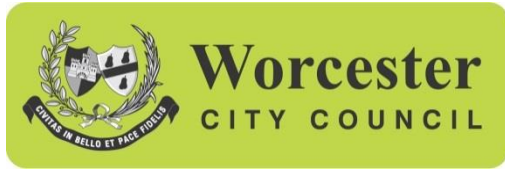


The data on this page relates to **Environmental Health** and **Licensing** complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of **Redditch**.

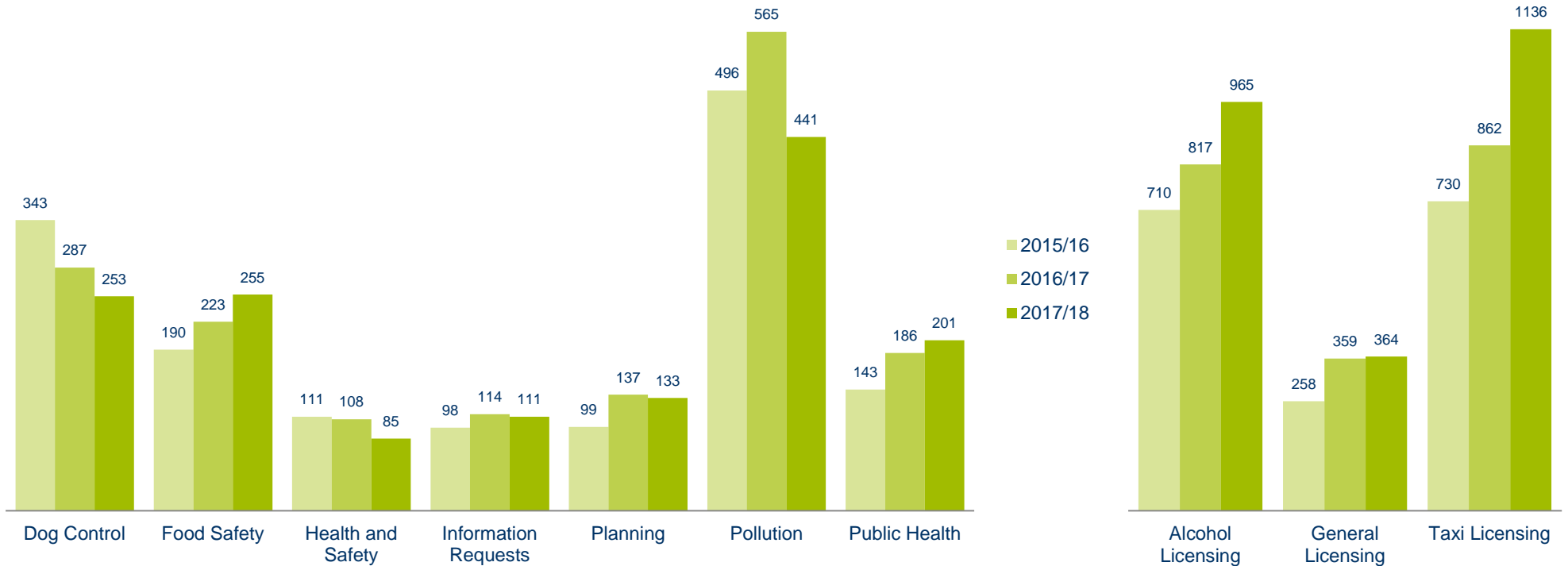
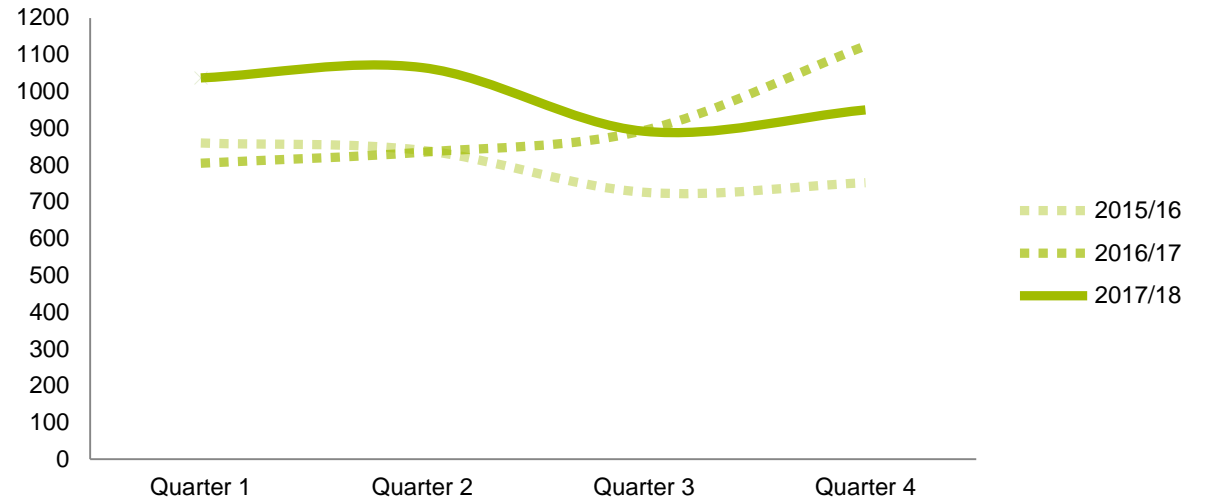


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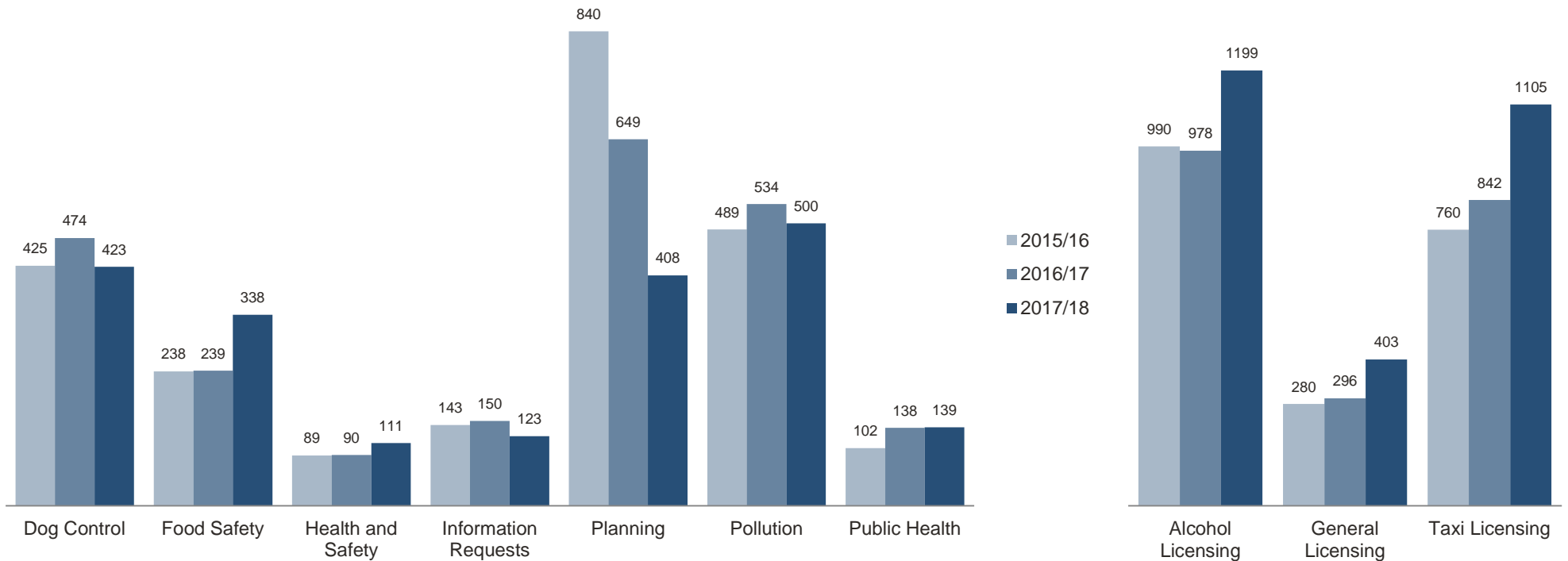
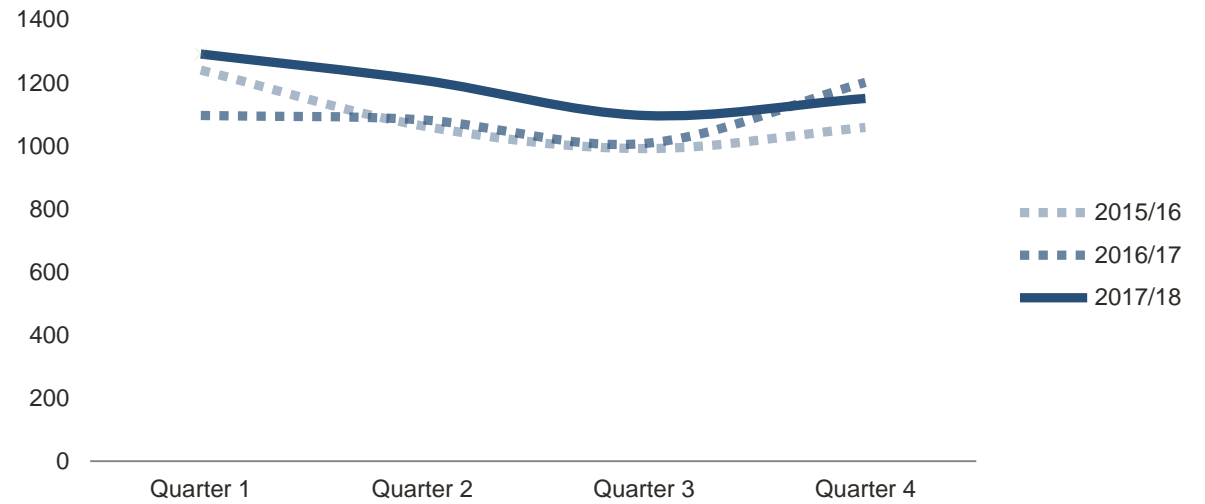




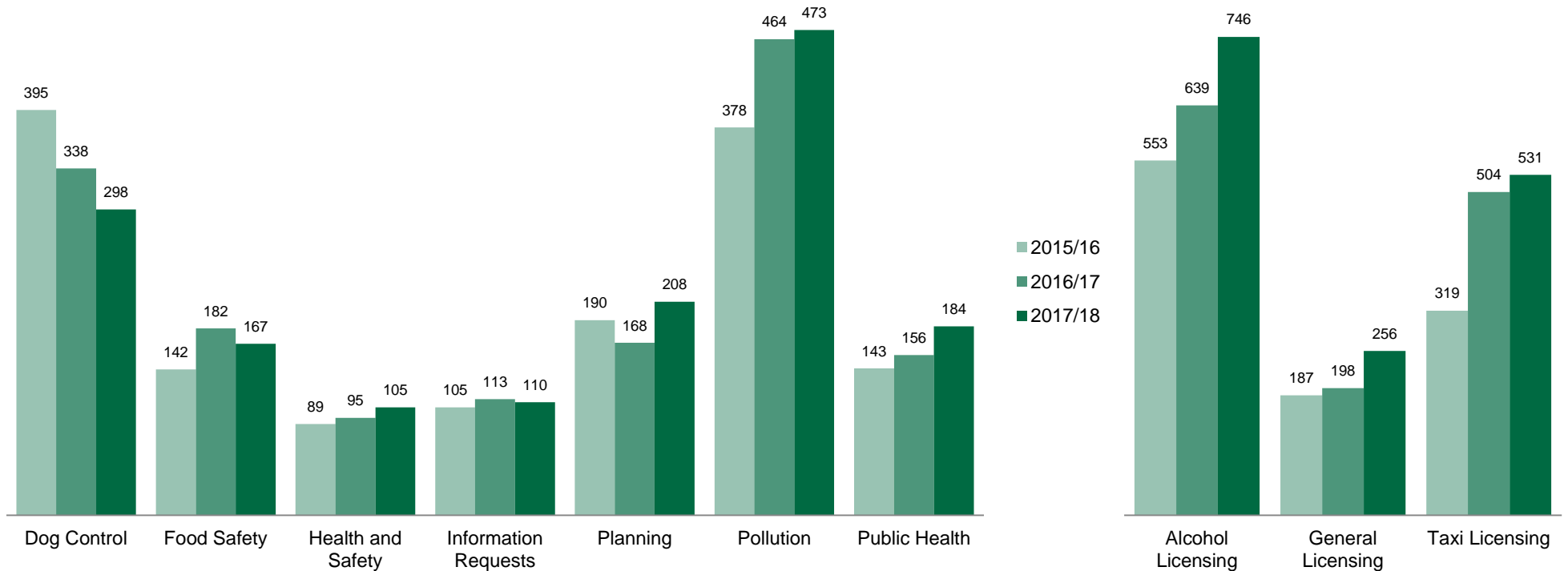
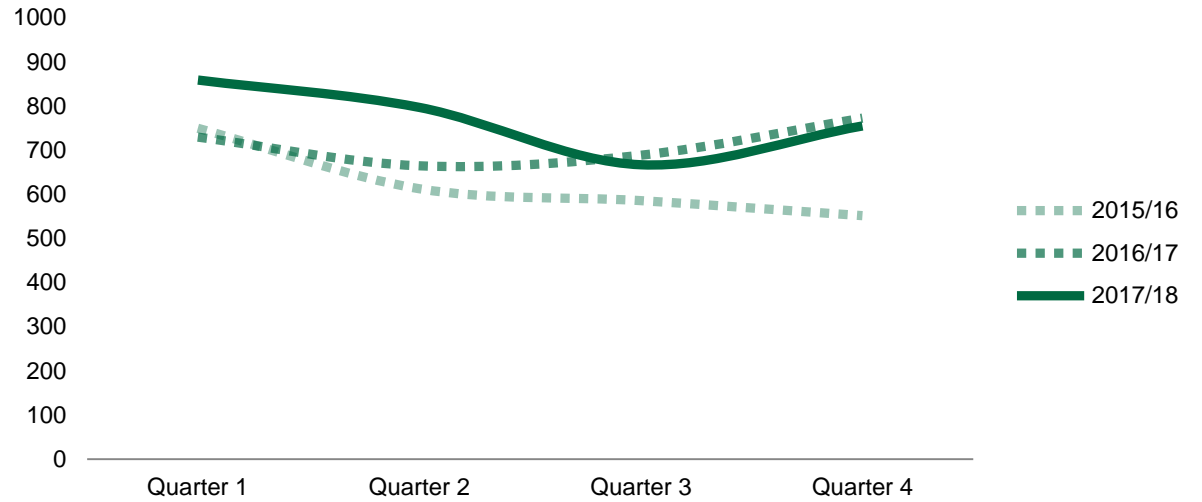
The data on this page relates to **Environmental Health** and **Licensing** complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of **Worcester City**.



The data on this page relates to **Environmental Health** and **Licensing** complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of **Wychavon**.



The data on this page relates to **Environmental Health** and **Licensing** complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of **Wyre Forest**.



Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Supporting and protecting you

WRS BOARD
21st June 2018

Food Hygiene “Triple Five Scheme”

Recommendation

That members note the report

Introduction

For many businesses WRS is still perceived as primarily a regulator, even though we have long adopted the principle of supporting businesses to thrive. Whilst we do not precisely know what the drivers are that help make for successful sustainable compliance, the figures we often quote to members are a success story. At the end of 2017-18 we had only 68 businesses rated at Level L0-L2 on the Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS) indicating that they were not broadly compliant with food safety requirements from a FHRS database of some 4,700 premises.

Food safety is a high profile issue with much TV and newspaper coverage and despite such a high level of compliance, we seem to spend a lot of time thinking about, and rightly taking action against, poor performers. This helps demonstrate to businesses that we are fair but firm in our dealings with the food business sector.

Report

With promoting economic prosperity as one of our key drivers, coupled with excellent county wide compliance, it is proposed that we should shift some of our focus to Rewarding and Promoting our Good Businesses. Through our Food Lead Officer we are planning to introduce an innovative “Triple 5 Award” (working title only) for food businesses that have scored three consecutive L5 (Level 5 is the highest attainable score in the FHRS) inspection scores. This would cover a period of approximately 5-6 years.

Current data shows that just 234 premises would qualify for the award as proposed. This represents approximately 5% of our database and covers all sectors from independent businesses to chains, so it really would single out those who are committed to maintaining their standards.

The Partner split of businesses which would currently be eligible is as follows:

Bromsgrove	21
Malvern	45
Redditch	27
Worcester	39
Wychavon	48
Wyre Forest	54

The Award would be withdrawn if the FHRS score for a business drops below L5 for a year.

It is hoped that this approach would both recognise the achievements of these businesses in maintaining standards but also incentivise others to follow suit. The more businesses can demonstrate their ability to maintain the highest of standards, the less the service needs to consider intervening in their activities. At L5, compliance levels are well above minimum and systems should be in place to ensure compliance continues without the need for intervention.

Brief Overview of How the Award may Operate

Data would be drawn from the Uniform inspection database at appropriate intervals; current thinking is that this should be every quarter.

Those achieving the triple L5 score would be invited to an appropriate venue with Member representative(s) of the Partner Authority to be presented with a certificate. We would offer the session out to the press to cover the event directly, backing this up with press releases and photographs of our own.

If they continue to maintain the L5 standard we would issue a Plus 1, Plus 2, Plus 3 updated certificate post officer inspection visit. This would be for up to 3 further visits which would cover some 10 years, at which point a separate acknowledgement may be required for such an achievement.

Introducing an Award this year fits in well with our revised food safety website which will go live this summer. First event(s) could be held from September onward with a soft launch/event in each District for those businesses on the database found to be meeting the requirements at the nominated date.

The proposed scheme does not incur high resource demand nor does it need major operational officer involvement. The award events may attract some limited refreshment costs.



It will need initial set up time but once the model is established it is anticipated that it should be easy to run as part of WRS “business as usual”.

Benefits to WRS and District Partners

1. Reassure public of high standards of food safety in Worcestershire;
2. Supports every business size and type in database in addition to the independent food and drink sector through WLEP funded Worcestershire Food and Drink project;
3. Increase reputation for both WRS and Districts that we support our food businesses;
4. Positive publicity through all forms of media;
5. Use as a further tool to increase compliance;
6. Possible source of income if businesses require advice how to reach and maintain L5.

Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications, although a light touch, less intensive inspection regime would ensure that resources could be even better targeted at problem premises.

Sustainability

The scheme, once up and running, should be sustainable and readily maintained.

Contact Points

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services
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Background Papers

None



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