

WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER 2019, AT 5:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors J. Grubb (Chairman), A. D. Kent (during Minute No's 19/19 to 23/19), H. J. Jones, J. Gallagher (substituting for Councillor J. Raine), T. Wells (during Minute No's part of 22/19 to 23/19). J. Squires, A. Stafford (substituting for Councillor L. Griffiths), E. Stokes, D. Morris, H. Dyke and P. Dyke

Partner Officers: Mr. P. Merrick, Malvern Hills District Council and Wychavon District Council, Mr. L. Griffiths, Worcester City Council and Mr. M. Parker, Wyre Forest District Council

Officers: Mr. S. Wilkes, Mr. R. Keyte, Mr. C. Forrester, Mr. M. Cox, Mr. D. Mellors and Mrs. P. Ross.

19/19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Raine, Malvern Hills District Council and L. Griffiths, Worcester City Council, with Councillors J. Gallagher and A. Stafford present as substitute members respectively.

20/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

21/19 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 26th September 2019, were submitted.

Councillor H. Jones, Bromsgrove District Council commented that she had not received a response to the two queries that she had raised at Minute Number 14/19.

The Head of Regulatory Services responded to both queries.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 26th September 2019, be approved as a correct record.

Due to the late commencement of the meeting and having been informed that two Members of the Board had to leave the meeting early, the Chairman altered the running order of the Agenda, in order for the Board to consider Agenda Item 5, Worcestershire Regulatory Services Budgets 2020/21 – 2022/23 and Agenda Item 4, Worcestershire Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring April – September 2019 first.

22/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUDGETS - 2020/21 - 2022/23

The Financial Services Manager, Bromsgrove District Council, introduced the report and in doing so drew Members' attention to the tabled amended Recommendations; and clarified that the vote was by majority and not unanimous, as detailed in the report.

In response to questions from Members:

The Financial Services Manager clarified that, the 1% pay award for 2021/22 and 2022/23, had been included in the budget; and was based on the pay award assumption made by the host authority Bromsgrove District Council (BDC). The Head of Regulatory Services further commented that BDC usually worked to a 1% assumption, however, moving forward he was happy to work with the Financial Services Manager to look at a higher level of pay award for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and the potential impact on WRS; with an information report being presented to a future meeting of the Board.

The Head of Regulatory Services explained that not all partner authorities included the taxi test within their licensing fees, some kept the taxi test fee separate from the licensing fee; hence taxi tests being included in the Supplies and Service section on Appendix 1 to the report.

The Financial Services Manager agreed to amend Appendix 1 to the report, in order to include the 2019/2020 figures. The Democratic Services Officer to be tasked to ensure that the amended appendix, Appendix 1, and the amended Recommendations tabled at the meeting to be provided to each partner authority, in order to be included in their budget setting and decision making process.

RECOMMENDED that partner authorities approve the following for 2020/21:

1.1 The base revenue partner contributions for 2020/21-2022/23

Bromsgrove District Council	£439k
Malvern Hills District Council	£386k
Redditch Borough Council	£529k
Worcester City Council	£499k
Wychavon District Council	£701k
Wyre Forest District Council	£463k

Total	£3,017k
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1.2 The partner percentage allocations for 2020/21 onwards:-

	%
Bromsgrove District Council	14.55
Malvern Hills District Council	12.79
Redditch Borough Council	17.53
Worcester City Council	16.54
Wychavon District Council	23.24
Wyre Forest District Council	15.35

1.3 The additional partner liabilities for 2020/21 in relation to unavoidable salary pressure and increase in WRS pension forward funding rate.

Bromsgrove District Council	£13k
Malvern Hills District Council	£11k
Redditch Borough Council	£16k
Worcester City Council	£15k
Wychavon District Council	£21k
Wyre Forest District Council	£14k
Total	£90k

1.4 The additional partner liabilities for 2020/21 in relation to three additional Technical Officers.

Council	Tech Officer Primary Authority – 3 Months £000	Tech Officer Animal Activity £000	Tech Officer Gull Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	1	6	

Malvern Hills District Council	1	9	
Redditch Borough Council	1	1	
Worcester City Council	1	4	30
Wychavon District Council	2	9	
Wyre Forest District Council	1	4	
Total	7	33	30

- 1.5 The 2020/21 gross expenditure budget of £3,547k as shown in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- 1.6 The 2020/21 income budget of £530k as shown in Appendix 3 to the report.

23/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE MONITORING APRIL - SEPT 2019

The Board considered the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Revenue Monitoring report, April to September 2019.

The Financial Services Manager, Bromsgrove District Council (BDC), introduced the report and in doing so highlighted that the revenue report as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, showed a projected outturn 2019/2020 of an £18k deficit. WRS officers would continue to work on income generation and would do their utmost to mitigate this excess as much as possible by the end of the financial year. It was appreciated that this was an estimation to the year end based on the assumptions, as detailed on page 11 of the main agenda report.

The Financial Services Manager, BDC reported that if April to September 2019 spend on pest control continued on the same trend for the rest of the year, that there would be an overspend on this service of £19k. WRS officers would continue to monitor and analysis this spend and advise of any changes in quarter 3.

The actual bereavements costs for April to September 2019 to be funded by partners, were charged on an as and when basis. Due to the nature of the charge it was not possible to project a final outturn figure.

Appendix 2 to the report detailed the income achieved by WRS from April to September 2019.

With regard to questions raised on the additional Animal Activity licensing, the Head of Regulatory Services briefly explained that there had been an additional £23k worth of vet inspections, which was fully recovered.

The licensing of various animal-related establishments, Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 had come into effect on 1st October 2018, with specific procedural documents and guidance documents published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

As a result of these new regulations a large number of licences already in force under the previous licensing regimes expired in December 2018 and new licence applications were also received. Each application made under the new regulations required an inspection to be undertaken, with some inspections requiring a vet to be in attendance.

The Head of Regulatory Services further responded to a question raised with regard to 'Works in Default'.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, responded to questions with regard to the Dog Warden and explained that WRS had recently employed 2 new dog wardens who were very active and worked later into the evenings, therefore taking away some of the work previously carried out by 'out of hours' contractors.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the final financial position for the period April – September 2019 be noted;
- (b) that partner councils be informed of their liabilities for 2019-20 in relation to Bereavements, as follows; and

Council	April – Sept 2019 Actual for Bereavements £000
Redditch Borough Council	3
Malvern Hills District Council	2
Worcester City Council	10
Bromsgrove District Council	7
Total	22

- (c) that partner councils be informed of their liabilities for 2019-20 in relation to Pest Control, as follows; and

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn Recharge in relation to Pest Control 2019/20 £000
Redditch Borough Council	11
Wychavon District Council	7
Wyre Forest District Council	1
Total	19

(d) that partner councils be informed of their liabilities for 2019-20 in relation to three additional Technical Officers, as follows:

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2019/20 Tech Officer Primary Authority £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2019/20 Tech Officer Animal Activity £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2019/20 Tech Officer Gull Control £000
Redditch Borough Council	5	1	
Malvern Hills District Council	4	9	
Worcester City Council	5	3	30
Bromsgrove District Council	4	6	
Wychavon District Council	6	8	
Wyre Forest District Council	4	4	
Total	28	31	30

24/19

ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE DATA - QUARTER 2

The Environmental Health & Trading Standards Manager Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the Activity and Performance Data, Quarter 2 report.

The Environmental Health & Trading Standards Manager WRS, reported that the number of food safety interventions had remained on par with previous years. Complaints and enquiries were down over the summer compared with previous years and that there had been a notable dip in August, when officers would normally expect to

see a peak. This had enabled officers to task allergen work into the programme.

Health and Safety enquiries and complaints/service requests remained broadly in line with 2018/2019. The greater proportion of accidents related to injuries to members of the public or injuries to a worker being incapacitated for more than seven consecutive days. Several resource intensive formal investigations were ongoing with the likelihood of legal proceedings.

The number of requests for support from planning colleagues remained significantly up in quarter 2. During the last quarter the team reviewed and provided advice on over 500 potential sites for Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment to inform the review of the South Worcestershire Development Plan.

Quarter 2 saw the Director of Public Health, Highways, WRS and County and district Sustainability team representatives attend the first comprehensive air quality action forum for Worcestershire. This was an exciting development and was the first time that all stakeholders had committed to having a role in improving health and air quality.

The Dog Warden Team had had another busy quarter with a total of 418 dogs being reported to WRS as strays. Over 300 were reunited with their owners and a further 67 were successfully rehomed by WRS through reputable charities. Sadly 8 of the dogs were welfare cases, where possible improvement notices were issued to owners. In addition to this a further 9 dogs required veterinary treatment for other ailments.

In general WRS had performed well against the agreed indicators. The percentage of service requests where a resolution was achieved to customer satisfaction was higher than it had been for some time at over 73%. Business satisfaction remained excellent at over 98%. The proportion of people who felt better equipped to deal with issues in the future following WRS interventions was also up on previous quarters at 63%.

The processing measure for taxi licences was over 75% within 5 working days and were all issued before the licences expired. This was slightly higher in the past so officers would look at to why this has slipped. The figure for defective vehicles whilst in service as taxis was similar to the figures at the end of last year (30 compared to 44), so slightly up on the half year figure last year (17). The Licensing Team have spoken with the garages carrying out the tests and have emphasised the need to feed this information back to Licensing officers as it was key intelligence as to how well drivers were maintaining their vehicles.

Sickness figures had increased slightly to 2.9 days per full time equivalent (PFTE), compared to 2.8 (PFTE) last year.

The income figure as a proportion of budget was 5.3% for 2019/2020. As previously highlighted WRS had yet to fill the gap left by the loss of one of the dog related contracts that was worth £60,000 per annum.

RESOLVED that the Activity and Performance Data report for Quarter 2, be noted; and that Board Members use the contents of the report to inform each of their partner authorities.

25/19

INFORMATION REPORT - AIR QUALITY UPDATE 2019

The Technical Services Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), presented the Air Quality Update 2019, information report.

The Local Air Quality Management process (LAQM) was the Local Authority role with air quality that was set out in PART IV of the Environment Act 1995 and subsequent Technical Guidance and Policy documents. There were a number of health based objectives for pollutants but for Worcestershire it was nitrogen dioxide which was the primary pollutant of concern.

The objectives for that pollutant were an annual average of 40 microgrammes per metre cubed for a residential property or school and a one-hour average of 200 microgrammes per metre cubed for a property where someone would realistically spend an hour, such as outdoor seating of a café or a playground. WRS reported annually to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on behalf of all Districts on the current situation.

There were currently 7 AQMAs in Worcestershire. The focus of DEFRA Guidance to Local Authorities had been aimed at District and County Council's together with Public Health colleagues to deliver the measures to improve air quality that were included in their local Action Plans.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, drew Members' attention to the summarised annual monitoring data for 2018 for each partner authority, as detailed on pages 66 and 67 of the main agenda pack.

The actual monitoring results for each district were reported annually in an 'Annual Status Report' (ASR) submitted to DEFRA. The report was produced between April and June with the previous year's monitoring data, following adjustment for location (to represent relevant exposure), analytical bias and any missing data (to represent a full year's worth of data). The ASR also provided details of all of the current measures in the Action Plan to address poor air quality. DEFRA recommended that 3 years' worth of robust data should be collated.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, responded to questions from Members with regard to their specific authorities' information as detailed on pages 66 and 67 of the main agenda pack.

The Technical Services Manager, WRS, briefly explained the European emission standards, Euro 4 for petrol driven vehicles and Euro 6 for diesel driven vehicles.

RESOLVED that the Air Quality Update 2019, Information Report be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.45 p.m.

Chairman