WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2026
AT 4.30 P.M.

PARKSIDE, MARKET STREET, BROMSGROVE, WORCESTERSHIRE, B61 8DA

MEMBERS: Chairman: Councillor M. Dormer, Redditch Borough Council
Vice- Chairman: Councillor R. Deller, Wychavon District Council
Councillor K. Taylor, Bromsgrove District Council
Councillor H. J. Jones, Bromsgrove District Council
Councillor J. Owenson, Malvern Hills District Council
Councillor C. Palmer, Malvern Hills District Council
Councillor N. Pioli, Redditch Borough Council
Councillor R. Uddal, Worcester City Council
Councillor K. Holmes, Worcester City Council
Councillor M. Goodge, Wychavon District Council
Councillor T. Onslow, Wyre Forest District Council
Councillor I. Hardiman, Wyre Forest District Council

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes

2. 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.

3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 25th June 2026. (Pages 5 - 14)

4. Activity and Performance Data Quarter 1 (2026/27) (Pages 15 - 46)

5. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring April- June 2026 (Pages 47 - 54)

6. Trading Standards Changes (Pages 55 - 58)

7. Safety at Sports Grounds (Pages 59 - 66)

8. Animal Licensing (Pages 67 - 72)

9. 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.

J. Leach
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

16th September 2026

If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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Democratic Services Officer

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If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers, please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.

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Notes:

Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.

WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY 25TH JUNE 2026, AT 4.44 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Dormer (Chairman), R. Deller (Vice- Chairman), M. Goodge, I. Hardiman, K. Holmes, T. Onslow, J. Owenson and K. Taylor.

Officers: Mr. S. Wilkes, Mr. J. Walton, Mrs. M. Patel, Ms. K. Lahel, Mr M. Cox, Mr. D. Mellors, Mr. G. Day and Mr. J. Swann.

Partner Officers: Mr. J. Leach (Virtual – Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils), Mr. I. Miller (Virtual - Wyre Forest District Council), Mr. I. Edwards (Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils) and Ms. S. Green (Worcester City Council).

The meeting commenced upon achieving a quoracy of Board Members.

1/26 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

As this meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board was the first held during the municipal year of 2026/ 27, Members present were required to elect a Chairman.

RESOLVED that Councillor M. Dormer (Redditch Borough Council) be elected Chairman of the Board for the municipal year of 2026/ 27.

2/26 **ELECTION OF VICE- CHAIRMAN**

As this meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board was the first held during the municipal year of 2026/ 27, Members present were required to elect a Vice- Chairman.

RESOLVED that Councillor R. Deller (Wychavon District Council) be elected Vice- Chairman of the Board for the municipal year of 2026/ 27.

3/26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H. Jones (Bromsgrove District Council), C. Palmer (Malvern Hills District Council), N. Pioli (Redditch Borough Council) and R. Udall (Worcester City Council).

4/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5/26 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 19th February 2026, were submitted for Members consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board meeting held on 19th February 2026, be approved as a correct record.

6/26 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE MONITORING APRIL - MARCH 2026 AND ANNUAL RETURN**

The Board received an overview of the Revenue Monitoring report for the April 2025- March 2026 period and Annual Return.

The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) and Redditch Borough Council (RBC), presented the report and highlighted that the report presented the final financial position which showed a final outturn surplus of £67,487. This figure, which represented 1.6% of the annual budget, was as a result of:

- Lower salary costs than budget forecasts originally accounted for due to departmental vacancies and delayed recruitment exercises.
- Income had been higher than predicted income by £517,000.

Members were informed as detailed in the report (page 21 of the main agenda pack), that it was being requested that the final surplus amount of £67,487 be added to the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) reserves; in order to assist with any upcoming cost pressures. Should Board Members reject this request, then the surplus amount would be refunded to Partners.

It was acknowledged that cost pressures that could arise in the upcoming year included:

- Salary increases were likely to exceed the budgeted amount of 3%, as the proposed salary offer had been rejected by the trade unions.
- Expenditure related to training for Officers to ensure staff adhered to statutory training requirements as stipulated by the Code of Practice for Environmental Health Officers.
- Possible legislation changes to Hackney and Private Hire vehicle controls, as laid out in the King's Speech.

The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, BDC and RBC, outlined that some figures detailed in the reports were incorrect, and provided the Board with corrections, namely:

- The Board had regard to the WRS Annual Return 2025/ 26 (Appendix 3) at Page 29 of the main agenda pack:

  - Income received from partners via Technical Pollution Work (Worcester City) was £44,863.
  - The income received from all partners totalled £5,189,170.
  - Other income categorised as 'County – Management, Administration and Legal etc' was £80,033.
  - The other income totalled £638,608.
- The figures quoted in WRS Income 2025/ 26 (Appendix 4) were confirmed as accurate.
- The Board had regard to the WRS Reserves Statement 2025/ 26 (Appendix 5) at Page 33 of the main agenda pack:
  - The total earmarked reserve 'Transfers Out 2025/ 26' was -£595.
  - The total earmarked reserve 'Transfers In 2025/ 26' was £0.
  - The WRS General Reserve balance as of 31st March 2026 was £125,529.
  - The Total Earmarked Reserve balance as of 31st March 2026 was £342,860.

It was noted that the recruitment of temporary staff may be required to ensure service delivery was maintained. Board Members in attendance further noted that there had been an overspend during the municipal year of 2025/ 26 in both IT and dog warden charges service areas.

The Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services highlighted that the service had experienced a successful year in terms of service and performance outcomes.

RESOLVED that

1) The final financial position for the period April 2025- March 2026 be noted;
2) The 2025/ 26 surplus of £67,487 be approved and added to the Worcestershire Regulatory Services reserve, in order to assist with addressing any upcoming cost pressures.

7/26 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2025/ 26**

The Board considered the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report 2025/ 26.

The Director of WRS drew Members' attention to the Recommendation, as detailed on page 35 of the main agenda pack.

Members were informed that under the Shared Services Partnership Service Level Agreement (SLA) the Board was required to receive the annual report at its annual meeting.

The Director of WRS highlighted that the report covered the performance of the service from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026. The

report contained details of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and a summary of activities and data, which was presented to Members.

Performance had remained good in most areas:

- Food business compliance rates remained high.
- Taxi licence renewal timescales had fallen slightly, although were significantly above the target timescale of 90% in five working days.
- The taxi fleet was in good working order, with the number of vehicles failing tests whilst in service reducing for another consecutive year.

As with previous years, complaints against the service were significantly exceeded by compliments. Complaints arose across a number of service areas and the main issues related to complaints included:

- Individuals not being allowed to be involved with the re- homing of a dog.
- Dissatisfaction related to investigations related to planning matters.
- Concerns regarding the tone of the standard letter template used for dealing with nuisance cases.
- Response to nuisance issues, despite having noise equipment deployed to an individual's property.

Non-business customer satisfaction was slightly improved at 57.1%, compared to last year's figure of 56.7%, and recent figures of 59.2% and 60.4%. Further detail on this had been provided in both the Annual Report and the Activity and Performance Data, Quarters 1 to 4, 2025/ 26.

Managers would continue to work to address this performance measure. The nature of the service was such that officers would never be able to ensure that all partners were content because a significant proportion of nuisance complaints would not meet the threshold to be classified as a statutory nuisance, although performance could be improved in this area.

Business satisfaction levels fell to 92.3%, although no obvious reason for this could be identified. It was hoped that this figure would rise to above 96% in 2026/ 27.

The indicators for licenced premises and noise complaints were long established, which allowed the service to establish baselines, for which this year's figures were at average or below.

The rate of noise complaints against population figures for all Districts had risen slightly, however remained good. It was believed that the previous summer's record- breaking hot temperatures had contributed to this modest increase. Overall, available data suggested that a good environment was in place for the residents of Worcestershire.

The service continued to utilise some of the staff recruited during the pandemic to support work under contract to discharge the Homes 4 Ukraine support for Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils, with support from experienced WRS managers, while several other former covid staff also featured in the planning enforcement and enviro-crime enforcement team.

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

As in previous years, the WRS Annual Report would be published on the WRS website and would be shared with other partners. By putting the report into the public domain, this allowed the service to meet the requirement in the Regulators Code, made under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, which required local authorities to publish summary information about their regulatory activities each year.

From the comments and questions by members of the Committee, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- Three full time equivalent (FTE) staff had been employed by the service to focus on areas related to food safety.
- The Food Standards Agency had required the service to produce an updated Food Safety Action Plan to reduce outstanding visits by March 2028, and to improve compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice to ensure interventions were actioned within 28 days of the due inspection date.
- The Food Standards Agency was reasonably satisfied that the service had sufficient food hygiene capacity to allow WRS to discharge its duties.
- Compliance with food safety standards was high across the County, with over 90% of businesses obtaining a Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS) score of 4/ 5.
- Service expectations differed between businesses and the general public, whilst evidencing satisfaction amongst the general public was challenging, anecdotal evidence suggested over two-thirds of customers were satisfied with the service they had received. This satisfaction level, due to the difference between public expectations and what the law enabled, was good.

RESOLVED that

1) The Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report 2025/ 26 be noted;
2) A copy of the WRS Annual Report be send to each Chief Executive and the Elected Members of the six partner authorities.

8/26 **ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE DATA QUARTERS 1, 2 3 AND 4 2024/5**

The Technical Services Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, summarised the Activity and Performance Data, Quarters 1 to 4, 2025/ 26 report, and in doing so drew Members' attention to the following key metrics.

The number of dog control cases received over the previous year had represented an increase of 5%. Most dog control cases categorised as 'lost or stray dogs' with 18% of assessed dogs having identified welfare concerns.

The service received 84 complaints over the year about dogs which were related to dog fouling and/ or dogs that were persistently straying away from residential properties.

The overall number of food safety cases received had risen by 14% when compared to each of the previous two years. Of 522 complaints, 73% were related to issues with food products such as poor- quality food or food containing a foreign object, whilst 27% of complaints were related to poor hygiene standards or practices.

Of the 1,727 food hyenine interventions carried out by WRS, approximately 5% had received a score classified as 'non- compliant' which was a rating of 0, 1, or 2.

The overall number of health and safety cases considered was slightly higher than in the previous two years. Approximately half of these cases were reports of accidents in workplaces, with the majority of cases being injuries which resulted in a worker being incapacitated for over seven days. Slips, trips and falls remained the largest cause of accidents. The Service had also investigated three fatalities during the year.

It was noted that the overall number of licensing cases fell by over 4%. Over two- thirds of licensing cases were applications or registrations related to temporary events (23%), private hire vehicles (18%) and hackney carriage vehicles (11%). A further 11% of cases related to animal licensing, with most cases classified as unlicenced breeding, and the sale of dogs.

Data which was available indicated that the cost of providing the service per person in the County was £6.89.

In response to questions from Members, it was acknowledged that staff sickness and absence rates remained high and had increased. The Director of WRS outlined that there had been a concerted effort to encourage staff to return to the workplace via targeted support. It was also noted that staff who had been experienced a period of ill health, received return to work interviews upon their return to the workplace.

RESOLVED that the Activity and Performance Data Quarters 1 to 4 2025/ 26 be noted, and that Members use the contents of the report to report back to their respective partner authority.

9/26 **COMPLIMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS PROCESS**

The Board received an overview of the refreshed Compliments, Complaints and Comments Process.

WRS had established a mechanism upon the creation of the service in 2010, for dealing with feedback and comments from service users and the general public.

The original process was a three- tiered process for managing complaints:

- Stage One: Informal involving the officer and their Line Manager.
- Stage Two: Where Stage One failed to deliver a resolution, investigation and/ or review by the relevant team manager of Head of Service.
- Stage Three: Where Stage Two did not achieve a resolution, the complaint was fed into the final stage of the complaint process for the relevant partner authority.

During the 2025/ 26 year, the Local Government Ombudsman Service had outlined that local authority formal compliant processes should contain two stages only.

In order to align with this and streamline processes, the process for managing complaints had been adapted:

- Informal Stage.
- Formal Stage One.
- Formal Stage Two.

Members noted the refreshed Compliments, Complaints and Comments Process.

RESOLVED that the report detailing the Compliments, Complaints and Comments process be noted.

10/26 **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.**

Additional Items of Business had been received and tabled before Members for consideration.

Vote of Thanks

The Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services announced that he was retiring and that this would be his last meeting in his current role. He outlined to the Committee that he had decided to retire at this point to enable his successor to support the service during local government reorganisation.

The Chair acknowledged his long service and considerable efforts to ensure that a high- quality service was provided to the residents of Worcestershire and thanked him for his hard work and dedication.

Board Members in attendance paid tribute to his hard work and the service and wished him the best for the future.

RESOLVED that a Vote of Thanks be recorded in relation to the outgoing Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Process for the Appointment of the new Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services

The Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils paid tribute to the outgoing Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and sought the input of Board Members for the process of appointing his successor.

It was proposed that a national advertising campaign would commence at the end of June 2026, followed by a thorough recruitment process in July 2026.

The recruitment process was to incorporate a shortlisting exercise, a multi- stage assessment, psychometric testing and interview process. It was envisaged that the candidate would be appointed late July 2026.

It was acknowledged that due to the importance of the role, a suitable candidate would have to be appointed rapidly to ensure continuous service delivery.

Board Members in attendance agreed that the proposed process and timescale was satisfactory and would ensure that the service could continue to experience good leadership.

It was agreed that the Chair, in consultation with the Chief Executive, the outgoing Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services, would work with the Vice- Chair and Councillor K. Holmes to support the arrangements for the appointment for a new Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

RESOLVED that the Chair, Vice- Chair and Councillor K. Holmes be delegated to confirm and support the arrangements for the appointment for a new Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

The meeting closed at 5.20 p.m.

Chairman

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

WRS Joint Board
Date: 24th September 2026
Title: Activity and Performance Data Quarter 1 (2026/27)

Recommendation

That the Joint 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 the first quarter of 2026/7, but the actual data allows comparison with previous quarters and previous years.

Contribution to Priorities

Joint Board members have asked the service to provide data on activity levels to help reassure local members that WRS continues to address a range of issues in each partner area and more broadly across the county.

Report

Activity Data

At 279, the number of complaints and enquiries to the service regarding food are on trend and similar to figures at this time in the previous two-years. Over half of these are enquiries including requests for business advice, re-rating requests and similar queries about compliance.

Some 405 programmed food interventions were undertaken during quarter 1, above last year's 329 and slightly exceeding the 392 and 391 respectively in the previous two similar periods. The vast majority of premise were compliant and, as with previous quarters, a higher proportion of non-compliant ratings were issued to the hospitality sector (such as takeaways and restaurants) or small retailers.

At 69, the number of reported accidents for Health and Safety is the highest in any quarter in the last 3 years, but at this stage close enough to the trend to not cause too much concern. Slips, trips and falls remains the most reported source of accident.

Members should be aware that the duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 are divided between the Health and Safety Executive and local authorities, so WRS only undertakes investigations at premises within the local remit such as retail outlets, offices, leisure services, and hospitality premises. Other premises, such as factories, farms, and medical premises, fall with the remit of the HSE. Although local authority premises are regarded as lower risk for this function, our officers still deal with fatalities from time to time and, a number are on-going.

Pollution cases started the year on the increase, with 556 cases slightly over last year's 553 at the same point and well over the 334 in Q1 the year before. This is rather unsurprising given that the spring was relatively good weather wise and heralded the hot summer we have all experienced. No doubt this will be illustrated by Q2's figures. As ever, most cases were reports of potential statutory nuisances, with around half relating to noise from domestic properties, with disturbance created by barking dogs or audio-visual equipment being most common. The pie-chart used to show areas with higher rates of noise complaint has changed slightly and uses Medium Super-Output Areas (MSOA) as a basis. These and Lower Super-Output Areas (LSOA) are small parts of a district often used in many analyses by different bodies, so we have a common approach and data like that used or created by Public Health can be compared. The geographical area covered is also included.

Public Health complaints and enquiries, often linked to pollution control as the legislation is the same or similar, were roughly on trend this year with very similar figures to this time last year. Complaints reported to WRS include reports of accumulations or rubbish and reports of pest species activity, potentially due to the activities of residents or businesses. The number of requests for subsidised domestic pest control treatments was likewise on a par with last year.

In Licensing, the number of applications was up slightly, likely due to the number of spring Temporary Event Notices, although overall terns for these and applications/ registrations remains slightly downward. Enquiries continue to outnumber complaints and those contacts regarding concerns about behaviour tend to be regarding the taxi trades, although concerns are also expressed about animal activity licenses.

The number of stray dogs increased slightly after Q4 last year, but this year's Q1 total of 188 is the lowest in the last 3-years for this period and reflects the slight downturn in numbers overall. Complaints increased from Q3 and Q4 last year, and 52 complaints/ enquiries is the equal second highest number for a quarter in the past 3-years. Having said that, it is still not impacting on the slight downward trend in this type of complaint.

Planning support work fell between Q4 last year and Q1, with the figure of 746 being lower than Q1 last year but higher than the year before. This change is not sufficient to make us thing that the trend does not remain upward for this work. This continues to be an area of work the service delivers for authorities beyond the County border.

Work on Envirocrime and Planning enforcement is included for completeness, but this is only undertaken for Redditch and Bromsgrove and continues to be discharged by a team of officers dedicated to these activities. Work is at anticipated levels.

Performance

As always, reporting against the suite of indicators is more limited for the first quarter. The non-business customer measure was 60.7%, better than the 53.8% we had at this time last year and closer to is lower the 3 years before this when they were at varying figures above 60%. At 50%, the proportion of customers who felt better equipped to address their own issues in the future is an improvement on the figure at this time last year (42.9%,)

and the same as Q1 in 2024/25. We have yet to move forward with alternative approaches for getting feedback.

Satisfaction for business customers was 94.6%, better than 91.8%, which we had at this point last year. Again, there are no obvious poor responses to the questions asked. Early returns were relatively poor again at 34, slightly up on last year's 25 at this point.

We report overall numbers of compliant and non-compliant food businesses at this point in the year, without the district breakdown. 98.29% of businesses subject to intervention were graded 3 stars to 5 stars on the hygiene rating scheme.

Compliments outnumber complaints significantly, with the figure currently 5 to 2.

Staff sickness started the year at 0.49 days per FTE, is significantly below the previous 4-years' figures for this period (2.17, 1.13, 0.76, 0.9, respectively). Following the return to work following serious illness by several staff members, only 31% of absences for this period were classed as long-term (29+ days,) moving back towards what might be regarded as a normal pattern for the workforce.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

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

Appendix B: Performance Indicators 2026/27

Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	60.7			
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	94.6			
3. % businesses broadly compliant/ made compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	98.29	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**		Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1st April each year	Annually	1.71	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**		Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	6-monthly	NA		NA	
6 % of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service Number of vehicles found to be defective by district and the percentage this represents of the fleet county-wide	6-monthly	NA	**or of the fleet county-wide** Vehicles found defective in service (suspended during the period) are: BDC MHDC RBC WCC WDC WFDC	NA	**or of the fleet county-wide** Vehicles found defective in service (suspended during the period) are: BDC MHDC RBC WCC WDC WFDC

7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	50%			
8	Review of register of complaints/ compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	2/5			
9	Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	0.49 days per FTE	days per FTE	days per FTE	days per FTE
10	% of staff who enjoy working for WRS	Annually	NA	NA	NA	
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**	NA	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**	NA	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest **Worcestershire**
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA	£XXX,XXX which is XX% as a proportion of the 2016/17 revenue budget figure (£3,017,000) and XX% of current revenue budget	NA	£XXX,XXX which is XX% as a proportion of the 2016/17 revenue budget figure (£3,017,000) and XX% of current revenue budget

14 Cost of regulatory services per head of population (Calculation will offset income against revenue budget)	Annually	NA	NA	NA	Based on outrun cost of £X,XXX,XXX against the County's most recent population estimate of XXX,XXX in 202X, the service cost is: **£X.XX per head**

Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

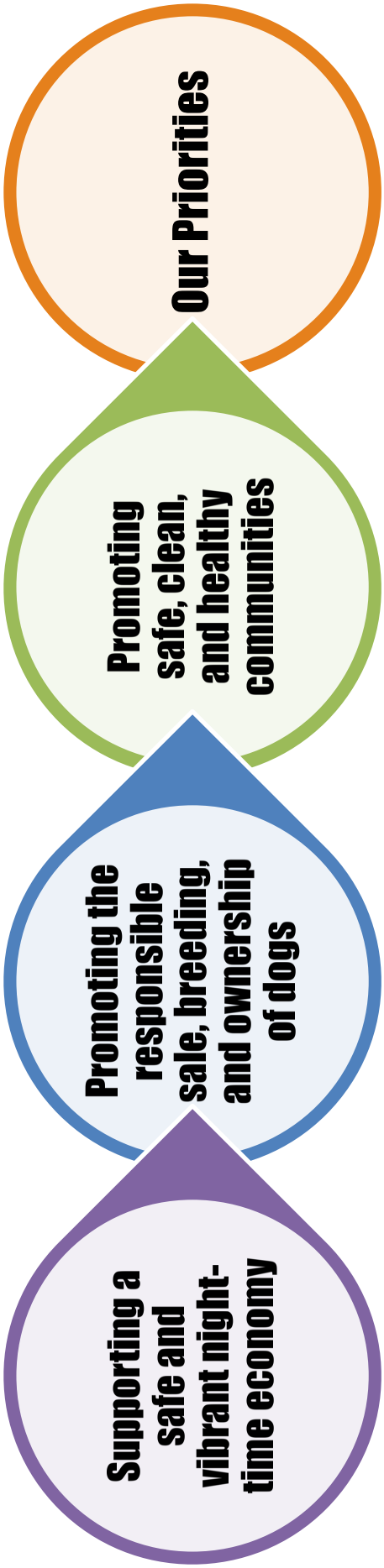
Activity Report

Quarter One

2026-27

Bromsgrove District Council www.bromsgrove.gov.uk
Malvern Hills District Council www.malvernhills.gov.uk
Redditch Borough Council Working together for our communities
Worcester City Council
Wychavon
Wyre Forest District Council

Agenda Item 4


Supporting a safe and vibrant night-time economy
Promoting the responsible sale, breeding, and ownership of dogs
Promoting safe, clean, and healthy communities
Our Priorities

A Message From The Director

Welcome to the first Activity Report of 2026/27! This is my last one as Director and is slightly revamped in terms of the look, linking better we hope with our priorities. Each WRS division has its own section and links are provided to a number of the press and social media posts made by the service over the year, to give a flavour of what we have said, or what has been picked up by the media. These listings will grow over the year, so you will see the full picture of what we've done and hopefully be able to look back.

Beyond that, much of the content will be familiar, covering the elements that Board members will have seen many times. As ever, the detail covers the period 1st April to 30th June 2026, but figures in the graphs and tables will allow comparison with the data in previous periods.

The number of food hygiene interventions is slightly up on the same period last year, and more than 2-years ago. Recruitment of the 3 additional officers agreed for this year took place during Q1, and whilst 2 of the three will need some coaching and training before they go out alone, both have the degree in Environmental Health and the potential to become fully competent EHOs and replacements for older staff as they leave the organisation. Our Food Lead has also formally engaged with our host authority's HR team to consider Levy funding for apprenticeships. Also in Community Environmental Health (CEH), work on Health and Safety at Work followed the usual trends in terms of accidents, complaints and enquiries. The team still has a number of open fatality cases. Also, we saw the upswing on nuisance begin at a similar time to last year as another hot summer beckoned. No doubt the Q2 figures when we see them will also be reflective of this.

In Technical Services, stray numbers were slightly up, but not sufficiently to buck the slight downward trend in numbers and dog-related complaints were also slightly up but on trend. Planning support requests did fall between Q4 last year and Q1 of this, but not sufficiently to change the upward trend seen in recent years. Enviro-crime and planning enforcement work for Bromsgrove and Redditch were on-track.

In Licensing, applications and registrations were on-trend for the year. Applications showed their usual slight upswing as the Spring Temporary Event Notices are served on partners for the summer, but complaints and enquiries continued following the slight downward trend we have been seeing in this area.

As ever, we hope the report demonstrates the volume of work staff are undertaking and that some of the stories behind the numbers highlight the difficulties staff sometimes face. If you have further queries, please feel free to contact myself and the Team Managers.

Thanks

Community Environmental Health

Headlines and Social Media

Please click the bullet points below for more information about some of the cases referred to and proactive activities undertaken by the team during the year to date.

The Barnt Green Sports Club appeal against an Abatement Notice for statutory nuisance for outdoor padel noise was in court in June. The District Judge rejected the Club's appeal against the notice. This would appear to be the first legal case confirming outdoor padel as a statutory nuisance and has generated considerable national interest from environmental health professionals and other interested parties.

• Court upholds nuisance finding over local padel noise - Bromsgrove District Council (15/06/2026)

Officers participated in a Public Health/Worcester University led multi-agency exercise in dealing with a local Meningitis outbreak.

A meeting was held with the new Scala Theatre development in Worcester to discuss food safety management for the site.

The inquest into the death of a club member reported as having become unconscious during prolonged breath holding under water at a private indoor swimming pool was heard at Worcestershire Coroner's Court in Stourport on Severn. The coroner's conclusion was 'Death by Misadventure', namely an intentional act that went wrong. This determination was based on the civil standard of proof meaning that something is proved if it is established on the balance of probabilities as more likely than not. Officers had provided substantial support to the coroner's office in this investigation as reported previously.

In June, our Principal Officer for Health and Safety provided a review of the activities carried out by the service to the County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee. WRS is contracted by the County Council to discharge statutory duties under the Safety at Sports Grounds and related legislation. The Committee noted that the statutory duty in respect of Safety at Sports Grounds legislation had been successfully met.

The nuisance team was extremely busy during this period, the exceptional hot and dry weather leading to a high number of investigations and visits to control dust nuisance at development sites across the county.

Food Safety

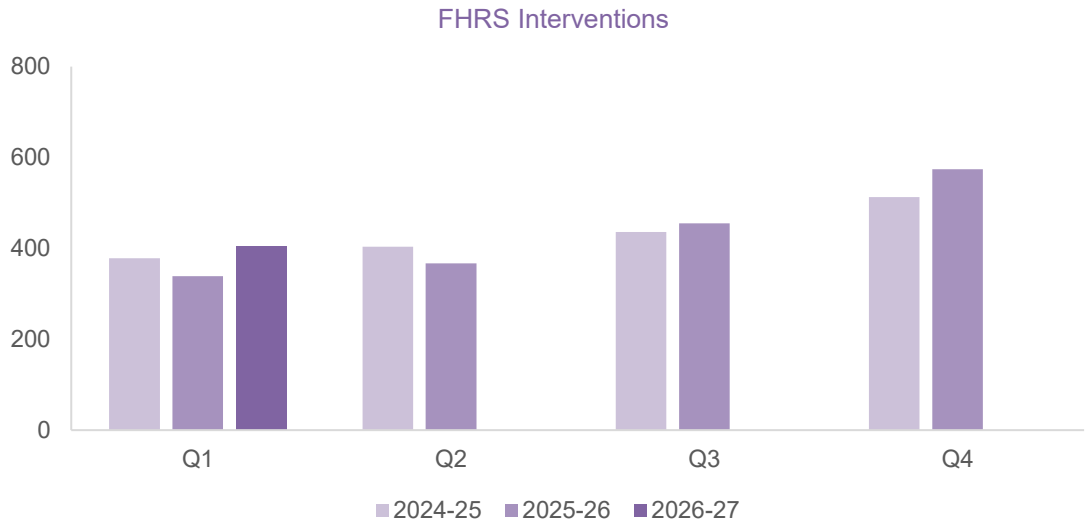
Whilst food safety overlaps with the communities priority, the service is more likely to identify problems at businesses operating under the umbrella of the night-time economy.

Approximately 53% of food safety cases are typically enquiries (including requests for business advice), requests for hygiene ratings, or requests for export health certificates. The latter is required by businesses seeking to export food to Northern Ireland, the European Union, and non-EU countries. Where complaints are received by the service, most will relate to issues with food products (such as poor quality food or food containing a foreign object). Approximately 29% of complaints will relate to poor hygiene standards or practices at food businesses.

Whilst the general level of compliance is high, approximately 4% of interventions completed at food businesses each year will result in a non-compliant rating being issued. Most 0, 1, or 2 ratings are issued to takeaways, restaurants, or small retailers.

Comments

Complaints relating to allergens, or the composition and labelling of food are investigated by Worcestershire Trading Standards Service. To find out more about food hygiene ratings, please visit https://ratings.food.gov.uk.



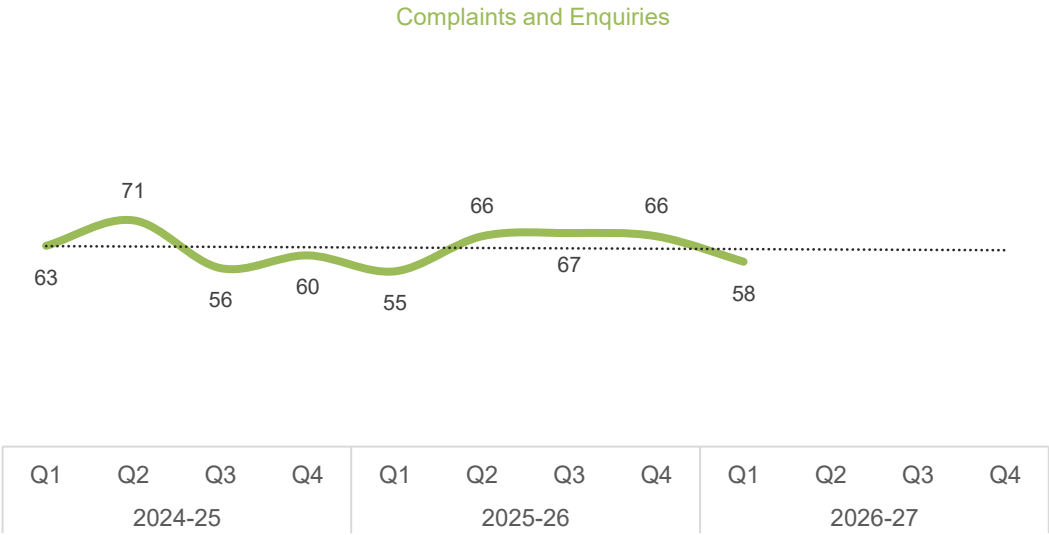
Health & Safety

Health and safety is aligned with several priorities as the service investigates accidents (and unsafe conditions) at a range of workplaces.

Approximately 43% of health and safety cases are typically reports of accidents. These reports commonly relate to injuries where a worker was incapacitated for more than seven days or injuries to members of the public, however, the service has sadly investigated several fatalities over recent years. The highest number of accidents are caused by slips, trips, and falls (either on the same level of from height).

Comments

Investigations are only undertaken by the service where the incident takes place at workplaces such as retail outlets, offices, leisure services, hospitality premises, and cosmetology premises. Other premises, such as factories and medical premises, fall within the remit of the Health and Safety Executive.



Pollution

Pollution is a fundamental part of each priority area as the service investigates a range of issues occurring at both commercial and residential properties.

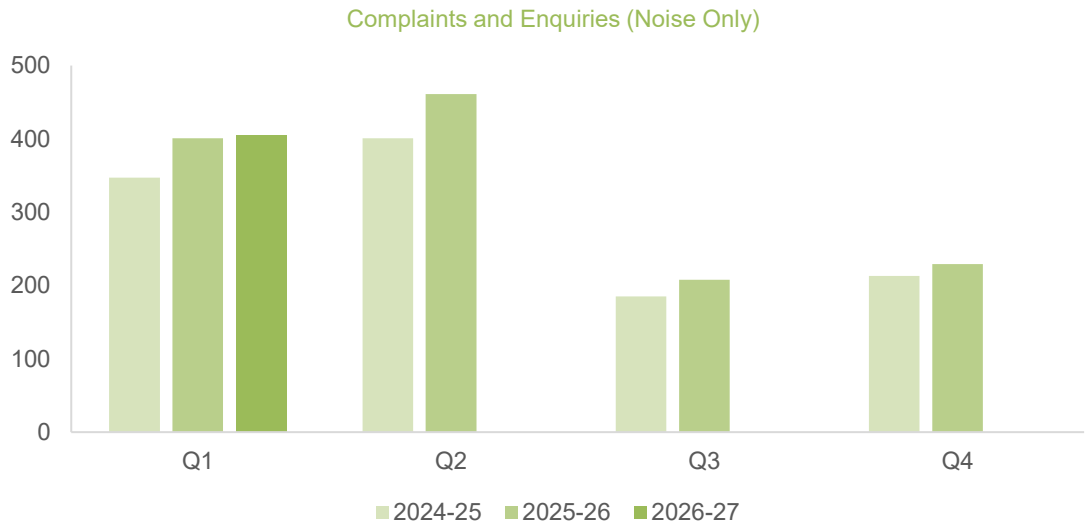
Approximately 90% of pollution cases tend to relate to nuisances, with most cases referencing problems with noise. Whilst a significant proportion of these complaints relate to noise generated by the hospitality sector (primarily noise from music or people at pubs and clubs), approximately 50% of noise complaints relate to barking dogs and/or general noise from residential properties (such as noise from audio-visual equipment).

Other common nuisances reported to the service include smoke from the burning of domestic or commercial waste and noise or dust from construction sties.

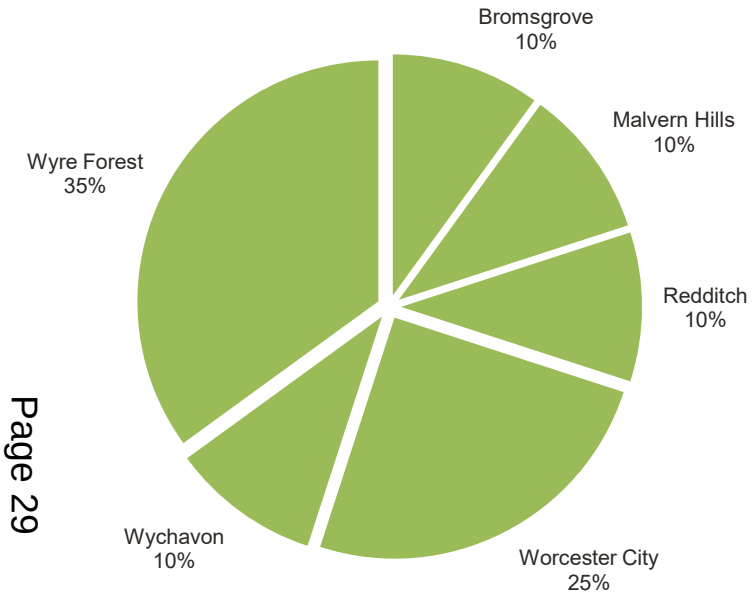
Comments

The table overleaf outlines the Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) which have the highest rate of noise complaints per 1,000 populations. The figures stated are cumulative and, as a result, the table will continue to change until the end of year report is published. In addition, as a proportion of cases could not be mapped to an MSOA, the rates in certain areas may be higher.

To find out more information about output areas, please visit doogal.co.uk (and search for a postcode) or visit the "data" section of the Worcestershire County Council website.



Rate of Noise Complaints



MSOA	AREA COVERED	TOTAL	POPULATION	RATE
Wyre Forest 013	Stourport Mitton and Wilden	18	7,958	2.26
Worcester 011	Worcester Town South	11	7,424	1.48
Wyre Forest 007	Comberton	12	8,369	1.43
Worcester 009	Dines Green and St Johns	11	8,528	1.29
Bromsgrove 009	Alvechurch, Hopwood and Holt End	9	7,102	1.27
Malvern Hills 002	Abberley, Holt Heath and Hallow	11	8,753	1.26
Wyre Forest 004	Kidderminster Town	10	8,508	1.18
Wyre Forest 009	Birchen Coppice	7	6,116	1.14
Wychavon 008	Inkberrow and Flyford Flavell	6	5,803	1.03
Wyre Forest 002	Franche	7	6,907	1.01
Redditch 003	Batchley and Brockhill	9	9,076	0.99
Bromsgrove 007	Catshill	6	6,140	0.98
Worcester 014	St Peters	5	5,275	0.95
Redditch 005	Winyates Green	5	5,481	0.91
Malvern Hills 007	Pickersleigh	6	6,607	0.91
Wychavon 013	Harvington, Offensham and Badsey	8	9,418	0.85
Wyre Forest 008	Blakebrook and Habberley South	6	7,627	0.79
Wyre Forest 010	Spennells and Hoobrook	5	6,469	0.77
Worcester 001	Northwick	6	7,920	0.76
Worcester 002	Warndon West	4	5,385	0.74

Public Health

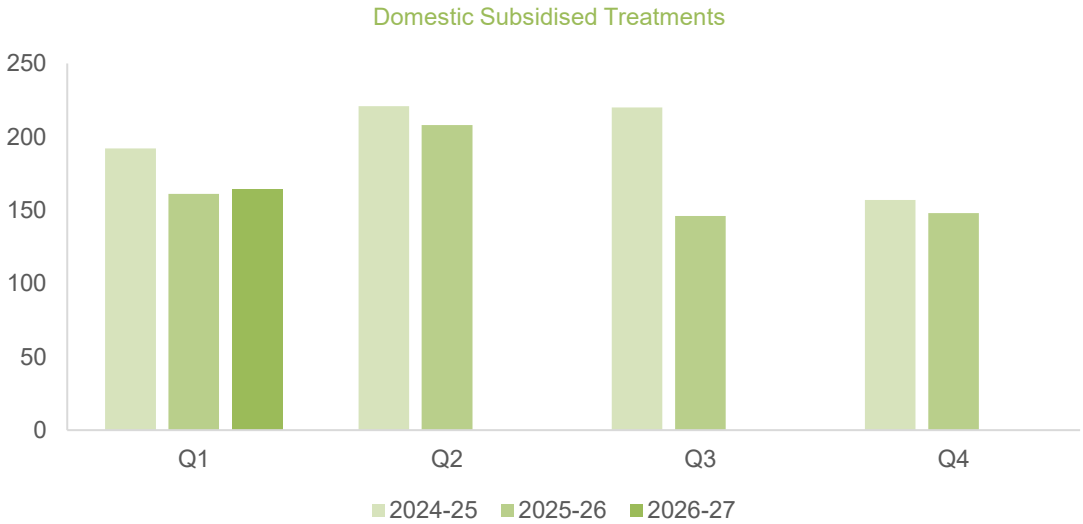
Public health is aligned with the communities priority and primarily focuses on the control of pests.

Approximately, 54% of public health cases are typically enquiries about domestic treatments, enquiries about sewer baiting, or complaints relating to pest activity caused by the actions of neighbouring residents or businesses. In addition, approximately 25% of cases are reports of accumulations at residential properties (including abandoned properties and overgrown gardens). It should be noted, however, that such complaints commonly reference the sighting of rats, mice, and/or other pests.

Where pest control treatments are offered by local authorities, most residents on qaulifying benefits will seek support due to problems with rats, wasps, or hornets. In addition, a higher number of treatments tend to take place at properties in Redditch and Wychavon.

Comments

Pest control treatments are offered by five of the districts, however, Wyre Forest District Council does not offer a subsidised pest control service.



Licensing

Headlines and Social Media

Please click the bullet points below for more information about some of the cases referred to and proactive activities undertaken by the team during the year to date.

- Taxis in 'unroadworthy condition' taken off road in Redditch - Redditch Advertiser (14/05/2026)
- Licensing officers carry out join operation in Redditch town centre

- Worcester seeks fifth award running for night-time economy - Worcester News (03/05/2026)
- WRS partner with Worcester BID ahead of Purple Flag assessment

- WRS launch consultation on taxi policy in Redditch
- WRS launch consultation on taxi policy in Wychavon

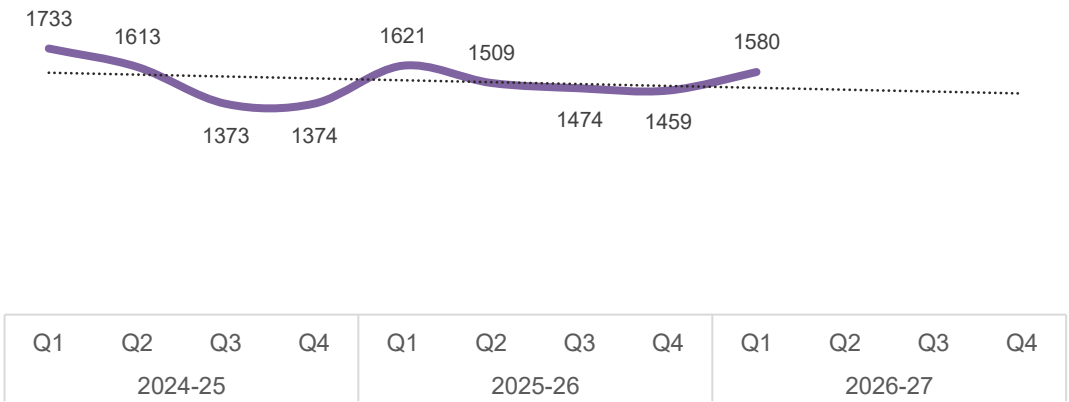
Licensing

Whilst the primary licensing functions are more commonly aligned with the night-time economy (such as alcohol and taxi licensing), licensing forms part of all three priority areas. Animal licensing, for example, is a key part of the dog priority whilst scrap metal licensing supports the objectives of the communities priority.

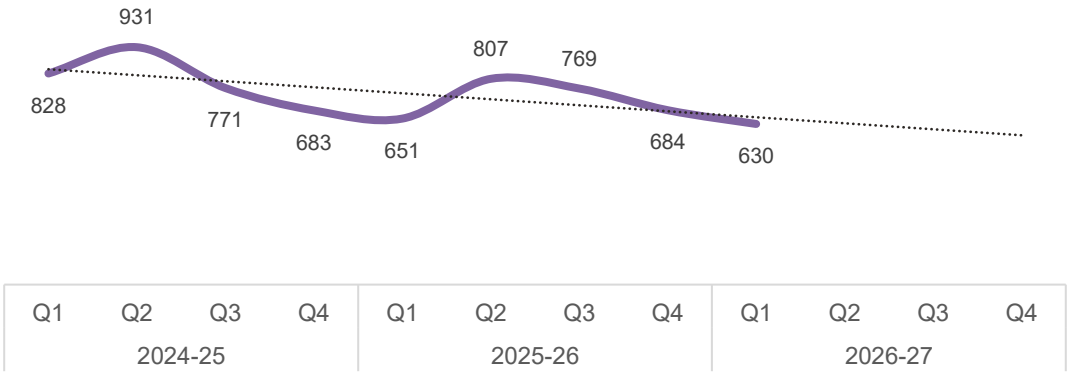
Approximately 66% of licensing cases are typically applications for licences or registrations (such as those notifying the service that a tattooist is due to start trading). Half of these cases are temporary event notices or applications for vehicle (private hire or hackney carriage) licences.

In general terms, the service receives a higher number of enquiries (queries about regulations, by-laws, and licence conditions etc.) than complaints. Where complaints are received, approximately 70% relate to taxi licensing (such as reports of poor driver behaviour, unauthorised parking, or poor driving standards) or alcohol licensing (reports of businesses failing to comply with the licensing objectives). The service also receives a significant number of complaints relating to the unlicenced breeding and/or sale of dogs.

Applications and Registrations



Complaints and Enquiries



Technical Services

Headlines and Social Media

Please click the bullet points below for more information about some of the cases referred to and proactive activities undertaken by the team during the year to date.

• Council Clamp-Down on Litter Louts - Bromsgrove District Council (21/05/2026)

As part of our developing strategy to tackle the enablers of fly tipping crimes, we coordinated a multi-agency operation. The media releases below provide a summary of the operation and the successful outcome.

• One arrest and vehicles seized in rural crime operation - West Mercia Police (27/07/2026)
• Worcestershire Enviro-Crime Team Tackles Waste Offences with Partners

Many of you will have seen our reporting of ‘Phoenix’ in the media. At of the time of publication, we are unable to provide an update on the case but, as you will see from the photograph, he is doing amazingly well and is now 25kg. This has been the result of support and funding from our rehoming partners.

• Dog found 'half dead' in 'appalling' Malvern cruelty case - BBC News (02/04/2026)

Unfortunately, Phoenix is not an isolated case, with the proportion of stray dogs with welfare concerns remaining high. In this period, a stray named ‘Ethel’ required a leg amputation due to her condition but sadly died 8 days later due to an aneurysm. Other notable cases included a severely matted cocker spaniel with mammary tumours, a blind poodle, and two lurchers in an extremely poor state. We have and continue to share these cases to raise awareness about the responsibility owners have when they get a dog and encourage early intervention and veterinary care when needed.

Our third Annual Air Quality survey was launched in June and recently closed. The survey is used to inform our air quality behaviour change work and help target resources in specific areas of need.

• WRS launch air quality survey

In partnership with Wyre Forest District Council and Susfest (in promotion of Clean Air Day 2026 on the 18th June), officers attended GreenShoots events to promote air quality. Key to this was the engagement with young people to discuss the health risks attached to bad air quality and the changes we can all make to reduce air pollution where we live. Also, just prior to clean air day, officers attended two community engagements to discuss the important topics of air pollution, how EarthSense monitors work around the county, and lifestyle changes we can make to create a healthier, happier environment. Officers started their day in Bromsgrove at Meadow First School before travelling across to Worcester's Tolly Hub to engage with members of the public who dropped into the Worcester Community Trust group session.

• WRS staff attend Greenshoots event

Continuing our engagement with schools, our Air Quality Behaviour Change officer has recently become a Skills Ambassador for the Heart of Worcestershire College.

• WRS officer becomes a Skills Ambassador
• Air Quality team visit the University of Birmingham's Air Quality Supersite

Also, in our proactive planning advice work to all Districts in Worcestershire, following the successful defence of an appeal from a noise abatement notice reported by our Community Environmental Health colleagues last year, we have seen a number of similar applications that have required careful thought and comment to planning officers. We have also seen a number of enquiries from other Local Authorities asking about our approach to managing noise though the planning process along with the relatively fast growth in this sport.

We have received six new arrivals under the Homes for Ukraine scheme this period (two in Bromsgrove and four in Redditch). We are pleased to report that two of our elderly guests, including one who has been in the UK since April 2022 has successfully moved into their own property. Support has been provided to assist them with the transition from hosted accommodation to independent living, including helping them to establish themselves in their new homes and navigate the practical aspects of living independently.

Dog Control

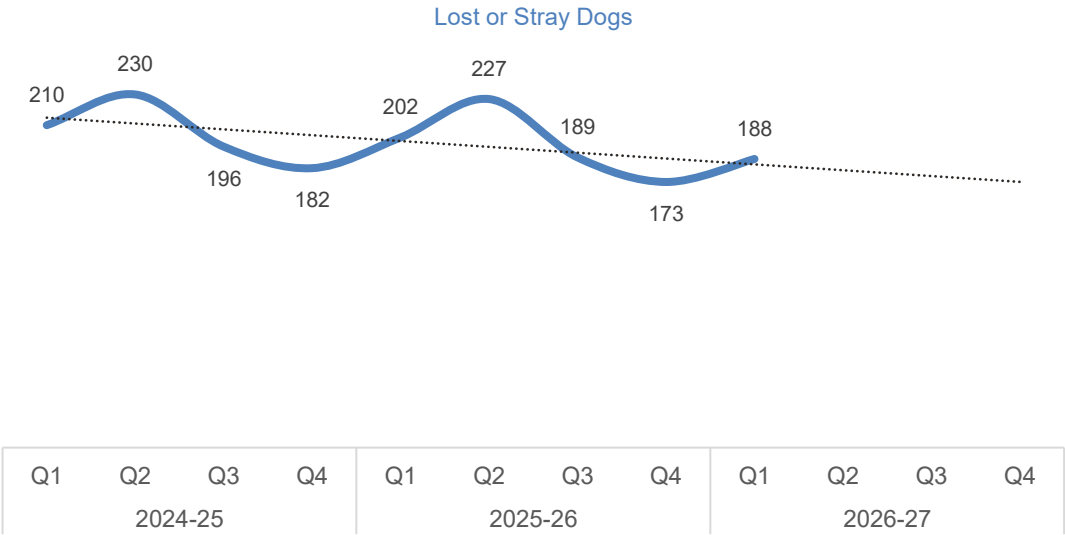
Dog control is a fundamental part of the dog priority and is largely centred on the number of stray dogs reported to the service. The priority also focuses, however, on the level of microchipping (including an assessment of microchips with out of date contact information) and the welfare of dogs that come into our care.

Approximately 80% of dog control cases typically relate to stray or lost dogs, with most cases categorised as "contained strays" (meaning dogs are found, and held, by members of the public before being seized by a Dog Warden). Whilst figures vary for each local authority, approximately half of the dogs collected in Worcestershire will have a microchip and 50% will go on to be reunited with their owners. There has, sadly, been a concerning increase over the past few years in the number of dogs requiring veterinary treatment or examination due to poor health or neglect.

Whilst the service receives a lower number of dog control complaints, such cases tend to relate to dog fouling or dogs persistently straying from residential properties.

Comments

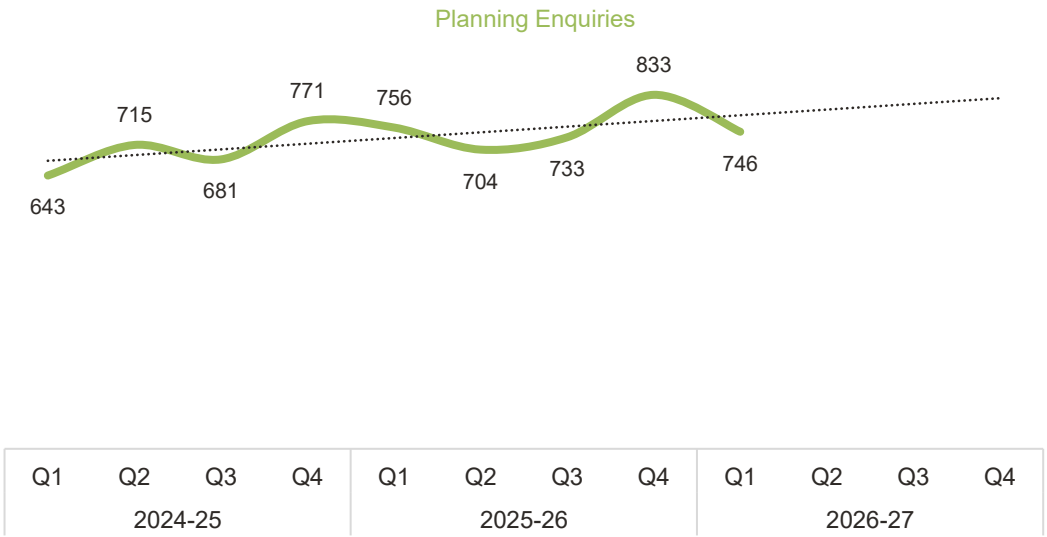
The service can only investigate welfare offences where a dog is found to be straying. The general welfare of dogs is investigated by the RSPCA and West Mercia Police.



Planning

Planning forms part of the communities priority and the service responds to planning enquiries when notified by district council planning departments. Enquiries are either "consultations" or "requests to discharge conditions" with the latter being applied to the site during a previous planning decision.

Approximately 92% of planning enquiries are typically consultations for air quality, contaminated land, or nuisances. The service also processes enquiries in connection with environmental permitting, food, health and safety, and private water supplies. Whilst the data on this page relates to Worcestershire authorities, the service responds to planning enquiries (on a contractual basis) on behalf of several local authorities.



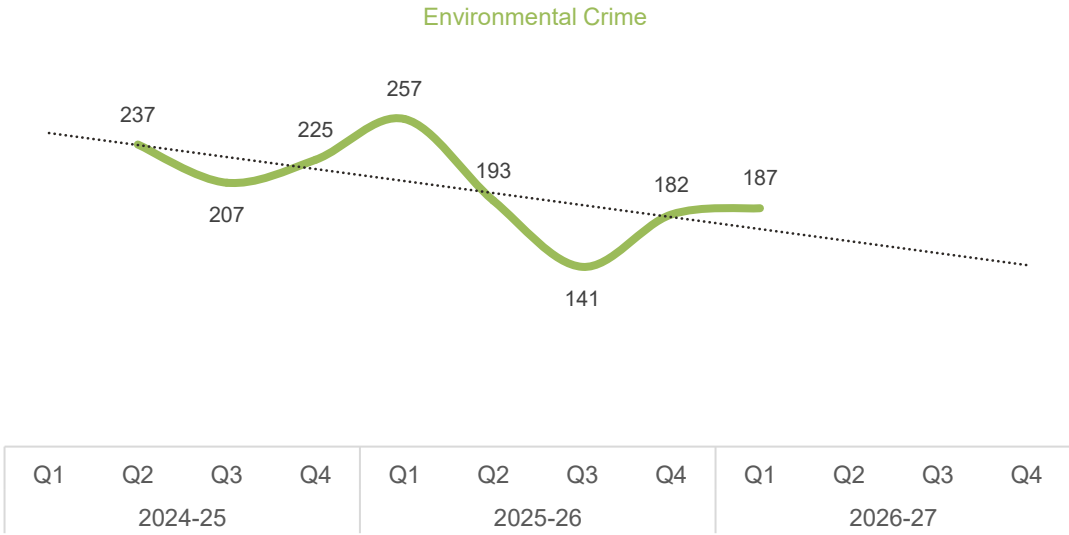
Planning Enforcement and Environmental Crime

Whilst planning enforcement and environmental crime are key parts of the communities priority, the functions are only delivered on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils. In addition, the functions have only been within the remit of the service since June 2024.

Approximately 68% of cases typically relate to environmental crime and, whilst this includes a number of littering incidents, most cases reported to the service relate to the illegal disposal of household or commercial waste (commonly known as fly-tipping). From a planning enforcement perspective, most cases relate to unauthorised developments at residential properties (such as extensions, conservatories, and outbuildings). Where a breach is connected to a commercial premises, this will commonly relate to buildings, or land, being used for business activities without consent.

Comments

The environmental crime figures stated relate to the number of cases actively investigated by the service. During the year to date, 621 fly-tipping incidents have been reported to Bromsgrove District Council and 468 incidents have been reported to Redditch Borough Council. Where an incident is not investigated, this is commonly because there is no possible means for the service to identify a suspect and/or because insufficient details were supplied to the service via the initial reporting form.



District Summaries

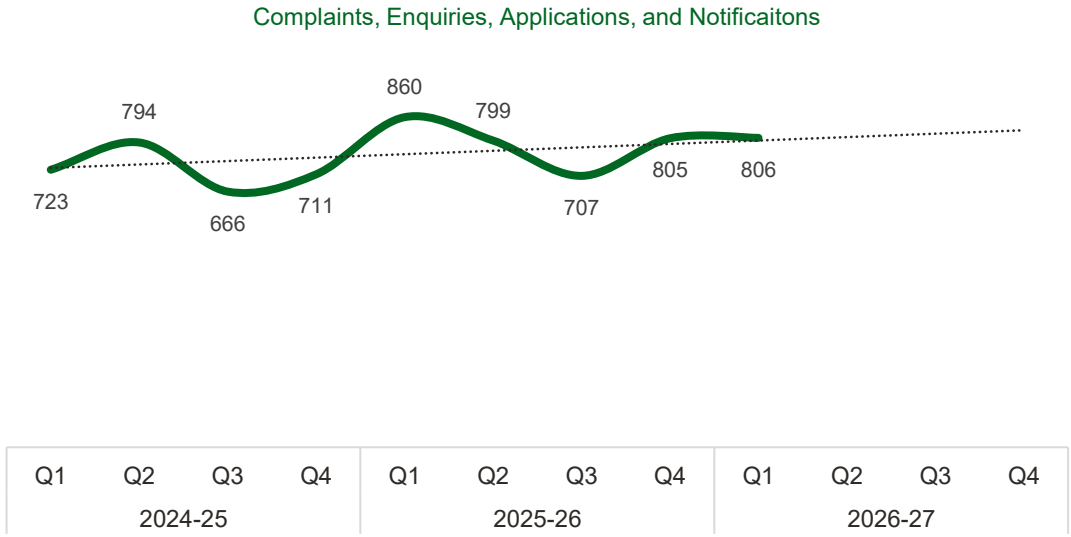
The data on the following pages outlines the number of complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications handled by the service (over a three-year period) where the subject and/or enquirier were located in the stated local authority.

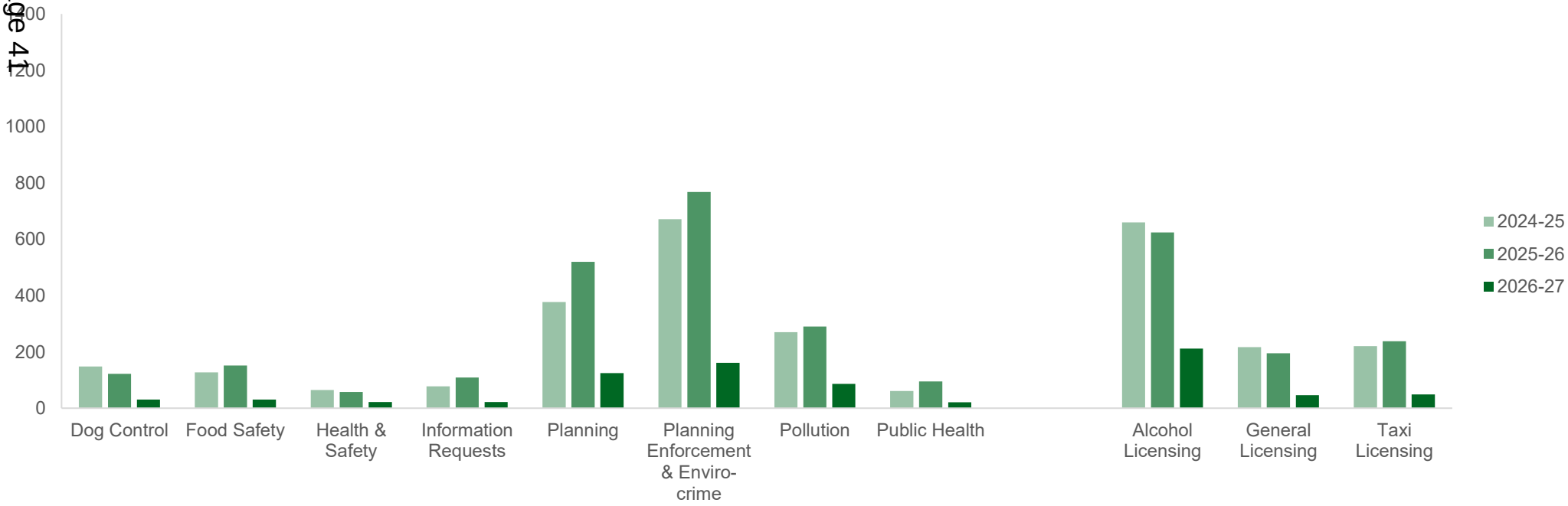
The data also shows a breakdown of cases by the primary functions delivered by the service on behalf of that local authority.

Comments

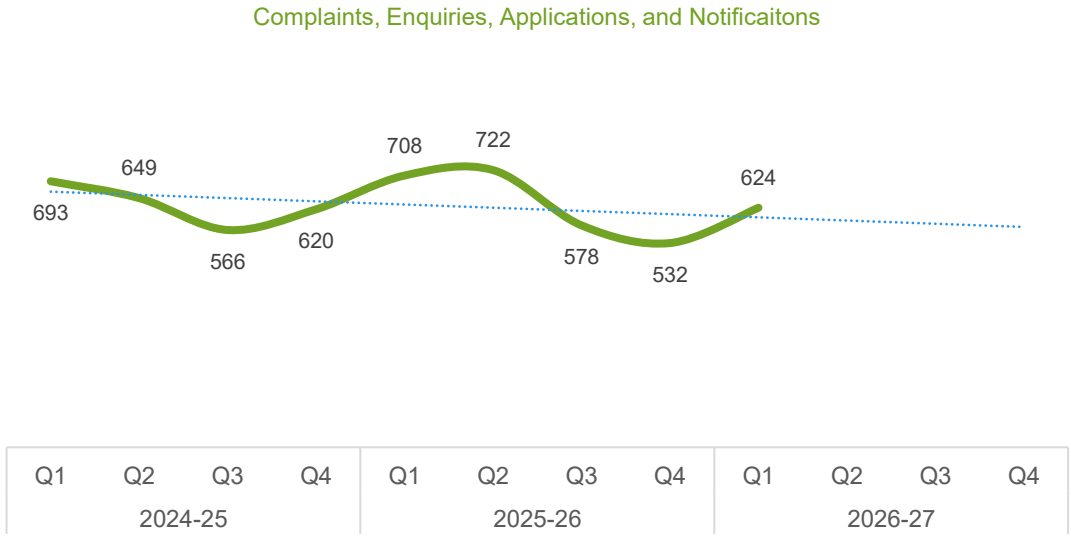
Please be advised that the figures for the current year are cumulative and will continue to increase until the end of year report is published. In addition, the vertical axes for the charts at the bottom of each page have been standardised. This should enable the level of activity recorded against function to be broadly compared across each local authority area.

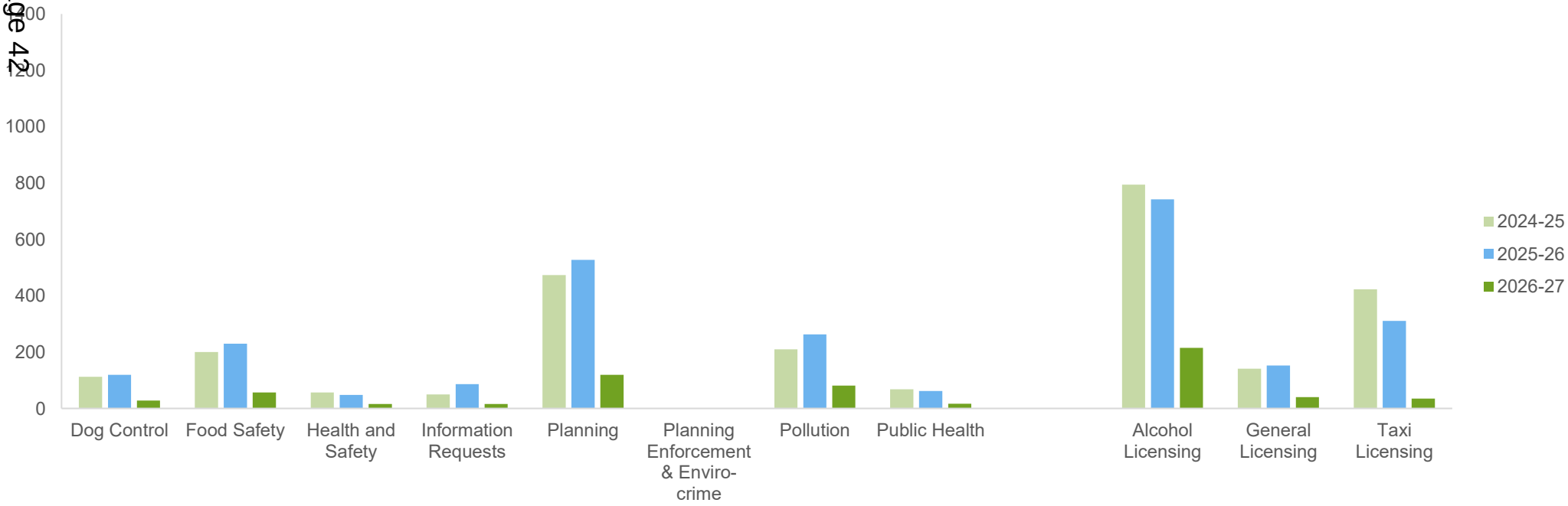
Bromsgrove District Council





Malvern Hills District Council





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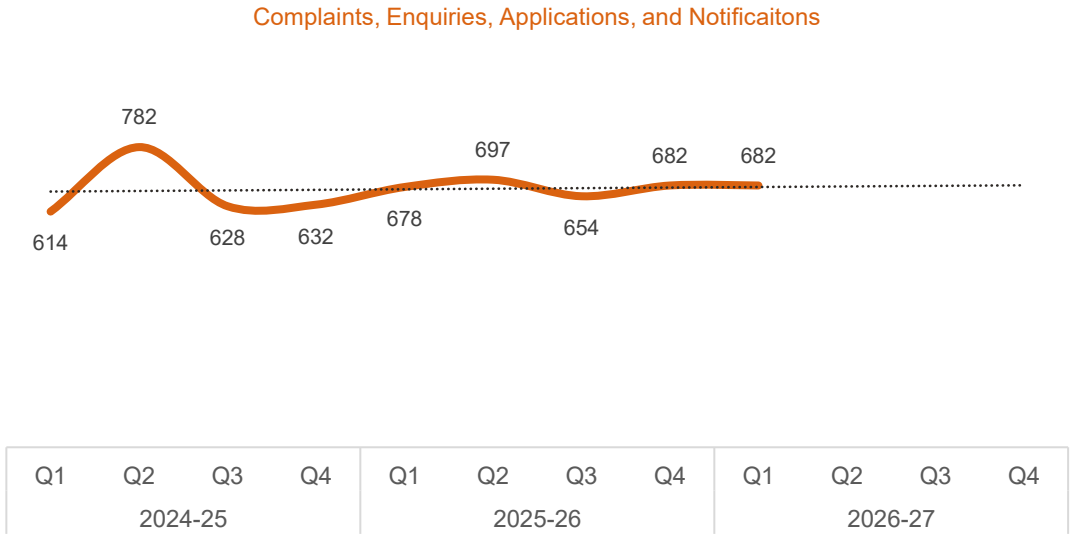
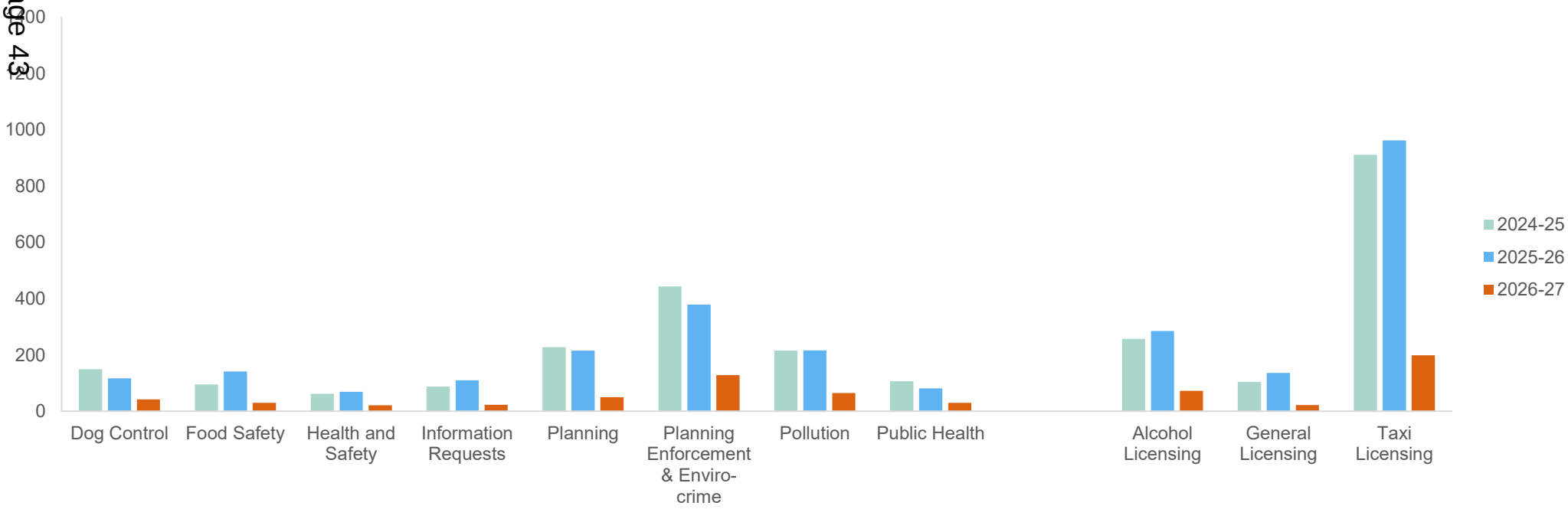
Redditch Borough Council





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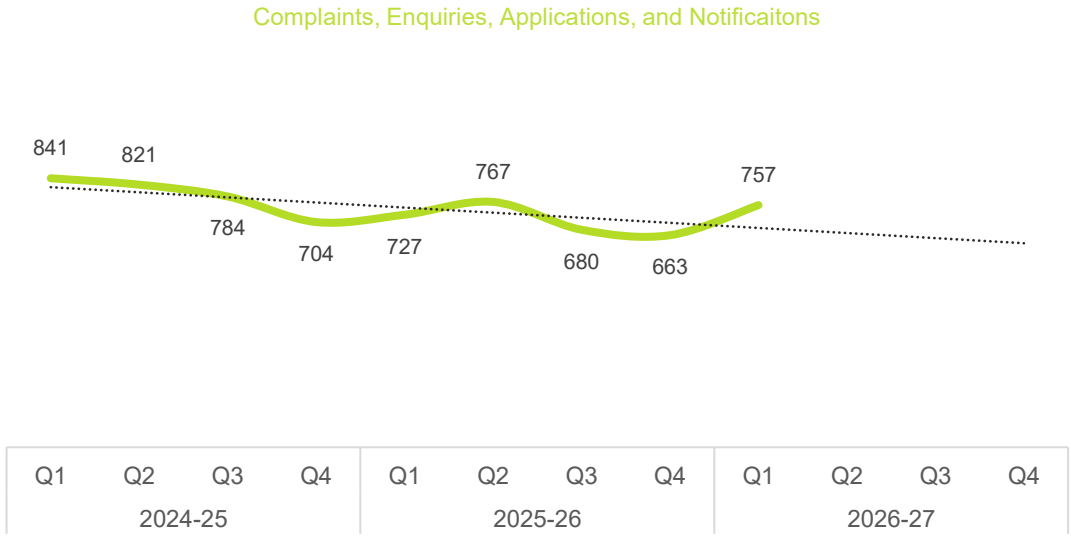
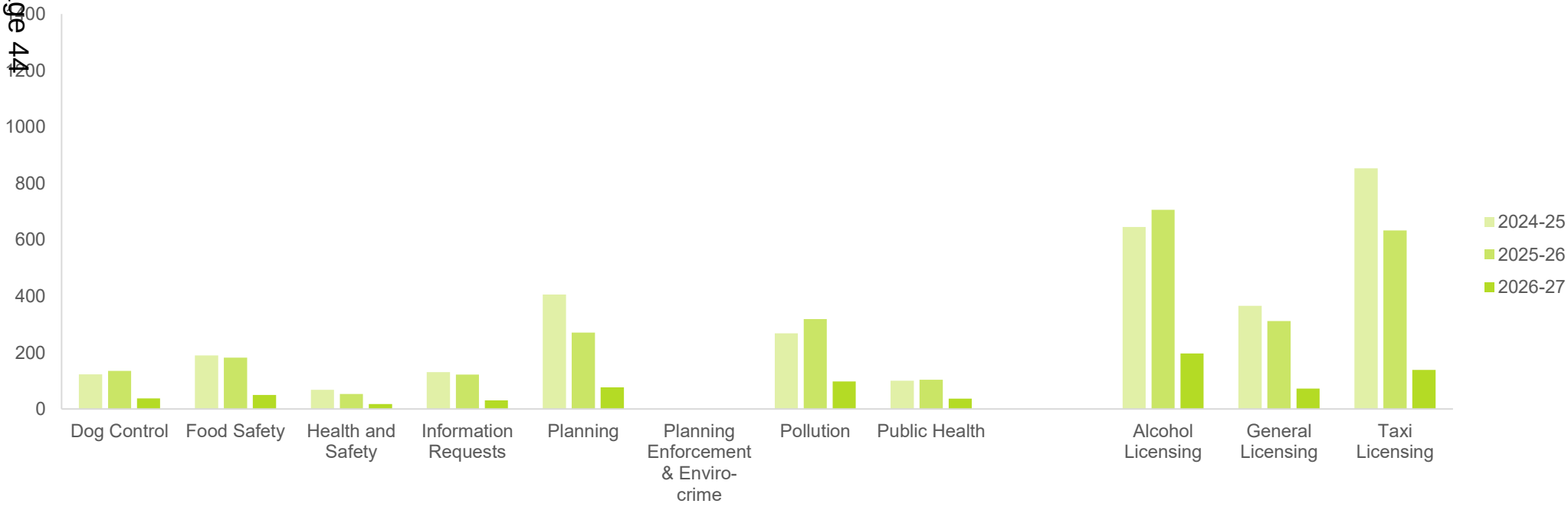
Worcester City Council





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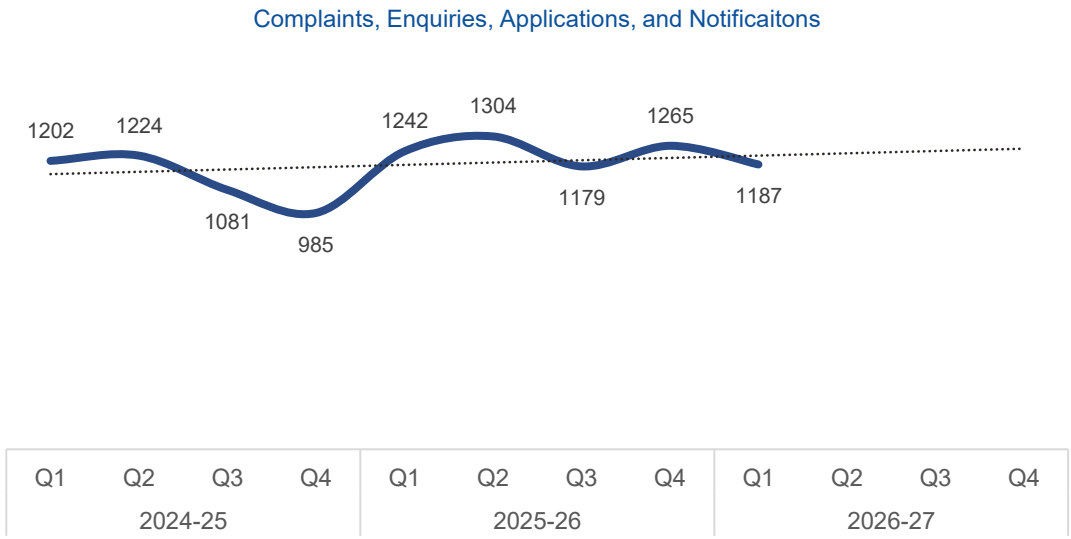
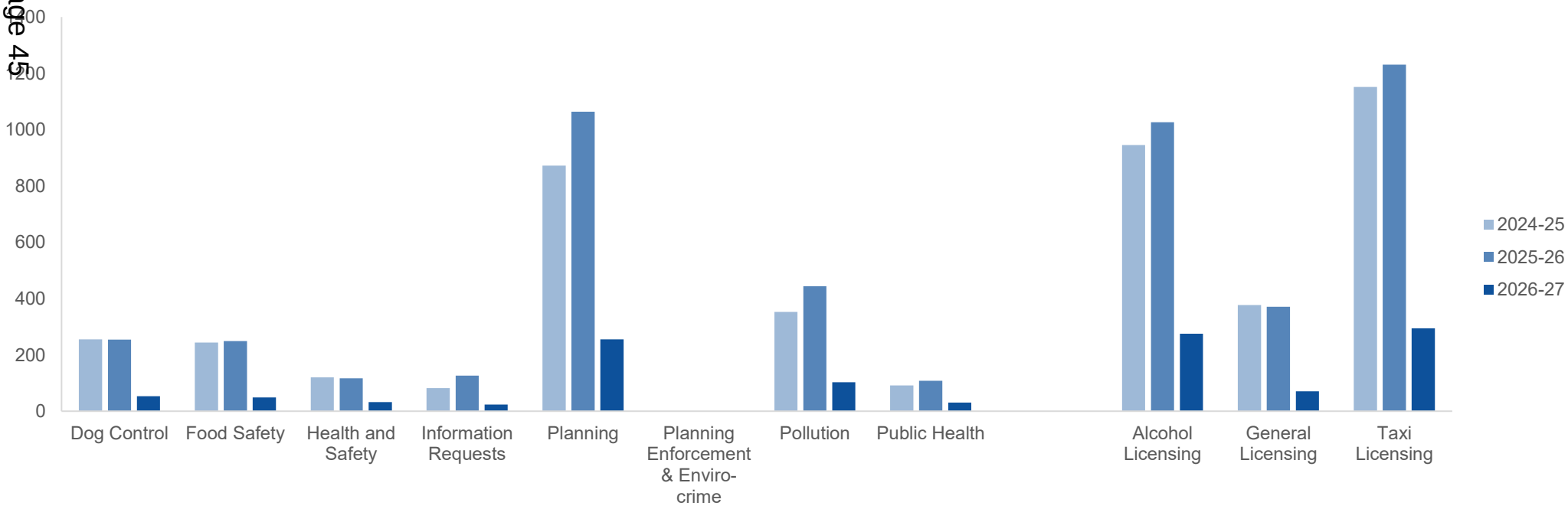
Wychavon District Council





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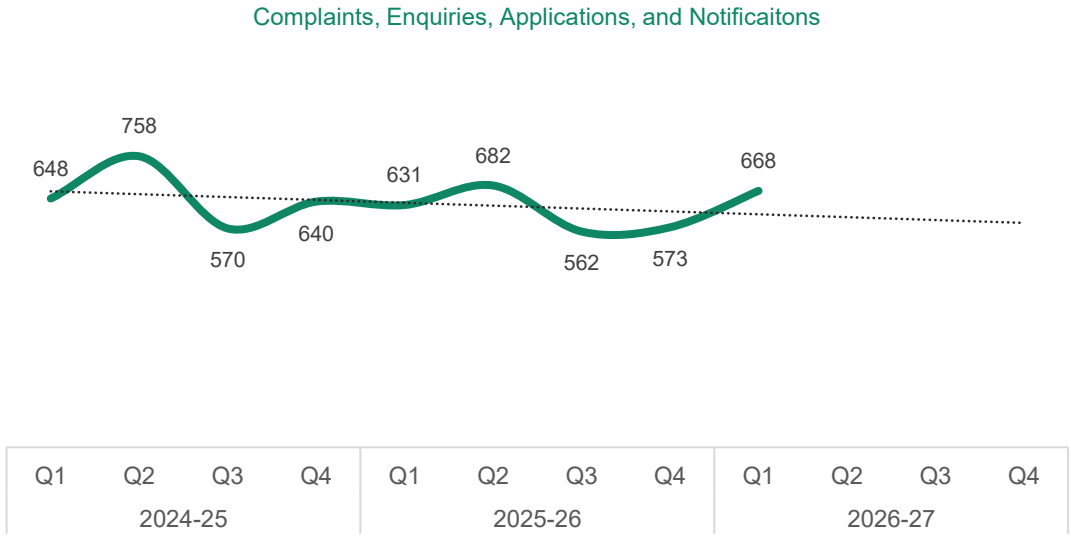
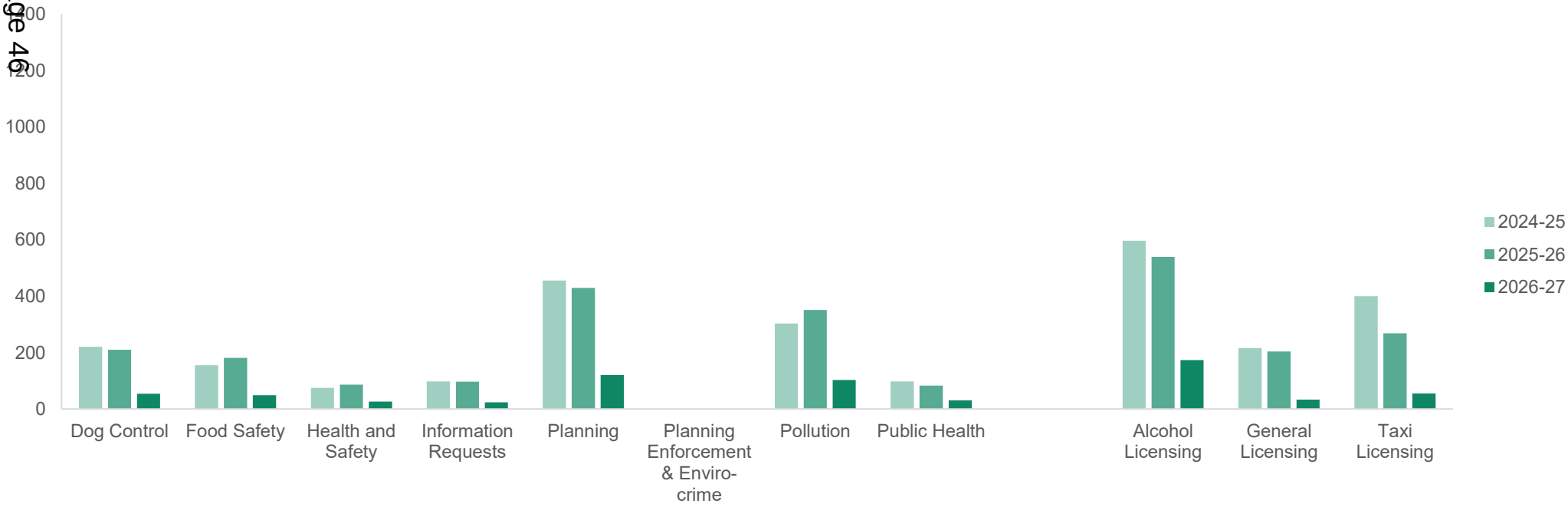
Agenda Item 4

Wyre Forest District Council





Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

WRS Board
24th September 2026

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE MONITORING April – June 2026

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Joint Board:

1.1 Note the final financial position for the period April – June 2026

1.2 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for Apr – June 26 in relation to Bereavements

Council	**Apr–June 26 Actual for Bereavements £000**
Bromsgrove District Council	1
Wychavon District Council	2
Worcester City Council	6
Total	**9**

1.3 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2026-27 in relation to Pest control

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2026/27 Pest Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	2
Malvern Hills District Council	2
Redditch Borough Council	3
Worcester City Council	1
Wychavon District Council	5
Total	**14**

1.4 That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2025-26 in relation to additional Technical Officers

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2026/27 Tech Officer Animal Activity £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2026/27 Gull Control £000
Bromsgrove District Council	10	
Malvern Hills District Council	8	
Redditch Borough Council	3	
Worcester City Council	4	30
Wychavon District Council	15	
Wyre Forest District Council	10	
Total	**50**	**30**

Contribution to Priorities	The robust financial management arrangements ensure the priorities of the service can be delivered effectively.
Introduction/Summary	This report presents the financial position for Worcestershire Regulatory Services for the period April – June 2026.
Background	The financial monitoring reports are presented to this meeting on a quarterly basis.
Report	The following reports are included for Joint Board's Attention: • Revenue Monitoring - April – June 26 – Appendix 1 • Income Breakdown - April – June 26 – Appendix 2 <u>Revenue Monitoring</u> The detailed revenue report is attached at Appendix 1. This shows a projected outturn 2026/27 in line with budget. It is appreciated this is an estimation to the year-end based on following assumptions: • The £72k underspend against the Q1 budget primary relates to timing differences rather than permanent savings. As we progress through the year, we expect these timing variances to unwind and the associated budgets to be utilised, which is reflected in the revised full-year forecast position remaining on budget. • Appendix 2 shows the detail of the income achieved by WRS April – June 26 • Any grant funded expenditure is shown separate to the core service costs as this is not funded by the participating Councils. • WRS are continuing to work on the Victoria Forms project & is now receiving income for all partner councils for temporary event notices licence (TEN's), below is the income recovered to partner councils for Apr – June 26:-

Bromsgrove District Council	£2.6k
Malvern Hills District Council	£3.1k
Redditch Borough Council	£0.7k
Worcester City Council	£2.3k
Wychavon District Council	£3.6k
Wyre Forest District Council	£1.7k

Financial Implications

None other than those stated in the report

Sustainability

None as a direct result of this report

Contact Points

James Walton
Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough councils
James.Walton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Background Papers

Detailed financial business case

WRS - Profit & Loss Report 2026/27

Total WRS June 26 / Period 3 - 26/27

	Revised Full Year Budget 26-27	Revised Budget - Apr - June 26	Committed Expenditure Apr - June 26	Variance	Qtr 1 Projected outturn	Qtr 1 Projected Outturn Variance	Comments
Direct Expenditure	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Employees							
Salary	4,587	1,147	995	-151	4,587	0	Employee costs are below the Q1 budget due to delays in recruiting to vacant posts, resulting in salary savings during the period. The service also includes Ukrainian employee costs, which are offset by corresponding income contributions. The favourable staffing variance is partially offset by higher agency costs incurred to maintain service delivery while recruitment remains ongoing.
Agency Staff	0	0	80	80	0	0	The costs are offset by salary savings & income generation work, including work for other local authorities
Employee Insurance	22	5	9	4	22	0	
Sub-Total - Employees	**4,608**	**1,152**	**1,084**	**-68**	**4,608**	**0**	
Premises							
Rent / Hire of Premise	85	21	19	-3	85	0	
Cleaning	1	0	-0	-0	1	0	
Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sub-Total - Premises	**86**	**21**	**18**	**-3**	**86**	**0**	
Transport							
Vehicle Hire	13	3	1	-2	13	0	
Vehicle Fuel	8	2	1	-1	8	0	
Road Fund Tax	1	0	0	-0	1	0	
Vehicle Insurance	5	1	0	-1	5	0	
Vehicle Maintenance	3	1	0	-0	3	0	
Car Allowances	55	14	12	-2	55	0	
Sub-Total - Transport	**84**	**21**	**14**	**-7**	**84**	**0**	
Supplies and Services							
Furniture & Equipment	49	12	1	-11	49	0	The underspend mainly reflects a timing difference with the cost expected to be recognised within the year
Clothing, uniforms and laundry	2	0	-1	-1	2	0	
Printing & Photocopying	17	4	-1	-5	17	0	
Postage	11	3	3	1	11	0	
ICT	114	28	67	39	114	0	The variance is predominantly due to the Idox software licence charge (£40.8k) being prepaid for the full year, resulting in a timing difference at Q1.
Telephones	36	9	-0	-9	36	0	
Training & Seminars	34	9	3	-6	34	0	
Insurance	17	4	0	-4	17	0	
Third Party Payments	217	54	33	-21	217	0	The underspend mainly reflects a timing difference on Hosting Charges (BDC), with the cost expected to be recognised in Q2
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	**496**	**124**	**105**	**-19**	**496**	**0**	
Contractors							
Dog Warden	121	30	58	27	121	0	Higher-than-budgeted kennelling costs, primarily due to timing differences
Pest Control	67	17	34	17	67	0	This is overspend within pest control, funded by the contributions from partners
Taxi / Alcohol / & Other Licensing	28	7	2	-5	28	0	
Other contractors/consultants	3	1	5	4	3	0	
Water Safety	5	1	1	-0	5	0	
Food Safety	0	0	-0	-0	0	0	
Environmental Protection	22	6	14	9	22	0	Bereavement costs : expected to be fully offset by income received from partner contributions.
Grants / Subscriptions	13	3	3	-0	13	0	
Advertising, Publicity and Promotion	6	1	0	-1	6	0	
Sub-Total	**264**	**66**	**116**	**50**	**264**	**0**	
Income							
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-1,014	-254	-279	-26	-1,014	0	See append 2
Sub-Total	**-1,014**	**-254**	**-279**	**-26**	**-1,014**	**0**	
Overall Total	**4,524**	**1,131**	**1,059**	**-72**	**4,524**	**0**	The £72k underspend against the Q1 budget is mainly driven by a combination of temporary timing differences and one-off variances. The most significant variance relates to staff vacancies, which have generated salary savings of £142k, partially offset by £80k of additional agency costs incurred to maintain service delivery during recruitment. There have also been favourable one-off income movements, including the Air Quality Grant and Ukraine Homes Support funding. A number of the remaining variances are timing-related, including ICT costs, third-party payments, supplies and services expenditure, and income collection. These are expected to reverse as expenditure is incurred and income levels normalise during the remainder of the year. As a result, despite the favourable Q1 position, the revised full-year forecast remains broadly in line with the approved budget.
	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Notes:-

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Appendix 2

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Income 2026/27

Income from Partners	April to June 26
	£
Budget	1,014,222
Bereavement / Public Burials	9,295
Pest Control Overspend	14,241
Planning Enforcement - Bromsgrove & Redditch	118,814
Ukrainian Support Work - Bromsgrove & Redditch	32,090
	1,188,662
Grant Income	
Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting	13,985
Air Quality Grant	12,637
	26,622
Other Income	
Stray Dog Income	12,966
Worcester County - Mgmt, Legal & Admin Support	36,395
County - Database and Uniform	8,413
Contaminated Land Work	1,103
Primary Authority work	8,127
Licensing - Pre-App Advice	1,359
Food Training Courses / Certificates / Food Hygiene Rating / Pre-Opening	9,728
	78,090
Total Income Apr - June 26	**1,293,374**
2026/27 Base Budget from Partners	-1,014,222
Total Income Excluding Budget	**279,152**

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services
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WRS Joint Board
Date: 24th September 2026

Changes to the agreement for support of WCC Trading Standards

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

(i) Note the report

Background

Worcestershire County Council (WCC) was originally a full partner in the WRS shared service. During the business case period from 2010/11 through to 2013/14, partners accepted a similar percentage saving relative to the amount invested. However, the following three years from 2014/5 through to 2016/17, partners determined their own saving needs based upon their financial positions at the time. WCC's original contribution to the partnership was £2.2M and by the end of the business case period, this had reduced to around £1.7M. At this point WCC indicated an aspiration of moving to a budget of only £250K per annum to discharge all its statutory functions. District members expressed serious concerns about the impacts this would have and continued to voice these going forward.

In the Autumn of 2015, WCC announced its intention to quit the partnership and, after paying for its exit, took back its functions in May 2016. Part of the negotiation involved continued support for the service at its base at Wyre Forest House. There were only around 10 people remaining in the service at this point which fell further, reaching at its lowest point 6.5FTE. Not long after their departure from the partnership, WCC realised it needed some form of dedicated regulatory management support for this service. WRS stepped in with an offer of time from a Team Manager and the Director, which were added to the original elements of the exit agreement.

When the service moved into the remit of the Director of Public Health (DPH), the post holder at the time was concerned at the level of provision, particularly give the role in tobacco control the service had. She used this as an opportunity to increase their contribution to the TS budget. This has continued to the present, where the current DPH has allocated funding to grow the service from its current 13.9 FTE by an additional 4FTE posts.

For some time, the Director and Team Manager have struggled with the allocation of time in the contract. With the growth in previous years and the proposed further increase in resources, the time available from these two post-holders is no longer sufficient. Trading Standards needs a dedicated manager role and whilst WCC could have asked WRS to commission this, they have opted to directly employ someone in the role. There will however by an expectation that they are engaged and working directly with the WRS Management team and staff will continue to engage across the services.

Report

The Trading Standards and Animal Health Service discharges WCC's approaching 300 statutory duties relating to consumer protection and business regulation, which include

- Weights and Measures Law
- Food and Agricultural Standards law
- Product Safety Law
- Fair Trading Law
- Animal Health law

This covers a plethora of legislative controls. Fair Trading alone is very diverse encompassing everything from basic misdescriptions of goods and services and misleading price indications to illicit tobacco controls to counterfeit goods, underage sales and the regulation of estate and letting agent activities. All goods that consumers can purchase are caught by the Product Safety function as well as a range of other products and aspects of their safety (e.g., construction products, electromagnetic compatibility.)

As with WRS, key elements of the service's work focus on the investigation of criminal offences and these activities are governed by the same legal processes as other law enforcement organisations (PACE 1984, CPIA 1996 and RIPA 2000/ IPA 2106.) Other than in food law, where district council officers deal with Food Hygiene/ Safety and county officers deal with Food Composition and Labelling, there is very limited overlap between functions across the tiers. Both sets are distinct, with Environmental Health having s stronger emphasis on places and people, whereas Trading Standards is more about products, services and people.

Apart from the allocation of 1-day per week of Team Manager's time and 2-days per month of Director's time, the current agreement covers a range of other supporting activities including:

- Contribution towards the cost of the Legal Administration Officer
- Contribution to the cost of Database Administrator,
- 2-days per week of clerical and financial administrative support,
- Contribution to the cost of the Uniform database.

Other contributions include a significant amount of the cost of the Lexis Nexis legal database, which is separate from the overall agreement, and recharges for things like petty cash, GPC card us and mobile devices. Two other functions discharged are Petroleum Licensing (by the Environmental Permitting team,) and Safety at Sportsgrounds. The former is rolled into the agreement for wider TS delivers as it is a function within this remit, but payment for Sportsgrounds work comes via Emergency Planning. Neither is impacted by this change.

Financial Impact

The current agreement includes **£72,787** for support and management roles, plus £**21,169** to discharge the petroleum licensing function. The removal of the two elements of day-to-day management makes the revised charges **£40,443** for service support and the **£21,169** for Petroleum Licensing is retained. This gives a new annual total charge of **£61,612,** a reduction per annum of **£32,344.** Having said this, WCC have agreed that the 3-month notice period required in the agreement for variations and changes should start on 1st September, meaning that funding for management will cover till the end of November. This significantly reduces the loss of income for 2026/27 to around **£11,000** but the full impact would be felt in 2027/28 for the final year of the partnership as we know it now.

If income generation holds during this financial year, the loss should not be an issue. WRS Managers will work with Officer Members of the Board in the run up to budget setting and are likely to suggest a draw from reserves if needed to offset any reduction in 2027/28.

Contact Point

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Worcestershire
Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

WRS Joint Board
Date: Thursday 24 September 2026

Title: Report on contracted work on Safety at Sports Grounds

Recommendation

That the Joint Board notes the Report.

Background

1. The discharge of the Safety at Sportsgrounds (SatSGs) function including Safety Advisory Group (SAG) co-ordination has been contracted to WRS under a legal agreement from the County Council's Public Health directorate since August 2020 following the retirement of the member of the County Council's Emergency planning team who had previously led on this work. The County Council retains its statutory duty in relation to the legislation with WRS acting on its behalf to deliver the function and service.

2. WRS is required to provide an annual review to the County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee of activities carried out on its behalf to discharge these statutory duties (SatSGs). Members should note that the operational detail of this information report reflects the activity presented to Worcestershire County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee at its last annual review meeting of June 2026. The purpose of this information report is to make District members aware of this aspect of work being delivered by WRS.

Report

3. The County Council's responsibilities under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) 2005 are discharged by WRS and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (H&W F&R).

4. The Safety at Sportsgrounds function is about ensuring the safety of anyone in a regulated stadium, so it has aspects of health and safety and building control and is thus well suited to

sit alongside similar functions that are discharged by WRS.

5. The legislation focuses on both “designated stadia” and “regulated stands,” which are defined in the legislation. The "Designated" stadium in Worcestershire as defined by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport under The Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 is

    - Sixways Stadium –Worcester Warriors Rugby Football Club

6. The "Regulated Stands" in Worcestershire, namely stadia with stands that provide covered accommodation for 500 or more spectators and are covered by the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) 2005 are:

    - The Grandstand – Pitchcroft, Worcester Racecourse
    - Aggborough Stadium –Kidderminster Harriers Football Club
    - The Victoria Ground –Bromsgrove Sporting Football Club

7. Members may be surprised to learn that the Worcestershire County Cricket Ground at New Road and the Worcester Arena do not fall into these categories. Their capacities and the nature of the buildings or individual stands mean that they are not subject to the legislation.

8. Safety Certificates

9. In discharging its statutory responsibilities, the County Council must consider applications for, and issue to qualified persons, Safety Certificates for designated sports grounds with the aim of securing reasonable safety and setting maximum capacity at the sports grounds. Where grounds are used for other purposes such as concerts or firework displays, there is provision for “Special Safety Certificates” to be issued where the grounds are used in ways not covered in the same way as in the general certificates.

10. Where there are concerns about safety, powers are available to local authorities to serve a Prohibition Notice in respect of a sports ground if the Council considers that "the admission of spectators to a sports ground or any part of a sports ground involves or will involve a risk to them so serious that, until steps have been taken to reduce it to a reasonable level, admission of spectators to that part of the ground ought to be prohibited or

restricted".

11. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) 2005 ensures a risk-based approach to fire safety. The County Council is the enforcing authority for the FSO to ensure that all necessary fire risk assessments have been made at all four of the regulated locations and their premises covered by the SatSGs legislation. This assessment is carried out by H&W F&R on behalf of the County Council.

12. Safety Advisory Groups

13. Management and discharge of SatSGs legislation is administered through a site-specific Safety Advisory Group (SAG) based on each sports venue. SAG meetings were convened regularly throughout the year, coordinated and administered by WRS. The core Agency membership of SAG is composed of:

- Worcestershire County Council (WRS Senior Practitioner or nominated representative)
- West Mercia Police,
- Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service,
- West Midlands Ambulance Service,
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health, Licensing, Health and Safety) and,
- the host stadium Safety Officer and Club representatives.

14. Where necessary this can be supplemented with other bodies including District Councils or their shared services (i.e. Parking Enforcement, Building Control) and National Highways

15. All SAG decisions are made on a multi-agency basis under the chairmanship of WRS as the County Council's representative. Under the terms of the Scheme of Delegation and Policy statements the Chair and Vice Chair of the County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee are made aware of any significant alterations and modifications to General and Special Safety Certificates issued.

16. Venue Summaries:

17. Sixways Stadium, Worcester Warriors RFC

18. In May 2024 the safety certificate for the stadium was issued to the new owners Junction 6 Ltd and reissued in November 2024 and June 2026 to allow for additional Safety Officers and increased spectator numbers for designated football matches. A

Special Safety Certificate was arranged to cover the 2026 fireworks display.

19. Junction 6 Ltd made an application in November 2024 to the Rugby Football Union to play in tier two of a new format league from September 2025. This was in part supported by confirmation that the stadium had a valid safety certificate in place. In April 2025 Worcester Warriors were admitted into Champ Rugby (formerly the RFU Championship).

20. Worcester Raiders Football Club continued to play at the ground during 2024/5, but Worcester City Football Club became tenants for the 2025/6 season. The stadium also hosted Hereford United FC whilst their waterlogged pitch was re-laid.

21. The club sold the North Stand to Ospreys Rugby Club (this was a temporary addition approx. 14 years ago) and removal of this area of seating had the potential to affect the designation of the stadium. Advice was sought from the Sports Grounds Safety Authority, however capacity remained over 10,000 (a requirement for designation).

22. Aggborough Stadium, Kidderminster Harriers FC

23. KHFC played in the National League North (6th tier of English football) having been relegated from the National League in the previous season. In the 2025/6 season they were successful in the play offs and returned to the National League. The stadium safety certificate holder remains the Club Chairman. Wolves Under 21s also play at the Aggborough Stadium

24. Collaboration continued to be excellent with the club hosting the SAGs. During September 2024 members held a match day inspection - a well-run fixture with no concerns. In October 2024 an unplanned partial evacuation of the stadium (the result of a false alarm) was dealt with safely and responsibly.

25. The club refined its youth match and season ticket scheme and consulted with the SAG on matters of safeguarding and security. The club dealt robustly with spectator problems, issuing bans to individuals where appropriate and were able to advise other local clubs experiencing similar problems.

26. On the advice from SAG the club's medical provider underwent assessment to become CQC registered in anticipation of changes in exemptions for sports grounds.

27. In January 2026 the club began the process to potentially purchase the ground from Wyre Forest District Council.

28. The Grandstand, Worcester Racecourse

29. Worcester Racecourse is owned by Worcester City Council with the Grandstand and surrounding area together with the racecourse being operated by the Arena Racing Company (ARC). The Grandstand is managed as a Regulated Stand under the SatSGs legislation. The Racecourse has a designated safety certificate holder and safety officers. Other than racing and events, the whole area is fully open to the public.

30. The SAG met twice a year to mirror the summer jump season which in 2024 was shortened due to flooding - the first 3 meetings were transferred to Hereford (another course operated by ARC). The most popular fixture of the year, Ladies Day, became their season opener in 2024, for which the SAG reviewed their event management plan. The full 18 fixtures took place in 2025. SAG members attended the stewards' annual briefings in May 24 and April 25 and undertook an in-meeting inspection in September 2024. Worcester Racecourse is also subject to inspections and monitoring by the British Horseracing Authority.

31. Victoria Ground, Bromsgrove Sporting FC

32. Bromsgrove Sporting leases the Victoria Ground on a long-term arrangement from Bromsgrove District Council, who own the freehold. The Main and North stands are Regulated Stands under the SatSGs legislation. The Club played in the Southern League Premier Division Central.

33. The SAG met pre, mid and end of season. Although the club applied for, and was granted, planning permission for a new stand at the Town End of the ground, the decision was made to postpone (this would have become the third regulated stand at the ground).

34. The Bromsgrove Sporting FC safety certificate holder remains the Club Chairman. The club has a suitably qualified safety officer. The in-match inspections took place in January 2024 and October 2025. The former identified some safety issues that were subsequently resolved with the Fire Officer, with the latter raising no concerns.

35. A new consortium became involved with the club in April 2026 and will be making a request to increase capacity which the SAG will assess through due process.

36. Defibrillators

37. All sports grounds have at least one defibrillator available. The majority, including New Road, have two. Each sports ground's Safety Officer, as well as other large event organisers, were also made aware of grants available for trauma kits from Worcestershire's Public Health team.

38. Non-Statutory Event Safety Management Advice

39. The multi-agency members involved with the SAGs also provide safety management advice to several well-established venues and events that take place throughout the year. This process ensures that best practice is shared with organisers, safety managers and stewards, many of whom work at the designated or regulated grounds. Some of the venues and events where advice has been offered include:

- Malvern, Three Counties Showground.
- Worcestershire County Cricket Ground
- Worcester's Victorian Christmas Fayre
- Sunshine Festival.
- Worcester Balloon Festival
- Hanbury Show
- Astwood Bank Carnival
- Battle of Evesham.
- Dubs in the Middle

40. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO)

41. The Fire Safety duty is currently administered by the County Council through a Service Level Agreement provided by the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

42. Funding

43. The work described in this report is funded by the County Council, so WRS's costs are fully recovered. Officers of WRS are engaged with many aspects of these activities as part of their normal duties, so this work provides a natural extension and progression of that and provides a good platform on which to engage with these business operators and of course, helps maintain our strong links with the County Council and Public Health colleagues.

Contact Point

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Background Papers	None

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Worcestershire
Regulatory Services
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WRS Joint Board
Date: 24th September 2026

Animal Licensing Information Report

Recommendation

WRS Board Members are asked to note the report

Background

In 2018 The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 under section 13 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 was introduced and in doing so it replaced a number of existing licensing regimes to control the following licensable activities:

- selling animals as pets
- providing or arranging for the provision of boarding for cats or dogs
- hiring out horses
- breeding dogs
- keeping or training animals for exhibition

The new legislation replaced and consolidated four previous Acts; the 1951 Pet Animals Act, 1963 Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1964 Riding Establishments Act, and 1973 Breeding of Dogs Act; along with the 1925 Performing Animals Act, into a unified licensing regime under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 focuses on welfare and was designed as a risk-based, full cost-recovery framework to enhance minimum standards of welfare across all covered activities.

Each District Council is currently responsible for functions in relation to the licensing and regulation of various animal-related activities. Worcestershire Regulatory Services carries out these functions on behalf of each district council and a proportion of funds towards 1 FTE to carry out this work is allocated in the budget.

In addition to those licences mentioned above Members should note that licences to operate a zoo, to keep a dangerous wild animal or Primates are not included in this legislation, and they remain a separate licence in their own right but all regimes are still delivered by the Licensing team. These are:

- Primate Licences issued under the Animal Welfare (Primate Licences) (England) Regulations 2024
- Dangerous Wild Animal Licences issued under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 197
- Zoo Licences issued under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

Although each piece of legislation establishes its own licensing regime, they all share the same core purpose: safeguarding animal welfare. The frameworks are based on shared principles and processes, with consistent standards

Report

and expectations applied across each regime.

Current Licensing Activity

The current number of Animal licences across the districts are set out in the table below:

TABLE A

Licence Type	BDC	MHDC	RBC	WCC	WDC	WFDC	Total
Breeding dogs	0	4	0	3	17	10	**34**
Hiring out horses	3	7	1		2	4	**17**
Keeping/training animals for exhibition	8	8	1	1	13	2	**33**
Providing boarding for cats	9	6	2	1	9	9	**36**
Providing boarding in kennels for dogs	10	5	0	1	13	6	**35**
Providing day care for dogs	3	5	0	3	3	2	**16**
Providing home boarding for dogs	16	11	6	9	24	15	**81**
Selling animals as pets	6	3	1	2	3	2	**17**
	55	**49**	**11**	**20**	**84**	**50**	**269**

In 2020 DEFRA introduced a mandatory qualification for all officers who undertake animal licensing inspections. The qualification can take anywhere between 12 – 18 months to complete and requires a combination of theory and practical assessments.

There are currently 4 officers fully qualified with 1 officer awaiting a course commencement date. Unfortunately, two qualified officers left the team last year and therefore for resilience the team are investing in another officer commencing training this year.

Each licence inspection requires a comprehensive visit and check by a qualified officer and on some occasions where the legislation requires a qualified vet must also attend. The DEFRA guidance is comprehensive, and the inspection requirements are very prescriptive meaning at times these inspections can take a considerable length of time to complete.

Alongside, each inspection there is an interim inspection that is booked by the team at various points across the length of the licence. Therefore, the licence inspection numbers shown in the table above are doubled depending on when an interim inspection will be scheduled. The interim inspection will be determined and scheduled by an officer dependent upon on the risk observed and the star rating awarded at the initial inspection.

There are new powers for licensing authorities to vary, suspend and revoke licences where there is non-compliance or it is necessary to protect the welfare of an animal – where previously the only option available to the local authority was prosecution. Officers have varied, suspended and revoked licences where there has been a requirement to do so. When licences have been suspended a list of recommendations are provided to the business which they must comply within a 28 day period.

The table below illustrates the animal licensing inspection trend year on year since the implementation of the new regulations alongside the licence numbers for Zoo inspections and Dangerous Wild Animal (DWA) Licences.

TABLE B

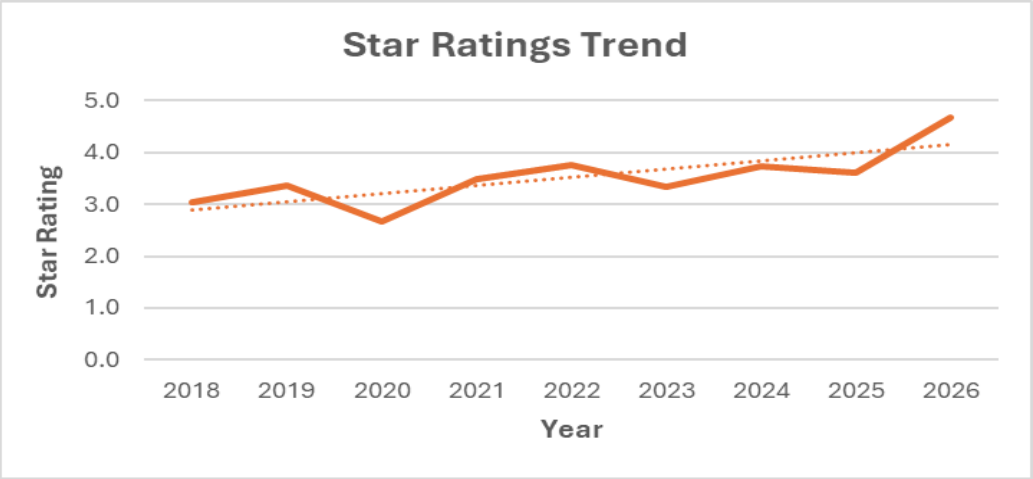
District	Licence Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
BDC	ANIACT	37	41	41	43	43	47	44	**55**
BDC	ZOO	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
MHDC	ANIACT	35	34	39	31	32	35	37	**49**
RBC	ANIACT	6	7	7	8	8	10	12	**11**
RBC	DWA	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0
WC	ANIACT	16	13	13	11	14	14	15	**20**
WC	DWA	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	**1**
WDC	ANIACT	62	58	63	64	64	67	62	**84**
WDC	DWA	3	3	3	2	1	0	0	0
WDC	ZOO	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	**2**
WFDC	ANIACT	29	32	36	38	34	38	44	**50**
WFDC	ZOO	1		1	1	1	1	1	1

Each zoo licence is inspected annually by an officer. After an initial inspection accompanied by a DEFRA appointed vet a licensing officer carries out an inspection every year and a periodical inspection with a vet on Year 3 and Year 6 of a licence.

For animal licenses Officers have worked collaboratively with licence holders since the implementation of the new regime to increase standards. It has been a huge learning curve for businesses across Worcestershire to not only meet the minimum standards but maintain them due to price rises and cost of living challenges.

Table C outlines the trend across Worcestershire of the Star Ratings provided to businesses since the new regime was implemented from 2018 to today. Businesses are Star rated from 1-5 and this is dependent upon a number of factors including risk, training qualifications/experience and having the correct policies in place.

TABLE C



Proactive Work and Enforcement

The team have worked collaboratively with the intelligence team on a number of Operations for illegal dog breeding using complaints data and intelligence as a source for investigation and in turn have had successful outcomes. The number of complaints and enquiries received into the service for animal licensing is shown in Table D.

TABLE D

District	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Grand Total
Bromsgrove	**25**	**37**	**29**	**21**	**40**	**41**	**193**
Complaint	3	15	17	7	29	25	96
Enquiry	22	22	12	14	11	16	97
Malvern Hills	**28**	**29**	**34**	**32**	**21**	**35**	**179**
Complaint	12	13	12	14	5	26	82
Enquiry	16	16	22	18	16	9	97
Redditch	**19**	**17**	**23**	**15**	**10**	**9**	**93**
Complaint	8	8	15	9	3	8	51
Enquiry	11	9	8	6	7	1	42
Worcester	**24**	**31**	**25**	**22**	**20**	**23**	**145**
Complaint	9	12	11	7	7	14	60
Enquiry	15	19	14	15	13	9	85
Wychavon	**56**	**67**	**45**	**77**	**65**	**64**	**374**
Complaint	21	28	22	42	35	39	187
Enquiry	35	39	23	35	30	25	187
Wyre Forest	**84**	**59**	**55**	**56**	**49**	**41**	**344**
Complaint	39	24	33	25	23	21	165
Enquiry	45	35	22	31	26	20	179
Grand Total	**236**	**240**	**211**	**223**	**205**	**213**	**1328**

The team will prioritise the investigation of these complaints either through analysing risk or through an intelligence gathering operation such as Operation Lisbon (1 and 2) and Operation Braga. These are two Operations where the team have looked at illegal dog breeding across the County. They will also check if the complaint is regarding an existing license holder or an unlicensed business.

For existing licence holders the team will follow the requirements in the legislation and statutory guidance. To date four premises have had their licence suspended as a result of complaints or an interim inspection by the team.

For businesses that are unlicensed in the digital world it is important that any investigations that involve accessing records are done legally and correctly and this can take time. Some investigations may result in a warning letter however others may require the collection of communications data, further intelligence or a warrant from the courts, all of which can take time to pursue.

Joint Communications and press releases with the environmental heath team and dog warden service have increased awareness across the County however the service are aware that there is still some more work that is needed on communications to alert the public to come forward when illegal activity is perceived to be happening or seen.

Resources and Cost

Financial and Budgetary Implications

An analysis has been undertaken of the hours spent on the activities and licensing regimes outlined in this report since the implementation of the 2018 animal licensing regime and the number of FTEs undertaking this area of licensing has significantly increased. The service understands this to be a priority area as outlined in the overall strategic assessment, however this can then pull on resources from other areas of licensing activity. The indication of 2FTE as the baseline has been provided using data collected by WRS colleagues rather than the 1FTE originally put forward to Members in the report in 2017 prior to the team commencing the work required.

Members should also be aware that the cost to the district's by the team training more officers has in turn reduced the need to use Vets for inspecting in the longer term. These costs and savings are outlined below.

Year	Cost
21-22	£23,624
22-23	£19,395
23-24	£35,797
24-25	£13,368
25-26	£7,145

Summary

The team have built up knowledge and expertise in this area of licensing over time and continue to work with colleagues across the country and sit on various National groups as experts in their field. The regulations are very prescriptive as to how matters should be conducted in the granting, suspension, variation, refusal and revocation of a licence, with the welfare of the animals concerned at the very heart of any action to be taken.

The landscape has changed across animal licensing with the introduction of the new regime. The requirements to undertake the interim inspections alongside the proactive enforcement and compliance work with its own legal requirements can provide successful outcomes but not withholding its own challenges for the service.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

None

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