

JOINT COMMITTEE

Date : 26th November 2015

Activity and Performance Data Quarters 1 and 2

Recommendation

That the joint committee notes the Report.

Background

The report covers both district and county functionality so covers the wide range of local authority corporate priorities to which regulatory services contribute

Contribution to Priorities

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

Report

Activity Data

With respect to **district functions**, as usual, licensing and environmental nuisance continue to make the most impact in terms of demand which is understandable given their direct impact on the public. The most significant piece of data in the Q2 information was that numbers of complaints relating to nuisance and noise showed only a marginal increase over Q1

As members are aware from previous reports, these types of complaint, especially noise are seasonal due to factors such as outdoor events, and one normally expects to see a spike in figures for Q2 which appears not to have happened this year, although the number of noise complaints is still significant.

There could be a number of reasons for this but the most likely is the relatively poor weather during the summer. Long periods of fine weather usually lead to significant increases in the number of complaints about nuisance, and especially noise. Whilst there was a lot of dry weather this summer it was relatively cool, making it less likely that people would hold noisy events outdoors and people would be more likely to keep windows closed.

As part of the efficiency savings for all partners, we have introduced the kind of self-help regimes that have been in place in Worcester City and

Wyre Forest for a couple of years, and extended the range of nuisance complaints in these two districts for which self-help is required before the service will intervene. Previous experience would suggest that it takes 6-12 months before the impact of such measures is seen in the figures, so it is unlikely that anything introduced in April would feed through so quickly. We will now have to wait until next summer to see if the weather was as responsible as we think.

The spread of noise complaints has not significantly altered with all districts having wards that appear within the top 20 for the overall number of complaints (please note some old ward boundaries have been kept for data comparison purposes, and will not change until the new financial year.)

Health and safety showed an increase over the last quarter and the same quarter last year and this area of work has put increasing demand on the team not only because of numbers but also the complexity and seriousness of a small number of cases under investigation which currently include 2 fatalities.

353 food hygiene inspections were carried out and the food hygiene inspection programme is on or ahead of schedule in all areas.

The focus this last quarter for the technical pollution team has been on air quality work and the production of the air quality action plan progress report which will be submitted to DEFRA this summer.

Planning consultations continue to make large demands in terms of numbers and complexity on the team with numbers down on last quarter but significantly up on the same quarter last year. The reason for the recent drop is probably seasonal combined with the work the team is doing with district development control teams to lessen the number of referrals.

Licensing demand continues to be high but consistent with previous quarters as one would expect given the relatively stable number of licences issued and renewals. Taxi and alcohol licensing continue to be the highest areas of demand.

Trading standards service requests are holding steady compared with the last 2 quarters but slightly down compared to the same quarter last year.

The top three complaint categories are second hand cars, building work and clothing.

As members will recall complaints about furniture usually featured within the top 3 but for the second quarter running clothing has pushed furniture out and we will keep an eye on this trend.

Activity continues to be focussed on rogue traders who target vulnerable people, consumer products that are dangerous and can cause people harm and traders with a large number of complaints against them.

Performance

Customer satisfaction figures for Q2 are 77% which is down on last quarter



but is consistent with the overall satisfaction of 77% for all of last year.

Business satisfaction for the quarter is 98% the same as for the last quarter and 73% of customers feel better equipped to deal with problems after speaking with us which is a decrease on the first quarter but consistent with last year's out-run figure.

Overall for the first 6 months the satisfaction figures are very similar to last years and staff will now be working hard to try and attain an improvement overall.

The cumulative number of sick days per staff member is 1.55 days which puts us on target to beat last year's 3.9 days per FTE.

% of licensed premises subject to complaint of not upholding the licensing objectives was 3.9% for the county and last year's total was 7%, so a similar position at 6-months. Rates of noise complaints per 1000 persons were 1.87 compared with last year's total of 3.8, so again similar in trend to last year.

Performance overall is comparable and in some areas improved over last year and we will work as a team to ensure this is reflected at year end. See appendix B Table of PIs)

Finally a couple of press releases from the quarter that should be of interest. All of WRS press releases are available on the website.

Items of interest

First for Worcestershire business! 06 October 2015

Congratulations to Spennells Tandoori in Kidderminster

The first Asian business in Worcestershire to achieve the Healthier Choices food award.

It is owned and operated by Mr Tazmul Islam whose premise is in the Spennells Shopping Centre, Warbler Place, Kidderminster.

On receiving the Gold level for the Healthier Choices Food Award, Mr Islam said, 'I am delighted to be the first winner of this award in Kidderminster. I hope that people will try the food I serve, especially the healthier choices'.

Customers can request more salad with their starter or main meal and smaller portions of the meals. A current favorite is Chicken Tandoori with salad.

Website of business- <http://spennellstandoori-hoobrook.co.uk/>

For full details of the award scheme visit www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/food



Fined for selling illegal tobacco

A Worcestershire shopkeeper caught selling illegal tobacco has been fined after pleading guilty to 18 offences.

Ahmed Mohammed Ahmed, 37, of Juniper Avenue, Gloucester, appeared at Worcester Magistrates Court on Thursday (July 30) where he pleaded guilty to 18 offences of selling counterfeit and incorrectly labeled tobacco, through Evesham Mini Market on Evesham High Street which he ran at the time.

The court heard how offences were uncovered in March 2014 when Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Trading Standards officers carried out test purchases at the Mini Market following a number of anonymous complaints about the sale of non-duty paid and foreign labeled cigarettes.

The officers then visited the Mini Market with police and a sniffer dog and found foreign labeled cigarettes and tobacco being sold. Cigarettes and tobacco - including counterfeit Golden Virginia Hand Rolling Tobacco and cigarettes not marked with the appropriate warning statements or photographs - were found hidden under shelving units, behind other foods and household goods on the shelves and in two holdalls in the staff toilets.

As a result of the investigation Mr Ahmad's licence to sell alcohol was revoked by the licensing committee of Wychavon District Council.

In mitigation, Mr Ahmad claimed that he was not aware of the presence of the cigarettes and tobacco and that he had subsequently sold his interest in the business.

Magistrates fined Mr Ahmed £1,080 with a £20 victim surcharge and awarded costs of £3,120.

WRS Joint Committee Chairman Cllr Bronwen Behan said: "Illegal tobacco has a serious impact on health and legitimate local business. It is far from a victimless crime and this case shows that we will move to protect public safety and our communities."

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Contact Points

Background Papers

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

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Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	83%	77%		
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	98%	98%		
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	NA	NA	NA	
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	Annually	NA	NA	NA	
5. % of applicants for driver licenses rejected as not fit and proper Number of applicants refused, by district, and percentage those drivers represent of the total driver numbers in the County	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 1 Malvern Hills 1 Redditch 6 Worcester 5 Wychavon 1 Wyre Forest 3 Total 17 1.1%	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	Bromsgrove 1 Malvern Hills 1 Redditch 2 Worcester 3 Wychavon 2 Wyre Forest 2 Total 11 0.8%	NA	
7. % of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	80%	73%		
8. Review of register of complaints/ compliments NB: See breakdown tables	Quarterly	6/20	10/31		
9. Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly	0.99 day/ FTE	1.55 days/ 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 3.6% Malvern Hills 1.4% Redditch 4.8% Worcester 5.4% Wychavon 3.6% Wyre Forest 4.7% Worcestershire 3.9%	NA	
12. Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 1.64 Malvern Hills 1.51 Redditch 2.12 Worcester 2.67 Wychavon 1.56 Wyre Forest 1.71 Worcestershire 1.87	NA	

