

Worcestershire  
**Regulatory Services**

*Supporting and protecting you*

# **Service Plan**

## **2016/17**

# **Worcestershire Regulatory Services Vision**

"That Worcestershire is a healthy, safe and fair place to live, where businesses can thrive"

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The plan broadly follows previous years and outlines:

- How the service will operate over the following 12 months to deliver on both national and local priorities, some of which are highlighted in the plan,
- What activities the service will carry out to achieve or address those priorities and how success will be measured.

The County Council decision to leave the WRS Partnership altogether from sometime in the first quarter of 2016 means that this Service Plan has been drafted for the remaining six Worcestershire District Councils. The County Council's Trading Standards Service will be delivered under a short term Service Level agreement with WRS for two months, after which it will revert to direct control by the County Council themselves. Consequently a separate Service Plan has been drafted for the County Council work, which is being shared with County Council colleagues and members, which will cover the short period of WRS oversight and enable a smooth transition to Worcestershire County Council control.

The Service will enter 2016/17 with a total agreed budget from the district partners of £3025M, excluding the County Council contribution, which is listed as an income stream. This fully delivers the savings required by partners for 2016/17. The reduction in contributions from partners totals £244,000, which is being delivered using a mixture of transformational efficiencies and changes in approach to various elements of service delivery. An example of this is the introduction of wide ranging self-help in relation to nuisance cases across all six districts.

A 3-year business plan which has a number of strands for continuing the Service's development was prepared last year and has now been updated. The service will continue to examine opportunities for commercial activities to bring in additional income. It has become clear over the past 12 months that the opportunities for income generation are limited and that there is a general reluctance from business to pay for advice from the local regulator. The service has been more successful in obtaining income by doing work for other local authorities, specifically in relation to Environmental Health and Dog Warden provisions. This will continue to be pursued going forward with an increased strategic approach to improve stability and certainty.

In making decisions regarding service delivery, the service will continue to risk assess what it does taking into account the following criteria:

- a) Is there a positive/ negative impact on the local economy?
- b) Are vulnerable people impacted?
- c) Are health and wellbeing issues involved?

The work on our risk matrix of services, which has the approval of both Management Board and the Joint Committee, will continue to inform this approach where possible. Time recording will continue to develop in order that the service can continue to improve its understanding of its cost base and better place itself to bid for delivering work for others.

Simon Wilkes  
Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the sixth formal annual service plan to be produced by Worcestershire Regulatory Services and follows a similar format to the previous plans with an Executive Summary and much of the detail in appendices that follow on from the commentary. The financial information covers the three year accounting period 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 however the operational detail reflects the planned activities that the service will undertake in 2016/17 only. The latter is in recognition of the on-going uncertainty of local government finances for the period to the end of the Parliament. The settlement for partners for this period, whilst it is being offered by Government with a guarantee, appears to be less generous than was anticipated and this may require partners to look for further savings from the regulatory functions.

2015/16 was again very busy and successful for WRS, dominated by the decision of Worcestershire County Council to withdrawal from the WRS partnership and by the continuing implementation of the time recording procedure for fee earning work. In these financially challenging times, officers have continued to deliver excellent work, with some excellent results in recent Court cases involving WRS. Details of this will be reported in the Annual Report to be produced at the end of May 2016.

The coming year is likely to be dominated by:

- Working hard to continue to deliver excellent service following reductions in partner contributions,
- Establishing practical procedures to maintaining resilience and the benefits from service elements such as Legal Support and the Intel Unit that provide operational support to both WRS and Trading Standards functions,
- Seeking new income streams to help support local delivery in the face of further potential strains on partner's ability to fund the service.

It is hoped that, around the start date of this Service Plan, a Business and Relationships Manager will be in post and beginning to assist in capitalising on the contracts already being delivered by increasing their scope and securing wider ranging arrangements offering greater rewards. The budget for 2016/17 has been agreed at £3,025M (Districts only), which fully reflects the savings required for the period.

The positive lessons learnt from the Strategic Partnering experience have continued to be used both in developing the service to demonstrate that WRS delivers excellent value for money to its partners and clients, and using this as a sound basis for producing business proposals to give to potential clients. The significant work already undertaken on the Fee Earner Matrix together with preliminary time recording data has supported this further. Whilst we will continue to seek business opportunities where they arise for specific subject areas or skill sets, we are developing sufficiently understanding of our capacity to consider much greater opportunities including the option of delivering a whole district Environmental Health and Licensing service.

For existing partners, managers will look to identify any changes that can be made to service delivery to either improve marginal efficiency or improve service. This is particularly relevant for areas of high demand, such as planning referrals and areas of significant officer resource, such as long-standing complaints or enforcement action. This will require close working relationships to support and assist partner colleagues to ensure that we are all working as effectively as possible.

Improvements to our website continue, with the development of public access/self-service the ultimate target. We are also in the process of developing and maintaining our partners website pages in relation to licensing with Worcester City currently piloting over fifty two new and

improved pages and once tested this new framework will be rolled out countywide to all other partners. During the last twelve months we have also continued to expand our on-line public registers which now include Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and Drivers; whilst these pages are updated monthly manually we hope further development of public access will enable delivery of registers in real time.

## **2. OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

At the national level the external environment in which the Service operates continues to face unprecedented challenges. National government continues to set challenging financial targets for local government and challenges regulators to demonstrate how regulation supports businesses and economic growth, whilst supporting and protecting local residents. The provisional local government finance settlement announced on 17 December 2015 has made it clear that, for Local Government, on-going austerity will continue for some time so the challenging financial climate will remain for the foreseeable future. Even the promise of a guaranteed 4-year financial settlement has come to some partners with the need for a published improvement plan and serious financial controls over the period of the Parliament.

The service shares these significant financial challenges with partners being part of each of the local authorities involved and, whilst previously the service was able to provide significant savings to partners; as was previously established during the Strategic Partnering exercise, there are no longer significant profit margins available or easy wins for the delivery of cost saving efficiencies left. The service will continue to look for marginal efficiencies where possible, and look to generate income to assist with the offsetting of budget shortfalls, particularly where economies of scale produce a benefit far greater than the cost of delivery.

We have reported previously that businesses are unwilling to pay local regulators for the advice that they have received previously without charge. This has limited our ability to generate income from such sources. The only exception to this is under Primary Authority, where the advice given is deemed assured and there are additional potential protections for businesses if this advice is followed. We will continue to work with bodies like the Worcestershire LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP to engage with businesses where possible and the BRDO's Better Business for All philosophy will continue to inform our approach to the regulation of legitimate traders.

Another risk to our potential income streams is that financial pressures finally start to drive district councils outside of Worcestershire to work more closely together as partners where, in the past, they have chosen to use our services instead. We are starting to see this 'intra-county reshuffling' in at least one area where we have been successful in obtaining business, so will have to work hard to demonstrate the potential for such authorities working with WRS rather than creating new structures in the current financial climate.

The budget for 2016/17 is agreed at £3025M. To achieve this WRS will deliver significant savings to partners and also set itself an income target to limit the level of reduction in staffing that is required. WRS will continue to seek marginal efficiency savings for the benefit of the Partner Authorities and further income streams to maintain the workforce capacity.

Shifting demand to the use of more cost efficient digital channels remains a major focus of efficiency proposals, with self-help in relation to service requests and planning consultations being a major area for action. Increasing the volume of helpful information on the service's website and giving public access to some of the data from our database (e.g. public registers being available on-line, effectively published directly from the database,) does help. Giving customers the ability to monitor the progress of their service requests on-line will also deliver some

improvements in efficiency at the margins. Some care will need to be taken with this as some customers may find this difficult and it may be that face to face interaction is the most efficient channel for their demand.

For Planning Departments, providing the spatial constraints to identify potential air quality and contaminated land concerns and criteria to identify whether a noise or nuisance issue should be considered will assist in engaging WRS in the planning process early, minimising delays and improving the submission of supporting documentation. Additionally advice is provided such that planners know when it is appropriate to add informatives or standard conditions rather than consult WRS for the simpler sites/issues, again making the process more efficient. WRS will continue to work with the Planning Departments to become confident with this approach so that the efficiencies can be fully realised.

The re-tendering of the Pest Control contracts for domestic treatment of pests for those partners who continue to offer these services enabled extra controls to be put in place on both clients and operators, reducing charges associated with false call outs for bees rather than wasps, and removing costs to Councils where access can not be gained despite an appointment being made or where eligibility criteria had not been checked.

Staff have been effectively using the new IT system for some time now and this has significantly improved our ability to provide performance and activity data to members. Officers are already working flexibly, which helps to control the mileage bill and allows staff to have a better work/ life balance. The disturbance allowance payments, which have created an additional short-term financial burden on partners, will conclude for the vast majority of staff (half a dozen have been on maternity leave in recent months so will claim it on their return,) now the first year at Wyre Forest House has been completed.

### **3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The Government tasked the BDRO (Better Regulation Delivery Office) with developing Priority Regulatory Outcomes for England for local authorities to consider when undertaking their service planning processes. Published in May 2011, the list is as follows:

1. Support economic growth, especially in small businesses, by ensuring a fair, responsible and competitive trading environment
2. Protect the environment for future generations including tackling the threats and impacts of climate change
3. Improve quality of life and wellbeing by ensuring clean and safe neighbourhoods
4. Help people to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health
5. Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy

The aim of these priorities was to help local authority regulators demonstrate their links to the main corporate priorities of their parent councils and to give those authorities the opportunity to shape what is delivered to local need. They have been used previously by the service for this purpose and still dove-tail well with the priorities of the district partners across Worcestershire. Whilst the wording is slightly different for each partner, the commonalities and similarities across their high-level priorities are such that the BRDO strategic priorities will enable us to engage with issues that matter across the districts and at county level. The service will also have the flexibility to engage with members and other stakeholders to identify any truly local priorities which may not easily fit into any of the above.

The service has faced the challenging budget situation of the past few years and addressed it through transforming how things are done. Moving forward, with the financial environment continuing to be difficult, for the service to continue to deliver against national and local priorities there is no question that further changes will be an inevitable consequence. We will need to prioritise what is delivered, to whom and how. To assist in this decision making, the service will continue to use its risk matrix, as approved by Management Board and Joint Committee, which identifies 3 key criteria to consider when making decision on service provision:

- a) Are vulnerable people impacted
- b) Are there Health and Well Being issues involved
- c) Is there a positive/negative impact on economic activity

This piece of work will continue to inform any process around financial requirements. There remains a risk that demand which can no longer be met by WRS is simply re-directed to partners in other ways e.g. via complaints. At this stage, with the reductions we have seen so far, the risk of district partners facing challenges relating to whether or not they are meeting their statutory obligations are very low and the position highly defensible.

#### **4. PURPOSES**

Following its Systems Thinking work, WRS adopted 3 purposes to underpin service delivery and provide a common thread to run through all of its functions.

1. Help me resolve my problem and stop it from happening to anyone else,
2. I want to assume everything is ok
3. Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same.

These purposes are expressed in terms a customer (member of the public or a business,) might use, provide a focus for staff and have been agreed by the Joint Committee. These purposes, combined with the priorities outlined by BRDO, encapsulate the Service's contribution to the wider community agenda, reflecting as they do the broad themes relevant to all partners.

#### **5. FINANCE**

A summary of the budget position for 2016/17 is shown at Appendix B, along with the proposed budgets for the following two years. This includes an indication of the levels of saving partners are considering at the time of writing. Obviously the financial position may change going forward particularly following the recent Autumn Statement as partner Council's consider how they will approach their own financial shortfalls. A more detailed breakdown will be available to the Joint Committee in its regular financial reports. Income levels are difficult to estimate but we have set ourselves income targets going forward in order to maintain a greater resilience than would otherwise be possible.

#### **6. AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Internal Audit Service will be provided under the current arrangement by Worcester City Council to the Host Authority. The participating authorities S151 Officers will consider the Audit Plan of the Host to ensure adequate arrangements are in place. An assurance statement and



copies of relevant Audit reports will be made available to the S151 officers when audits are undertaken. External Auditors appointed by our hosts will provide an Audit opinion of the Joint Arrangement as a separate entity to the Host's financial reports.

The Financial Statement of Accounts will be presented to the Joint Committee in June for approval within the statutory deadline. Member Authorities will liaise about requests from their Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Audit Committees. They will use reasonable endeavours to agree joint scrutiny arrangements with a view to avoiding duplication of effort

## 7. ACTIVITIES & OUTCOME MEASURES

The IT system allows the service to report accurately on activities. The service has continued to work with members to demonstrate the service's performance and the service's current core performance indicators are listed as Appendix C. This list also contains additional performance indicators developed from the recommendations at the Joint Committee Members' session in November 2015. As part of the process of approving this plan, members will be asked to ratify the list of indicators as being what members require for the service to demonstrate that it is addressing partner needs. Over time we have seen improvement or maintenance of most of these indicators, which we hope will continue in 2016/17.

The activities outlined below are examples of what is planned by the service. We believe that activity data combined with the core performance indicators will give Members the confidence that the Service is performing well, given the current financial constraints, and contributing to the wider local agenda. The approach is very much in line with Government thinking in terms of reducing burdens on and supporting local businesses whilst tackling rogues who would ignore their responsibilities and criminals who use business as a model for generating criminal assets. It also addresses the significant demand that comes into the service as complaints/ service requests, covering a wide range of issues and concerns from residents, visitors, businesses and the other departments of partner authorities within Worcestershire.

	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>WHAT WE WILL DO</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>NATIONAL PRIORITY</b>	<b>MEASURES</b>
1	Businesses are supported to become economically successful and compliant with the law (Pollution, H&S, Food Safety, Licensing)	Provide businesses with advice and assistance using a range of channels.  Conduct risk based/ intelligence-led interventions with businesses; targeting resources towards potentially non-compliant businesses  Undertake intelligence led projects including sampling of various consumer products including food.	I want to assume everything is ok.  Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same	<b>1, 2, 3 and 5</b>	% businesses broadly compliant at first visit/ inspection  % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction  % of food businesses scoring 0,1,2* at 1 <sup>st</sup> April each year

2	Reduction in nuisance and other pollution related issues	<p>Respond to complaints and take appropriate action</p> <p>Provide relevant advice and information, available through a range of channels.</p>	<p>Help me to solve my problem and stop it from happening to anyone else</p> <p>Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same</p>	<b>2 and 3</b>	<p>% of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction</p> <p>Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population</p>
3	Protecting the environment and the public through monitoring air quality and the use of contaminated land for development. Controlling environmental emissions leading to reduced environmental damage and better health	<p>Conduct risk based/ intelligence-led interventions with businesses, especially permitted premises</p> <p>Air quality monitoring</p> <p>Responding to contaminated land issues</p> <p>Supporting the planning system</p>	I want to assume everything is ok	<b>2</b>	<p>% businesses broadly compliant at first visit/ inspection</p> <p>Monitoring of the County-wide Air Quality strategy is delivered</p> <p>% of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction</p>
4	Licensed premises cause no significant alcohol-fuelled crime/ disorder and ASB.	<p>Respond to complaints regarding alcohol and similar licensing related issues e.g. underage sales, breach of conditions, poor conduct of licence holders, etc.</p> <p>Provide businesses with advice and assistance</p>	<p>I want to assume everything is ok</p> <p>Help me to solve my problem and stop it from happening to anyone else</p> <p>Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same</p>	<b>1 and 3</b>	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives
5	Taxi's drivers are suitable people to be licensed for the role and vehicles are safe whilst in use for Hackney Carriage / Private Hire activity	<p>Conduct risk based/ intelligence-led interventions with taxi firms</p> <p>Respond to complaints and take appropriate action</p> <p>Provide businesses with advice and assistance</p>	<p>I want to assume everything is ok</p> <p>Help me to solve my problem and stop it from happening to anyone else</p> <p>Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same</p>	<b>3</b>	<p>% of applicants for driver licenses rejected as not fit and proper</p> <p>% of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service</p>

6	Consumers able to make informed choices on where to eat or purchase food through published food hygiene ratings.	<p>Implement and promote a county wide food hygiene rating scheme</p> <p>Publish hygiene ratings and accrediting those which improve health and wellbeing of their workforce.</p> <p>Offer incentive to maintain star ratings through the Healthy Eating Award</p>	<p>I want to assume everything is ok</p> <p>Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same</p>	<b>4 and 5</b>	<p>% businesses meeting purpose at first assessment/ inspection</p> <p>Number of 4* and 5* business signing up for the Healthy Eating Award</p>
7	High levels of customer satisfaction	<p>Respond to complaints and take appropriate action</p> <p>Building our ability to resolve issues or re-direct callers on their first contact with us</p> <p>Maintain a register of compliments and complaints with actions taken</p>	<p>I want to assume everything is ok</p> <p>Help me to solve my problem and stop it from happening to anyone else</p> <p>Help me trade well and ensure my competitors do the same</p>	<b>1, 2, 3 and 5</b>	<p>% of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction</p> <p>% of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction</p>
8	Having engaged and satisfied staff who have the right skills, tools and support	<p>Ensure necessary training is identified and delivered</p> <p>Undertake annual staff survey.</p> <p>Undertake annual staff performance reviews with regular feedback sessions from supervisors and managers</p>	<p>All officers must be able to undertake a range of activities that address our strategic priorities focusing on ensuring that the three purposes are met by/ for customers</p>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4 and 5</b>	<p>Staff sickness and absence at public sector national average or better</p> <p>% of staff who enjoy working for WRS</p>
9	Maintained preparedness for response to emergencies, including disease outbreaks.	<p>Maintain links with county-wide TCG.</p> <p>Take part in partner exercises to test plans, as appropriate</p> <p>Respond to disease notifications and outbreaks</p>	<p>I want to assume everything is ok</p>	<b>1 and 5</b>	<p>Disease response plans are maintained, reviewed and updated on a regular basis</p> <p>Business Continuity plans are maintained, reviewed and updated on a regular basis</p>

## **8. PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

Assuming that final agreement is reached across the district partners, performance against outcomes will be reported to the new WRS Board, quarterly, six-monthly or annually, depending on the individual measure. The new IT platform has enabled the collection and analysis of data which will be both accurate and robust. The service's ability to provide activity data has continued to improve as the benefits of the new IT platform have been implemented. Use of time recording to give a better understanding of how much it costs to undertake particular activities is the most recent development, which will continue to be refined. Members will continue to be engaged so that we can update the type and extent of performance and activity type information required by them, so that they can be reassured that the service is delivering what is required.

## **9. STRUCTURE**

The saving requirements for 2015/16 meant that a Management Review was conducted by the Chair of the WRS Management Board, resulting in the Business Manager posts being deleted and the Head of Service role being reviewed. New Team Manager posts were created that link the strategic and operational aspects of delivery in the absence of the Business Manager roles and also provide support to the Head of Service directly. A Business and Relationship Manager post has been created (two year fixed term), which will hopefully be filled around the start of the financial year, to deliver income generation and support the management of relationships with existing partners. The current structure came in to place in October 2015 with the Management Team reduced from 7 posts to 5.

The return of Trading Standard functions to direct control by Worcestershire County Council is almost certain now, following a likely two month service level agreement with WRS from April 2016. Service Reviews in Community Environmental Health and Licensing & Support Teams mean there have also been some organisational structural changes to meet budget changes on behalf of partners. The structure of the service going into 2016/17 is outlined at Appendix A, including the Trading Standards and Animal Health team, which will probably cease to be part of the structure from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016. The team's functions are as follows:

- 1) The Community Environmental Health team provides Food Hygiene, Health and Safety at Work, Public Health and Nuisance functions using three teams. Two teams operate on an East: West Geographical basis, whilst the other delivers specialist Food and Health and Safety functionality county-wide. It will also be where the Trading Standards team sit until its departure. The legal support role has recently been transferred into this team as the majority of casework emanates from here.
- 2) The Technical Services team provides all environmental health support around planning matters, delivers IPPC inspection, Air Quality and Contaminated Land Regime work, manages the pest control contracts and directly delivers the Dog Wardens service. The internal IT support and management roles have recently been transferred to this team as the more complex IT related work is done here.
- 3) The Licensing and Support Services unit delivers in-house first contacts, all WRS licensing administration and some elements of licensing enforcement, along with the wider in-house clerical/ administrative support that is required.

## **10. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Changes to the legal framework occur reasonably frequently so, to maintaining the competence of its staff and ensure that the partner's statutory duties are correctly discharged the service must maintain a training budget for its staff. Over the period this has been massively reduced reflecting the financial realities that the service faces, and the service uses various approaches to ensure the money is spent wisely. Developing staff to ensure there are opportunities to plan succession is also essential.

There will be a focus on enabling staff to work across the Environmental Health professional areas. Officers from the Community Environmental Health team and the Technical Services team will continue to develop their skills, to provide resilience and enable support where contracts bring in additional demand. Within Licensing, the focus will be on getting work done at the most effective cost, so administration is done at administrative rates and the more complex issues handled by qualified and competent professionals, with both being done across a number of districts.

By creating a larger service, buying in trainers to deliver technical training to our teams collectively becomes economically viable for the service. A lot of aspects of professional practice and process are common across the enforcement professions so we can continue to offer this as an option to colleagues within Trading Standards and some of our neighbours where we have spaces available on the courses that we arrange. The regional heads of Trading Standards Group runs a significant number of training courses through its regional co-ordination unit which we will use where we can and the regional Heads of Environmental Health Group is set to start working with the CEnTSA Co-ordination unit to offer more bespoke professional courses. Engagement with colleagues across the region remains essential to ensure co-ordinated responses to government and a common approach to businesses, thus ensuring the level playing field for competition.

## **11. BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

Business continuity plans for the service are in development (following office re-location and loss of County functions) and we hope to take these through the process of the new WRS Board for information during 2016/17. If the impact of the on-going financial constraints is that partners require larger reductions than are currently envisaged, this might threaten our ability to maintain the full range of interventions across these functions whilst responding to large scale events. Priorities will therefore be established as part of the Business Continuity Planning process.

Despite Trading Standards returning to direct County Council control, the Community Environmental Health team and the Trading Standards and Animal Health unit will continue to work closely together to ensure that, in event of an emergency or capacity shortage, officers can support each other when necessary. Having the teams together under one roof and in one office space will continue to allow both teams to utilise pairs of hands, extra eyes and ears and boots on the ground, to tackle any incident or alteration to work demands that may require additional resource or a different workforce allocation.

## **12. LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS**

The service has remained engaged with the two Local Enterprise Partnerships (Greater Birmingham and Solihull, and Worcestershire,) with the aim of improving our relationships with local businesses and identifying their needs with a view to contributing to the growth of the local economy. The Business Charter for Regulators, launched during 2012 in both LEPs, clearly outlines the relationship that we are seeking to have with the business community in Worcestershire. Worcestershire LEP is funding a regulatory exemplar initiative looking at reducing burdens on

businesses in the food and horticulture sector in a range of regulatory areas by allowing SMEs to gain “Earned Recognition” through a locally run scheme. Worcestershire LEP has also assisted us in getting recognition for our work and putting the service forward for an award (the work we have done with the Bangladeshi Catering trade in Worcestershire and our Healthy Eating Award.) We have made it clear to the LEP that, whilst partners are keen to continue with the Better Business for All approach, wider business support initiatives cannot go forward without financial support. Government still seems keen to use the LEPs to drive economic growth at a local level so we will seek to maintain engagement into 2016/17 at a suitable level to make sure that funding can be accessed if it is available.

### **13. OTHER PARTNERSHIPS**

The service continues to need to work closely with a range of partners to deliver what is required against a number of agendas. The importance of the six local authority partners is recognised and we will continue to maintain our existing interfaces with other elements of these organisations e.g. Planning, Worcestershire Hub, Economic Development teams, etc. With the County Council taking back direct control of Trading Standards functions, it will be essential to retain the strong links between both groups of staff. This should be facilitated by the proposed co-location of teams, with Trading Standards and Animal Health continuing to occupy a section at Wyre Forest House for the foreseeable future. This is particularly relevant for the two Intelligence Officers who will be split between the two organisations.

Customer demand will have a significant impact on the nature of our interfaces as we move the service forward. Close partnership working with a range of professional and community groups is essential to ensure deliver of the outcomes required by partners. Key partners for engagement include:

- West Mercia Police & West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner
- Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service
- The Environment Agency
- The Health and Safety Executive
- Health Protection England
- Local Partnership bodies e.g. District Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (often known as Community Safety Partnerships)
- Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards
- Citizens Advice Consumer Service, local Citizens Advice Bureaux and other 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations
- GP Consortia and Public Health team at the County Council
- Regional Regulatory Partnerships and National Bodies (CEnEHA, CEnTSA, TSI, ACTSO, NTSB, CIEH, MJAC).

Existing links to these bodies will be maintained. Additionally, to ensure WRS provides an attractive product for external clients, engagement with equivalent partners in other geographical regions will be pursued, which will include the collation/interpretation and review of intelligence data in such areas.

### **14. CONSULTATION/ ENGAGEMENT**

In relation to national consultations on legislative changes, we will address these through the relevant professional channels at local, regional and national level. We will continue to engage local members in relation to local policy issues, especially around licensing matters. For general engagement with the wider community of elected members, we will provide a number of Member Newsletters per year so that all are updated on

the various activities that the service undertakes across the County. We will try to make this information specific to districts where it is relevant, to reassure members that our activities are seeking to protect everyone and support businesses across the whole of Worcestershire. Licensing specific newsletters will also be produced for members of those committees and these may be more frequent due to the nature of this function. It is hoped that the Activity Data reports that will continue to be provided to the new WRS Board will provide elected members on the Board with sufficient information to also feedback to the wider membership in their respective authorities.

In terms of customer engagement, we will continue to work with colleagues at both the Worcestershire LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP on engaging with our business customers to improve our ability to address their needs. The approach outlined in our business charter will provide the basis for our interactions with the business community. We will continue to survey those businesses subject to interventions to identify how to improve and to help ensure businesses remain satisfied with our performance.

For members of the public, we will continue to survey customers who have used the service to look at how we dealt with their issues, not only from a satisfaction point of view, but also to see if they feel better equipped to deal with future problems. Helping people to help themselves is at the heart of model of public service engagement we are pursuing and it is essential we move people down this route and reduce the expectation that we will always do it for them. This idea is now developing further with all partners signing up to the “digital first” concept that, where possible, initial contact with partners will always be via a digital channel rather than necessarily requiring either telephony or face-to-face interactions.

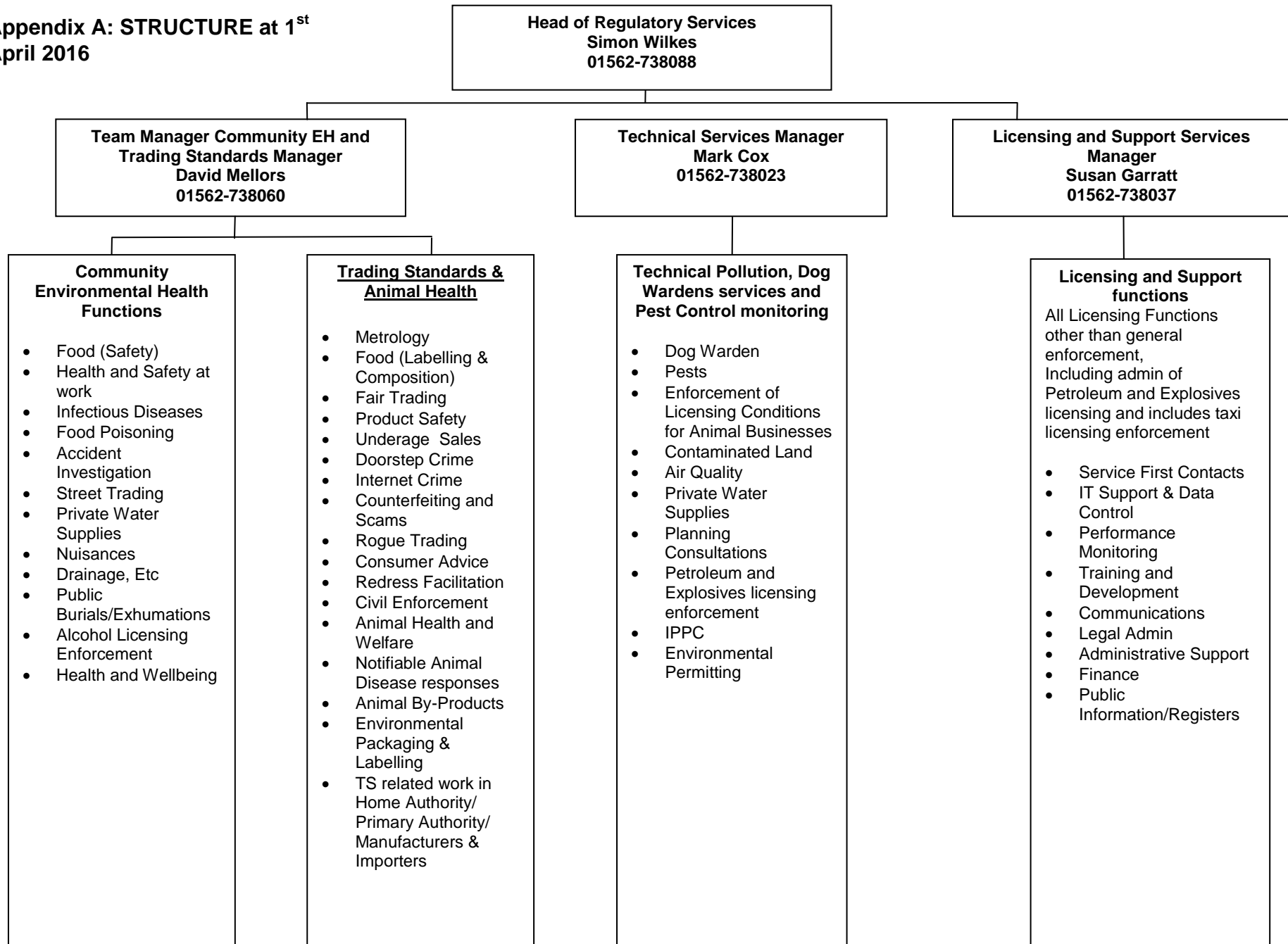
## **15. GOVERNANCE**

Following the recommendations of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny report published in 2014/15 and County Council movement towards exit from the partnership, a review of future arrangements to include governance was undertaken by Ivor Pumfrey as Chair of the Management Board. At the June 2015 Joint Committee meeting it was agreed that the majority of the terms of the 2010 partnership agreement remained relevant to the proposed new six district partnership, as this will continue to operate as a Joint Committee in accordance with Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 20 of the Local Government Act 2000, albeit the proposal was to have a single Board comprised of both officers and members, with members having voting rights. The extant agreement is, at the time of writing, being used as the basis for the new partnership agreement with modifications, additions and deletions reflecting the future requirements. These changes come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016

## **16. RISKS**

A copy of the current Risk Register is appended at Appendix D. It is included in the service’s forward plan so it has been reviewed at Management Board on an annual basis. The reductions in budget are likely to increase some risks, particularly in relation to responding to larger scale disease outbreaks. The reviews of Trading Standards by BIS and the LGA have brought regulatory performance more into the public eye with questions asked about what actually is required. A section has been added to recognise the interest that is developing in relation to the delivery of regulatory functions at statutory minima. Also, given the income generation agenda, we have added a line to reflect the need to ensure this type of activity does not generate threats to the service.

**Appendix A: STRUCTURE at 1<sup>st</sup>  
April 2016**





## Appendix B: REGULATORY SERVICES BUDGET

### Account description

Budget  
2016 / 2017

£000's

#### Employees

Monthly salaries - assumes savings made to fund incremental increase	2,647
Training for professional qualifications	2
Medical fees (employees')	2
Employers' liability insurance	17
Employees' professional subscriptions	4
<b>Sub-Total - Employees</b>	<b>2,671</b>

#### Premises

Internal repair/maint.	0
Rents	60
Utilities	0
Business Rates	0
Room hire	2
Trade Waste	0
Cleaning and domestic supplies	0
<b>Sub-Total - Premises</b>	<b>62</b>

#### Transport

Vehicle repairs/maint'ce	3
Diesel fuel	8
Licences	1
Contract hire of vehicles	4
Vehicle insurances	3
Van Lease	9
Fares & Car Parking	5

Car allowances	85
<b>Sub-Total - Transport</b>	<b>118</b>

**Supplies & Service**

Equipment - purchase/maintenance/rental	21
Materials	9
Clothing and uniforms	2
Laundry	1
Training fees	23
General insurances	30
Printing and stationery	21
Books and publications	2
Postage/packaging	11
ICT	60
Telephones	23
Taxi Tests	30
CRB Checks (taxi)	25
Legal fees	0
Support service recharges	100
Support service recharges - ICT	60
Audit	5
<b>Sub-Total - Supplies &amp; Service</b>	<b>422</b>

**Contractors**

Consultants / Contractors' fees/charges/SLA's	236
Advertising (general)	4
Grants and subscriptions	13
Marketing/promotion/publicity	2
<b>Sub-Total - Contractors</b>	<b>255</b>

**Savings to be identified to keep council targets for 2016/17**

Savings for partner councils	-134
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Sub-Total - Savings to be identified

-134

**DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP BUDGET 2016-17**

**3,394**

**Income**

Grants / Nuisance Work / Food Training / Contaminated Land / Stray Dogs / Sewer Baiting

-216

County - 3 Month SLA

-153

**Sub-Total - Income**

**-369**

**TOTAL BUDGET 2016/17**

**3,025**

**BUDGET PER PARTNER  
COUNCIL**

**2016-17 Revised  
Percentages**

**Draft Budget  
2016-17**

**Income 2016/17**

**Income - SLA  
County 3  
Months**

**Budget 2016-  
17**

%

£'000

£'000

£'000

£'000

Bromsgrove

14.52%

493

-31

-22

439

Malvern

12.77%

433

-28

-20

386

Redditch

17.49%

594

-38

-27

529

Worcester City

16.76%

569

-36

-26

507

Wychavon

23.16%

786

-50

-35

701

Wyre Forest

15.30%

519

-33

-23

463

**District Partnership Budget Total**

**100.00%**

**3,394**

**-216**

**-153**

**3,025**

## Appendix C: Performance Measures Relating to Outcomes

	Measure	Reporting Frequency	Background
1	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly	Based on questionnaires send out to a significant number of members of the public who use the service.
2	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly	Based on questionnaires send out to a significant number of businesses inspected or otherwise contacted by the service.
3	% businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	Based on the proportion of businesses meeting the key purpose from a regulatory perspective i.e. food businesses produce safe food.
4	% of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 <sup>st</sup> April each year	Annually	Based on proportion of businesses scoring 1-2 star on a national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme assessment (2 stars and below is deemed to be at risk of not producing safe food.)
5	% of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days.	6-monthly	New 2016/17 Based on the proportion of drivers licence renewals issued within 5 working days of receipt of application. Note new applicants all require DBS checks and time frames for these fall outside of WRS control, hence they are not included.
6	% of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service	6-monthly	Percentage of vehicles stopped during enforcement exercises that are required to be removed from service for remedial work before being allowed to carry on operating.
7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly	Based on questionnaires send out to a significant number of members of the public and businesses who have used the service.
8	Review of register of complaints and compliments	Quarterly	All are recorded Increasing compliments/ Reduced complaints

9	Staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly	Sickness recorded using host processes. Public sector average 8.75 or better
10	% of staff who enjoy working for WRS	Annually	Taken from the staff survey.
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	6-monthly	Indicator, linked to Crime & Disorder agenda, looking at performance of premises license holders and control on their activity.
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	Place indicator, potential link to quality of life and health and well-being.
13	Total income	6-monthly	New for 2016/17 Expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)
14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population	Annually	New for 2016/17. Will be total spend divided by the total population, based on the most recent mid-year estimate available at the time of publication. NB: Calculation will offset income against revenue budget to account for external income sources

## Appendix D: Risk Register

Risk Description	Consequences	When is this likely to happen	Current Position			Control measures
			Likelihood	Impact	Matrix RAG Status	
Loss of Data through IT failures	Disruption to Service Provision. Inability to produce records and data.	On-going	Low	High	Green	Wyre Forest ICT has effective processes and business continuity plans in place.
Issues with the WRS database system	Impact on work planning. Self-help may not enable savings required	On-going	Low	High	Amber	Initial implementation is completed. Further development of the system will be treated as business as usual, with priority going to public access and self-help/ self-service to continue the channel shift process. Service website remains key access point
Effective and efficient Business Continuity arrangements in place	Disruption to service if e.g. Major Power failures or other reasons that access to Wyre Forest House is not possible.	On-going	Very Low	Medium	Green	Staff are equipped for mobile/home working. Touchdown stations available in partner council locations. Working from WFDC depot successfully tested over Christmas period.
Maintain our capacity to achieve service delivery	Disruption to service e.g. Major staff sickness (e.g. flu pandemic) or Unable to recruit or retain suitably qualified staff.	On-going	Low	Medium	Green	In such event, service priorities to be managed and partners informed of any changes to service. Consultants are available to provide short term cover and this has worked well where we have used them to cover peak demand periods.  We are active within regional and sub-regional groups to share resources if required. Effective training and development processes are in place to ensure recruitment and retention of staff.  Regular inventory and maintenance of equipment. In future budget for replace may be an issue but would be a relatively small amount for partners to share.
Pest and Dog Control contractors cease operations.	Disruption to service. Negative media coverage. Increased public health risks	On-going	Low	High	Green	New framework contract has 6 pest control suppliers so the loss of one allows work to be moved to the others.
Effective and efficient contract arrangement for dog control	Disruption to service if no kennels available. Negative media coverage. Increased public health risks	On-going	Low	High	Amber	Budget available to buy in use of other private sector providers in short term. Contracts being re-let.

Hosting support does not deliver necessary financial and HR support to ensure efficient management	Efficiency of management reduced; staffing issues remain unaddressed and performance suffers	On-going	Low	High	<b>Amber</b>	Some continuing issues around access to the financial system from Wyre Forest house, meaning managers are reliant on host finance officers for financial reporting. ICT team from WFDC and BDC continue to work to resolve the issue
One or more partners continue to be under great financial pressure and may consider alternatives to the partnership to deliver their service	Creates reputational issues for remaining partners and increases the need to manage overheads. Difficulties in delivering highly varied levels of service	On-going	Low-Medium	High	<b>Amber</b>	New legal agreement limits variations in contribution before partners have to move to contractual relationship. Leanness of organisation minimises overheads and focuses resource at the front line. Growth strategy should generate income to support partners in the future
Robust arrangements in place in relation to obtaining legal advice and monitoring legislative changes.	Loss of cases is costly and damages reputation.	On-going	Low	Medium	<b>Green</b>	Continued close working with BDC legal team and other partners who don't use BDC for advocacy. Technical and legal training days for staff.
Service provision complies with Government requirements	Adverse comments following audits e.g. FSA Intervention by Government bodies i.e. FSA, whilst highly unlikely, is damaging to reputation.	On-going	Low	High	<b>Green</b>	Limited detail of what statutory minima are. LGA clearly aware of impact of budget reductions on regulation and has made it clear Government cannot expect what it had previously. Fewer interventions/ audits by government. Service has developed systems that follow the principles of the requirements of bodies like FSA so can show some level of compliance.
Failure to deliver external contract work at the level expected by the business or local authority with whom we have the contract	Damage to reputation, loss of future income streams, financial impact of paying damages	On-going	Low	High	<b>Green</b>	Ensure contract negotiations are clear on performance criteria and these are clearly recorded in the final documentation. Monthly reviews against performance criteria. Select staff to ensure competence of those undertaking work outside Worcestershire. Maintain strong links with the customer's monitoring staff. Intervene early with corrective action
Increasing competition for contract work or move towards partnering as an alternative to buying services	Reduced opportunities for income generation, potential loss of current contracts outside of Worcestershire, need to operate on a even wider base to generate income streams	On-going	Low	High	<b>Green</b>	Currently limited competition from neighbours and one potential threat from developing partnership. Continue to minimise overhead and work on limiting support costs. Maintain levels of expertise in demand areas, trade on reputation as experienced delivery agent able to deliver services at reduced cost immediately.