

## JOINT COMMITTEE

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016

### Activity and Performance Data Quarters 1, 2 and 3

#### Recommendation

That the Joint Committee 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 report covers both district and county functionality so covers the wide range of local authority corporate priorities to which regulatory services contributes.

The detail of the report focuses on Q3 but much of the actual data allows comparison with previous quarters and previous years.

#### 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.

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 appeared not to have happened this year, although the number of noise complaints is still significant. In quarter 3 we saw another quiet quarter for nuisance activity, with levels of recorded complaints being lower than the same quarters in the previous two years. We are still struggling to explain these variations, especially as we had a relatively warm Autumn and early Winter.

As was mentioned in the previous quarter's report, 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 some time. Previous experience would suggest that it takes 6-12 months before the impact of such measures is seen in the figures, so it seems unlikely that anything introduced in April would feed through so quickly. However, self

help and digital first are strategies that have been introduced widely across public services including local government and it may be that the public have taken on board these methodologies more quickly than in previous years. We will now have to wait until next summer to see if the changes are genuinely embedded.

The spread of noise complaints has not significantly altered with the top 20 wards for the overall number of complaints mainly coming from the three northern districts and the City (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 another increase over the last quarter and the same quarter last year, putting increased demands 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 on-going investigation of 2 fatalities.

Just over 300 food hygiene inspections were carried out in Q3 and the food hygiene inspection programme is on or ahead of schedule in all areas.

Planning consultations continue to make large demands in terms of numbers and complexity on the team. Numbers of applications referred or requiring a response are lower than the same quarter last year, however, the requests to discharge conditions based on our input is significantly up, reflecting the cycle of the planning process. Request to discharge tend to be more time consuming and technical as they are where potential issues have been flagged by conditions that the developers are trying to resolve.

The Technical Services team led on liaison with Network Rail and its contractors over essential maintenance work that had to be done over Christmas in the vicinity of Bromsgrove station. A semi-collapsed culvert required replacing, necessitating the use of heavy machinery through the night from late on Christmas Eve through to the end of Boxing Day. Officers worked with the managers from Network Rail to agree measures to ameliorate the noise issues and supported the company in its work with the local community.

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**

For quarter 3 there is a limited update on a number of indicators.

Customer satisfaction figures for Q2 are 77.9% which is slightly up on last quarter and consistent with the overall satisfaction of 77% for all of last year.

Business satisfaction for the quarter remains at 98%, the same as for the previous two quarters and 76.7% of customers feel better equipped to deal with problems after speaking with us which is a slight increase on the last quarter, still slightly below the first quarter but remaining consistent with last year's out-run figure.

The cumulative number of sick days per staff member is 2.13 days which puts us on target to beat last year's 3.9 days per FTE.

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**

### **Worcester printing company fined for Environmental Crime**

A Worcester printing company has been fined thousands of pounds for committing environmental crime.

Webflex Ltd, in Blackpole, pleaded guilty to operating without an Environmental Permit in contravention of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010.

The company was adding solvent to its printing inks, but had never made an application for the relevant permit, under which, equipment which abated the pollution would be required. On April 21 2015 a Section 60 Information Notice was served upon the company, requiring it to provide 'annual solvent consumption in kilograms for the period Webflex Ltd have operated a printing process in Worcestershire'. A response was received on April 24 with figures from 2002 through to 2014, with a variance of amounts from 12.8 to 57.4 tonnes, all well above the five tonne threshold at which a permit is required.

The case was brought to court by Worcestershire Regulatory Services, on behalf of Worcester City Council.

Guilty pleas were also entered by two directors, Steven Leharne of Watchetts Green, Worcester and David Jones of The Limes, Kempsey, Worcester.

Jones said: "We are working closely with Worcestershire Regulatory Services to rectify any incidents that have occurred. These changes will be made as soon as possible."

Webflex Ltd was fined £4,000, and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of



£120, a court charge of £180 and costs of £2,374. Jones was given a fine of £4,000, a victim surcharge of £120, and a court charge of £180. Leharne, who played a lesser part in the business, was fined £3,600, a £120 victim surcharge and a court charge of £180. The total financial penalty was £14,874.

### **Man fined for transporting counterfeit goods**

On 8<sup>th</sup> December a David Dudley appeared before Redditch Magistrates court in relation to offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994. He had been stopped by Police Officers on the M5 motorway and a quantity of counterfeit clothing had been found in the rear of his van.

Mr Dudley had been summoned to Court the previous Thursday but failed to turn up and so a warrant without bail was issued. That warrant was executed on the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> and Mr Dudley appeared the following morning. A Bail Act offence was also put to Mr Dudley who pleaded guilty to that and also all 8 Trade Mark offences.

The prosecution case was outlined in full. Through his solicitor, the defendant indicated that he knew there were counterfeit items of clothing in the rear of the vehicle and that he had been paid £40 to transport them to Birmingham, but that he was not himself gaining anything other than the amount of cash he had been given. The solicitor indicated that Mr Dudley had not re-offended since and he was of limited means.

In sentencing the Magistrates said they gave credit for his guilty plea, and were mindful of his limited finances and that he had spent a night in custody.

Mr Dudley was fined £73 for the Trade Marks offending and a fine of £50 for the Bail Act offence, plus a victim surcharge of £20 and criminal court charge of £150. Costs were ordered in full in the sum of £1,933 making a total of £2,226 payable at a rate of £5 per week.

A Forfeiture Order for all items seized as detailed on the schedule was made.

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## **Contact Points**

## **Background Papers**

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



Appendix B: Performance Indicator Table

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%	77.9 %	
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	98%	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 <sup>st</sup> 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 <b>Total 17</b> <b>1.1%</b>	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 <b>Total 11</b> <b>0.8%</b>	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%	76.7 %	
8. Review of register of complaints/ compliments NB: See breakdown tables	Quarterly	6/20	10/31	6/18	
9. Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly	0.99 day/ FTE	1.55 days/ FTE	2.13 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 3.6% Malvern Hills 1.4% Redditch 4.8% Worcester 5.4% Wychavon 3.6% Wyre Forest 4.7% <b>Worcestershire</b> <b>3.9%</b>	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 <b>Worcestershire</b> <b>1.87</b>	NA	

