

**WRS Board**

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**Title: Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report  
2020/21**

**Recommendation**

That the Board note the Annual Report for 2020/21 and agree that a copy be forwarded to each Chief Executive of the 6 partner authorities and also to the wider elected member base in their areas.

**Contribution to Priorities**

Not applicable

**Summary**

Under the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Service Level Agreement, the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Lead Finance Officer for the host authority, Bromsgrove District Council, are required to submit to the Board an annual report that covers the performance of the shared service and provides a summary of the finances. This report covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31 March 2021. If endorsed by the Board, a copy will be forwarded to each Chief Executive of each member authority and the authors would request that members use their usual channels within their authorities to distribute the report to the wider elected member cohort.

**Report**

Under Clause 11 of Part 1 of the Shared Services Partnership Agreement, the Board is required to receive a report at its annual meeting which will be held no later than 30 June. The report covers the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The annual report is co-signed by the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Lead Financial Officer for the Host Authority as required by the legal agreement.

The report covers the performance of the service for that period, both in terms of KPIs and highlights of activity, a short summary activity report appearing at Appendix 5. This has been reduced somewhat as the Committee now receives a separate Activity Data report, which covers these aspects in much more detail. Some detail of the

performance indicators has also been covered in the Activity Data Report.

Obviously the global Covid 19 pandemic has required a significant resource input from WRS. This has meant that some areas of work were more limited during 2020/21 and the Food Standards Agency actually suspended the routine food hygiene programme so figures for these premises are more limited this year.

In spite of this, performance has remained good. Food business compliance rates remain high. Taxi license renewals have been dealt with in a reasonable time in the main. The taxi fleet appears to be generally in good order, although with council and other garages being closed for a significant period of time and with some drivers/ operators having taken vehicles off the road for a period of time, it is impossible to compare this year with previous ones.

As with previous years, complaints against the service are significantly exceeded by compliments. The main issues for complainants related to people:

- Paying for the cost of stray dog recovery,
- Unhappy that the thing annoying them had not amounted to a statutory nuisance,
- Having pest controller issues
- Content of responses to planning consultation.

Some of these are unavoidable because of the nature of the law, others simply related to people's expectations of what could be delivered. Some of these have been quite time consuming and have involved responses from a number of officers.

The indicators for licensed premises and noise complaints have been in place long enough now for us to establish good base-lines. The former shows that generally premises in the County licensed to sell alcohol are well managed. The figures can now be used, along with intelligence, to focus enforcement resources in a proactive way to tackle any individual problem premises, although these are relatively few and far between. As we have said previously, most complaints relate to nuisance issues, usually created when a venue introduces a novel activity like live music to diversify its activities. These are usually relatively minor and the overall rate of noise complaints is relatively low and probably reflective of the generally good environment in Worcestershire.

The Annual Report also gives a summary of the financial position, the key achievements and covers issues relating to human resources. There are also sections on risk management and equalities. The Report will be published on the WRS website and will be shared with

other partners e.g. Worcestershire LEP. A press release will be sent out to accompany the publishing of the report. Putting the report into the public domain meets the requirement in the Regulators Code, made under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, which requires local authorities to publish summary information about their regulatory activities each year.

**Financial Implications**

The financial implications are contained within the Annual Report.

**Contact Points**

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**Background Papers**

WRS Annual Report 2020/21