

## WRS Board

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022

### Title: Activity and Performance Data Quarter 2 2022/23

#### Recommendation

That the 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 second quarter of 2022/23, but the actual data allows comparison with previous quarters and previous years.

#### Contribution to Priorities

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

The second quarter of 2022/23 saw us having our first real summer post Covid pandemic. Businesses were working towards individual recovery, and many people were looking forward to a Summer of normality, which as we now know, featured record-breaking temperatures and many hours of sunshine.

The service continued to follow the FSA roadmap to normal delivery of food interventions through quarter 2, with a significant volume of interventions delivered. Many of these were done by agency staff, taken on using backfilling funding from the Covid grant and monies allocated by Board for this purpose.

The number of food safety cases recorded by WRS during the year to date is a reduction of 28% compared to 2021-22, but an increase of 18% compared to 2020-21. In general terms, a higher proportion of food safety

cases are enquiries such as requests for business advice or export health certificates. Based on the 278 complaints recorded, 75% have related to issues with products purchased from food businesses, whilst 25% have related to poor hygiene standards and practices.

Of the interventions conducted at businesses included in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS), 39 were rated as non-compliant (0, 1 or 2) with most of these ratings issued to takeaways, restaurants, and small retailers.

The number of health and safety cases recorded by WRS during the year to date is a reduction of 16% compared to 2021-22, but an increase of 19% compared to 2020-21. Approximately 39% of cases were reports of accidents, with 45% relating to injuries where a worker was incapacitated for more than seven days and 32% relating to injuries to members of the public. The remaining cases were accidents, where major injuries were sustained, or where dangerous occurrences featured, plus two fatalities. Slips, trips, and falls continues to be the prominent cause of accidents.

The number of licensing cases recorded by WRS during the year to date is an increase of 10% compared to 2021-22, but an increase of 36% compared to 2020-21. It should be noted that there were significantly fewer licensing applications recorded two years ago due to COVID restrictions and the closure of many hospitality premises. Approximately 68% of cases have been applications and registrations; with 30% relating to temporary events, 27% relating to private hire or hackney carriage vehicle licences, and 14% relating to driver licences. The high levels of temporary events is a feature of the summer, reinforced by hospitality businesses rebuilding post-pandemic.

WRS tends to receive a higher number of enquiries about licensing matters than complaints about licensed or unlicensed activity. Based on the 292 complaints recorded, 33% have related to taxi licensing, 29% to alcohol licensing, and 20% to animal licensing.

Quarter 2 saw the fall in numbers of planning enquiries begin to plateau out but, the number of planning enquiries completed during the year to date is still a reduction of 36% compared to 2021-22, and a reduction of 17% compared to 2020-21. Approximately 89% of enquiries have been consultations, whilst 53% have related to contaminated land. Around 17% of enquiries have been completed, on a contractual basis, on behalf of other local authorities.

Interestingly, the number of information requests, which are often linked to the planning system, grew during quarter 2, so we may see an increase in planning work to follow this. Having said that, officers report feeling that the

number of general FOI requests has been higher over the summer than they have experienced in some years.

The number of stray or lost dogs recorded by WRS continued to increase through quarter 2. During the year to date, WRS has seen an increase of 24% compared to 2021-22, but an increase of 21% compared to 2020-21. Approximately 70% of recorded cases related to 'contained' stray dogs, which means that a dog was found and held by, for example, a member of the public. Overall, 67% of contained strays were reunited with their owners, however, figures vary significantly between local authorities.

In general terms, WRS receives a relatively low number of dog control complaints. Based on the 45 complaints recorded, 25 have related to fouling and persistent straying, 12 have related to dangerous dogs, and have related to welfare concerns.

The service had its usual very busy summer with the number of pollution cases recorded during the year to date representing a reduction of 8% compared to 2021-22, but a reduction of 12% compared to 2020-21. It should be noted that the increased number of cases two years ago coincides with COVID-19 restrictions and a greater number of residents being at home. It also should be noted that totals are in line with seasonal variations.

Approximately 71% of recorded cases related to noise nuisances, with noise from domestic properties (such as from dog barking or noise from audio-visual equipment) being the most prominent sources. A further 11% of recorded cases related to smoke nuisances and issues such as the burning of domestic or commercial waste.

The number of public health cases recorded by WRS during the year to date is a reduction of 30% compared to 2021-22, but a reduction of 35% compared to 2020-21. Approximately 66% of cases have related to pest control, whether enquiries about domestic treatments and sewer baiting, or complaints about pest control issues caused by the activity of neighbouring residents or businesses. A further 27% of cases have been complaints relating to accumulations at domestic properties which can also include pest control issues.

Of the 351 domestic treatments undertaken, approximately 53% have been due to issues with rats, 22% have been due to issues with wasps, and 35% have been due to pests at properties within the Wychavon district.

## **Performance**

The non-business customer measure has slipped slightly to 54.1% from

55.6% last quarter and remains well below last year's out-turn figure. Heavy demands on resourcing in Community Environmental Health over the Summer meant we struggled to keep on top of nuisance complaints and often had a long list of work waiting to be addressed in spite of using our temporary Regulatory Support Officers to triage complaints to identify them most serious ones. Hence, many people were less happy about the time taken to respond and the time taken to get to any kind of resolution. Only half found our interventions helpful and we were unable to resolve issues to the satisfaction of many.

During quarter 2 we also experimented again with trying to get satisfaction figures electronically by asking people for comments by email. As with last time, this led to a significantly smaller number of responses, which generally means that those unhappy are more strongly represented in the replies. Managers are looking at ways to boost response numbers and the declining backlog of nuisance work will result in better response times.

At the time, Officers did explain the reasons for delays but clearly this has had a negative impact on perceptions of the service. Likewise, numbers who felt better equipped to deal with future issues was also down at 45.9%%.

Business customer satisfaction remains good at 98.6%.

Overall numbers of compliant and non-compliant food businesses were at 98.2% and 1.8% respectively. This remains good and on a par with previous years. As we work through the Food Standards Agency recovery plan, we are seeing some falls in Food Hygiene ratings but thankfully very few businesses drop into the 0-2 range which indicates a risk of producing unsafe food.

Generally, compliments outnumber complaints by around 2 to 1, slightly less than we would expect to see. Again, this may be a victim of getting fewer returns for satisfaction surveys as many compliments come from these, particularly the business ones. This quarter most complaints related to issues with our handling of noise issues, either that things were not resolved, or the time being taken. This matches up with the picture from the satisfaction figures. One related to someone unhappy at having their dog seized and another related to our officer misunderstanding a situation about a piece of gull control work.

Performance on processing complete driver license renewals was at 98.6% for all authorities, with several individual authorities being 100%. This is again great work by the team. A handful of applications fell

outside of our 5-day time scale and one of these because it was referred to a sub-committee that refused the license.

The data on defective vehicles relates to situations where the vehicle is recorded as having been suspended either by the district garage on inspection or by an officer, usually following a reported accident taking the vehicle outside the acceptable standards. At the end of last year, we saw an increase in the number of defective vehicles reported under this indicator, driven mainly by higher numbers in one of the six fleets. We have a similar picture at the end of Q2 this year, with 37 vehicles having been suspended in the period but with 25 being in that same fleet area. Even with this number, only 2.37% of the fleet county-wide are recorded as potentially problematic. More details appear in the table in appendix B at the end of the report. We hope that we can work with the operators to reduce this figure, but members of the trade need to be aware that they must always keep their vehicles up to standard and that the regular tests are not to be used to assess what maintenance may be required.

Staff sickness has increased from 0.9 days per FTE to 1.79 days per FTE cumulative for the year. Current sickness levels are higher than the same period last year (1.55,) and the year before (0.94,) but lower than the figures for 2019/20 (2.91,) and 2018/19 (2.77) at the same point in the year. So, we continue to move toward pre-pandemic levels.

The rate of noise complaints against population is 0.91. This is slightly lower than the figure at Q2 last year (1.08,) but like the figures in the previous 2 years (0.94 and 0.85 respectively.) Members will be aware that this measure has been significantly higher at this point in previous years with 1.7 in 2018/19 and 2.1 in 2017/18. Hopefully, the current figure again is indicative of a return to normal levels.

The rate of hospitality businesses not upholding the 4 licensing objectives is 2.7%. This is significantly below the previous three years' figures at this point (6.7%, 4.3%, 4.9%,) and much closer to the 2.8% seen in 2018/19. We know that, on occasion, one or other district can hit above 8%, but figures so far this year look good and hopefully it will continue in a similar vein.

Income brought in during the first half of 2022/23 is £232,520, which is significantly up on last year at this point (£163, 583,) and the previous year (£131,901). Using the historic budget figure for 2016/17 (£3,017,000) to maintain the comparison with previous years, this comes out at 7.7%. Hopefully, this shows we are starting to see more normality returned in the areas that generate our income streams. We have not included additional income for work on issues like supporting Ukrainian

refugees as this is work done on behalf of the six partners and we try to use this measure to look at work we do for others.

## Contact Points

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## Background Papers

Appendix A: Activity Report (separate document), Appendix B below

### Appendix B: Performance indicator table 2022/23

Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	55.6	54.1		
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	98.7	98.6		
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	98.4	Bromsgrove 99.2% Malvern Hills 97.9% Redditch 97.0% Worcester City 98.9% Wychavon 97.6% Wyre Forest 98.4% <b>Worcestershire 98.2%</b>		
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 <sup>st</sup> April each year	Annually	1.6	Bromsgrove 0.8% Malvern Hills 2.1% Redditch 3.0% Worcester City 1.1% Wychavon 2.4% Wyre Forest 1.6% <b>Worcestershire 1.8%</b>		
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a	6-monthly	NA	<b>98%</b>	NA	

complete application					
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	<b>37 = 2.37% of 1562 vehicles on the road county-wide</b>  BDC 3 MHDC 1 RBC 25 WC 2 WDC 1 WFDC 4	NA	
7 % of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	46.7	45.9		
8 Review of register of complaints/compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	8/23	19/37		
9 Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	0.90 days per FTE	1.79 date 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 2.2% Malvern Hills 1.3% Redditch 1.3% Worcester City 2.8% Wychavon 3.8% Wyre Forest 3.5% <b>Worcestershire 2.7%</b>	NA	

12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 0.97 Malvern Hills 0.76 Redditch 0.91 Worcester City 1.14 Wychavon 0.69 Wyre Forest 1.04 <b>Worcestershire 0.91</b>	NA	
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA	£232,520, which is 7.7% as a proportion of the 2016/17 revenue budget figure (£3,017,000)	NA	
14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population (Calculation will offset income against revenue budget)	Annually	NA	NA	NA	