

Worcestershire  
**Regulatory Services**

*Supporting and protecting you*

# ANNUAL REPORT

**2022/23**

*Making Worcestershire a healthy, safe and a fair place to live where businesses can thrive*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Annual Report has been produced for the Joint Board in accordance with clause 11.1 of Part 1 of the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Agreement. The report covers the progress and performance of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2022 up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2023 and reports operational activity by the relevant service elements for the financial year. The report summarises key performance data for WRS and provides a summary of the financial position. The report also meets the requirement of the Regulators Code, which requires local authorities to publish a summary of their regulatory activities on an annual basis.

At the beginning of the year, we felt that 2022/3 was likely to be the first truly post-pandemic year, but there were still tinges of response like the continuation of the Local Response Team, which meant that Covid 19 was still in the background. We managed to continue to find roles for some of those staff who had joined us in roles like Covid Advisor and local Contact Tracer, supporting several partners with the Homes for Ukraine initiative and our pilot on taking on Planning enforcement activity for Redditch BC and Bromsgrove DC. More on the success of these projects will be found within the body of the report. As well as this, “business as usual” activities continued to be delivered, with work on the food recovery plan going forward and the usual high levels of nuisance complaints. In other areas, we managed to keep all of our new customers for our income generation programme, and we continued to look at opportunities for more.

Looking forward, whilst our key strategic priorities remain the same, at a tactical level we will look to shape our work slightly differently to address the key cross cutting issues identified in the strategic assessment. Following the service plan, these are:

- Supporting a safe and vibrant night-time economy
- Promoting the responsible sale, breeding, and ownership of dogs
- Promoting safe and clean communities

As we hopefully now move genuinely beyond the pandemic and into our “new normality”, we will continue to support legitimate businesses and residents, particularly the vulnerable, where we are able and at the same time, we will tackle those who break the law, ignore best practice, or adversely impact the environment. Central to this approach remains the availability of accurate data and intelligence sharing. Our intelligence unit coordinates, and analyses intelligence obtained by WRS officers and external agencies, helping managers to target WRS resources more effectively and to forge links with other enforcement agencies and partners to share intelligence and target enforcement action. This is becoming more and more embedded at the heart of what we do.

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Simon Wilkes  
Head of Regulatory Services

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Peter Carpenter  
Lead Financial Officer

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR WRS IN 2021/22:**

These are covered in the sections below:

**PERFORMANCE**

Our ability to report performance remains underpinned by the IDOX UNiform management information system, providing Joint Board members with a clear picture of the work being undertaken by WRS. Our key performance measures continue to focus on customer satisfaction and the positive compliance of businesses. Previous year’s results appear in brackets in the relevant box providing a comparative view of performance over time. Members will note that this was the last transitional year for some systems like food interventions post-pandemic, so figures are not comparable with earlier years. Our original feeling at the beginning of the year was that this would be the first truly post-pandemic year, but Covid 19 has cast a long shadow and we continued to have some, albeit limited involvement. However, as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 all support funding ends, so this coming year will truly be our first post-Covid year.

	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Figure</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
1	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to non-business customers satisfaction	<b>59.2%</b> , (61.6, 74, 69.5, 63.0. 75.4, 78.9, 78.2, 77.4)	Based on an average score for 6 questions relating to the interaction of the service with non-business customers. 63.5% found their contact with WRS helpful, down from 69.5% last year. 72% found the information and advice provided easy to use, down from 77.4% last year. 57.7% felt that the length of time to address their problem was satisfactory, up from 54.5% last year, and 65.1% (4.5% points better than last year,) felt that the speed of initial response from WRS was satisfactory. Last Summer was busy but officers were only able to resolve the issues for around 40% of those who responded to the survey, which will always lead to worse figures. Also, the service had another go at digitising our customer satisfaction approach and yet again response numbers plummeted, so this is based on only 138 responses. It seems we have little option but to continue to use paper feedback forms. Managers will look at how to improve performance in a number of these areas and continue to try to manage public expectations around what is achievable with nuisance issues as many of these will never be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

2	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to business customers satisfaction	<b>98.1%</b> , (98.2 98.4, 97.4, 97.2, 97.7, 97.1 97.9, 97)	Based on an average score for 9 questions relating to the interaction of the service with business customers. This year fewer than previous numbers (352) of businesses replied to our questionnaires. Of those who responded, 98.3% (97.7% last year,) felt that their business had been treated fairly and 98.6% (98.5% last year,) of customers felt staff were polite in their dealings with them and informative. Some 98.3% (98.7% last year,) of customers found the information and advice we provided easy to understand and 97.9% (98.1% last year,) found their interaction with us helpful. 96.% (96.7% last year,) were happy with the speed of our responses and, of those who made enquiries rather than being visited, 96.3% (97.3% last year,) were satisfied with the response. As you can imagine, as a regulator we cannot always tell businesses what they want to hear.
3	% Food businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	<p>Bromsgrove <b>99.3%</b> (99.3, 98.4, 97.1, 97.2, 98.7 99.1.)</p> <p>Malvern Hills <b>97.8%</b> (98.4, 98.6, 98.1, 97.2, 97.0, 97.7,)</p> <p>Redditch <b>97.1%</b> (97.5, 97.6, 95.6, 96.0, 96.7, 97.6,)</p> <p>Worcester City <b>99.0%</b> (98.4, 98.4, 97.5, 98.0, 98.0, 98.6,)</p> <p>Wychavon <b>97.6%</b> (98.2, 99.2, 98.0, 97.4, 97.8, 98,)</p> <p>Wyre Forest <b>98.5%</b> (98.6, 98.2, 98.1, 97.7, 97.2, 98.1,)</p> <p>Worcestershire <b>98.3%</b> (98.5, 98.5, 97.5, 97.3, 97.6, 98.2,)</p>	The Service has been following the Food Standards Agency's roadmap to normal processes following the moratorium on the normal food inspection programme. This ended on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023. Originally, it was anticipated that, at this point, the Agency's revised Code of Practice on Local Authority Food Law enforcement would come into play, however, this has been delayed for 12-months. The figures are, strictly speaking, bot fully comparable with previous years as the Roadmap to recovery was not structured in the same way as a normal intervention programme, however, we continue to highlight the high level of compliance amongst our local food businesses.
4	% of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 <sup>st</sup> April each year	<p>Bromsgrove <b>0.7%</b> (0.7, 1.4, 2.9, 3.6, 1.3, 0.9, 2.9,)</p> <p>Malvern Hills <b>2.2%</b> (1.6, 1.6, 1.9, 2.8, 3.0, 2.3, 3, 2.4)</p> <p>Redditch <b>2.9%</b> (2.5, 2.4, 4.4, 5.1, 3.3, 2.4, 4.9,)</p>	Food premises scoring 2 or below on the Food Hygiene Rating System are deemed to be at risk of not producing safe food and are subject to further intervention until such time as they meet requirements or face formal action. As mentioned above, because of the roadmap and the suspension of the normal processes, these figures are not

		<p>Worcester City <b>1.0%</b> (1.6, 1.6, 2.5, 2.2, 2.0, 1.4, 1.8,)  Wychavon <b>2.4%</b> (1.8, 0.8, 2.0, 3.0, 2.2, 2, 0.8,)  Wyre Forest <b>1.5%</b> (1.4, 1.8, 1.9, 2.4, 2.8, 1.9, 3.4,)  Worcestershire <b>1.7%</b> (1.5, 1.5, 2.7, 2.7, 2.4, 2.4, 2.6,)</p>	comparable with previous years, although the number of non-compliant premises remains low.
5	% of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	<p><b>97.5%</b> (97.6, 96.9, 75.2, 91.4, 87.7)</p>	This measure was introduced in 2017/18 and looks at how quickly driver licenses are renewed. This is one of the licensing processes where generally no additional paperwork is required before someone is re-licensed so generally this is one where the WRS team is in most control over timescales. This measure is about the same as last year.
6	% of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service	<p><b>84 = 5.4%</b>  <b>Of 1546 vehicles on the road county-wide</b></p> <p>(4%, <b>0.39%</b>, 3.6%, 2.8%, 2.2%, 2.4%)</p> <p>NB: Figure in bold is from 2020/21 when council garages and others used for testing vehicles were closed for much of the year and no proactive enforcement monitoring took place.</p>	This figure represents 84 vehicles, higher than last year (59,) and in previous years, and is probably a reflection of the wider impacts of the pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis. As members will see in the activity data report, one district is particularly impacted whereas others are slightly up compared to last year, but not as significantly. The result is probably a useful reminder to members that taxis travel a great deal further each year than domestic vehicles and therefore require significantly more upkeep to keep them in a good and safe condition. By definition this will create financial pressures within the trade but the safety of the travelling public must remain paramount for the local licensing authority.
7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	<p><b>57.0%</b> (58.5, 58.8, 68.2, 58.1, 59, 72.5, 73.8, 76.8, 74.2)</p>	This focuses on non-business customers. It is a specific question asked to members of the public in the questionnaire to test if the information and support provided to them by WRS is likely to help them deal with their own problems in the future. The measure has been lowered for a number of years, reflecting the lower

			performance overall on non-business customer satisfaction.
8	Review of register of complaints and compliments	<p><b>28 complaints</b> (25, 42, 44, 27, 25, 31, 17, 24, 47, 70)</p> <p><b>116 compliments</b> (134, 161, 163, 128, 138, 103, 51, 57, 36, 24)</p>	This is our longest running performance indicator in this format, hence the long list of previous year's figures. This year's figures are like previous years. The majority of complaints related to issues with responses to nuisance problems. A further small number related to dog warden services and then odd ones from other service areas.
9	Staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	<p><b>2.93 days per FTE</b> (5.2, 1.9, 4.4, 4.12, 12.45, 5.95, 2.3, 3.9, 7.7, 9.5)</p>	A pretty good year for sickness in the team, well below last year's 5.2 and below the average for the 5 years including last (3.71 days/FTE.) As we said, last year several staff had surgery during Q4, put back following the pandemic so this pushed our figures above the average. None of that featured this year's figures, although, with an aging workforce, it will happen from time to time.
10	% of staff who are satisfied with working for WRS	<p><b>92%</b> 97.5%, 93.5%, 98%, 88%, (NB: Annual figures for 2017/18 and before, 80%, 85%, 77%, 82%)</p>	Our staff cohort has shrunk back down post-pandemic, although we still have additional people in place for some of our projects. 48 responses were received from the slightly more than 80 staff. As ever, some did not respond to all the questions. This score for this measure is based on those who scored 5/10 or better for the question in the staff survey which asked, are you satisfied with working with WRS (score is from 0 to 10.) 66% (31/47,) scored this question at 8/10 or higher. Due to current time constraints, we have yet to do more detailed analysis of broader staff comments, but it is good to know that many are happy working for the service.
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	<p>Bromsgrove <b>7.2%</b> (5.9, 5.4, 6.8, 8.7, 6.73, 3.8, 7.9)</p> <p>Malvern Hills <b>4.1%</b> (5.1, 3.5, 5.7, 4.8, 4.94, 3.6, 3,)</p> <p>Redditch <b>8.1%</b> (9.5, 8.3, 8.5, 7.1 8.65, 2.7, 8.1,)</p> <p>Worcester City <b>8.5%</b> (10.0, 5.7, 8.8, 8.1, 8.19, 5.8, 9.4,)</p> <p>Wychavon <b>8.2%</b></p>	Linked to the Crime & Disorder agenda and introduced following discussions with elected members, this measure is now in its eighth year. We previously explained to members that, after pandemic lockdowns where hospitality premises were closed for long periods, the general tolerance of noise and similar activities from this type of premise seemed to have reduced, so as these businesses sought other activities and uses of their outside spaces to increase revenue, this made residents living in the vicinity

		(6.3, 3.7, 4.2, 4.0, 4.97, 4.0, 5.5,) Wyre Forest <b>9.4%</b> (9.1, 5.1, 8.5, 7.0, 8.29, 5.8, 9.4,) <b>Worcestershire 7.6%</b> (7.5, 5.0, 6.8, 6.4, 6.78, 4.4, 6.9,)	unhappy. This appears to be slightly less prevalent for last year, with our more urban districts, returning figures around average with our more rural districts returning figures at average or slightly higher. It still shows that 90% plus of premises across the County are still well run and controlled by their operators, and we know from interactions with Police colleagues that concerns tend to be limited to smaller numbers of premises.
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	Bromsgrove <b>2.26</b> (2.25, 2.56, 1.96, 2.7, 2.82, 3.0, 2.7, 3.1) Malvern Hills <b>1.93</b> (2.29, 2.45, 2.07, 2.2, 2.39, 3.0, 2.3, 3.9) Redditch <b>3.09</b> (3.61, 3.67, 2.97, 3.2, 3.61, 4.1, 3.7, 3.5) Worcester City <b>3.40</b> (3.47, 3.1, 2.78, 3.2, 3.13, 4.2, 4.0, 2.9) Wychavon <b>2.07</b> (2.45, 2.08, 2.01, 2.1, 2.46, 2.7, 2.6, 2.5) Wyre Forest <b>2.75</b> (2.65, 2.71, 2.37, 2.6, 3.23, 3.4, 3.0, 3.0) Worcestershire <b>2.57</b> (2.9, 2.74, 2.35, 2.7, 2.93, 3.4, 3.1, 3.8)	The rate for Malvern Hills is low compared to previous years and numbers for other areas appear around average to slightly below average. Domestic noise represents more than half of complaints and, as we have alluded to in Activity Data Reports, noise from dogs and from audio devices remain key drivers of this. With commercial premises it tends to be a small number of these that certain residents have concerns about, and things like a change of DPS in a pub and the business looking at more diverse ways of bringing in revenue can lead to friction with the local community.  1,535 noise cases were received during 2022/23 (266 fewer than the previous year), with 1,014 (or 66%) relating to noise from domestic properties.
13	Total Income	<b>12.73%</b> Note: £384,185 as a % of previous budget of £3.017M  Using the current net budget figure (3.325M,) the figure yielded is 11.6%	This figure does not include the income for work derived from partners like the Homes 4 Ukraine work or the pilot work on planning enforcement. This is purely money raised from outside of the partners.



14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population.	Based on outrun cost of £3.325M against the current population estimate of 603,000 the service cost is:  <b>£5.51 per head</b>	This is the amount spent by the partners following the off-setting of cost with income, then divided by the mid-year estimate we currently use for other work. It is difficult to benchmark this figure with other authorities as WRS functions are not all of those reported in the relevant part of the RO return to DLUHC.
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## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Strong management of performance is vital for the success of this service, ensuring that customers are satisfied, and partners are reassured by the cost-effective delivery of the service on their behalf. Whilst everyone must accept responsibility for managing performance, the WRS management team is committed to driving performance forward so that a high standard of service delivery can be maintained. As can be seen from the figures above, the main challenge for the service is to improve the perception of non-business customers have of our performance, so this will be a key task for managers in 2023/4 and beyond.

Management team meetings are used to review performance against the service plan and to highlight any issues of concern. Principal Officers (first line managers) attend these wider management meetings to ensure a two-way flow of information between management and staff. This has been supplemented throughout the pandemic with a weekly informal meeting of the Head of Service and Team Managers to ensure everything is kept under review, which has continued. Teams have their own detailed plans that sit below the service plan signed off by Joint Board. Progress against this is monitored by Team Managers and Principal Officers.

The Management team also looks to the strategic direction of the service and ensures that the operational and financial resources available to partners are used in the most efficient manner to achieve both their individual strategic aims together with WRS priorities.

Continued refinement of our IT platform ensures our ability to report to Joint Board on our performance measures and that this remains accurate. The Uniform system operates well across all functions, but it is somewhat antiquated. Consideration was given to replacement but in the current financial climate this is co-prohibitive when we have a system in place that does the job, albeit is a little clunky at times. The service also subscribes to the national IDB intelligence database, enabling it to share intelligence with other local authorities in the region and nationally so that common issues and individuals can be identified and work to deal with them co-ordinated. DLUHC is looking to encourage the broader use of the system, especially at district council level, and has continued to fund access for district council Housing Standards teams to help them better engage with colleagues in Trading Standards services where enforcement responsibility for estate agency, tenant fees and energy efficiency of buildings sits.

There are a wide range of bodies to which the service must report data (e.g., Food Standards Agency, Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Health and Safety Executive, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Gambling Commission etc.). All statutory reports are submitted to ensure that WRS continues to

meet its partner's statutory obligations. It was hoped that the central bodies would accept a single data return for all partners, but it now appears that all Departments except for the Health and Safety Executive continue to require individual returns for each partner. WRS provides these as necessary.

A short summary of activity data is included at Appendix 5 to avoid duplication with the wider and more detailed set of activity data that is provided in the final Activity Data Report for 2020/21, which members will receive at the same meeting where this Annual Report is presented.

### **Internal Audits**

There was one audit for Licensing that was carried out in accordance with the Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service Audit Plan for Bromsgrove District Council for 2022/3. The audit was a critical friend review of how the licensing service deals with the animal licensing regime. As members will be aware, Government modernised a range of business activities involving animals including breeding, boarding and sales, creating a whole new regulatory framework using regulations made under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 embed the RSPCA's five freedoms at the heart of business operations for things like dog breeding and boarding, catteries, and pet shops. The regulations also cover more specialised premises like riding establishments and replaced several separate regulatory regimes created in the 1950s and 1960s.

At the time of writing, we await the final report, so this will be formally reported in next year's Annual Report, however members can be reassured that the Audit team were very positive and very supportive and there were no major adverse comments needing significant intervention. They were happy that the processes developed were good and found some positive suggestions for improvement.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY HIGHLIGHTS**

There have been many highlights throughout the year that showcase the work of our teams and illustrate the breadth of their responsibilities. We also feature the other work-streams taken on, including elements of pandemic control work.

### **Community Environmental Health Team**

The Community Environmental Health Team were kept incredibly busy throughout the year across the whole range of environmental health work.

#### **Food Safety**

One impact of Covid was all Local Authorities having a long list of overdue inspections. Whilst many of the businesses were closed for a period, many continued to provide takeaway services. The FSA advised that routine inspection programmes were to be suspended. Post pandemic the FSA implemented a two-year FSA Inspection Recovery programme (April 21-March 23).

We have had to provide quarterly progress reports to FSA which will continue going forward in coming year.

The total of overdue interventions across the county at start of 2022-23 financial year was over 3,500 existing registered businesses. During any year we also expect to deal with 700-900 new business registrations. As we have always had a high level of FHRS compliance, the numbers with A/B (low FHRS) scores were <5% of our total. Officers were, therefore, able to conduct a wide range of visits across all FHRS ratings.

Covid brought major challenges to food businesses, although many were able to diversify and survive. Now businesses face an economic crisis with staff shortages, increased fuel costs and inflationary food costs of up to 20%, all in a declining market. Premises are adapting by reducing opening hours, changing from restaurant to takeaway, revising menus and suppliers. There are signs of increasing closures of businesses although currently the numbers are being matched by new premises registrations.

We no longer base our food intervention programmes solely on inspection dates set in the national Food Law Code of Practice which are automatically generated by our IT system. We also record and consider intel through Tactical Assessment programmes. This opens up many options including sectoral approaches (e.g., geographical, new premises, ethnics, bakeries, small retail), specific projects (e.g., sampling, FHRS sticker checks, arising from complaints). The FSA is now considering a similar model as part of its ABC Review and in November they visited WRS to see how our system worked.

Between April 2022 and end March 2023 WRS completed 2058 inspections. This figure includes both site visits and assessments of low-risk premises done by remote monitoring, e.g., questionnaires. Whilst the data below indicates we continue to have high levels of compliance officers report they are finding more premises with major non-compliances, particularly in the independent sector.

30 Food Notices were served to bring businesses into compliance, with 668 New Food Registrations being received.

## **Exports**

We continued to provide an export certificate service throughout the year, an essential function which enables Worcestershire businesses to trade overseas. Eight officers have now undergone training and been re-certified by APHA to sign certificates for fish and egg related exports.

## **Local Outbreak Response Team**

We retained a commitment to the team of officer time to be drawn down as required by the team. Officers were asked to engage on one or two activities, but input was limited for the period.

## **Nuisance**

The surge in nuisance demand continued throughout the summer of 2022, with high numbers of complaints about noise from licensed premises remaining a notable feature. This resulted in an unprecedented backlog of cases. Abatement Notices were served for issues including noise nuisances from amplified music on licensed premises, barking dogs, accumulations, and insufficient drainage arrangements.

WRS worked with a car wash in Pershore in meeting its undertaking in respect of works to resolve a noise problem. We were also able to provide expertise in advising a local business in preventing light nuisance to residents where a film company was using their premises to film at night. We continued to receive a significant number of complaints concerning pubs having live music events in their gardens, often where they were fundamentally unsuitable for such events due to the proximity of neighbouring residential premises. We adopted a proactive intelligence-led approach to monitoring various large-scale events planned through the summer and served abatement notices in respect of noise from fans in Evesham, a cockerel crowing at a café in Bromsgrove, noise from barking at kennels and odour nuisance in Ombersley linked with a Planning enforcement notice. Another cockerel case made the national press, appearing in "The Sun", where we had been able to intervene and resolve the case.

A landowner in Worcester was served with a notice in respect of controlling rats and a Simple Caution was issued in respect of a long-running nuisance case involving barking dogs in Worcester. We also dealt with disturbance from a warehouse rave, carried out a BS4142 noise assessment on an industrial company in Evesham and investigated smoke nuisance from a business directed to burn tomato plants by The Animal and Plant Health Authority in Throckmorton.

Several complaints were received in year concerning smoke/odour from newly installed log burners at domestic premises around the county. It is believed that these may be driven by the rise in fuel costs, and the situation is being monitored to establish if this is going to become an increasing problem.

## **Health and Safety at Work**

The team were faced with some very complex and challenging health and safety accident investigations throughout 2022/3, some of which have involved fatalities and close liaison with West Mercia Police and The Coroner's Office. More details of these can be shared once they have progressed through the legal process.

WRS officers were also instrumental in the process of ensuring that the sadly now defunct professional Worcester Warriors Premiership rugby team could fulfil their home fixtures by working with the safety officer at the club to maintain the General Safety Certificate for Sixways as the club unfortunately passed into Administration. This Safety at Sports Grounds work is carried out on a contract basis by WRS on behalf of Worcestershire County Council who have the legal responsibility for issuing safety certificates. Our ongoing work secures events being held safely at Sixways Stadium.

## **Events and Safety at Sports Grounds**

The team continue to monitor events, working with organisers to ensure that they are properly managed, meet legal requirements and run smoothly, safely and without causing unnecessary disturbance. These have included numerous music festivals across the county, a Passion Play in Worcester which included checking the risk assessment for a mock crucifixion and events planned for the Three Counties Showground. Your Officers also provide the Safety at Sports Grounds function for Worcestershire County Council which has included working with Worcester Warriors Rugby Club, Bromsgrove Sporting and Kidderminster Harriers Football clubs (the latter during their FA Cup run and televised match at home to a Premier League club) and Worcester Racecourse.

## **Primary Authority**

We continue with our successful Primary Authority Partnerships (PAPs) in the food sector. Existing PAPs include Alimenti, Aspens, My EChef, Servest, Venture Events Catering, Mindful Chef (online healthy meals), Kelsius (international company offering temperature control equipment) and NeoKare (processing of baby milk). Some of these are multiple site operators, others are SME with less than 10 employees, demonstrating the range of businesses to which WRS can offer support. Our Principal Officer (Food) is also part of a national network of PA authorities and will be chairing this panel going forward.

After forming a Primary Authority Partnership with Halfords, officers continue to offer assured advice to the company in helping them to comply with health and safety requirements at a national level.

## **Working in partnership with the business community**

WRS have been instrumental in working with businesses and partners to provide information and advice to assist them in compliance and in getting them back on to a business-as-usual footing post Covid restrictions. Your officers have been both sympathetic and supportive in ensuring that Worcestershire businesses can respond quickly as economic opportunities presented themselves post Covid.

It is worth noting that all the work described in the section above is carried out by a single multi-disciplinary Community Environmental Health team, with professional officers supported by their line managers balancing all of these competing demands across an extensive and challenging range of subject areas.

## **Technical Services Team**

### **Environmental Permitting**

The technical services team successfully completed our inspection programme for 2022-23 in January and all subsistence instructions were supplied to the partners by the agreed dates of mid-March. DEFRA have also determined that there would be no increase in subsistence fees again for 2023-24.

Officers have successfully identified a number of businesses in breach of the Environmental Permitting regulations. One received a formal caution and a second was prosecuted for operation of a polluting process without the required permit in place. Both of these were in Wychavon District. A third, in Malvern Hills District is being pursued through enforcement action following a pollution incident.

Alongside the environmental permitting for petrol stations the petroleum licensing function of the County Council was delivered to maximise efficiency, minimise enforcement costs and deliver improved customer service.

### **Local Air Quality Management**

Officers have been working to complete the installation of a permanent air quality monitoring station in Wychbold following borderline air quality levels being identified over successive years. This system will provide important information on PM10 pollution and greatly enhance our understanding of air quality impact around the village. It will also provide us with real-time information when poor air quality episodes take place allowing us to provide the public with local air quality information in real-time. It is anticipated that the installation will be completed early 2023/24 with monitoring commencing immediately.

Completion of the source apportionment work (identification of pollution sources) in Worcester City has meant action planning was commenced to identify actions that can lead to reductions in those vehicle fleets that are of most significance in each area of poor air quality in the city. An Air Quality Steering Group has been set up to assist with drafting of an Action Plan to resolve the air quality issues. Whilst this work continues in Worcester with support from County, District and Public Health colleagues amongst others, we have begun traffic surveys in the other districts to enable source apportionment to be completed there.

The team were successful with a bid to Defra in funding an enhanced air quality monitoring programme in the county to support behavioural change. A grant of over £240,000 was awarded to WRS with agreement for 10% match funding by the districts. A significant amount of work went into the bid preparation during the autumn with the proposal to deliver 24 monitoring stations across the county with the ability to monitor nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and other pollutants accurately in real time. The data collected will be reported and published in real time and enable behavioural change to be encouraged. The aim is to influence those who are vulnerable to air pollutants to protect themselves when required but also to influence those who may consider whether to contribute to pollutant release (drive a polluting vehicle) on any particular day.

### **Planning support on technical issues**

Officers continued to support the development control process has continued throughout the year with this being the largest or second largest draws on demand of all WRS service areas from September onwards through to the end of the financial year. Alongside the reactive work, the team have continued to work with partner colleagues in production of a supplementary planning document on Air Quality for South Worcestershire and provided updates to guidance available to consultants supporting developers when tackling environmental health issues with development.

### **Dog Warden Service**

It has been a very troublesome time for dog wardens. The previously reported annual fall in dog numbers has plateaued with a slight increase of over one hundred stray dogs reported during 2022, at 582 dogs when compared with last year. What has made this more significant is that the percentage of owners not claiming their dogs has increased to 32% which means longer stays in our kennels for the statutory 7 days. Unlike through the COVID pandemic, the rate of new dog ownership has fallen sharply and many are giving up their dogs voluntarily. The availability of kennel space for our strays has been a concern as most of our providers are animal charity organisations which help with rehoming unwanted animals. As a result, they have had capacity issues and it has been a real challenge to rehome our dogs. As has been a consistent issue, a significant proportion of those that are seized as strays were not microchipped and often had welfare concerns, which made the process of reunification where an owner has come forward, more complex due to proof of ownership issues and potential enforcement situations. We also provide Dog Warden Services for Birmingham City Council out of hours, Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough Council under contracts delivered this year.

### **Subsidised Pest Control & Worcester City Gull Control**

Subsidised pest control treatments were up on last year's figures but the service operated smoothly without significant issue. Some local authorities as reported required additional funds to cover the cost of treatment in their areas. As well as the domestic service, sewer baiting was undertaken in areas where issues had been reported by residents, pest controllers or Severn Trent Water.

Additional funding was approved by the City Council to enhance the gull control management this year which allowed an extensive programme of nest, egg and chick removal in the city centre, supported by deterrent hawking, disturbance tactics and gull proofing measures. All work was carried out in accordance with any conditions of the licences provided by Natural England where appropriate. The work was successful in bringing about significant local change such that some locations were gull free for the first time in a while. We continue to support Bath and North East Somerset under contract with their gull control work following the successes had in Worcester.

### **Homes for Ukraine & Planning Enforcement support**

Support has continued to be provided to Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch and Wychavon with the provision of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. This has involved host and guest checks, support and guidance as well as facilitating appropriate payments. This has been completed utilising staff formerly employed as COVID Advisors. In Bromsgrove and Redditch, former Contact Tracing and Enforcement staff have been utilised to support planning colleagues in tackling a backlog of planning enforcement issues. Most of these cases are live and going through the enforcement process.



## **Licensing**

This year saw an increase in proactive enforcement and inspection regimes in all Districts across the County encompassing all areas of licensing including taxis, gambling premises, animal licensing businesses and caravans. Joint visits were also conducted throughout the year with partner agencies including West Mercia Police, Trading Standards, CIEH colleagues and parking enforcement teams. Focus on proactive enforcement by the Licensing team has continued with officers engaging with partners, businesses, licence holders and external agencies including Worcester Bid to tackle issues in the Night Time Economy, taxi enforcement and street trading.

The first ever Licensing Districts Chairs meeting was also held this year allowing the Licensing Chairs to discuss issues that were prevalent in all of their district areas and to look to see if any similar discussions can be had in their own Licensing meetings. The focus was on discussing areas of licensing where there were similar discussions already being had at meetings so to allow greater consistency when discussing policy matters. The introduction of the Taxi Standards and Animal Licensing are two recent exemplar consultations that show that this can be done well and provides advantages to both the Council and licence holders.

Another key milestone was the agreement by members to fund the implementation of automation of data entry for customers, thus enabling a range of services to be addressed by the client entering data in forms on the WRS website, which can then upload directly into the IDOX Uniform back-office system. This includes the automation of payments for Licensing, so Bromsgrove District Council as the host authority can collect fees for the 6 partners and pass money back to the other 5.

### **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire**

The long-awaited Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Standards published on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 were implemented across all six districts completing the cycle of working through policy development and committee stages. This has allowed all six districts to now allow the standardisation of Taxi Standards across the County. The Statutory Standards set-out a range of robust measures to protect taxi and private hire vehicle passengers, particularly those most vulnerable. Government advice is that licensing authorities must work together to ensure that, above all else, the taxi and private hire vehicle services the public use are safe. The Licensing team have been working with the County Council to ensure thorough training provision of both a theory and practical test for all new drivers is undertaken.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has issued best practice guidance on taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) licensing since 2006 to assist local authorities that have responsibility for the regulation of this sector. This has recently been updated to take into account stakeholder views and changes in the way the sector operates after consultation with the public, licensing authorities and the taxi and private hire industry. WRS are now awaiting the final outcome of these consultations which is believed to be imminent.



## **Net Zero and Electric Vehicles**

The team have continued to work with District Councils to implement methods for the introduction of electric vehicles as part of their wider council carbon neutral agenda and we will continue to look at the best approach for their fleet taking into account the make-up of their current fleet and the age criteria policy of each council. Some of these options have included discussions around changing the age criteria of the fleet of vehicles licensed alongside implementing incentives for drivers to move to electric vehicles.

The government has confirmed its ambition to see at least half of new cars to be ultra-low emission by 2030. The proposals are outlined in their 'Road to zero' Strategy. The desire is to reduce emissions from the vehicles already on the UK's roads, and drive the uptake of zero emission cars, vans and trucks to deliver cleaner air, a better environment and a strong clean economy.

As set out in the government's 'Air Quality Plan' the UK will end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040 so we will continue to work with each district and members to incorporate a plan that meets these objectives but not foregoing the challenges that this will involve including the trade and the infrastructure that is required to make this viable both financially and economically.

## **Non – surgical cosmetic procedures licensing regime**

In February 2022, the Government announced its intention to introduce a licensing regime for non-surgical cosmetic procedures to ensure those that were responsible for carrying out the procedures were adequately trained and competent practitioners. Principal officers have been working closely with the Institute of Licensing as part of a working group to look at how and what this will look like in the future.

## **Alcohol, Entertainment and Gambling**

Partnership working has influenced a lot of the teams work across the districts this year with teams carrying out joint enforcement work across all six districts with partner authorities, West Mercia Police and County Council Trading Standards colleagues.

There has been more resource directed towards working in the Night Time Economy (NTE) as this was identified as a priority area for the service following recommendations in the 2022 Strategic Assessment and officers have undertaken a number of operations led by intelligence and data from partner agencies. The team have continued to be proactive in looking at suspended licenses to ensure sales have not taken place where licenses have been suspended and have liaised with both trading standards colleagues and CEH colleagues where appropriate if a visit is to be undertaken.

Each Council's Gambling Statement of Principles were reviewed and approved by each district last year and following this a comprehensive plan was rolled out to undertake Gambling inspections across all six districts. Work has commenced on the Local Area Gambling Profile Refresh which is coming up to 5 years old so this will

be available to see in the next financial year. The majority of the premises inspected by officers (betting shops, adult gaming centre and Bingo premises) were very well managed and compliant with licence conditions, staff were well informed and the required safer gambling measures all in place. The premises inspected were on the whole part of national chains so lots of internal measures and management were set out by the company/head office.

### **Animal Licenses**

WRS continue to be well represented in this area of work as we sit on both the Licensing and Animal Welfare Group and the Canine, Feline Sector Group. Both of which have strong links with DEFRA and policy change. Unfortunately, this sector was hard hit during the pandemic with more people working from home and choosing not to go away many businesses struggled. WRS saw this turn around slightly for a short period however the rise in costs has once again see more and more businesses closing down and more complaints being received for non-compliance.

As mentioned earlier the Animal Licensing Process from the point of receiving an application through to carrying out an inspection or carrying out enforcement has had a critical friend audit carried out and this highlighted the number of staff that the team required to be qualified needed to increase. It was a requirement made by DEFRA after implementation of the new licensing regime in 2008 that all officers inspecting any animal licensed premises must hold a suitable Level 3 qualification. As a response to this, 3 members of the team have undertaken the training required.

The team are now looking to implement the streamlined processes that are in place to save time for both officers and the licence holder for some elements of the application and inspection process.

### **Caravans**

The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of a site to be a fit and proper person) Regulations 2020 guidance was published last year so officers implemented a new application process and fee structure so applicants could submit applications for determination by WRS. All applications were assessed and determined in the required timescales set. Alongside this work WRS officers completed a three-phase inspection programme to inspect caravan sites in both Wychavon and Worcester as per the partner officer requirements. This required some follow up with planning colleagues across both districts and further inspections will take place next year.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### **Budget 2022/23**

Quarterly financial monitoring reports are provided to managers and finances are regularly considered by officers from the partners ahead of each Joint Board meeting. Bromsgrove DC operates a robust ordering and authorisation process to ensure the transparency and accuracy of costing. This year saw a surplus at year end of just under £182,000. This resulted from excellent income results and sensible spending. More would have been done using agency staff to address areas like the food recovery but the numbers in the agency pool remain low. Teams had to carry the burden and were very stretched because of this, especially during the Summer.

The draft outrun budget for 2022/23 is included as Appendix 3, along with the proposed budget for 2023/24 onwards at Appendix 4. The outrun position is subject to final audit, although the budget has now reduced so far that this is no longer a statutory requirement for specific audit of the WRS accounts. Hence, this will be done as part of the overall audit of Bromsgrove District Council's accounts.

Until 2020/21, the operating assumption was a cash standstill budget, with increasing income targets set to balance the budget each year. For that year and beyond, partners have recognised that the service's ability to increase income is limited and have agreed to fund the pay increases and the uplifts in pension contributions. Members recognised that the income generation progress could not deliver the increases expected, especially in the current climate with financial uncertainty and the level of inflation. This situation is unlikely to change in the immediate future with pay increases likely to be at last year's level and prices continuing to increase in some areas with alarming rapidity. Should it be necessary, the service's reserve may help partners to buffer some financial impacts were the financial model for the service to become difficult to maintain, allowing partners time to determine the way forward for the delivery of these functions.

## **WORKFORCE PLANNING AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

The WRS structure has now been in place since October 2015 with Simon Wilkes as the Head of Service with a team of four Manager posts looking after different areas of the service. David Mellors as Community Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager covering all the responsibilities of his Community Environmental Health team, (Food Safety, Health and Safety and Statutory Nuisance, with some other minor areas,) and the Trading Standards remit (Weights and Measures, Food and Agricultural Standards, Product Safety, Fair Trading, Animal Health) on a contractual basis since the County's departure from the partnership in 2016. Mark Cox continues to head up the Technical Services Team covering Technical Pollution (managing Planning, IPPC, Contaminated Land, Air Quality), Dog Wardens, Pest Control, Information Management & Database administration and more recently the first contact team of Duty Officers. Kiran Lahel heads up the Licensing and Support Services Team, leaving her previous post of Business and Relationship Manager vacant. We have looked at how best to re-deploy this funding to new roles to better support the service's work, particularly better support for the Team Managers and enhancing some of our functions and are in the process of moving this forward. However, we will retain the 4<sup>th</sup> post on the establishment in event of an improving or changing picture in the future.

Staff turnover remains low, although several long-standing and well-regarded members of staff did decide to move onto pastures new during 2022/3. All of these were to better paid roles with national public bodies, in roles that amounted to promotions for those individuals. Whilst we have felt the loss of old friends, the fact is that WRS continues to provide a solid platform for professional development as we need the best to keep up our reputation for excellence. These changes have also allowed us to recruit new but experienced staff either from other backgrounds to suit our income generation work or from other local authorities. All the newcomers have begun adding value to what is being delivered.

At the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the core permanent staff establishment was around 69 FTE, although some of this capacity is on fixed term contract and some supernumerary roles remain in place providing the Homes for Ukraine and Planning Enforcement capacity, all of which is funded directly by the relevant partners.

Maintaining competence will remain central to our ability to deliver income and, helpful more training is now being delivered in bite-sized chunks via Teams, making it easier and cheaper to hold onto relevance competencies. However, there will always be a need to undertake some face-to-face training, particularly where a course has to run over an extended period to embed new knowledge within the officer's understanding. As ever, we will look to use our usual PDR approach this year with a main one and a 6-month review to help identify what individuals need.

### **Staff Survey**

48 of our staff cohort responded to the survey. Most have returned to normal duties over the year, but a few additional staff are retained for work on projects like Homes 4 Ukraine and the planning enforcement pilot. As ever, some did not respond to all the questions. The satisfaction score is based on those who scored 5/10 or better for the question in the staff survey which asked, are you satisfied with working with WRS (score is from 0 to 10.) The figure obtained, of 92% is slightly lower than last year but remains excellent. Around two-thirds of staff who responded scored working for WRS at 8 or better out of 10, which is good news. Due to current time constraints, we have yet to do more detailed analysis of broader staff comments, but it is good to know that many are happy working for the service.

One area that sprang out was our WRS teams working together. Whilst the majority still felt it was ok, with 42/48 scoring 5 or higher, only 16/48 scored it 8 or above, suggesting that we have lost some of that cross-team engagement as we have come out of being very focused on pandemic response. We hope that the themed, cross-team priorities will help bring people together and improve understanding across our diverse teams. Despite the impacts of the pandemic, it was good to see that 46/48 respondents scored 5 or more in relation to receiving sufficient support from their line managers and the same number felt they received sufficient support from their colleagues. Hopefully, this will leave us well placed as we move fully to business-as-usual activity.

### **Staff Sickness**

During 2022/23 staff sickness reached only 2.93 days per FTE, well below last year's 5.2 and below the average for the 5 years including last (3.71 days/FTE.) As we said, last year several staff had surgery during Q4 of last year, put back following the pandemic, so this pushed our figures above the average in 2021/22. None of that featured this year's figures, although, with an aging workforce, it will happen from time to time. Whilst an aging service is likely to have a slightly higher rate of sickness due to natural causes, managers will continue to work to maintain the figures in the normal range of 3-6 days.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

WRS remains located at Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. The use of flexible and mobile working is generally now the norm, and has been expanded further during the pandemic, with staff frequently using home as their start and finish point for work in the field. Office based activity will remain important for team performance, identity, and morale so officers will continue to operate to a flexible pattern that facilitates this and provides face to face liaison with managers and colleagues or for meetings. The touch down points retained in each of the councils have provided an excellent venue for licensing appointments and these will be maintained on an appointment only basis, providing a useful balance between availability for the trade and efficiency of service delivery. Taxi drivers/ operators can be

told what they will need over the telephone, ensuring that officer face-to-face time can be used more effectively to ensure complete applications are made and that paperwork has been completed correctly.

These work patterns enable staff to strike a better work/life balance which is essential for good morale, whilst maintaining the team ethos, having an organisation with which the staff identify and belong to, and giving the opportunity to share ideas and issues with other team members. Despite what those who evangelise about the benefits of virtual contact say, it does not build the kinds of trusting, working relationships necessary for the work that we do, so whilst we will be making more use of systems like Teams, it will not wholly replace face to face interaction between staff members.

## **BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION (SERVICE DELIVERY)**

The Intelligence Operating Model is now the way we deliver our activities. The model of a Strategic Assessment for longer term priorities and Tactical Assessments for adjusting resource allocation to address emergent threats has long been the operating model in core policing and other law enforcement organisations, not only nationally but internationally too. WRS continues to lead in the wider regulatory environment, using what we learnt with our Trading Standards colleagues on how this model can support our activities.

The current Strategic Assessment recommends that the focus of activity should be around the following tactical priorities, which will remain in place for 2023/4:

- Supporting a safe and vibrant night-time economy
- Promoting the responsible sale, breeding, and ownership of dogs.
- Promoting safe and clean communities
- Supporting commercial businesses to operate safely and responsibly
- Supporting industry to operate safely and responsibly

Tactical assessments will review our data and intelligence against these, to support Team Managers and Principal Officers in determining activities to respond to the intelligence picture current at that time. The top three are cross cutting aspects of our work and a Team Manager will take responsibility for each one, ensuring that work is done across the three teams that can contribute to the priority.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

WRS recognises that the development of policy, delivery of service priorities and the management of its services for six partners attract risk. In reviewing its service risks and the effects of management strategies and policies WRS seeks to:

- Identify, assess, and manage risk
- Safeguard the services assets and equipment
- Focus on the delivery of its service to its customers

The Service aims to ensure that Risk Management becomes a natural component of its management process and that when and where appropriate; risks are avoided, reduced, transferred, or retained. As part of these arrangements, a WRS risk register has been developed that can be integrated with the partners' individual risk registers. This register will be maintained and reviewed periodically to assess current risks and identify forthcoming priorities.

The current risk register at Appendix 2 has been reviewed for the new service plan. Many of the generic risks and mitigation have served us well during the pandemic and remain relevant. Flexible work patterns can create their own risks around feelings of isolation, lack of team identity and loss of belonging to the organisation and basic things like risk of muscular-skeletal injury because people spend long hours working at desks that are not ideal. So, whilst the service will continue to make more use of virtual meetings, they will never fully replace face to face interaction, nor will they lead to the abandonment of a physical location for the service.

Last year saw us address the final period of the Food Standards Agency's road-map, although the introduction of the revised version of their Local Authority Code of Practice for Food Law Enforcement has been delayed for 12-months while the Agency finalises a number of flexibilities required to make the model more intelligence based. There remain concerns going forward around public expectation around what is deliverable in law, particularly in relation to nuisance issues but the service will look to improve its performance in the eyes of our non-business customers.

## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

WRS is committed to equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. The service links in with the host Authority's adopted Equality Standard for Local Government as a framework to help embed equality and diversity into everyday aspects of its work. Equality issues have come to the fore in recent years with the Black Lives Matter movement highlighting racial inequalities but clearly there is a wider agenda for public services to address. The professional bodies for regulators are looking at how to respond and how to help make services be more reflective of communities they serve. I'm sure this is something that we will take on board at WRS and do our best to move forward in an inclusive way.

## **THE NEXT STEPS**

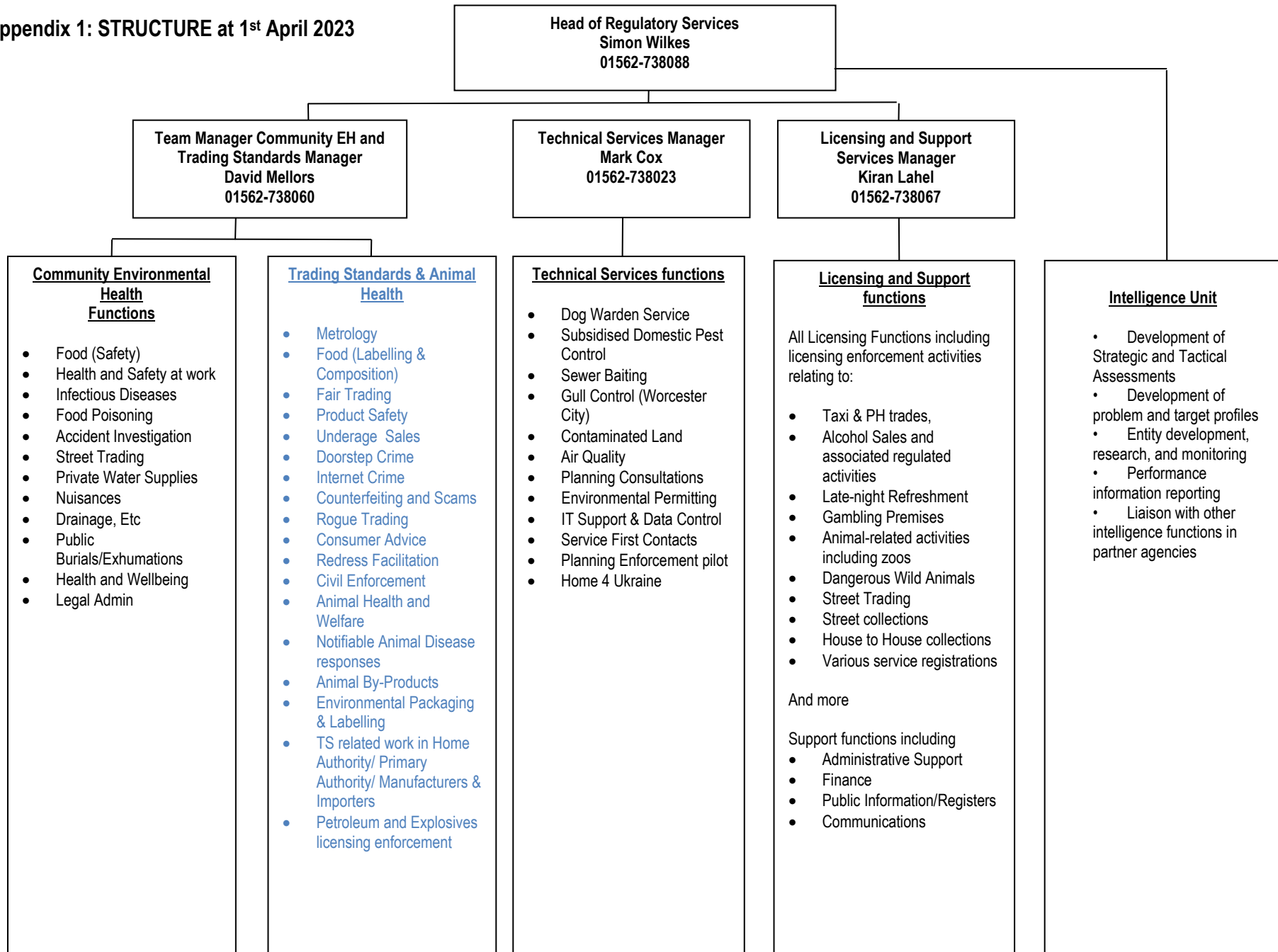
We are now properly moving back onto a business-as-usual footing, restoring our approach to engaging with issues where these had to change due to covid risks or resourcing issues due to pandemic response. We will:

- Continue to deliver the WRS Business Plan and our annual operational service plans

- Maintain existing income streams and looking at other ways of generating income for the service,
- Following our philosophy of continuous improvement, continue to review operations to improve marginal efficiencies,
- Continue the process of channel shift by increasing the customer's ability to use self-help, do transactions on-line and monitor progress of work.
- Continue to work closely with County Council Trading Standards colleagues and other partner agencies by maintaining links that help to support both WRS and other services to the benefit of local people.
- Continue to engage with partners to see if any other services could sit well on the WRS platform.

On this last point, our pilot work with some of the districts in north Worcestershire will hopefully lead to developments during 2023/4 around planning and potentially more widely. Having secured both petroleum licensing and safety at sportsgrounds work from the County Council, we will look at what other functions we might discharge for them too. There are likely to be further proposed changes to the legislative framework in the coming year as Government continues to assess the need to move away from the current post-EU-Exit framework. We will respond to consultations on behalf of the partners and, where we can, work with other colleagues in the region to help amplify the thinking of local authority officers across our area.

**Appendix 1: STRUCTURE at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023**





## Appendix 2 – WRS 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. WFDC upgraded relevant systems including Windows. The service moved to Office 365 during 2021/22, which provides better access to a range of provisions including Microsoft Teams and Power BI.
Issues with the WRS database system	Impact on work planning. Self-help may not enable savings required	On-going	Low	High	Amber	Current contract due to be re-negotiated in February 2023. Work has commenced on negotiating new contract. The cost of moving systems is prohibitive currently and, whilst the system has its faults, it provides the necessary functionality and will allow the enablement of data transfer from electronic forms.
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	Amber	The pandemic has shown that we were well prepared for the need to maximise working from home and now all staff, including some previously regarded as office based can do this. Touchdown stations remain available in partner council locations. WRS Managers do need to redraft contingency plans in the event of a prolonged IT failure or cyber-attack that will allow services to be maintained.
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	Amber	The pandemic response has shown that the service was well-placed to respond to what was required.. Consultants are available to provide short term cover and, whilst this worked well in peacetime to cover peak demand periods, the pandemic has revealed the limits to this type of capacity. These pressures will only be resolved in the longer term by local and central government investing in additional capacity

						<p>and additional training to bring more people into the regulatory professions.</p> <p>Having taken on contracts with additional authorities the demand has increased, and neighbouring authorities have lost the ability to assist with some technical specialisms. This is the double-edged sword of effectively operating as a centre of excellence.</p> <p>Whilst we have good resource of our own, in event of an issue, there are limits to who we can ask for help. Regional and sub-regional groups are in place so can provide shared resources for local authorities if required.</p> <p>Effective training and development processes are in place to ensure recruitment and retention of staff.</p> <p>There is increased training budget pressure, reduced technical knowledge in neighbouring authorities and increased importance in maintaining heightened skills for contractual obligations and commercial edge.</p> <p>Regular inventory and maintenance of equipment is undertaken. In the future, budget for replace may be an issue but would be a relatively small amount for partners to share.</p>
Pest contractors cease operations.	Disruption to service. Negative media coverage. Increased public health risks	On-going	Low	High	<b>Green</b>	The Pest control framework contract has multiple pest control suppliers so the loss of one allows work to be moved to the others. This should limit or eliminate risk, although the unlikely loss of multiple companies might create capacity issues.
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	<b>Amber</b>	The Out of Hours and Kennelling contracts were re-tendered to enhance the existing arrangements and provide resilience however there are increases in numbers of stray dogs, dog disease and contracts are restricted by geographical location. Retendering for additional kennels remains difficult and consideration may be given to creating our own capacity.

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>	Issues with the new BDC finance system have mainly been resolved, however some workarounds remain in place due to some unforeseen issues.
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	Medium	High	<b>Amber</b>	New legal agreement limits variations in contribution before partners must move to contractual relationship but this is quite high before it kicks in (20%.) Leanness of organisation minimises overheads and focuses resource at the front line. Growth strategy should generate income to support partners in the future but there are limits to this without additional capacity being added to the system. Invest to save capacity has been committed by partners to see if this achieves the necessary outcomes but even this is now fully occupied.
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. Difficulty in keeping informed of Case Law developments. Membership and attendance of Officer Technical Groups outside the County does assist.
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>Amber</b>	Limited detail of what is required for statutory minima can make decision making difficult around what is required in law as a minimum.  The LGA is 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.  The Service has developed systems that follow the principles of the requirements of bodies like FSA so can show some level of compliance, but service isn't operating to the letter of the current Code. The Code is however currently going through major changes and

						likely to move to a point where it is closer to the WRS model of operation.  Environmental reporting for Local Air Quality Management, Pollution Prevention and Control and Private Water Supply Inspection reports to Defra and DWI have received positive responses with no issues of concern raised by these bodies.
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

## Appendix 3: Detailed out-turn for Regulatory Services 2022/23

	Full Year Budget 22-23	Committed Expenditure Apr - Mar 23	Variance
Direct Expenditure	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employees			
Salary	3,164	3,077	-87
Agency Staff	0	281	281
Employee Insurance	25	4	-20
<b>Sub-Total - Employees</b>	<b>3,189</b>	<b>3,363</b>	<b>174</b>
Premises			
Rent / Hire of Premise	67	66	-1
Cleaning	1	0	-0
Utilities	0	0	0
<b>Sub-Total - Premises</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>-1</b>
Transport			
Vehicle Hire	21	8	-12
Vehicle Fuel	8	7	-1
Road Fund Tax	1	0	-1
Vehicle Insurance	5	4	-1
Vehicle Maintenance	3	1	-2

Car Allowances	67	43	-24
<b>Sub-Total - Transport</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>-42</b>

### Supplies and Services

Furniture & Equipment	32	68	36
Clothes, uniforms and laundry	2	1	-1
Printing & Photocopying	17	20	2
Postage	11	11	0
ICT	55	72	17
Telephones	21	14	-7
Training & Seminars	23	14	-8
Insurance	20	3	-17
Third Party Payments	177	178	0
<b>Sub-Total - Supplies &amp; Service</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>24</b>

### Contractors

Dog Warden	121	114	-7
Pest Control	103	103	0
Taxi / Alcohol / & Other Licensing	70	57	-13
Other contractors/consultants	3	10	8
Water Safety	5	6	1
Food Safety	1	0	-1
Environmental Protection	12	55	43
Grants / Subscriptions	13	18	5
Advertising, Publicity and Promotion	6	9	4

<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-543	-919	-376
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>-543</b>	<b>-919</b>	<b>-376</b>
<b>Service Total</b>	<b>3,507</b>	<b>3,325</b>	<b>-182</b>

## Appendix 4: 3-year budgets 2023/24 to 2025/26

Account description	Budget	Budget	Budget
	2023 / 2024	2024 / 2025	2025 / 2026
	£000's	£000's	£000's
<b>Employees</b>			
Monthly salaries	3,364	3,449	3,531
Training for professional qualifications	0	0	0
Medical fees (employees')	2	2	2
Employers' liability insurance	25	25	25
Employees' professional subscriptions	2	2	2
<b>Sub-Total - Employees</b>	<b>3,393</b>	<b>3,478</b>	<b>3,560</b>
<b>Premises</b>			
Rents	70	70	70
Room hire	2	2	2
Trade Waste	1	1	1
<b>Sub-Total - Premises</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Transport</b>			
Vehicle repairs/maint'ce	3	3	3
Diesel fuel	8	8	8
Licences	1	1	1
Contract hire of vehicles	4	4	4
Vehicle insurances	5	5	5
Van Lease	9	9	9
Fares & Car Parking	5	5	5
Car allowances	58	58	58
<b>Sub-Total - Transport</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>



**Supplies & Service**

Equipment - purchase/maintenance/rental	30	30	30
Materials	9	9	9
Clothing, uniforms & laundry	2	2	2
Training fees	23	23	23
General insurances	19	19	19
Printing and stationery	17	17	17
Books and publications	2	2	2
Postage/packaging	11	11	11
ICT	67	67	67
Telephones	21	21	21
Taxi Tests	22	22	22
CRB Checks (taxi)	26	26	26
Support service recharges	118	121	123
Support service recharges - ICT	67	67	67
<b>Sub-Total - Supplies &amp; Service</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>438</b>

**Contractors**

Consultants / Contractors' fees/charges/SLA's	269	234	234
Advertising (general)	5	5	5
Grants and subscriptions	13	13	13
Marketing/promotion/publicity	<b>287</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>252</b>

**Sub-Total - Contractors****Income**

Grants / Primary Authority / Food Training / Contaminated Land / Stray Dogs / Ad Hoc	<b>-524</b>	<b>-529</b>	<b>-534</b>
<b>Sub-Total - Income</b>	<b>-524</b>	<b>-529</b>	<b>-534</b>

**Income**

From partners for Technical Officers	<b>-143</b>	<b>-110</b>	<b>-112</b>
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Funding from Worcs City Council for Pest Control	-8	-8	-8
Funding from partners for Increase in Rent	-11	-11	-11
Funding from partners for Increase in ICT	-8	-8	-8
Funding from partners for Increase in Hosting Charges	-9	-9	-11
<b>Sub-Total - Income</b>	<b>-177</b>	<b>-147</b>	<b>-151</b>
<b>Additional Income</b>			
Income to be found due to unavoidable salary pressures	-82	-160	-235
<b>Sub-Total - Income</b>			
<b>DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP BUDGET</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>3,495</b>
<b>20-21 Partner Percentages</b>			
Bromsgrove District Council	14.52%		
Malvern Hills District Council	13.00%		
Redditch Borough Council	17.49%		
Worcester City Council	16.72%		
Wychavon District Council	23.19%		
Wyre Forest District Council	15.08%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>		

Additional costs for posts for new or additional activities will be allocated using this formula unless the work is requested by either one partner or a group of partners, in which case the relevant partners will agree a formula for cost allocation.

The table below covers off the additional payments that are likely to flow from the current allocations of additional funding for the additional Technical Officer capacity required for several pieces of work and to cover the salary and pension pressures going forward.

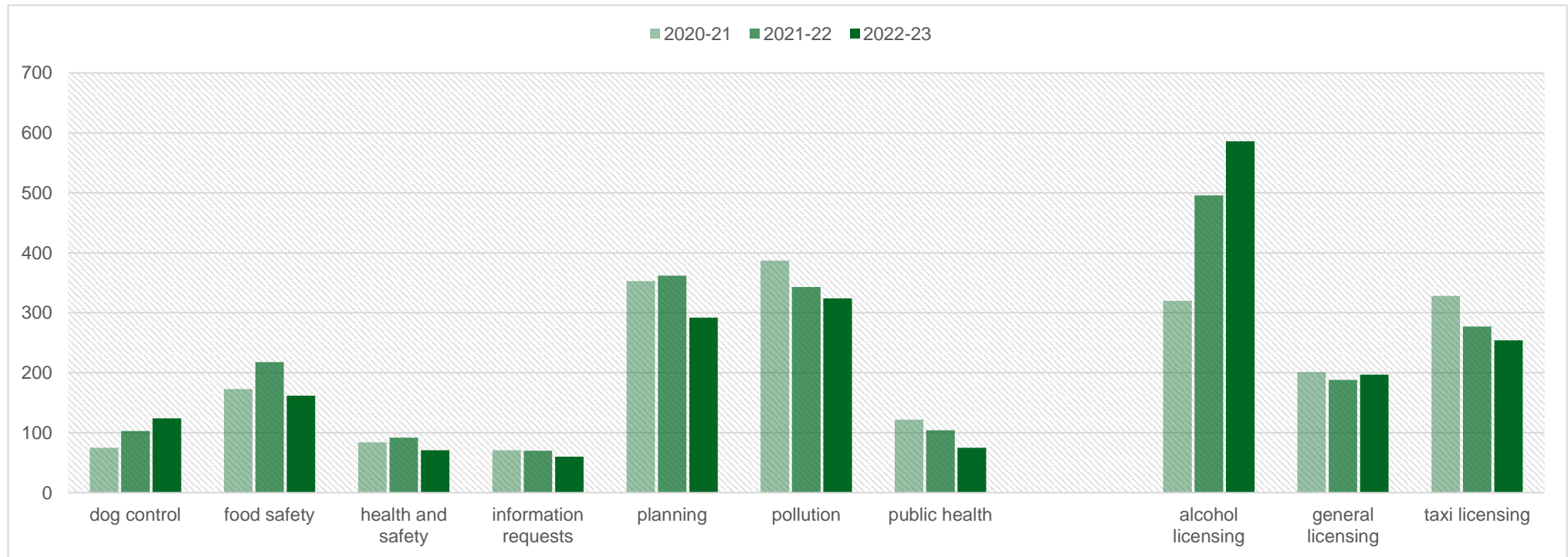
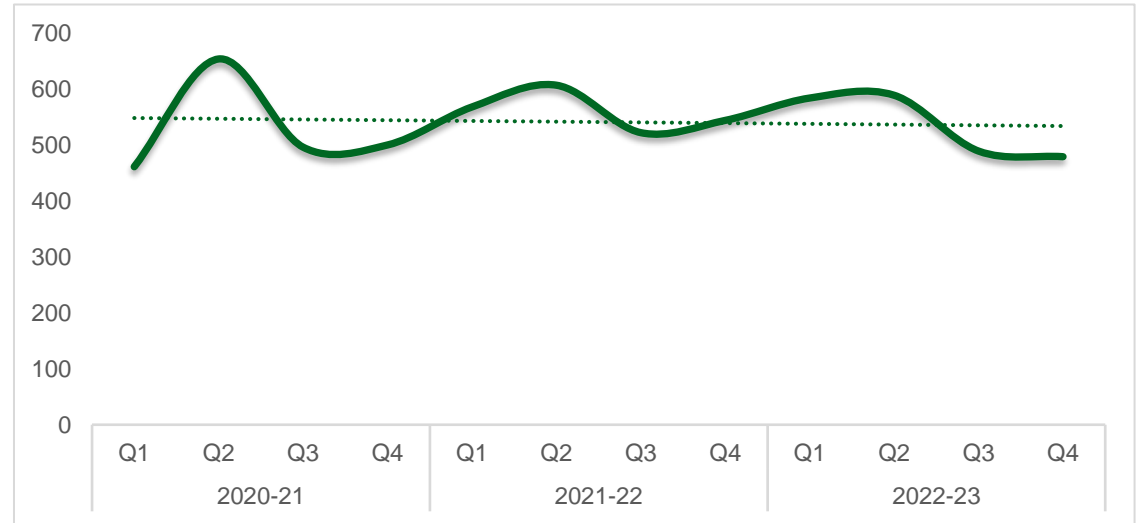
	Budget	Contribution Pest Control	Contribution Technical Officers	Partner Contribution	Contribution Increase in Rent, ICT & Hosting Charges	Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution
	2023 / 2024	2023 / 2024	2023 / 2024	2023 / 2024	2023 / 2024	2023 / 2024	2023 / 2024
Budget 2023 / 24	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Bromsgrove District Council	508		12	521	4	12	537
Malvern Hills District Council	455		18	473	3	11	487
Redditch Borough Council	613		8	621	5	14	640
Worcester City Council	578	8	75	660	4	14	678
Wychavon District Council	812		19	831	6	19	856
Wyre Forest District Council	528		11	539	4	12	555
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>3,644</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>3,753</b>
	Budget	Contribution Pest Control	Contribution Technical Officers	Partner Contribution	Contribution Increase in Rent, ICT & Hosting Charges	Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution
	2024 / 2025	2024 / 2025	2024 / 2025	2024 / 2025	2024 / 2025	2024 / 2025	2024 / 2025
Budget 2024 / 25	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Bromsgrove District Council	508		13	521	4	23	548
Malvern Hills District Council	455		18	473	4	21	498
Redditch Borough Council	613		9	621	5	28	654
Worcester City Council	578	8	40	625	5	27	657
Wychavon District Council	812		20	832	7	37	876
Wyre Forest District Council	528		11	539	4	24	567
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>3,611</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>3,800</b>

	Budget		Contribution Pest Control	Contribution Technical Officers	Partner Contribution	Contribution Increase in Rent, ICT & Hosting Charges	Unavoidable Salary Pressures	Total Partner Contribution
	2025 / 2026		2025 / 2026	2025 / 2026	2025 / 2026	2025 / 2026	2025 / 2026	2025 / 2026
<b>Budget 2025 / 26</b>	<b>£000's</b>		<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>
Bromsgrove District Council	508			13	521	5	34	560
Malvern Hills District Council	455			18	473	4	31	508
Redditch Borough Council	613			9	621	6	41	668
Worcester City Council	578	8		40	625	5	40	670
Wychavon District Council	812			20	832	7	54	894
Wyre Forest District Council	528			11	539	5	35	579
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,494</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>3,613</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>3,879</b>

# Appendix 5: District Council Summaries

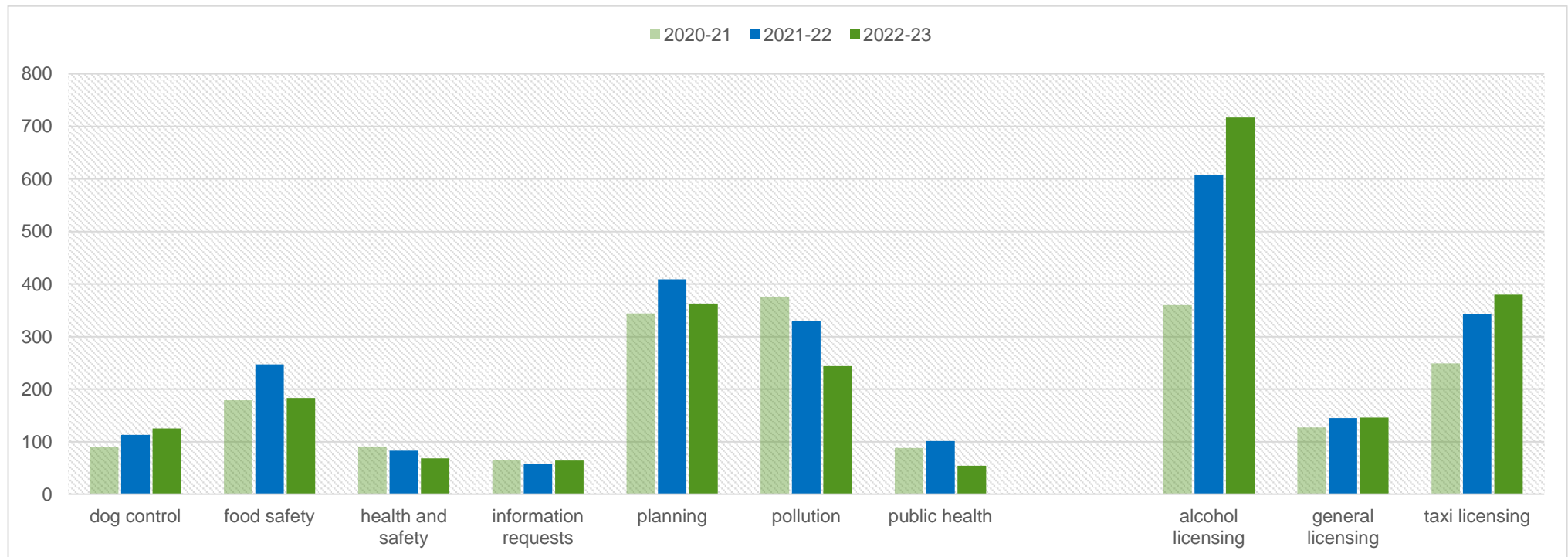
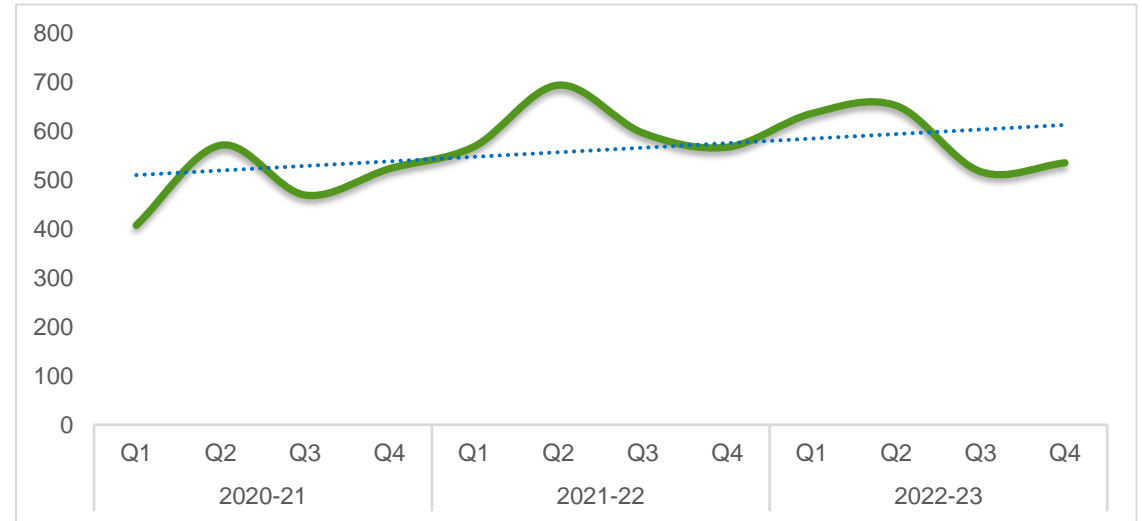
## Bromsgrove District Council

The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) where the subject and/or enquirer was located within the Bromsgrove district. The chart (right) shows the number of cases per quarter, whilst the chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the primary functions undertaken by WRS.



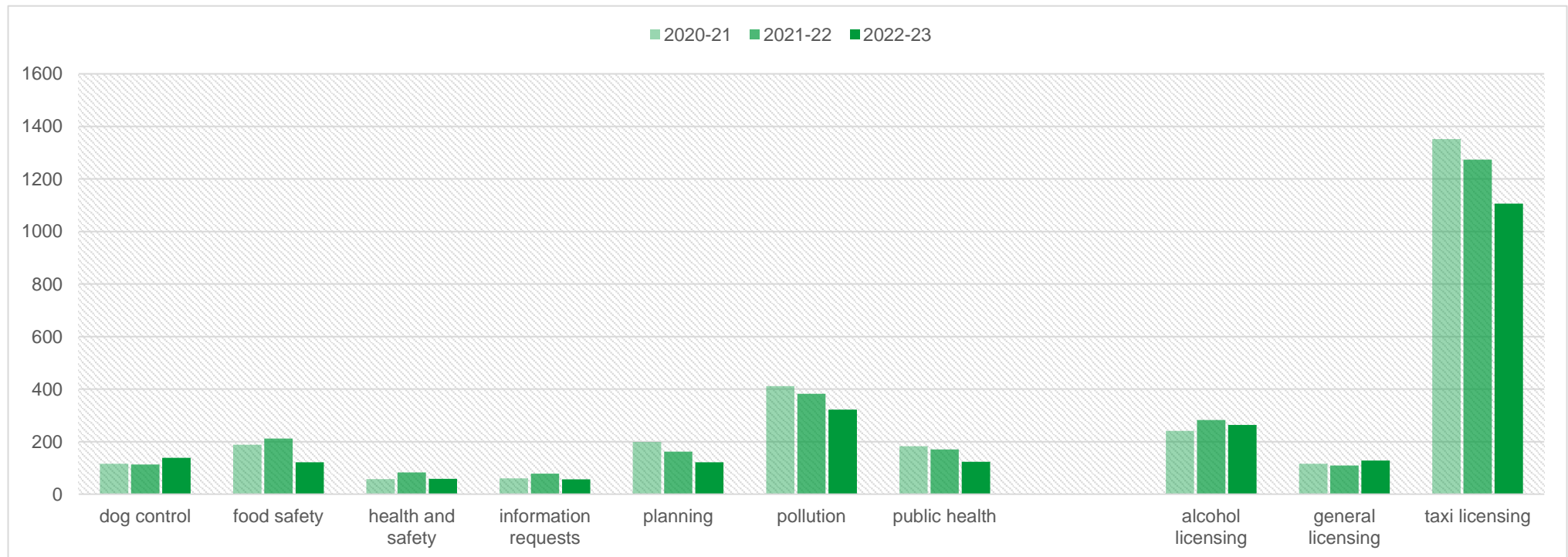
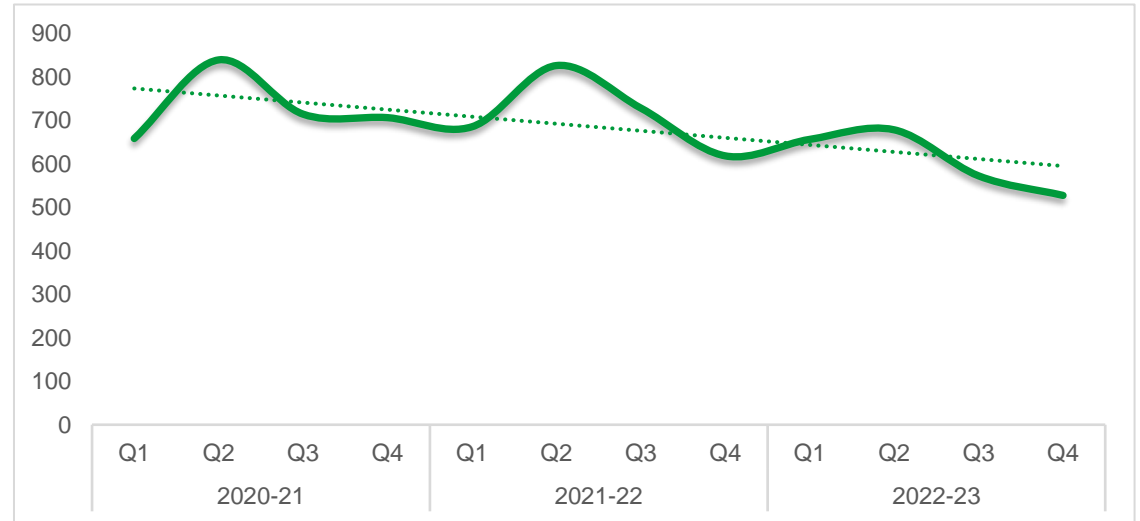
## Malvern Hills District Council

The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) where the subject and/or enquirer was located within the Malvern Hills district. The chart (right) shows the number of cases per quarter, whilst the chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the primary functions undertaken by WRS.



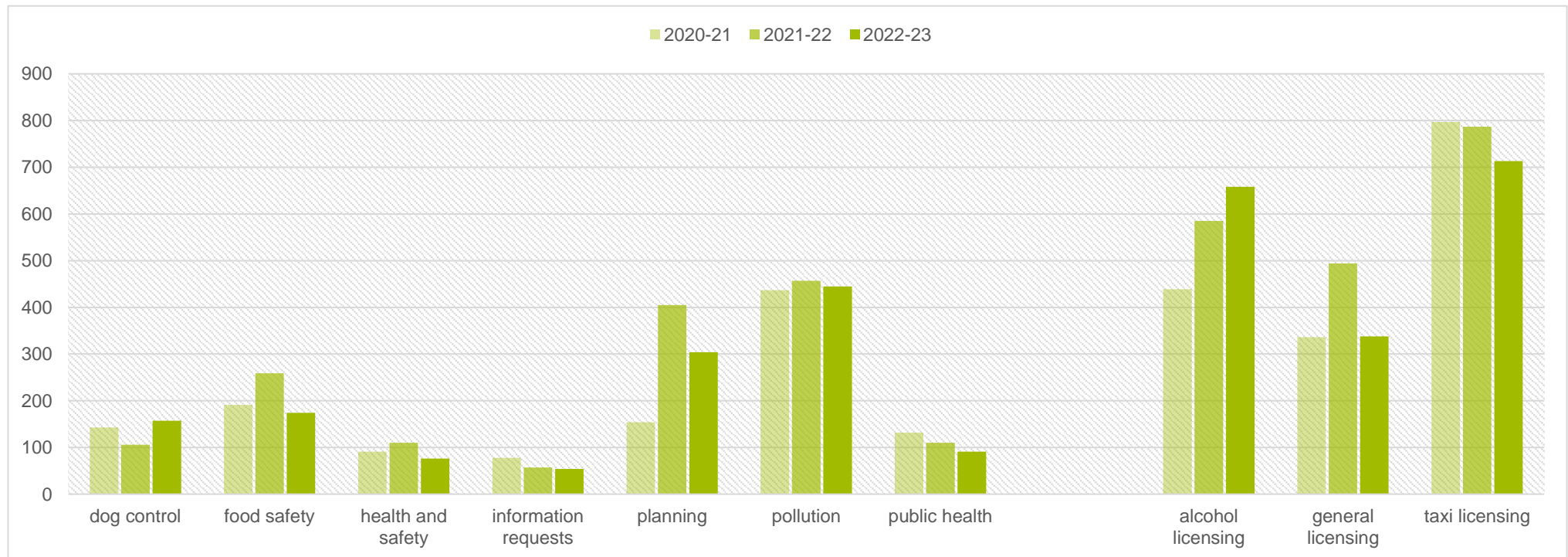
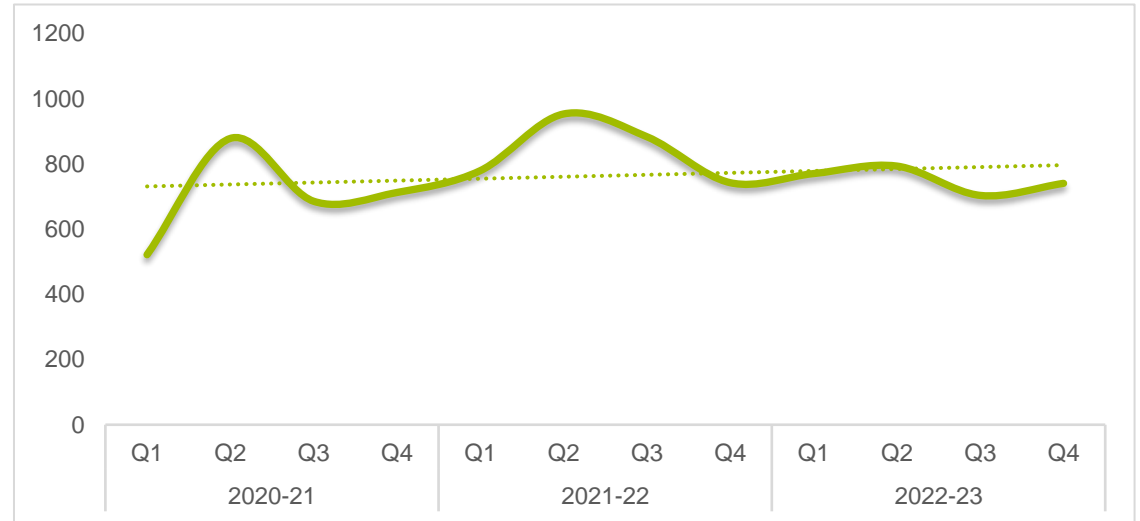
## Redditch Borough Council

The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) where the subject and/or enquirer was located within the Redditch district. The chart (right) shows the number of cases per quarter, whilst the chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the primary functions undertaken by WRS.



## Worcester City Council

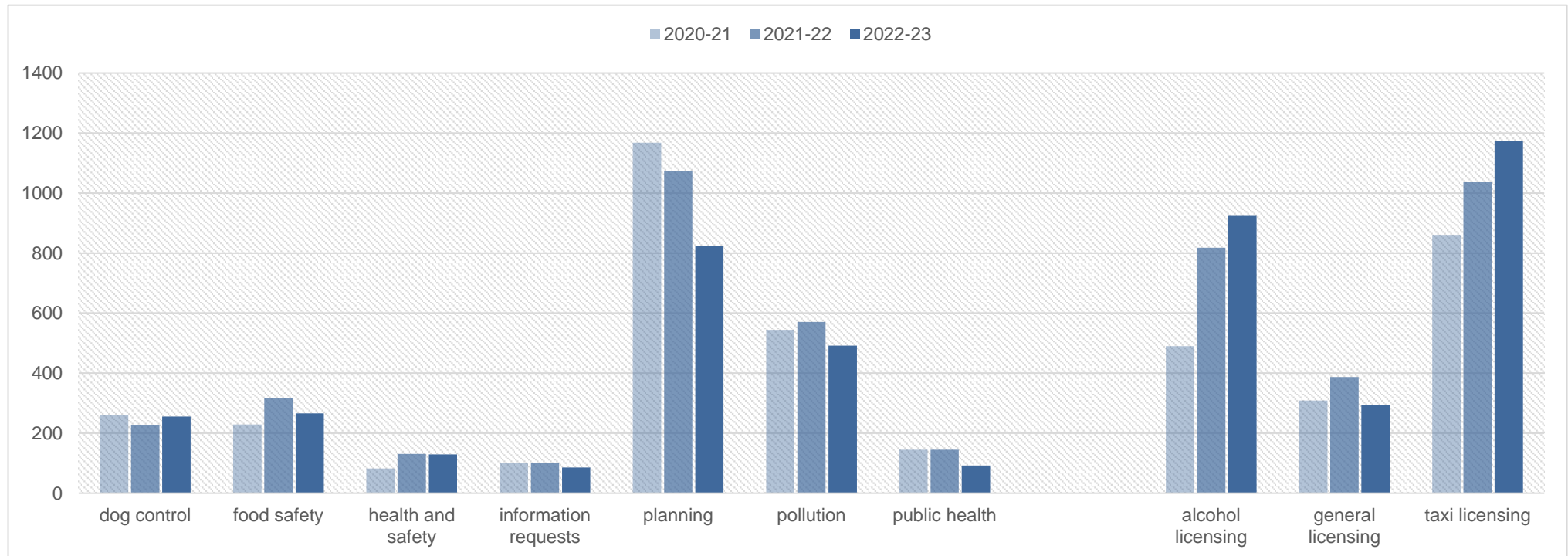
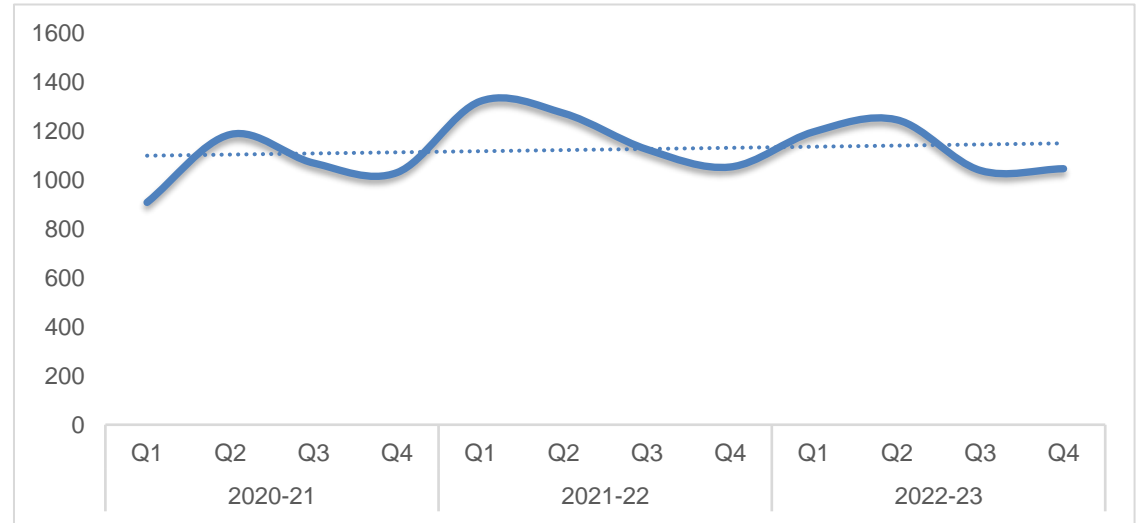
The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) where the subject and/or enquirer was located within the Worcester City district. The chart (right) shows the number of cases per quarter, whilst the chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the primary functions undertaken by WRS.





## Wychavon District Council

The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) where the subject and/or enquirer was located within the Wychavon district. The chart (right) shows the number of cases per quarter, whilst the chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the primary functions undertaken by WRS.



## Wyre Forest District Council

The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications, and notifications) where the subject and/or enquirer was located within the Wyre Forest district. The chart (right) shows the number of cases per quarter, whilst the chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the primary functions undertaken by WRS.

