

## WRS Board

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

### Title: Activity and Performance Data Quarter 2 2024/25

#### 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 2024/5, 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 2024/5 was yet another damp affair, with many people querying whether we actually had a summer. This has impacted on at least one or two of our measures. Worcestershire has continued to be a draw for outdoor activities with a range of events and festivals continuing to feature and now we are beyond the pandemic, the crowds appear to be returning, but it is clear that this is not to everyone's liking.

Food: The slight downward trend in the number of food related cases continued with the period between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 showing a reduction of 15% compared to the same period in 2022/23 and 3% compared to 2023/24. Most food-related service request tend to be enquiries, including requests for business advice, rather than actual food complaints. Of the 220 actual food complaints received during the year to date, 68% have related to issues with food products (such as poor-quality food or food containing a foreign object) and 32% have related to poor hygiene standards or practices at food businesses. Some 891 proactive



interventions at food businesses have undertaken during the year to date, with only 3% resulting in a business being rated as "non-compliant" (i.e., being issued a rating of 0, 1, or 2). A higher proportion of non-compliant ratings continue to be issued to the takeaway sector and small retailers.

The overall number of health and safety cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 shows a reduction of 12% compared to 2022/23 but an increase of 4% compared to 2023/24. Having said this, whilst complaint and enquiries increased slightly during the period, the number of reported accidents in the quarter was the lowest in some time. Approximately 40% of cases have been reports of accidents in workplaces with most cases relating to injuries where a worker was incapacitated for more than seven days, or injuries to members of the public. The most common cause of accidents continues to be slips, trips and falls (whether on the same level or from height). Sadly, the service has investigated a fatality during the second quarter after a contractor working at a retail outlet was crushed by a piece of mechanical equipment.

The overall number of Licensing cases recorded between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 represents an increase of 5% compared to 2022/23 and an increase of 6% compared to 2023/24. Applications fell slightly following the Q1 peak, probably reflecting that most businesses try to get their Temporary Event notices served well ahead of time. Complaints and enquiries however went up but only back towards the steady trend line, indicating we still have a good understanding of the relative levels of demand hitting this service area. Approximately two thirds of cases have been applications and registrations, with 30% relating to private hire or hackney carriage vehicles and 28% relating to temporary events.

The number of Licensing enquiries, such as queries about regulations, by-laws, and licence conditions, invariably exceeds the number of actual Licensing complaints. Of the actual complaints received during the year to date, approximately 43% have related to taxi licensing, such as reports of poor driver behaviour, unauthorised parking, or poor driving standards, and 21% have related to alcohol licensing, usually indications that a business may be breaching the licensing objectives. A further 14% of complaints have related to animal licensing with most cases relating to the unlicensed breeding and/or sale of dogs. Work remained on-going during the period in relation to the investigations relating to Operation Lisbon 2.

Planning enquiries continued to show an increasing number of cases, with volumes between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 representing an increase of 26% compared to 2022/23 and 16% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 90% of enquiries have been consultations for air quality, contaminated land, and nuisance; with around 20% of enquiries continuing



to be processed, on a contractual basis, on behalf of other local authorities.

Although, the number of information requests is often linked to the planning system, numbers fell during quarter 2, whilst the number of planning requests increased.

The total number of dog-related cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 is comparable to 2022/23 but a reduction of 10% compared to 2023/24. Overall, the trend on dog related complaints and enquiries remains slightly upwards, whilst although we saw a significant increase in strays compared to Q1, the trend remains level or slightly downward. Most of the cases have been reports of lost or stray dogs with most categorised as "contained strays," meaning dogs were found and held by members of the public. There has, however, been a notable increase in the number of dogs picked up with welfare concerns and subsequently requiring veterinary treatment or examination. Around 55% of dogs have been successfully reunited with their owners, although this figure is known to vary between district authorities. Numbers of dog control complaints remain low, with 42 complaints received during the year to date, 19 of which related to dogs which are persistently straying from residential properties and 12 have related to dog fouling.

Whilst there is always an increase in pollution related work during the summer, this year's figures again show how poor the weather was. The overall number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 represents a reduction of 31% compared to 2022/23 when we have that very hot period, and a reduction of 19% compared to 2023/24 suggesting that this summer was even worse than last year. Over 90% of cases have been allegations of potential statutory nuisances, with most cases relating to noise from domestic properties (most often from barking dogs or from music). Other prominent potential nuisances commonly reported include noise from hospitality businesses, smoke from the burning of waste, including garden waste, and dust from construction sites.

Public Health complaints, usually relating to accumulations of rubbish or pest issues were slightly up on the last quarter, albeit more or less on trend. The overall number of cases received between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024 represents a reduction of 3% compared to the same period in 2022/23 and a reduction of 6% compared to 2023/24. Approximately 60% of cases have related to pest control such as enquiries about domestic treatments, enquiries about sewer baiting, or complaints about pest activity caused by the actions of neighbouring residents or businesses. A further 26% of cases have related to accumulations at residential properties which can create pest control issues if vermin species are attracted to the location.



Of the 414 domestic treatments undertaken by contractors via the framework operated for people on certain benefits during the year to date, 48% were due to issues with rats whilst overall 35% of interventions have taken place at properties in the Redditch district.

## **Performance**

The non-business customer measure has fallen to 58.5% from 60% last quarter. Number of people are happy with the speed of initial response dropped slightly to just below 70%, and just under 60% remain happy with the time it takes to reach a conclusion. The biggest issue still appears to be our inability to deliver the outcome people would like to see, which is most often down to public expectations not being met by what the law on nuisance allows for. This is probably also why the numbers reporting feeling better equipped to address issues for themselves in the future remains low, although it has increased slightly this quarter from 50% to 51.9%. Numbers of responses to our questionnaires, whether by paper or electronic, also remain low with less than 60 returned so far this year.

Business satisfaction has fallen very slightly this quarter, from 98.3% to 97.7% but remains within the usual range for the measure, and above last year's low 94.5% figure which officers felt was merely a blip.

Compliments continue to significantly outnumber complaints.

Performance on processing complete driver license renewals was at 97.6% for all authorities, which is higher than the same period last year (93.9) but similar to the figure in previous years.

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. This may follow a reported accident taking the vehicle outside the acceptable standards, or even when the vehicle is submitted for its routine 6-monthly check. In recent reporting periods we have seen an increase in the number of defective vehicles reported under this indicator, driven mainly by higher numbers in one of the six fleets. Between April and the end of September this year, 26 vehicles had been suspended in the period, with the majority belong to our one of our larger fleet areas. This is lower than at the same point in the previous two years (34 and 37 vehicles respectively,) and represents only 1.54% of the fleet county-wide that were recorded as potentially problematic. More details appear in the table in appendix B at the end of the report. We will continue to re-enforce the need to ensure vehicles are always fit for use on the road with drivers and operators, and that the regular tests are not to be used to assess what maintenance may be required.



Staff sickness has increased from 1.13 days per FTE to 1.55 days per FTE cumulative for the year. Current sickness levels are similar to the same period in the last 3 years (1.42, 1.79, 1.55,) but above the first year of the pandemic period (0.95.) Sickness remains significantly lower than the figures for 2019/20 (2.91,) and 2018/19 (2.77) at the same point in the year.

The overall rate of noise complaints against population is 0.67, lower than the figure at this point last year (0.79,) and well below the figures at Q2 in the most recent years (0.9, 1.08, 0.94 and 0.85, respectively.) This is again a good reflection of the poor weather over the Spring and Summer. Members will be aware that this measure has been significantly higher at this point in previous years, as high as 2.1 in 2017/18.

The rate of hospitality businesses allegedly not upholding the 4 licensing objectives is 4%, slightly lower than the same period last year (5%,) and roughly in line with most of the previously recorded figures at this point in the year (6.7%, 4.3%, 4.9%.) This is looking like the norm for this measure again, suggesting that the 2.7% from 2022/3 and 2.8% seen in 2018/19 were unusually low. We know that, on occasion, one or other district can hit above 8%, but figures so far this year look like they are around the average and hopefully will continue in a similar vein.

Income brought in during the first half of 2024/25 is £258,989, which is slightly higher than the previous two years (£204,718 and £232,520 respectively,) and significantly up on the 2-years before this. Using the historic budget figure for 2016/17 (£3,017,000) to maintain the comparison with previous years, this comes out at 8.6% of that budget. Looking back at this point over recent years for comparison, the figures were 6.8%, 7.7%, 5.42%, 4.37%, 5.3% and 4.7% going back to 2018/19. The figure is roughly 5.7% of current revenue budget, so still healthy.

## Contact Points

David Mellors  
Community Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager  
01562 738060  
David.Mellors@worcsregservices.gov.uk

## Background Papers

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



## **Appendix B: Performance indicator table 2024/5**

Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	60	58.5		
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	98.3	97.7		
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	98.7	Bromsgrove 99.5 Malvern Hills 97.7 Redditch 98.0 Worcester City 99.3 Wychavon 98.1 Wyre Forest 97.4 Worcestershire 98.4		Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest Worcestershire
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 <sup>st</sup> April each year	Annually	1.3	Bromsgrove 0.5 Malvern Hills 2.3 Redditch 2.0 Worcester City 0.7 Wychavon 1.9 Wyre Forest 2.1 Worcestershire 1.6		Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest Worcestershire
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	6-monthly	NA	97.6%	NA	
6 % of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service Number of vehicles found to be defective by district and the percentage this represents of the fleet county-wide	6-monthly	NA	26= 1.54% of 1684 vehicles on the road county-wide  BDC 1 MHDC 2 RBC 18 WC 6 WDC 1 WFDC 0	NA	



7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	50	51.9		
8	Review of register of complaints/compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	5/11	12/26		
9	Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	1.13 days per FTE	1.55 days per FTE		
10	% of staff who enjoy working for WRS	Annually	NA	NA	NA	
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 4.2 Malvern Hills 3.5 Redditch 3.0 Worcester City 5.5 Wychavon 2.2 Wyre Forest 5.9 Worcestershire 4.0	NA	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest Worcestershire
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 0.55 Malvern Hills 0.68 Redditch 0.69 Worcester City 0.74 Wychavon 0.60 Wyre Forest 0.79 Worcestershire 0.67	NA	Bromsgrove Malvern Hills Redditch Worcester City Wychavon Wyre Forest Worcestershire
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA	£258,989 which is 8.6% 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	
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