Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

WRS Board
Date: 21st November 2024

Progress Report on the Automation Project

Recommendation	**Members are asked to note the report.**
Background	In 2023 at a previous Joint Board meeting members agreed to create a reserve of £150,000 from the previous year's underspend to fund the implementation of automation of data entry for customers. This would enable a range of services across WRS to be addressed by the customer entering data onto forms on the WRS website, which would then upload directly into our IDOX Uniform back-office system. Subsequently this will also include the automation of payments for Licensing, so our host authority Bromsgrove District Council will collect fees for the 6 partners and pass money back to the other 5. Officers agreed to provide a short progress report at each Board meeting between then and the actual implementation of the project.
Report	**Temporary Events Notice (TEN)**

The Temporary Events Notice form went live for 5 of the 6 districts in Worcestershire by close of play on Friday 27th September. Due to a planned internet update Worcester City requested to wait until a week later to launch the form on their website.

Overall, the shift to moving online has been a huge success with very few complicated challenges and as of writing this report we have 82% of forms now coming through this route.

The figures in Table 1 and Table 2 show the number of TENs received as of the 6th November 2024. There have been 249 TENs submitted to WRS in total. 155 were submitted via Victoria Forms (62%). Although there is still limited data based on the number of days the form has been live to see a real trend, the non-Victoria Forms TENs channel of submission seems to have successfully dropped off since the middle of October with a general upturn in Victoria Forms submissions as most now come via that route:

Total numbers by month

Month	VF Form	Non-VF	Total	Percent VF
September 2024	18	28	46	39%
October 2024	93	63	156	60%

November 2024	44	3	47	94%

(NB: September and November have about the same number of days 'live' with VF and almost the same number of TENs submitted. The difference is in how they have been submitted)

Percentage of TENs submitted by VF by month to date, by district

District	2024 09	2024 10	2024 11
BDC	11%	44%	60%
MHDC		68%	100%
RBC	100%	71%	100%
WCC		48%	100%
WDC	25%	69%	100%
WFDC	100%	53%	80%

The maximum number of Victoria Forms TENs received on any one day is 13, which has now occurred twice. This number was matched only once by non-Victoria Forms routes, that being only three days after launching Victoria Forms. There have been no days with double figures worth of non-Victoria Forms submissions since September.

The team are continuing to monitor the submissions to ensure it is all working correctly but this will slowly be reduced once the second form goes live.

Next Steps

The decision has been taken to launch the personal license application form next which is slightly different to the original list presented in September at the last meeting so the order of forms launching are now below:

1. Personal Licence Applications
2. Premises Licence Applications
   - Application to vary a premises license
   - Application to vary a DPS
   - Application form to transfer a premises licence
3. Taxi Applications
4. Animal Licensing Applications
5. Pavement Licensing

Progress continues on the 'service request' form where the task and finish group have now developed a series of questions for different scenarios received by all the teams across WRS. It is has been a challenge to scope out by the teams involved as it has required the need to address a very wide range of potential requests relating to the work of all three WRS service areas. It has also required members across WRS teams to get together at various points of the scoping exercise.

Comms and Website Development

Officers continue liaising with the communications leads to ensure district websites are easy to navigate alongside the 'help' guidance and FAQ's. These have been tested with external stakeholders and potential applicants and tweaks have been made where deemed necessary. The team have also been in touch with Victoria Forms regarding accessibility and they have confirmed that Victoria Forms meet the WCAG 2.2 AA standards.

Taxi ID Cards

Alongside the wider automation project, officers have been working with MyTAG to implement the roll out of electronic ID Cards for the taxi trade for both safeguarding and night time enforcement measures. IT colleagues at Wyre Forest have progressed with work on the dashboard and SANDBOX requirement and are now working with SmartTag to enable remote access to the IDOX database. This will allow testing to commence and templates of the Taxi ID cards to be created. As stated at the last meeting the Victoria forms project has taken precedent so work had stalled slightly but officers are now working on what is required to ensure this element of the project can be delivered with in scope and to the required objectives.

Contact Point

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