



WRS Board

Date: 25th September 2025

Title: Activity and Performance Data Quarter 1 2025/6

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 first quarter of 2025/6, 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	<p>Activity Data</p> <p>At 275, the number of complaints and enquiries to the service regarding food are around the trend line or slightly above it. The figure is not dissimilar to last year's Q1 figure of 261 but well above the 229 recorded the previous year. The majority are enquiries, including requests for business advice. Of the actual complaints received during the first quarter, 72% related to issues with food products such as poor quality food or food containing a foreign object, and 28% to poor hygiene standards or practices at businesses.</p> <p>Some 329 programmed interventions were undertaken during quarter 1, slightly below the 392 and 391 respectively in the previous two similar periods. Some 5% resulted in a business being rated as "non-compliant" (issued a rating of 0, 1, or 2). As with previous quarters, a higher proportion of non-compliant ratings were issued to the hospitality sector (such as takeaways and restaurants) or small retailers.</p>



The number of Health and Safety complaints and enquiries is roughly on trend, with 56 in Q1 compared to 63 last year and 49 the previous year, in the same period. Whilst the number of reported accidents jumped from 34 in Q4 of last year to 48 in Q1, this figure is similar to the last two reported figures for the same period at 51 and 47 respectively.

Some 46% of total cases recorded 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. As ever, slips, trips, and falls remain the commonest source of accidents. A fatality was reported to the service during quarter one after a volunteer was struck by a vehicle, but investigation revealed that the incident had occurred just over the border in Herefordshire, so the matter was handed to our colleagues there for further investigation. .

Members should be aware that the duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 are divided between the Health and Safety Executive and local authorities, so WRS only undertakes investigations at premises within the local remit such as retail outlets, offices, leisure services, and hospitality premises. Other premises, such as factories, farms, and medical premises, fall with the remit of the HSE. Although local authority premises are regarded as lower risk for this function, our officers still deal with fatalities from time to time and, a number are on-going.

The number of complaints and enquiries about dog control was the lowest for many quarters at only 29. It is below all the quarterly figures reported in the last 3 years, with only the 33-figure in Q2 of 2023/4 being close. The average Q1 figure for the past 2-years has been around 50 . Some 11 of these were classified as proper complaints, with 6 relating to dogs that were persistently straying from residential properties and 4 related to dog fouling.

Having said this, the number of reported strays has started the year high at 426, compared with 304 last year, and 402 the previous one. Around 94% of cases were reports of lost or stray dogs with most, as usual categorised as "contained strays", with dogs found and held by members of the public. Officers remain concerned at the notable increase in the number of dogs picked up with welfare concerns and subsequently requiring veterinary treatment or examination. Approximately 37% of dogs have been successfully reunited with their owners although this figure varies significantly between local authorities.

In Licensing, the number of complaints and enquiries appeared to follow the previous slightly downward trend, with 651 compared to 828 and 740 for the same period in the last two-years, and well below the peak of 1026 in the final quarter of 2023/4. Also, whilst 1603 applications and registrations is up on the end of last year, comparing this with 1739 last year and 1572 the previous year puts this at a marginally below average start to the year in terms of numbers.



Overall, the total number of recorded cases is 12% less than the same period in 2024/25 but 3% above the level in 2023/24. Some 70% of cases are represented by the applications and registrations, with 28% relating to temporary events and 27% relating to hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.

As with areas like food, Licensing tends to receive more enquiries than actual complaints about licensed activities. During the first quarter, around 38% of actual complaints related to taxi licensing (such as reports of poor driver behaviour, unauthorised parking, or poor driving standards) and 30% related to premises with alcohol supply licenses, with allegations of failure to meet the licensing objectives. A further 9% of complaints have related to animal licensing, with most relating to the unlicensed breeding and/or sale of dogs.

Planning support work continued an upward trend, with Q1 figures again exceeding those at the same point in the previous 2 years, with 977 requests compared to 808 and 763 respectively, roughly 21% and 28% respectively. With the previous 4 quarters all exceeding 900 requests, this represents an increase in work of around 1/3rd compared to the previous four quarters, presumably linked to the growth in development. Around 93% of enquiries were consultations for air quality, contaminated land, or nuisances; and approximately 1 in 4 enquiries were processed (on a contractual basis) on behalf of other local authorities

Information requests have started the year on a high, matching last year's Q1 figure of 166, significantly higher than the same period 2-years ago when only 87 were received. We can only wait to see if the upward trend from previous years continues.

Pollution cases started the year on the increase, with 553 cases approaching the level achieved in Q1 of 2023/4 and well above the 334 in Q4 last year. At 400, the number of noise complaints is a significant proportion of the overall total and on a par with the 410 logged in 2023/4. The previous two summers have been poor, which tends to lead to lower overall numbers. Around 91% of cases were reports of potential statutory nuisances, with around 45% of cases relating to noise from domestic properties, with disturbance created by noise from barking dogs or audio-visual equipment being most common. As with other quarters, other prominent sources of complaint were noise from hospitality businesses, domestic fires and, presumably due to the good weather, dust from construction sites.

This year's hot summer we know has led to more reports of nuisance, so we expect the level for Q2 to be significantly higher than the previous two summer periods.

Public Health complaints and enquiries, often linked to pollution control as the legislation is the same or similar, were roughly on-trend this year with 136 complaints and enquiries compared to 137 and 144 for the same period respectively in the last 2-years. Complaints reported to WRS include reports of accumulations or rubbish and reports of pest species activity, potentially due to the activities of residents or businesses. Around 49% 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 waste accumulations at residential properties, however, such complaints commonly reference the presence of rodents or other pests. Having said this, evidence of the presence of rodents in such circumstances is often limited.

Based on the 161 domestic treatments undertaken by pest control contractors during the first quarter, 55% were due to issues with rats whilst 66% have taken place at properties in the Redditch borough or Wychavon district.

Performance

As always, reporting against the suite of indicators is more limited for the first quarter. The non-business customer measure at 53.8% is lower compared to this point in the last 3 years when they were at varying figures above 60%. We began the year with a very poor response rate in that only 12 were received to the end of June. Responses in July were better and the cumulative impact of this is that the measure jumps to 66.5% at the end of that month, so we hope to see improvements in Quarter 2. The proportion of people who felt better equipped, going forward at 42.9%, was also the lowest in 3 years but, as with the overall satisfaction figures, the improvement in numbers of returns for July takes this up to 63.6%. We have begun a conversation with the Communications Team at Redditch and Bromsgrove around how we might approach this area to get increased response rates. They understand the trend we face from other work, and advise that only a very radical change, with a more immediate approach to getting feedback, is likely to improve the levels of return. We will look into this in the coming months with our temporary comms officer, but it will mean that, should this be followed, previous measures will not be comparable.

Satisfaction for business customers was on the low side at 91.8%, with no obvious indications as to why this should be the case. Early returns were relatively poor with only 25 sent back, but again, this doubled by the end of July and the figure had increased to 95.3%, so it is possible that this too reflects the low initial response level.

We report overall numbers of compliant and non-compliant food businesses at this point in the year, without the district breakdown. 98.3% of businesses subject to intervention were graded 3 stars to 5 stars on the hygiene rating scheme.

Compliments outnumber complaints significantly, with the figure currently 11 to 3.

Staff sickness is at 2.17 days per FTE, is significantly above the previous 3-year's figures for this period (1.13, 0.76, 0.9, respectively) and above the 0.85 days per FTE from the same period in 2019, pre-pandemic. Some 78.5% of absence for this period was classed as long-term (29+



days,) accounted for by a very small number of officers with either serious illness like cancer or other major health issues.

Contact Points

Mark Cox
Technical Services Manager
01562 738023
Mark.Cox@worcsregservices.gov.uk

Background Papers

Appendix A: Activity Report (separate document)
Appendix B: Performance indicators Table

Appendix B: Performance Indicators 2025/6

Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	53.8			
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	91.8			
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	98.3			
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	Annually	1.7			
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	6-monthly	NA		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		NA	
7 % of service requests where customer	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	42.9%			



	indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future					
8	Review of register of complaints/ compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	3/11			
9	Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	2.17 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		NA	
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA		NA	
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA		NA	
14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population (Calculation will offset income	Annually	NA	NA	NA	



against revenue budget)					
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