

WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

VIRTUAL

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

THURSDAY 18TH JUNE 2020 AT 4.30 P.M.

MEMBERS: Bromsgrove District Council: Councillor A. Kent
Bromsgrove District Council: Councillor H. Jones
Malvern Hills District Council: Councillor J. Raine
Malvern Hills District Council: Councillor T. Wells
Redditch Borough Council: Councillor J. Grubb
Redditch Borough Council: Councillor W. King
Worcester City Council: Councillor J. Squires
Worcester City Council: Councillor M. Johnson
Wychavon District Council: Councillor E. Stokes
Wychavon District Council: Councillor D. Morris
Wyre Forest District Council: Councillor H. Dyke
Wyre Forest District Council: Councillor P. Dyke

AGENDA

1. Election of Chairman
2. Election of Vice-Chairman
3. Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes
4. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.
5. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 13th February 2020 (Pages 1 - 8)
6. Information Report - Covid 19 Response (Pages 9 - 14)
7. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report 2019/2020 (Pages 15 - 52)
8. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring April - March 2020 and Annual Return 2019/2020 (Pages 53 - 66)

9. Update on Income Generation (Pages 67 - 70)
10. Activity and Performance Data - Quarters 1 - 4 (Pages 71 - 108)
11. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

8th June 2020

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

13TH FEBRUARY 2020, AT 4.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors A. D. Kent, H. J. Jones, Raine, Wells, Grubb, King, Squires, Mrs. E. Stokes, Dyke and Dyke

APOLOGIES: Councillor D. Morris, Wychavon District Council

ABSENT: Councillor L. Griffiths, Worcester City Council

Partner Officers: Mr. P. Merrick, Malvern Hills District Council and Wychavon District Council, Mr. L. Griffiths, Worcester City Council

Officers: Mr. S. Wilkes, Ms. C. Flanagan, Mr C. Forrester, Ms. K. Goldey, Mr. M. Cox, Mr. D. Mellors, Ms K. Lahel and Mrs. J. Gresham

26/19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Morris, Wychavon District Council. There were no substitute members present.

27/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

28/19 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD HELD ON 14TH NOVEMBER 2019**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 28th November 2019, were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 28th November 2019, be approved as a correct record.

Before the commencement of the meeting the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services introduced a new officer member of the board, the Acting Licensing and Support Services Manager, who would be attending the Regulatory Services Board meetings going forward.

29/19

**WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE
MONITORING APRIL - DEC 2019**

The Board considered the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Revenue Monitoring report, April to December 2019.

The Financial Services Manager, Bromsgrove District Council introduced the report and in doing so highlighted the detailed revenue report as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, showed a projected outturn 2019/2020 excess of £10k. WRS officers would continue to work on income generation and driving down expenditure in the financial year. The Financial Services Manager briefly explained that with the loss of PF22 the veterinary charges were less than anticipated with a £55k under spend.

The following questions were raised:-

- Councillor Kent, Bromsgrove District Council queried what equipment was included in the ICT refresh. WRS Officers explained that items that were required were laptop upgrades, provision of security patches, the support of Windows 10. These upgrades would ensure that by the end of the financial year the systems would be up to date and complaint. Officers from Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove district Councils undertook to find the details of the actual equipment spend of the ICT refresh.
- Councillor Jones, Bromsgrove District Council queried the 'Agency' budget line, as detailed on Appendix 1 to the report. The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services explained that there would still be agency costs in order to back fill core posts.
- Councillor Kent, Bromsgrove District Council also queried 'the £66k projected outturn versus the £26k projected outturn variance spend'. The Head of WRS clarified that this was this was because WRS had identified a number of additional income sources. Members were pleased to hear that the new contract had been awarded

RESOLVED to

- a) Note the final financial position for the period April – Dec 2019

Agenda Item 5

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board
13th February 2020

- b) That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2019-20 in relation to Bereavements

Council	Apr-Dec 19 Actual for Bereavements £000
Redditch Borough Council	5
Malvern Hills District Council	3
Worcester City Council	14
Bromsgrove District Council	8
Total	30

- c) That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2019-20 in relation to Pest Control

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn Recharge in Relation to Pest Control 2019/20 £000
Bromsgrove District Council	1
Redditch Borough Council	10
Wychavon District Council	8
Wyre Forest District Council	1
Total	20

- d) That partner councils are informed of their liabilities for 2019-20 in relation to three additional Technical Officers

Council	Estimated Projected Outturn 2019/20 Tech Officer Primary Authority £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2019/20 Tech Officer Animal Activity £000	Estimated Projected Outturn 2019/20 Tech Officer Gull Control £000
Redditch Borough Council	5	1	
Malvern Hills	4	9	

Agenda Item 5

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board
13th February 2020

District Council			
Worcester City Council	5	3	27
Bromsgrove District Council	4	6	
Wychavon District Council	6	8	
Wyre Forest District Council	4	4	
Total	28	31	27

30/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2023

The Board considered the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Business Plan 2020-2023 which was introduced by the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).

It was explained to Members that the Business Plan served a number of purposes that would inform the development of the service in the future. It was drawn to Members attention that there had been little clarity on Local Authority funding and that there was an ongoing lack of clarity. It was recognized that there was an added difficulty in that there were 6 partner councils on the WRS Board who all experienced their own levels of financial pressures.

The Head of WRS confirmed that income generation was the main focus for WRS going forward. It was made clear that clients of WRS were not necessarily looking for more services but more efficiency within the organisation. The Head of WRS explained that there was a need to create more income and the new Ministry of Defence contract was an example of the kind of work that will be undertaken in the future. The awarding of the contract had much to do with the experience of highly experienced, thoroughly trained and well thought of WRS officers.

The Head of WRS said that the Business Plan still contained potential options for partners to build other services into the WRS arrangement. He mentioned environmental health housing standards, enviro-crime and other enforcement related functions as being things that partners could consider adding as a means of creating efficiencies and possible savings but that clearly a business case would need to be made and considered by all partners. The Head of WRS reminded Members that WRS does have a reserve of £100k to protect the 6 partner councils in the event of funding difficulties.

The questions that were asked were as follows:

Councillor Kent, Bromsgrove District Council, questioned whether there could be key performance indicators added to the plan (page 27 of the Business Plan) as he was disappointed that there was still ongoing discussions regarding the website revamp and nothing had been actioned. He added that having 6 payment engines to receive payments through the website was untenable and that there needed to be a resolution that simplifies the way that customers make payments online. He also requested that officers provide a breakdown of the ICT costs that have already been incurred by the service.

The Head of WRS stated that there had been an ICT working group with the Executive Director Finance and Resources was involved in. However, it needed to be re-invigorated. WRS were working closely with the Finance teams at Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils to ensure that the new Finance IT system would interface with the WRS systems in order to work more effectively. Members acknowledged that this was encouraging however wanted it noted that there needed to be a resolution to the 6 payment systems that were currently in place. It was confirmed that Members would be informed of the timeframes as soon as they are known by WRS officers.

Councillor Stokes, Wychavon District Council asked exactly what WRS officers were doing to ensure that the £100k reserve would remain intact and it was confirmed by the Head of WRS that WRS were trying to broaden their services and their customers including other public bodies, such as hospitals. These kinds of contracts could include providing public services with frameworks for staff training.

Councillor Raine, Malvern District Council drew Members attention to the 'Picture of the plan' on page 28 of and questioned why 'cross skilling' was looked at separately and not as part of flexible working. The Head of WRS explained that cross skilling was important to stop WRS officers only being highly skilled in one area and ensuring that as well as having a specialism the officers had a broader range of skills in multiple areas.

Councillor Jones, Bromsgrove District Council questioned why, in the table on page 48 the 'Service provision complies with Government requirements'. The Head of WRS confirmed that the Food Standards Agency had audited the services and were very happy with the level of service provision.

Members requested an update on the ICT systems at the next meeting which officers confirmed they would provide to the Board.

RESOLVED to note the Business Plan 2020-2023

31/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES SERVICE PLAN 2020/21

The Board considered the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Service Plan 2020/21 which was introduced by the Environmental Health & Trading Standards Manager Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).

It was explained to Members that this was a high level plan which included some revised Performance Indicators as a result of the audit of the Food Standards Agency.

The following questions were asked:

Councillor Stokes, Wychavon District Council questioned whether WRS officers wore cameras when making food hygiene visits. It was confirmed by officers that none of the WRS officers wore any kind of body cameras for any of their duties.

Councillor Jones, Bromsgrove District Council, questioned whether there could be some target dates for the bullet points on page 57 regarding the 'realities of BREXIT'. The Head of WRS explained to Members that as a result of Brexit extra funding had been made available by the Chief Executives of the partner authorities as Government controls of the importation and exportation of food would now change that they would no longer be a part of the Single Market. These changes would affect approximately 100 businesses across Worcestershire and WRS would be working with these businesses.

The Head of WRS explained to Members that as the issues outlined on page 57 were ongoing there was little point to adding target dates as they are dependent on future income streams and needed a flexible approach.

Councillor Raine, Malvern District Council questioned the use of 'to assume' on page 65 and suggested that a more appropriate word would be 'be certain'. The Head of WRS confirmed that the use of word was as a result of the assumptions the public make when seeing five star ratings on establishments.

RESOLVED to note and approve the WRS Business Service Plan 2020/21

32/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES ACTIVITY & PERFORMANCE DATA - QUARTER 3

The Manager from WRS presented the report to the Board and noted the following:

- Food safety interventions were broadly in line with previous years.
- There had been 326 stray dogs reported which sadly included 4 welfare cases. One of these welfare cases involved a banned breed which resulted in the dog being put to sleep.
- In preparation for a 'No Deal Brexit' all food exporters in the county were contacted and contingency plan put in place where needed.
- WRS had worked with West Midlands Safari Park and carried out a test exercise in order to test their emergency plan.
- A private hire and Hackney Carriage test exercise was carried out in Worcester. It resulted in several drivers who had been plying for hire being reported to Worcestershire County Council for further legal action.

The Board noted the report and congratulated the team on a comprehensive report and successful quarter.

RESOLVED to note and approve the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Activity and Performance Data Quarter 3

33/19

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES - INFORMATION REPORT - TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICES

The Acting Licensing and Support Services Manager presented the Temporary Event Notices Information report and highlighted the following to Members:

- Events and activities that were covered by a Temporary Event Notice (TEN).
- The approach to granting these TENs was considered 'light touch' and used mainly for low risk, small events and that the limitations for the use of TENs were put in place in the Licensing Act 2003.
- Senior Officers endeavour to work with ward members if the event is deemed to be potentially controversial.

The following questions were asked:

Councillor Stokes, Wychavon District Council questioned WRS officers regarding the criteria for granting a TEN and whether private parties would have to apply. The Head of WRS explained that there was no need for private parties to apply for a notice as long as they do not sell alcohol on the premises, this would exclude the 'backgarden barbeque' from having to apply.

Councillor Jones, Bromsgrove District Council questioned whether the proximity of events to other activities is considered when granting a TEN. The Head of WRS confirmed that WRS do as much as they can to ensure that events are well regulated and do not impact on residents.

Councillors J. Raine and T. Wells left the meeting at 5,48pm. The officers from Malvern District Council explained that they had noted the report prior to their departure and the Principal Solicitor confirmed that the report could be noted in their absence.

RESOLVED to note and approve the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Activity and Performance Data Quarter 3

34/19

TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, EQUALITIES AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.

It was confirmed that there was no other business and the Chair declared the meeting closed.

The meeting closed at 5.54 p.m.

Chairman



WRS Board: 18th June 2020

Information Report - Covid-19 Response

Recommendation	That the Board notes the Report and that members use the contents of the information provided in their own reporting back to fellow members of the partner authorities.
Background	As Members are aware COVID-19 poses a serious and imminent risk to public health and has been declared a global pandemic. On 5 March 2020 the first death from coronavirus in the UK was confirmed and 12 March England's Chief Medical Officer told MPs that the UK had moved to the second stage of dealing with COVID-19 from "containment" to the "delay" phase. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care subsequently issued urgent regulations providing powers to limit onward transmission of the virus including the statutory closure of specified businesses including social venues such as pubs, clubs and theatres.
Report	Councils up and down the country have had to deal with many challenging issues during the current crisis. From a regulatory perspective, the first thing we were given was to lead on the business closure element of the new regulations. The regulations identified those businesses that had to close, mainly those that attracted crowds or where there was likely to be close person to person contact involved such as pubs, clubs and hairdressers. It also identified a range of businesses deemed essential which could remain open such as food retailers. Many non-food retailers were allowed to operate delivery services so people could still get hold of various household products and catering establishments were permitted to operate as takeaways. Many services and virtually all manufacturing businesses were not caught by the regulations at all and could therefore remain open as long as social distancing measures were observed. This was true for many of the trades like plumbers and builders. A lot of manufacturers needed time to re-set in-factory systems to work with people 2m apart so did close temporarily. In terms of demand on the service there was initially an increase in the number of complaints received and a reduction in the number of enquiries. This may be because



many of the businesses who would normally ask for informal advice were closed.

An increase in specific types of complaints was noted however, namely those relating to domestic noise, smoke nuisance and of course, alleged breaches of the COVID-19 Regulations. The former two may simply be down to the fact people are at home and being annoyed by things that they wouldn't normally encounter as they would be at work during the day.

We have also responded to over 450 service requests in respect of business advice on the Regulations and Covid-19 restrictions.

Initial Response

The first phase of response from the Community Environmental Health Team was to make proactive checks that businesses were closed. Officers were tasked to undertake proactive patrols at reasonable times to check that businesses were closed. Formal checks were not recorded for every property that was noted to be compliant and closed but we know that over 2,200 visits were made to businesses county wide. The level of compliance was found to be generally excellent, with only 7 Prohibition Notices and 30 written warnings being required for non-compliant businesses across the County. These checks were supplemented with work of the licensing Team who carried out spot checks on 550 pubs and clubs during the Easter Bank Holiday weekend to ensure businesses were not trading.

Further pro-active checks were made by the Community Environmental Health Team over the Spring Bank Holiday.

Your Licensing Officers have been in regular liaison with the taxi trade from the start of the Covid pandemic and more specifically have:

- Sent updates on changes in legislation;
- Proactively contacted drivers, vehicle proprietors and private hire operators in order to signpost them to relevant Government Funding and financial support, which is available to small and self-employed businesses;
- Proactively contacted drivers, vehicle proprietors and private hire operators to provide guidance on safety measures which have been introduced for the transport sector;
- Proactively contacted any drivers, vehicle proprietors and private hire operators licence holders who are due to renew licences in the coming months in an effort to identify/establish their current personal position in relation to their pending licence renewals and offer advice. To date very few drivers and vehicle proprietors have informed officers that they are not in a position to pay;
- Introduced a process whereby taxi renewals can be deferred up to 6 months from date of renewal;
- Extended the 5 day suspension period to 90 days for Business Premises License annual fees;



TENs submissions have significantly reduced due to restrictions on public gatherings.

The Teams have also been working with Economic Development and Town Centre management teams to:

- Support the delivery of grant funding to those eligible for either Council or Government financial support packages;
- Assist in recovery plans for city centre and town centre businesses;
- Provide advice and support for businesses in respect of safe working practices and government guidance;

The Food Standards Agency has suspended all routine food inspection work until mid-July. However, we have continued an ongoing dialogue with businesses, particularly those posing the highest risk and new registrations. We will still conduct safe visits where there appears to be an issue, but to date such intervention has not been required.

There have also been fewer food complaints as pubs and restaurants remain closed. We continue to try and re-rate businesses under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme wherever possible and appropriate, such as where they have completed structural works or introduced food safety management systems to address a low rating or those who need an initial rating as they have recently opened. To assist in this we have piloted novel methods of working such as virtual visits by video call to be followed up with physical visits when permitted.

This has allowed us to concentrate on our Engage/Educate/Encourage/Enforce approach to implementing the Health Protection Regulations, supported by targeted patrols, intelligence-led investigations and the excellent relationships forged through close liaison with the local Policing Teams.

A number of pro-active Sector Specific Projects have also been undertaken to support business and secure compliance:

- Legionella project
- Food Takeaway Project
- Garden Centre project
- Facebook project

Due to concerns over the risk of officers spreading the virus to potentially vulnerable households and equally, the risk to officers associated with accessing people's homes and handling and re-using equipment recovered from a property, we have limited our use of noise monitoring equipment. We have instead been more reliant on officer

observations which are much more difficult in the absence of a regular timeframe for pinpointing an issue. We have continued to use the kit where it is appropriate and where a risk assessment has shown it to be proportionate and acceptable. We keep this under regular review based on current guidance and will be looking to move back to its more regular use in the coming weeks.

Air quality monitoring has had to be suspended, initially because the laboratory we use for analysis closed, but it is clear that the reduction in traffic volumes will significantly affect the data for the duration that controls on movements remain in place. Decisions on the AQMAs within the County would thus not be appropriate based on this data.

We have been in liaison with the County Crematoria to provide advice about dispensations during periods of significantly increased demand on abatement of emissions to atmosphere. Permitting inspections were suspended.

There has also been a slow down on requests to provide technical advice to Planning Officers on planning applications or to house buyers on potential contamination issues during conveyancing. It has not completely ceased but has reduced in volume and with the easing of restrictions is now picking up again.

Moving Forwards

There is severe economic pressure to open businesses and with the changes to the legislation and government announcing the programmed re-opening of the economy, the focus is moving from business closure to supporting businesses to re-open safely.

All of the evidence is indicating that the Partners' enforcement role under Health and Safety at Work legislation is how government intends to ensure employees remain safe in those premises for which the councils are responsible.

Further, we are not out of the pandemic yet and it will not be enough to just inform the public that Worcestershire is now "open for business". If we are to bring back visitors, we are going to have to demonstrate that businesses are "open, safe and healthy" places to visit. Your Officers have therefore prioritised a strategy of business advice and support for re-opening.

Further, we are beginning to engage with the local outbreak management process that is seen as the key mechanism for controlling the spread of Covid 19 going forward. It is being developed by the Director of Public health and her team at the County Council and we are working alongside them in the process. A number of our officers will be working as part of the team that controls outbreaks. Our main focus is likely to be those in workplaces and similar premises where our Health and Safety at Work role is relevant, but beyond this we are likely to be involved in outbreaks at schools and care homes.



Your EHP expertise and resource will be focussed on outbreak investigation, proactive advice and enforcement to supplement the National contact tracing programme. This is a key role in effective disease control and prevention and your Officers have the essential experience, professional and legislative tools required to manage and control any outbreaks that do occur.

Beyond this we are trying wherever possible to return to our business as usual activities, with routine animal licensing visits being one of the first activities to resume.

We have developed a process to allow driver/vehicle operators to defer their renewals but decisions on this will sit with colleagues at the relevant Partner council. Similarly, the deferral of any payments under the Licensing Act 2003 will sit back with the partners.

There is almost certainly going to be an issue with resourcing in the future. Committing resource to the local outbreak management plan will take 4 Environmental Health Practitioners out of the business for a prolonged period of time and we are committing significant resources in supporting partners in the re-opening of their High Streets and supporting the local economy by providing advice and support to businesses as closures are gradually lifted. We shall also be providing the enforcement required to ensure that public health is protected, to give the public assurance that it is safe to return to the high street.

All of the partners agreed to move to the minimum level of service to meet their statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which means we currently only respond to reports of serious accidents or near misses led by intelligence. Covid 19 priorities, advice and enforcement work will draw further resources, meaning additional capacity is likely to be required to deliver our business as usual activity around food law enforcement and dealing with statutory nuisances.

We have already re-configured officer roles in the service to meet Covid and statutory responsibilities whilst delivering on your service priorities and will continue to be as flexible as possible in moving people around in response to differing demands in a quickly changing regulatory environment. However, we are restricted in drawing resources from those roles and areas of the service critical to income generation as that would potentially threaten the financial model on which the service is based.

Hence we will need to talk to Partners about investing some of the Government Covid response money into the regulatory service to allow us to deliver the response at the level you need whilst providing those activities we would normally be doing.

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WRS Board
18th June 2020

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Report 2019/20

Recommendation	That the Board note the Annual Report for 2019/20 and agree that a copy be forwarded to each Chief Executive of the 6 partner authorities and also to the wider elected member base in their areas.
Contribution to Priorities	Not applicable
Summary	Under the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Service Level Agreement, the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Lead Finance Officer for the host authority, Bromsgrove District Council, are required to submit to the Board an annual report that covers the performance of the shared service and provides a summary of the finances. This report covers the period from 1 st April 2019 to 31 March 2020. If endorsed by the Board, a copy will be forwarded to each Chief Executive of each member authority and the authors would request that members use their usual channels within their authorities to distribute the report to the wider elected member cohort.
Report	Under Clause 11 of Part 1 of the Shared Services Partnership Agreement, the Board is required to receive a report at its annual meeting which will be held no later than 30 June. The report covers the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The annual report is co-signed by the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Lead Financial Officer for the Host Authority as required by the legal agreement. The report covers the performance of the service for that period, both in terms of KPIs and highlights of activity, a short summary activity report appearing at Appendix 5. This has been reduced somewhat as the Committee now receives a separate Activity Data report, which covers these aspects in much more detail. Some detail of the performance indicators has also been covered in the Activity Data Report.



Generally, performance has remained good. Food business compliance rates remain high. Taxi license renewals are dealt with in a reasonable time in the main. The taxi fleet appears to be generally in good order, although the results from enforcement exercises suggest some driver/ operators need to improve in terms of maintaining vehicles.

Complaints against the service are significantly exceeded by compliments. We understand the main issues for complaints, which are related to either paying for the cost of stray dog recovery or the fact that we cannot resolve an issue that is causing annoyance to a resident due to the law on nuisances.

The indicators for licensed premises and noise complaints have been in place long enough now for us to establish good base-lines. The former shows that generally premises in the County licensed to sell alcohol are well managed. The figures can now be used, along with intelligence, to focus enforcement resources in a proactive way to tackle any individual problem premises, although these are relatively few and far between. As we have said previously, most complaints relate to nuisance issues, usually created when a venue introduces a novel activity like live music to diversify its activities. These are usually relatively minor and the overall rate of noise complaints is relatively low and probably reflective of the generally good environment in Worcestershire.

The Annual Report also gives a summary of the financial position, the key achievements and covers issues relating to human resources. There are also sections on risk management and equalities. The Report will be published on the WRS website and will be shared with other partners e.g. Worcestershire LEP. A press release will be sent out to accompany the publishing of the report. Putting the report into the public domain meets the requirement in the Regulators Code, made under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, which requires local authorities to publish summary information about their regulatory activities each year.

Financial Implications

The financial implications are contained within the Annual Report.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

WRS Annual Report 2019/20



ANNUAL REPORT

2019/20

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

	Page
Introduction	3
Key Achievements	5
Performance	5
Performance Management	10
Service Delivery Highlights	11
Financial Management	16
Workforce Planning and Human Resources Management	17
Accommodation	18
Business Transformation	18
Risk Management	19
Equality and Diversity	19
Next Steps	19
Appendix 1: Structure (1 st April 2018)	20
Appendix 2: Risk Log	21
Appendix 3: Revenue Out-turn 2017/18	24
Appendix 4: Agreed WRS Budget 2017/18-2020/21	27
Appendix 5: Activity summary by individual partners	30

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 1st April 2019 up to the 31st March 2020 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.

The year has been dominated by flooding in both the Autumn and Winter and now towards the end of the year by Covid 19. Whilst the submerged landscape of Worcestershire and those chilling pictures of the water overtopping barriers in Bewdley and submerging streets in Worcester are memories, the pandemic remains with us and will likely shape the service's ability to operate for a significant part of 2020/21 and potentially beyond. There was still excellent work undertaken during 2019/20, with very good results across a range of service areas. WRS managers continued to work along the lines identified in the comprehensive 3-year Business Plan for the period 2018-2021, which was adopted in February 2017 and February 2020 saw the adoption of a replacement plan to take the service to March 2023. The new plan highlighted some of the potential issues faced by the service if new sources of income could not be developed and some of the threats as more local authorities consider income generation as a potential opportunity. It also highlighted the potential impacts of the proposed 2% per annum pay rises over the next 3 years and, what was at the time, the looming spectre of increasing inflation which may have diminished somewhat at the time of writing. It highlighted how close to the originally envisaged minimum service we have moved in recent years. These pressures led to the Partners agreeing to cover the cost of the 2% pay award that has been estimated and also the next 3-year refresh to pension contributions. In total this mean an increase of £90,000 divided across the 6 partners using the usual formula. This increase will allow the service to focus on achievable income generation targets moving forward,

WRS has continued to develop opportunities to generate income, focusing on supplying services to other local authorities. Much of the bidding for work has succeeded because of a clear understanding of our cost-base and the value of service we can deliver. The client authorities have largely continued to request Environmental Health services like Air Quality, Contaminated Land, Environmental Permit inspections and all of the associated administration. The service has also looked more widely at contracts that we might have the skills to discharge perhaps outside of our role for the partners. There are restrictions in law on how far a local authority can go in its income generation activities before it needs to compete on a level playing field with other businesses through a vehicle such as a community interest company or a trust. At this point the service is well within the restrictions and can continue to build its portfolio of work areas.

Whilst none of the Partner Authorities requested budget adjustments during this year, inflationary pressures have been felt and continue to create pressures on the budget, which have been relieved by increasing income streams and now by an increase in contributions. Covid 19 may, it appears delay the Government's proposed revisions to local authority funding calculations which, it was anticipated would shift monies from lower tier to higher tier authorities. However, the current pandemic is seeing unprecedented levels of public expenditure and it is difficult to anticipate where this will leave councils once the disease is under control.

Whilst increasing the range of services delivered WRS has been successful in maintaining key arrangements with clients. Key to the success of this work has been to review charges, ensuring as well as recovering our costs they remain competitive and encourage greater commitment by the client. The level of service delivered is also important, which is why continued investment in staff is key so that they have the necessary skills and expertise in the rapidly changing field of technical specialisms.

Our three strategic priorities, remain relevant for now and into the post-Covid 19 environment. They are:

- Supporting the Local Economy
- Improving Health and Well-being
- Tackling and Preventing Crime and Disorder

We continue to support legitimate businesses and residents, particularly the vulnerable where we are able but at the same time we tackle those who break the law, ignore best practice or adversely impact the environment. Central to this approach was and 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. The continued co-location of the County Council's Trading Standards team with WRS helps to support this approach as well as providing an income stream to cover the cost of various support services that WRS provides to this team.

Simon Wilkes
Head of Regulatory Services

Jayne Pickering
Lead Financial Officer

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR WRS IN 2018/19:

These are covered in a number of sections below:

PERFORMANCE

Our ability to report performance has improved throughout the years with the refinement of the IDOX UNiform management information system. The corresponding demand and activity data provided to Joint Board members has continued to provide a clear picture for them of the work being undertaken by WRS.

Our key performance measures continue to focus on customer satisfaction and the positive compliance of businesses. The vast majority of higher risk businesses have been subject to inspection or some other form of suitable intervention and the key priorities of each partner council have been fulfilled. Business and consumer satisfaction have remained high in spite of changes made in some areas to service delivery. Previous year's results appear in brackets in the relevant box providing a comparative view of performance over time.

	Measure	Figure	Commentary
1	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to non-business customers satisfaction	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. Over 25% non-business customers replied to our questionnaires. 77.6% found their contact with WRS helpful and 84.1% found the information and advice provided easy to use. Both slightly higher than last year. 68.3% felt that the length of time to resolve their problem was satisfactory (an improvement on last year,) and 79.3% (11% points more than last year,) felt that the speed of initial response from WRS was satisfactory. For much of the year the score was above 70% but a poor level of response at the end of Q4, dominated by negative replies pushed the score below 70. Managers will continue to encourage staff to make decisions quickly in relation to the progress that can be made on service requests, and we will continue to look at how we can better manage public expectations around what is achievable with nuisance issues.

2	% of service requests where resolution is achieved to business customers satisfaction	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. Over 500 businesses replied to our questionnaires. Of those who responded, 97.7% felt that their business had been treated fairly and 98.5% of customers felt staff were polite in their dealings with them and informative. Some 98.7% of customers found the information and advice we provided easy to understand and 97.4% found their interaction with us helpful. 95.9% were happy with the speed of our responses and, of those who made enquiries rather than being visited, 96.5% 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	Bromsgrove 97.1% (97.2%, 98.7% 99.1%, 97.1%,) Malvern Hills 98.1% (97.2%, 97.0%, 97.7%, 97%,) Redditch 95.6% (96.0%, 96.7%, 97.6%, 95.1%,) Worcester City 97.5% (98.0%, 98.0%, 98.6%, 98.2%,) Wychavon 98.0% (97.4%, 97.8%, 98%, 99.1%,) Wyre Forest 98.1% (97.7%, 97.2%, 98.1%, 96.6%,) Worcestershire 97.5% (97.3%, 97.6%, 98.2%, 97.4%,)	This focuses on food hygiene interventions and the number of premises where there are no significant non-compliances and the food produced in such premises can be considered safe. A very high proportion of premises in all districts are broadly compliant, indicating that the vast majority of food businesses are well run. There are no significant changes in the figures so no real concerns.
4	% of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	Bromsgrove 2.9% (12) (3.6%, 1.3%, 0.9%, 2.9%,) Malvern Hills 1.9% (9) (2.8%, 3.0%, 2.3%, 3%, 2.4%) Redditch 4.4% (11) (5.1%, 3.3%, 2.4%, 4.9%,) Worcester City 2.5% (14) (2.2%, 2.0%, 1.4%, 1.8%,) Wychavon 2.0% (9) (3.0%, 2.2%, 2%, 0.8%,)	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. Overall there is no change in the County average and only minor movements which are of no real significance at district level. Local newspapers remain interested in premises scoring zero or 1 and are keen to highlight this and then the improvement when we have finished helping the business into compliance. Numbers in brackets are the

		Wyre Forest 1.9% (8) (2.4%, 2.8%, 1.9%, 3.4%,) Worcestershire 2.7% (63) (2.7%, 2.4%, 2.4%, 2.6%,)	number of premises represented by % given.
5	% of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	75.2% (91.4%, 87.7%)	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. We now have three years of data so can probably say that this range is the norm of performance. We now need to look at what we can do to improve performance to move us up from ¾ of licenses being issued within 5 working days.
6	% of vehicles found to be defective whilst in service	55 = 3.6% BDC 18 2.5% MHDC 1 0.9% RBC 21 5.4% WC 10 3.0% WDC 1 0.9% WFDC 4 2.6%	From 1572 vehicles operating in the County and based on vehicle stop checks and failures at garage inspections; some 55 vehicles were found to be defective whilst in service. This is higher than in the previous three years and shows that enforcement and improved communication between inspecting garages are yielding what is needed. This level offers a more realistic indication of the scale of the issue. District percentage figures are based on the numbers of vehicles registered in that district on 31 st March 2020. It still represents a small proportion of vehicles.
7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	58.1% (59%, 72.5%, 73.8%, 76.8%, 74.2%)	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 is down compared to previous years, which is reflective of the poor scoring for wider customer satisfaction this year, albeit that is slightly up. Officers have noted increasing expectations of what can be achieved for customers so this too has almost certainly influenced the figure.
8	Review of register of complaints and compliments	44 complaints (27, 25, 31, 17, 24, 47, 70)	This is our longest running performance indicator in this format, hence the long list of previous year's figures.

		163 compliments (128, 138, 103, 51, 57, 36, 24)	There has been a slight increase in complaints this year (27 recorded last year) and a slightly increased number of compliments (128 recorded last year). The biggest area for complaint remains our dealings with stray dogs. This will always create some issues as it is a very emotional situation for many people and paying to get their pet back is something that does not sit well with many people. Nuisance complaints that cannot be resolved is another area we continue to address.
9	Staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	4.4 days per FTE (4.12, 12.45, 5.95, 2.3, 3.9, 7.7, 9.5)	The excellent improvement compared to 2 years ago has been maintained, with the indicated figure being reasonably normal. Response to last year's unprecedented high and shows the service returning closer to the norm. Members will likely recall that the source of the majority of this was long term sickness and this was actively being tackled by managers. 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.
10	% of staff who are satisfied with working for WRS	98% 88%, (NB: Annual figures for 2017/18 and before, 80%, 85%, 77%, 82%)	50 of our 68 staff responded to the survey. Comparable with previous years except 2017/18 when a different process was used, this 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. 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. 34/50 scored working for the service as 8/10 or better which is really pleasing given our expectations of performance.
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	Bromsgrove 6.8% (8.7%, 6.73%, 3.8%, 7.9%) Malvern Hills 5.7% (4.8%, 4.94%, 3.6%, 3%,) Redditch 8.5% (7.1% 8.65%, 2.7%, 8.1%,)	Linked to the Crime & Disorder agenda and introduced following discussions with elected members, this measure is now in its fifth year. It still shows that generally premises across the County are well run and controlled by their operators. Looking at the figures over 5 years, the ones for 2016/17 stand out even more as a blip in terms of

		Worcester City 8.8% (8.1%, 8.19%, 5.8, 9.4%,) Wychavon 4.2% (4.0%, 4.97%, 4.0, 5.5%,) Wyre Forest 8.5% (7.0%, 8.29%, 5.8, 9.4%,) Worcestershire 6.8% (6.4%, 6.78%, 4.4%, 6.9%,)	improved performance and the following 2 years show a return to a pattern similar to the two years prior to this dip. Complaints about premises generally relate to minor issues, mainly to do with noise. Many pubs are trying to diversify, offering music and other entertainment, which is within their license conditions, but sometimes this is not welcomed by some living nearby. Simple precautions can result in resolution of most of these issues.
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	Bromsgrove 1.96 (2.7, 2.82, 3.0, 2.7, 3.1) Malvern Hills 2.07 (2.2, 2.39, 3.0, 2.3, 3.9) Redditch 2.97 (3.2, 3.61, 4.1, 3.7, 3.5) Worcester City 2.78 (3.2, 3.13, 4.2, 4.0, 2.9) Wychavon 2.01 (2.1, 2.46, 2.7, 2.6, 2.5) Wyre Forest 2.37 (2.6, 3.23, 3.4, 3.0, 3.0) Worcestershire 2.35 (2.7, 2.93, 3.4, 3.1, 3.8)	We continue to report the County average and this is the fifth year we are able to report data by individual districts. Members will be aware from the quarterly activity data reports that 2019/20 appeared to be a slightly quieter year than average for nuisance work and this is reflected in the nuisance numbers. It appears like it was a quieter year for noise complaints than some. It is however worth reiterating that the complexity of the issues that the team does deal with appears to have increased and the tolerance of noise in some quarters is reduced. Where we can resolve domestic noise issues this is generally achieved through mediation between the parties concerned. 1383 noise complaints were investigated during 2019/20; 187 fewer than the previous year. 886, or 64%, related to noise from domestic properties.
13	Total Income	14.65% Note: £442,032 as a % of £3.017M	This is an impressive figure. The service will continue to pursue this strategy but the difficulties associated with capacity for both income generation and delivering statutory regulation remains.
14	Cost of regulatory services per head of population.	Based on overrun cost of £2.960M against the current population estimate of 592,057 the service cost is: £5.00 per head	This is the amount spent by the partners following the off-setting of cost with income, then divided by the most recent mid-year estimate offered on the County Council's website. It is difficult to benchmark this figure as WRS functions are not all of those reported in the relevant part of the RO return to the MHCLG.

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.

Management team meetings are used to review performance against the service plan and to highlight any issues of concern. Senior practitioners (first line managers) are invited to attend these meetings to ensure a two-way flow of information between management and staff. This arrangement was introduced at the behest of senior practitioners and is working well. 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 Senior Practitioners.

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 remains accurate. There is still work to do to use the system more effectively, but Uniform is now operating well across all functions.

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 so as 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 with the exception of 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 2018/19, which members will receive at the same meeting where this Annual Report is presented.

Internal Audits

An Internal Audit of the stray dog service is performed. Generally, audit were pleased with the way the service is managed, making a small number of recommendations about better timely tendering of contracts, in-contract auditing of contractors and improved detail of activity recorded on the stray dog register. Actions have been undertaken to address the recommendations.

SERVICE DELIVERY HIGHLIGHTS

There have been a number of highlights throughout the year to showcase the work of our teams and illustrate the breadth of their responsibilities.

Community Environmental Health Team

Nuisance

The team investigated 1,874 nuisance complaints in 2019/20 covering light, noise, odour and smoke. 73.8% (1,383) of these related to noise nuisance which places the greatest demand on the service. Amongst these nuisance investigations were a number of challenging service requests requiring complex investigations.

The team are very skilful in resolving these issues informally, meaning that of all these cases, only 16 Abatement Notices were required.

Food Hygiene

This year, a total of 1,621 interventions were undertaken at food premises across the County which is an increase on 2018/19. A high proportion of these were found to be broadly compliant, indicating that the vast majority of food businesses are well run. At the year end, the proportion of businesses included in the FHRS found to be broadly compliant was 97.5%.

2.5% of food businesses across the county do however have a score of 2 or below (out of five) on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Such businesses are deemed to be at risk of not producing safe food so are subject to further intervention until such time as they meet requirements or face formal action.

Whilst the majority of businesses are supported to achieve compliance, formal action including premises closure has been taken in respect of those cases where conditions were found to put public health at risk.

It is worth noting that towards the end of the year proactive inspections of food businesses were suspended by the Food Standards Agency due to COVID-19.

Floods

In November the Team responded to the floods in Evesham. We contacted all affected food businesses providing pre-opening advice and support and followed up with visits to ensure that good hygiene conditions were met before they re-opened. The following February the Team were again called upon in respect of the severe floods in Wyre Forest, Worcester, Malvern Hills and Wychavon. We contacted all affected food businesses providing pre-opening advice and support and followed these up with visits to ensure that good hygiene conditions were being met before they re-opened. This included swabbing to check that food preparation surfaces were safe to use. We also provided advice and support to the Hublets which were set up to help the affected communities.

Brexit

In preparation for Brexit your Team contacted all potential food exporters to appraise their needs in the event of a “no deal” Brexit. Contingency plans were put in place which involved stakeholder engagement and a plan to identify where support was needed. With food products the issue is that many are high risk with short shelf life so there cannot be any delays in providing a certification service. We have provided a strategic single point of contact for Brexit work and the Food Lead within the Team

has taken operational responsibility. Liaison arrangements are in place with Worcestershire Trading Standards who are responsible for Food Standards and Website information has been updated to ensure that businesses can readily access current information. Duty Officers with expertise on the export process are available to take relevant calls. WRS have also contributed to the West Midlands CEO response to Government in respect of Food Safety implications of a no deal Brexit.

Covid-19 Response

March saw your Officers responding to the Covid-19 epidemic. To reduce social contact, the government required certain businesses and venues to close, by law, to members of the public. The Community Environmental Health Team provided advice and guidance to businesses and continue to provide assistance to business and monitor compliance with these regulations. Proactive patrols were organised including over the Bank Holidays and intelligence led investigations were carried out in partnership with West Mercia Police. Whilst compliance in Worcestershire was found to be high, several businesses breaching the regulations were subject to prohibition notices.

Working in partnership with the LEP

An interim Board has been formed to manage and run the Worcestershire Food and Drink Association (WF&DA). The Association was created through a WRS project funded by the LEP to promote local business and a successful application has now been made for it to be recognised as an independent community interest company (CIC).

Worcestershire has some superb locally produced food and drink, made and served by the some of the most enthusiastic and passionate people in the industry. WF&DA serves to promote the wide variety of produce Worcestershire has to offer and boost Worcestershire's economy. It boasts a first class website and several successful events have again been held around the county this year.

This organisation will become a fully independent entity once the appropriate financial arrangements are in place, and WRS will continue to offer support and advice.

Primary Authorities

The Community Environmental Health Team continues to support local businesses through Primary Authority Agreements, providing assured, paid for advice and expertise in the areas of Food Safety and Health and Safety.

Health & Safety at Work

Whilst proactive health and safety inspections no longer form part of the routine work programme due to service changes and Central Government's drive to reduce the regulatory burden on business, the investigation of several serious accidents arising from work activities continued to put pressure on resources. This has been exacerbated by the significant and prominent responsibilities placed on the team to ensure compliance with the Health Protection Regulations made to control the spread of Covid-19 through the control of health and safety at businesses and workplaces.

Further Health and Safety activity continues to be intelligence led, based on accident reports and complaints notified to us and is focused on enforcement activity. 264 Accident Reports and 151 complaints were investigated 2019/20 including 2 fatalities. Health and safety investigations are often complex and can take months, and sometimes years, to bring to completion.

Serious Crime

WRS continues to work closely with partner organisations through the North and South Worcestershire Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Groups and the various Multi Agency Targeted Enforcement Strategy Groups which are committed to sharing intelligence and carrying out joint operations to both tackle and disrupt serious crime in Worcestershire. WRS have contributed to several such operations targeted at Food Businesses and Licensed Premises with colleagues from West Mercia Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Immigration, Border Force, HMRC, Local Authority Housing and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority.

Technical Services Team

Environmental Permitting

Local authorities are required to permit certain industrial processes which require payment of an annual fee by the affected companies for compliance inspections.

WRS works hard to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses by advising and assisting the operators in compliance and coming out of the regulatory regime.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, WRS has been in communication with all crematoria to assist with relaxations of abatement permitted whilst increasing throughput.

Generally, compliance remains high within regulated industry sectors and thankfully WRS had completed all scheduled inspections prior to lockdown and all permits are up to date and appropriate for the industries regulated in Worcestershire and for Gloucester City who pay WRS to undertake this function on their behalf. WRS will continue to work with the businesses to ensure compliance whilst returning to business as usual.

Primary Authority Relationships

The two Primary Authority Contracts WRS have in this regulatory area have worked well during the last year. The contract with CEMEX has been very productive in drafting an inspection plan that all enforcing local authorities would have to have regard for when visiting their sites. More recently activity has focused on arranging a Welsh Partner to assist with their sites in Wales. It is hoped this work and publication of the Inspection Plan can be completed in the coming year. Considerable work has also been undertaken with Wienerberger to assist with communication and trouble-shooting where inconsistent enforcement has been proposed by other local authorities. As a company reliant on the construction trade their production staff are currently furloughed and sites mothballed but as a leading brick and tile manufacturer we are confident we will be continuing to support them in the near future.

Local Air Quality Management

WRS have continued to undertake all the statutory reporting on behalf of the six Worcestershire Districts.

In Worcester City WRS has continued to support other departments on work towards implementation of the Task & Finish Group for Air Quality recommendations. The measures prioritised by the group will form the Air Quality Action plan which has been in production by WRS during the last half of the year.

Planning support on technical issues

The quarterly activity reports have consistently shown the significant demand for support on technical issues required by Planning Officers. WRS provides assistance with Air Quality, land contamination and nuisance matters, ensuring these matters are addressed in line with government guidance for the protection of new users, the general public and the environment. In the background, WRS have been assisting with the initial drafting of a Supplementary Planning Document for air quality, land contamination and nuisance which sits beneath the South Worcestershire Development Plan Policy on these subjects which WRS has also been heavily involved in, providing technical support development of that policy. In addition, WRS initiated discussions to ensure gull control measures are included in the SWDP design policy.

Dog Warden Service

As well as providing the dog warden service for Worcestershire, the Dog Wardens and supporting staff (such as Duty Officers and Management) have successfully contributed to the income generation of the service in the provision of a dog warden service to Birmingham City (out of hours), Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and provided ancillary services relating to dogs to a number of organisations, making it the most successful year to date financially. The focus has been on providing services that other organisations struggle with, such as long term boarding of dogs with enhanced environments (working with kenneling contractors), assisting with abandoned dogs and other animals in private properties.

Subsidised Pest Control & Worcester City Gull Control

WRS manage a contract with a number of businesses who provide a subsidised pest control service to Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wychavon and Wyre Forest. We have worked with Wyre Forest during this year to assess the impact of removal of this service ahead of 2020/21. Under management by WRS the contractors also provided sewer baiting in all partner areas and in Forest of Dean, Warwick and Dudley on behalf of Severn Trent Water.

Management of the contractor providing egg replacement services in Worcester is undertaken by WRS every year, but during the last 12 months an enhanced gull control programme was completed during the 2019 breeding season despite withdrawal of the general licence used to tackle gulls legally by Natural England that year. An expanded programme has been developed and work commenced promptly ahead of the 2020 breeding season to ensure a robust assessment can be made of measures employed.

Licensing

The Licensing team have had a challenging year ranging from the final implementation of the new regulations for the licensing of certain activities involving animals to implementing new processes in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The team have worked extremely hard with the sector to explain and advise on the new guidance and implement it across all relevant settings including Animal Boarding, Dog Breeding, Pet Shops and Riding Establishments. Due to our expert understanding and experience we were invited to sit on the Canine and Feline Sector group which feeds directly into DEFRA. We have also started the training process required for two of our officers to gain the new qualification required by the regulations with a view to sending more in the next year.

The year has required the team to take part in a number of exercise's that have required partnership working across the sector including working with the police, immigration, various departments from across the districts and this has developed better co-ordinated responses saving time and resources but also utilising the appropriate skills across the County appropriately.

Midway through the year WRS were asked, and took up the opportunity, to work with the West Midlands Safari Park on executing their emergency plan. Officers helped arrange and facilitate a number of exercise's with a variety of stakeholders including the police, fire and rescue, highways and local authority representatives to name a few with a view to test the plan of action in a emergency situation.

Towards the end of the year the team worked in response to the Covid 19 pandemic by proactively working with the taxi Trade and businesses ensuring they were provided with up to date information on changes not only to government guidelines but also changes to process that WRS have had to implement as a result. Officers explored alternative ways of working moving many licensing processes online challenging both customers and officers but resulting in a better, streamlined service. .

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Budget 2019/20

Monthly 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. Good management of costs, income generation and the management of vacancies led the service being some £57,000 underspent at the end of the year. The partners agreed that £20,000 of this could be carried forward into 2020/21 to support the replacement of dog warden vans. The underspend was some 1.9% of overall budget. This was achieved mainly due to the level of income generation during the year but also because we did not make some year-end investments in both our dog van replacement and some additional agency support capacity due to first the flood response and then due to Covid 19.

The draft outrun budget for 2019/20 is included as Appendix 3, along with the proposed budget for 2020/21 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. Whether this remains deliverable will depend on the likely level of pay increases going forward. Before the Covid pandemic, the service was aware that some partners were likely to ask the

service to consider some savings from 2021 onwards. The pandemic has created further uncertainty in terms of the model for local government funding as work on the implementation of a new model is on hold as far as we are aware. The figures in Appendix 4 are based on the pre-Covid assumptions, which will almost certainly be subject to change, which at this stage is unknown. Should it be necessary, the service's reserve may help partner to buffer some financial impacts whilst determining the way forward for the delivery of these functions should the local authority financial situation become significantly worse in the future. .

Increasing income generation

In terms of commercial contract work, the largest income generation area was the Dog Warden Service. We provide the entire dog warden service for Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Gloucester City Councils and an out-of-hours service only for Birmingham City Council. This is supported by helping other organisations including Social Services and Housing Associations. This has successfully utilised the existing Dog Wardens and contractors to make better use of resources and benefit from economies of scale. The next two significant income generators were contaminated land advice to planners and service requesters in Gloucester City, South Gloucestershire and Mendip Council areas and Air Quality/ Planning consultation support in Gloucester City and Tewkesbury. We also provided Industrial permitting inspections for Gloucester City and have provided environmental permitting activity for other public sector organisations such as NHS Trusts and the Gibraltar Authority. There are a number of significant points concerning the work this year. The team has managed to maintain high standards of service for new clients, existing clients and the Partner Authorities; with the volume and scope of commercial work has increased. This has enabled income to be either reinvested where required or contribute to monies provided back to Partners at the end of the year.

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 Managers looking after different areas of the service. David Mellors as Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager covering all of 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. Susan Garratt retired due to ill health last year and Kiran Lahel has taken on the role of Licensing and Support Services Team Manager in an acting capacity while we look at how best to take things forward. This leaves her substantive post of Business and Relationship Manager vacant.

Staff turnover remains low, although occasionally a member of staff will decide to move onto pastures new. This has allowed us to recruit new but experienced staff from either other backgrounds to suit our income generation work or from other local authorities. All of the newcomers have added value to what is being delivered. At the 1st April 2019, the total staff establishment was around 68 FTE, although some of this capacity is on fixed term contract.

All staff participated in the Personal Development Review (PDR) process last year and this has been fed into a personal training plan for each officer and an overall training plan for the service. The latter allows us to look at opportunities for running training in-house (bringing the trainer to us) where there is sufficient need, which is significantly more cost effective than going to external providers.

WRS Officers receive two performance reviews per annum through the service's formal PDR system. The annual detailed review and 6-monthly progress check is designed to identify development needs and discuss how each person contributes more widely to the service's key strategic priorities and service delivery. All PDR reports are countersigned by the next level of management to ensure consistency, openness and transparency and ensure that nothing is missed.

Staff Survey

50 of our 68 staff responded to the survey. Comparable with previous years except 2017/18 when a different process was used, this 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. 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. 34/50 scored working for the service as 8/10 or better which is really pleasing given our expectations of performance.

Staff Sickness

During 2018/19 staff sickness reached 4.4 days per FTE, which is an excellent improvement compared to 2 years ago and has been maintained, with the indicated figure being reasonably normal. Response to last year's unprecedented high shows the service returning closer to the norm. Members will likely recall that the source of the majority of this was long term sickness and this was actively being tackled by managers. 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 with the contract up for renewal on the 23rd March 2020. The use of flexible and mobile working is generally now the norm, with staff frequently using home as their start and finish point for work in the field. Officers will come into the office two or three days per week to liaise with managers and colleagues or for meetings, and on the other days they work flexibly. The touch down points retained in each of the councils have provided an excellent venue for licensing surgeries and these have been welcomed by the taxi trade in particular. This move has also enabled staff to strike a better work/life balance which is essential for good morale. The service's original 5-year contract for accommodation at Wyre forest house came to an end on 23rd March 2020. The Head of Service agreed to continue to base the service there and agreed to an increase in payments based on inflation since the service located to the offices. He also agreed an extension of the Trading Standards use of Wyre Forest House as it continues to make sense for the Regulatory Services to be co-located. Generally, partners have been keen to keep the shared service accommodation costs within the local government family. It would make sense to do a more formal review of the location of the service in 2 years when hopefully the current crisis will have subsided somewhat.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION (SERVICE DELIVERY)

Further training has been provided to both managerial and operational staff on the components of an intelligence model, the process of developing raw information into finished intelligence (the intelligence cycle) and how to use intelligence during decision making processes. Aspects of this training were previously rolled out to colleagues across the region, and are still offered by the service as an income generating activity. The Intelligence Unit within the service has helped to both direct the work of the service and to provide information for managers and members on outputs. This will continue to develop during the coming years, even following the departure of Trading Standards from the partnership,

Whilst WRS has traditionally undertaken strategic tasking in the form of business planning, the tasking and coordination process was not routinely employed at a tactical level until 2016. Each operational team now has a tactical tasking group that convenes to review on-going enforcement activity, consider proposals for new 'project based' work and assess the level of available resource. This ensures a range of factors are considered during decision making processes including the level of risk, our priorities and available intelligence. This change of thinking is of critical importance as the service places a greater emphasis on taking 'evidence based decisions' and continues towards an intelligence led approach. In addition to tasking, a service wide tactical assessment is now produced on a six monthly basis and statistical bulletins on a quarterly basis. Other intelligence products have also been commissioned including 'problem profiles' on food hygiene standards and noise pollution and dog welfare.

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 service's Business Continuity Plan is going to be reviewed over the coming 12 months with the support of colleagues in North Worcestershire Emergency Planning. The restructured document should bring the service in line with the approach taken across other partner areas.

The risk register at Appendix 2 does not include elements relating to Covid 19 as the report looks back to a period before the current pandemic got hold of all of our lives. All of the service's activities have been reviewed in light of Covid 19. Currently the vast majority of staff are working from home. The office remains open for staff

to use but this is only when it is necessary, for example if officers need to print materials. This means there are seldom more than 6-8 staff from the service in the building at any point in time. We will be working with the Wyre Forest DC facilities team in the near future to assess safe working patterns within the building and to establish what a maximum occupancy of our space in the building will be. Managers will then plan how best to use our space but with the majority working successfully remotely, this should be relatively achievable.

With much proactive work suspended, time has been taken to review how our activities will be undertaken moving forward whilst Covid 19 remains a risk. Protocols for inspection are being addressed and the types of PPE that may be necessary to keep our officers safe are being sourced. Social distancing will be an important part of this and it will be difficult to do unannounced visits for the foreseeable future in anything other than the most essential of circumstances to ensure that officers and the people they are visiting remain safe. With many legitimate businesses this will not be an issue.

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.

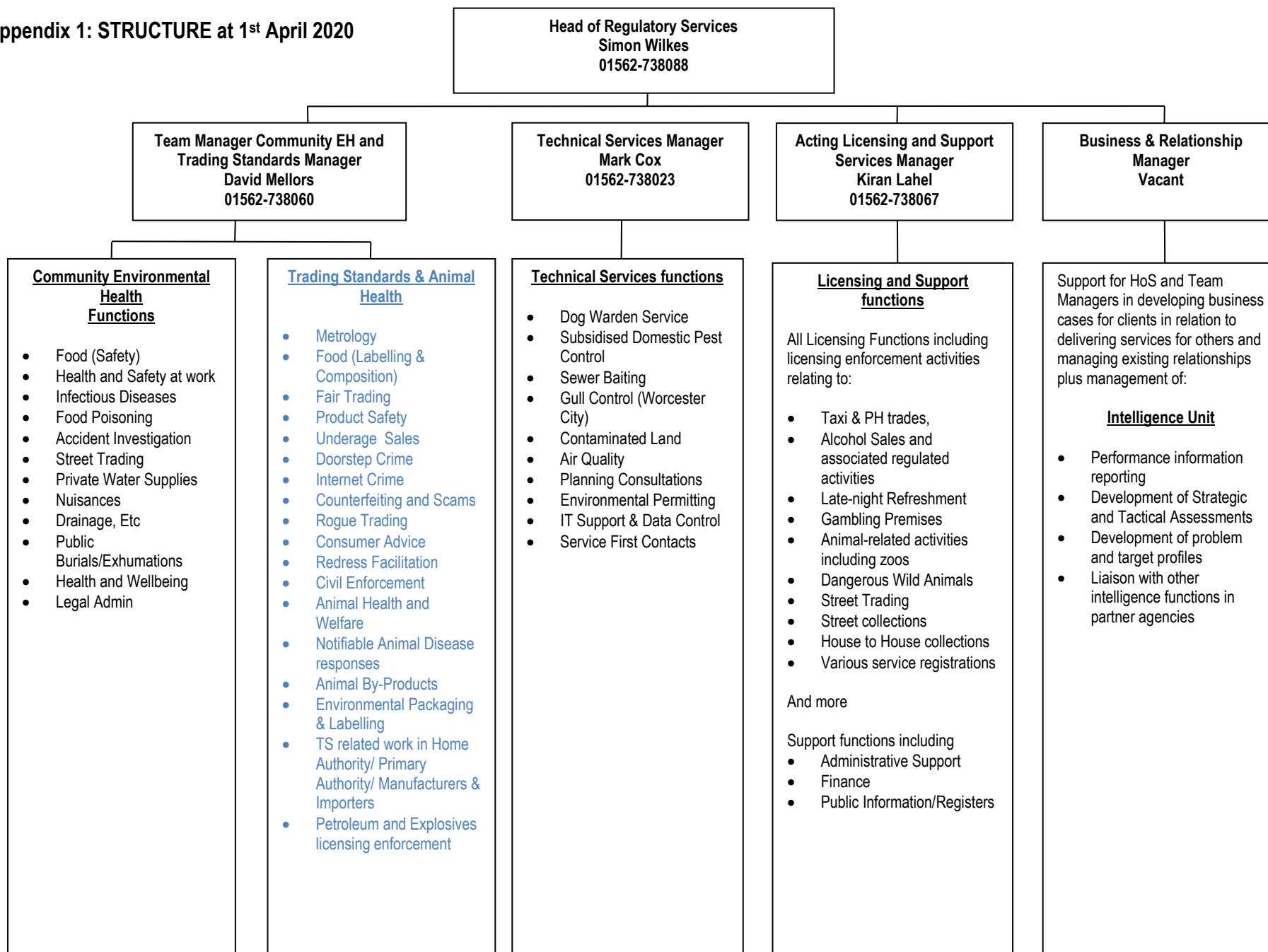
THE NEXT STEPS

Without the challenges of Covid 19, this would be a look forward at how we move on into the new financial year and what the headline areas for work are. We would be talking about key areas for activity and development being:

- Continued delivery of the WRS Business Plan and our annual operational service plans
- Maintaining existing income streams and looking at other ways of generating income for the service,
- Following our philosophy of continuous improvement, continuing to review operations to improve marginal efficiencies,
- Continuing 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.

All of these things will feature, however, one cannot underestimate the potential impact of Covid on the world that we were anticipating. WRS as a service will continue to be engaged in the disease response. It seems almost certain that our Health and Safety at Work role will be needed to deal with social distancing measures in the work place. This is an area of work that partners had moved to statutory minimum provision so further resource from within the service will need to be drawn upon to keep the business operating. We will also be required to work alongside Public Health colleagues in the Track, Trace and Test regime, dealing with local outbreaks arising in a wide range of businesses and other premises, potentially including schools. HSE may also ask us to deal with some of their premises depending on their resourcing position. So there is a strong possibility that some of these provisions will have to wait for calmer waters before they can be progressed in a meaningful way.

Appendix 1: STRUCTURE at 1st April 2020



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 VMWare
Issues with the WRS database system	Impact on work planning. Self-help may not enable savings required	On-going	Low	High	Green	Initial implementation is completed. Further development of the system will be treated as business as usual, with priority going to public access and self-help/ self-service to continue the channel shift process. Service website remains key access point. Tested disaster recovery of our Uniform back up and fail over to the business continuity server..
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	Green	Staff are equipped for mobile/home working. Touchdown stations available in partner council locations. Working from WFDC depot successfully tested over Christmas period.
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	In such event, service priorities to be managed and partners informed of any changes to service. Consultants are available to provide short term cover and this has worked well where we have used them to cover peak demand periods. However, having taken on contracts with additional authorities the demand has increased and neighbouring authorities have lost the ability to be able to assist with technical specialisms. We are active within regional and sub-regional groups to share resources if required. Effective training and development processes are in place to ensure recruitment and retention of staff. 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. Regular inventory and maintenance of equipment. In future budget for replace may be an issue but would be a relatively small amount for partners to share.
Pest contractors cease	Disruption to service.	On-going	Low	High	Amber	New framework contract has 6 pest control suppliers

operations.	Negative media coverage. Increased public health risks					so the loss of one allows work to be moved to the others. The reduced number of authorities providing this service makes the viability of the contract to contractors less certain.
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	Amber	Budget available to buy in use of other private sector providers in short term. Contracts tendered. The Dog Warden contracts are robust but we have one less kennel contractor but an additional five District Councils that we provide the service for. Work for other Public Sector clients are restricted to one kennelling provider raising the risk this element poses. Out of hours contract now provided in house reducing risk but provides concerns over ability to provide cover in short term whilst appointing additional dog warden.
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	Amber	Some continuing issues around access to the financial system from Wyre Forest house, meaning managers are reliant on host finance officers for financial reporting. ICT team from WFDC and BDC continue to work to resolve the issue
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	Low-Medium	High	Amber	New legal agreement limits variations in contribution before partners have to move to contractual relationship. Leanness of organisation minimises overheads and focuses resource at the front line. Growth strategy should generate income to support partners in the future. Some reputational damage and perceived loss of commercial skills from the County Council withdrawing from the partnership.
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	Green	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 would 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	Amber	Limited detail of what statutory minima are. LGA 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. Service has developed systems that follow the principles of the requirements of bodies like FSA so can show some level of compliance. WRS principle of moving away from rigid inspection programme of Food Standards Code (as approved by WRS Joint Board) to intelligence led interventions is compliant with Food Safety Act albeit not as FSA would be able to sanction. Environmental

						reporting for Local Air Quality Management, Pollution Prevention and Control and Private Water Supply Inspections to Defra and DWI have received positive responses with no issues of concern raised.
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	Green	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 2019/20

Full Year Budget 19-20

Committed Expenditure
Apr - Mar 20

Variance

Direct Expenditure

£'000

£'000

£'000

Employees

Salary

2,700

2,522

-178

Agency Staff

0

91

91

Employee Insurance

25

13

-12

Sub-Total - Employees

2,725

2,626

-99

Premises

Rent / Hire of Premise

54

53

-1

Cleaning

1

1

-0

Utilities

0

0

0

Sub-Total - Premises

55

54

-1

Transport

Vehicle Hire

13

1

-12

Vehicle Fuel

8

5

-3

Road Fund Tax

1

0

-1

Vehicle Insurance

5

4

-1

Vehicle Maintenance

3

2

-1

Car Allowances	80	73	-7
Sub-Total - Transport	109	84	-25

Supplies and Services

Furniture & Equipment	34	39	5
Clothes, uniforms and laundry	2	1	-1
Printing & Photocopying	17	22	5
Postage	11	15	4
ICT	40	60	20
Telephones	21	14	-7
Training & Seminars	24	20	-4
Insurance	20	10	-10
Third Party Payments	144	144	0
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	313	323	11

Contractors

Dog Warden	145	86	-60
Pest Control	58	62	4
Taxi / Alcohol / & Other Licensing	62	89	27
Other contractors/consultants	3	0	-3
Water Safety	5	6	1
Food Safety	2	0	-2
Environmental Protection	12	55	43
Grants / Subscriptions	13	14	2
Advertising, Publicity and	6	2	-4

Promotion			
Sub-Total	305	315	10
Income			
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-490	-442	48
Sub-Total	-490	-442	48
Service Total	3,017	2,960	-57
To be recommended			
Refunded to Partners	0	37	37
Stray Dog Van Reserve	0	20	20
Sub-Total	0	57	57
Net Position	3,017	3,017	-0

Appendix 4: 3-year budgets 2020/21 to 2022/23

Account description	Budget	Budget	Budget
	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employees			
Monthly salaries	2,749	2,789	2,833
Training for professional qualifications	0	0	0
Medical fees (employees')	2	2	2
Employers' liability insurance	40	40	40
Employees' professional subscriptions	2	2	2
Sub-Total - Employees	2,793	2,833	2,877
Premises			
Rents	52	52	52
Room hire	2	2	2
Trade Waste	0	0	0
Sub-Total - Premises	54	54	54
Transport			
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	70	70	70
Sub-Total - Transport	105	105	105
Supplies & Service			
Equipment - purchase/maintenance/rental	22	22	22

Materials	9	9	9
Clothing, uniforms & laundry	2	2	2
Training fees	23	23	23
General insurances	5	5	5
Printing and stationery	18	18	18
Books and publications	2	2	2
Postage/packaging	11	11	11
ICT	40	40	40
Telephones	21	21	21
Taxi Tests	22	22	22
CRB Checks (taxi)	26	26	26
Support service recharges	100	100	100
Support service recharges - ICT	44	44	44
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	344	344	344

Budget
2020 / 2021
£000's

Budget
2021 / 2022
£000's

Budget
2022 / 2023
£000's

Contractors

Consultants / Contractors' fees/charges/SLA's	234	234	234
Advertising (general)	5	5	5
Grants and subscriptions	11	11	11
Marketing/promotion/publicity	2	2	2
Sub-Total - Contractors	252	252	252

Income

Grants / Primary Authority / Food Training / Contaminated Land / Stray Dogs / Ad Hoc	-310	-310	-310
Sub-Total - Income	-310	-310	-310

Income

From partners for Technical Officers	-70	-64	-66
Sub-Total - Income	-70	-64	-66

Additional Income

Income to be Determined	-60	-60	-60
Income to be found due to unavoidable salary pressures	-90	-136	-178
Sub-Total - Income	-150	-196	-238

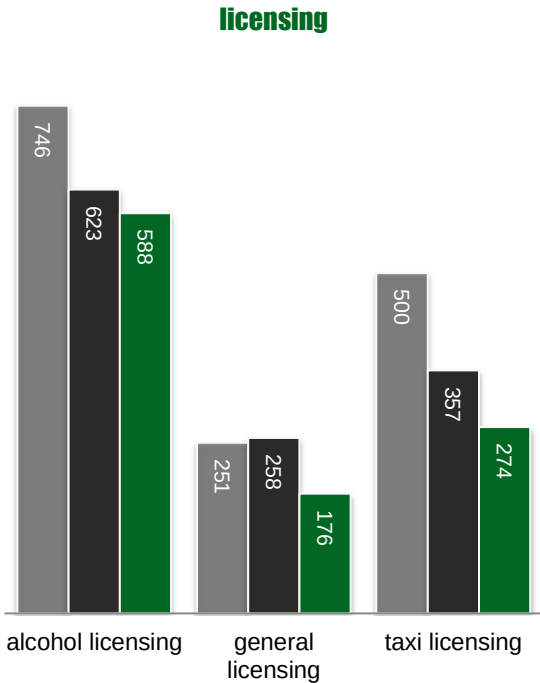
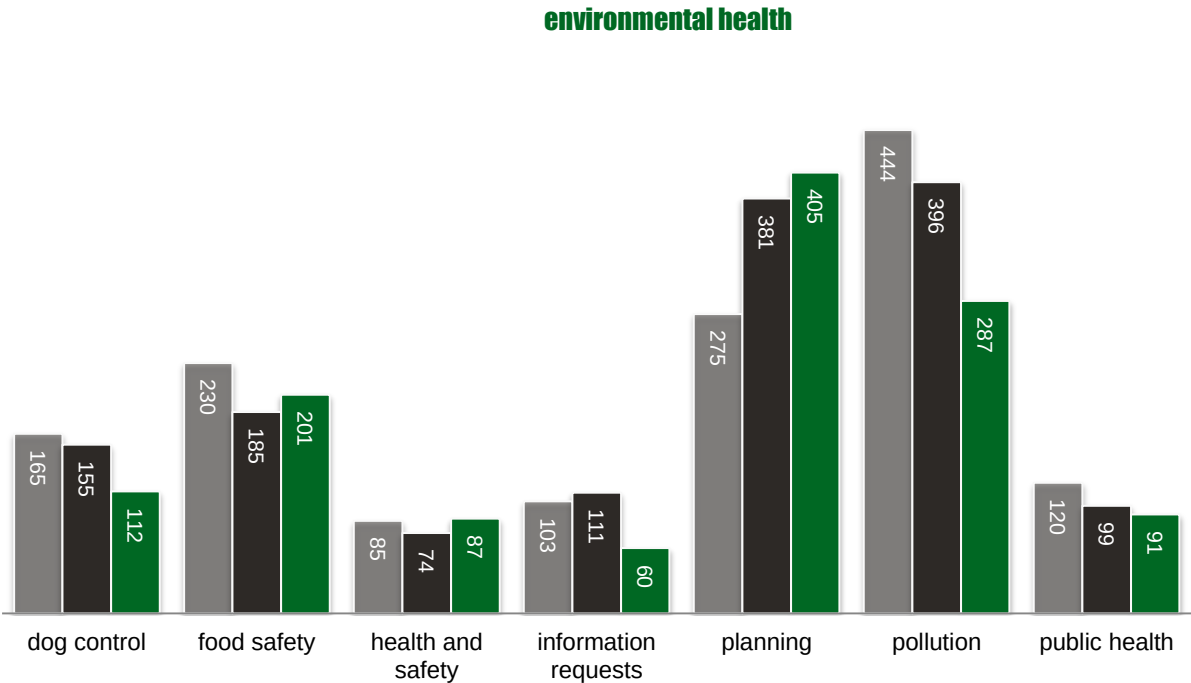
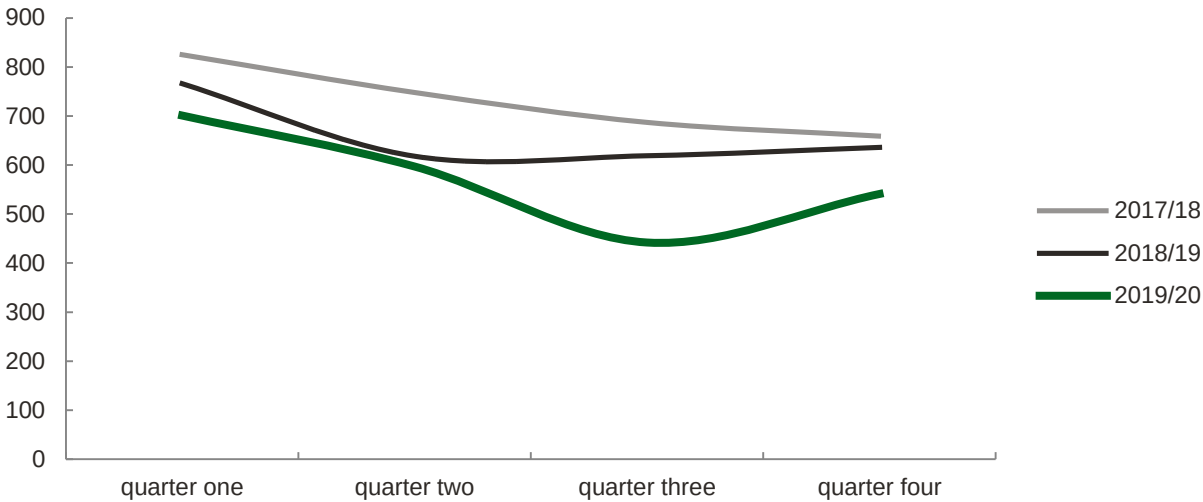
DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP BUDGET	3,017	3,017	3,017
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Current Partner Percentages

Bromsgrove	14.55%
Redditch	17.53%
Wyre Forest	15.35%
Wychavon	23.24%
Malvern	12.79%
Worcs City	16.54%
Total	100.00%

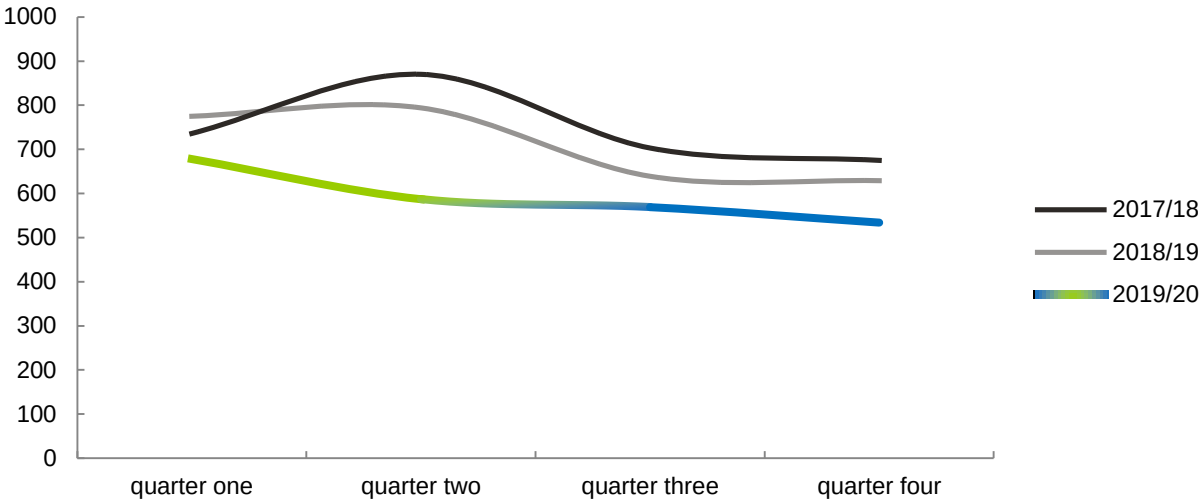
Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners – Bromsgrove District Council

The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications and notifications) where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Bromsgrove.

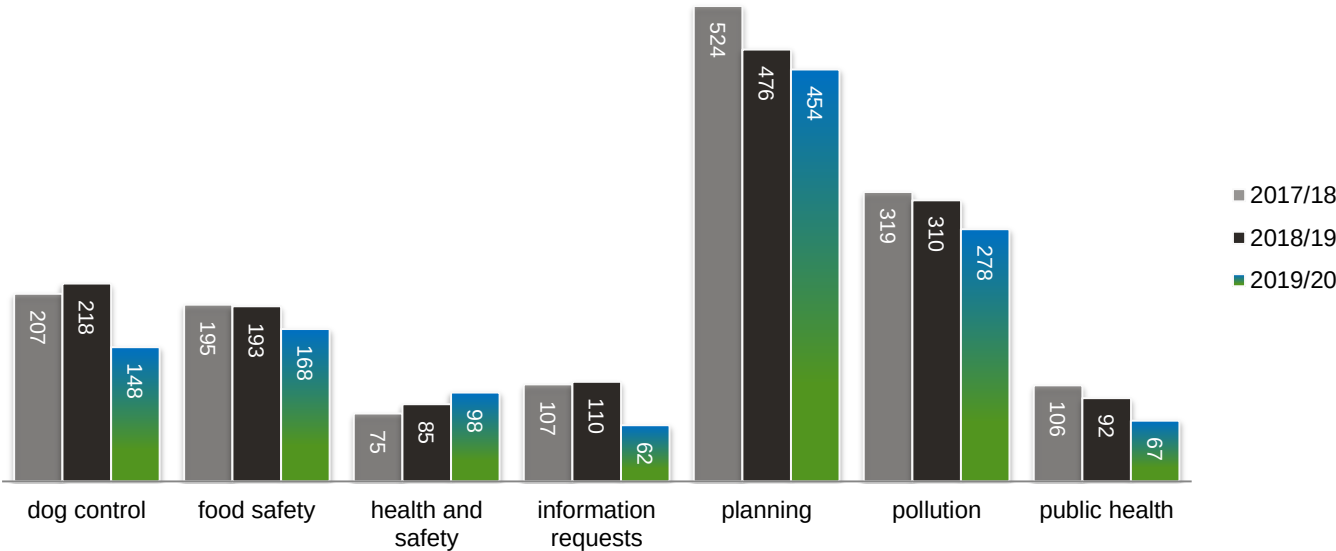


Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners – Malvern Hills District Council

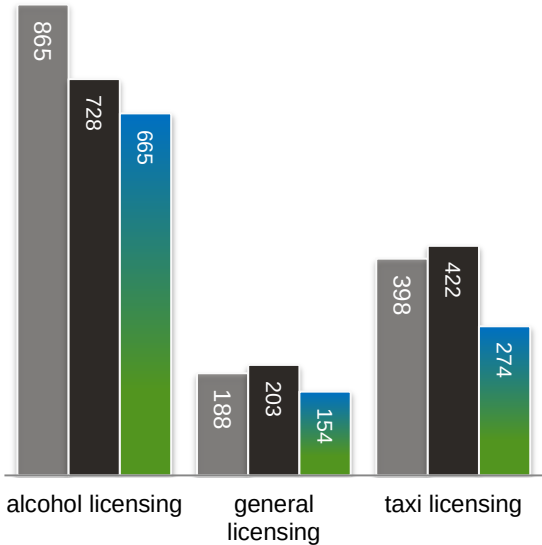
The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications and notifications) where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Malvern Hills.



environmental health

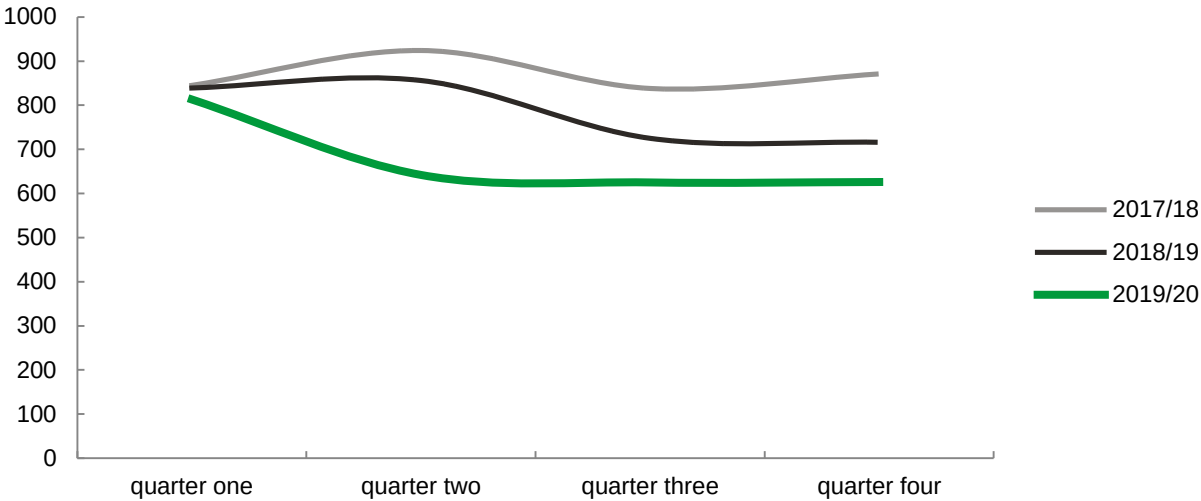


licensing

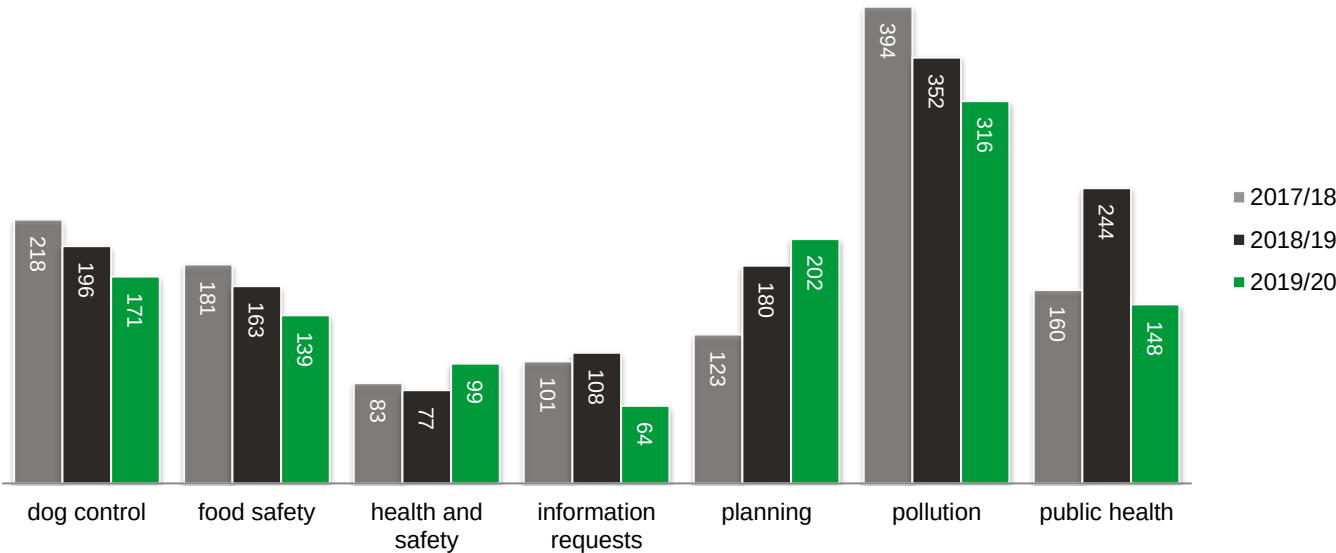


Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners – Redditch Borough Council

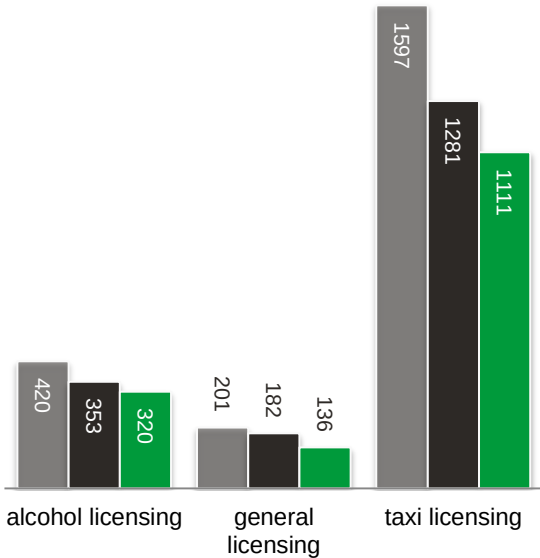
The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications and notifications) where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Redditch.



environmental health

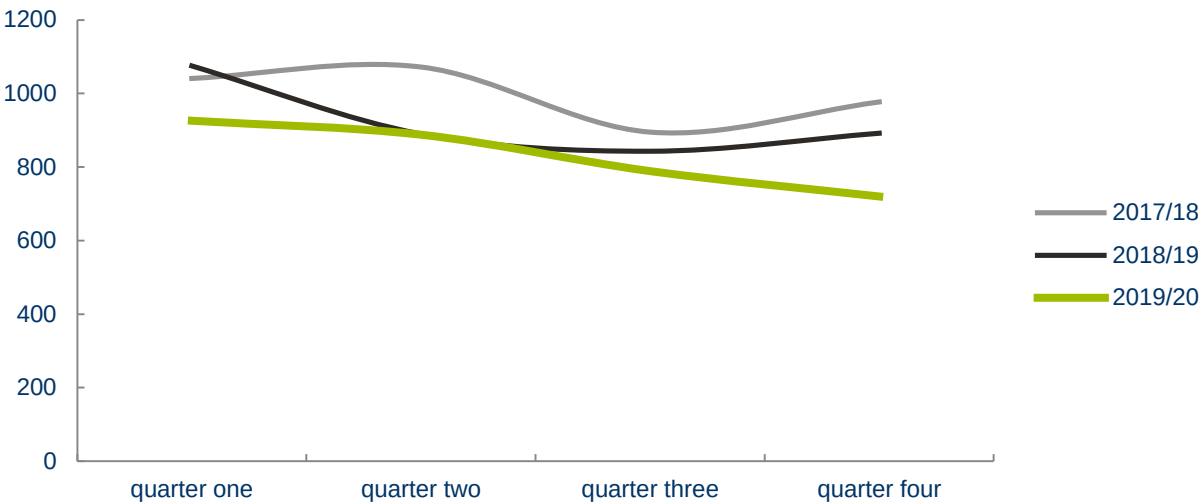


licensing

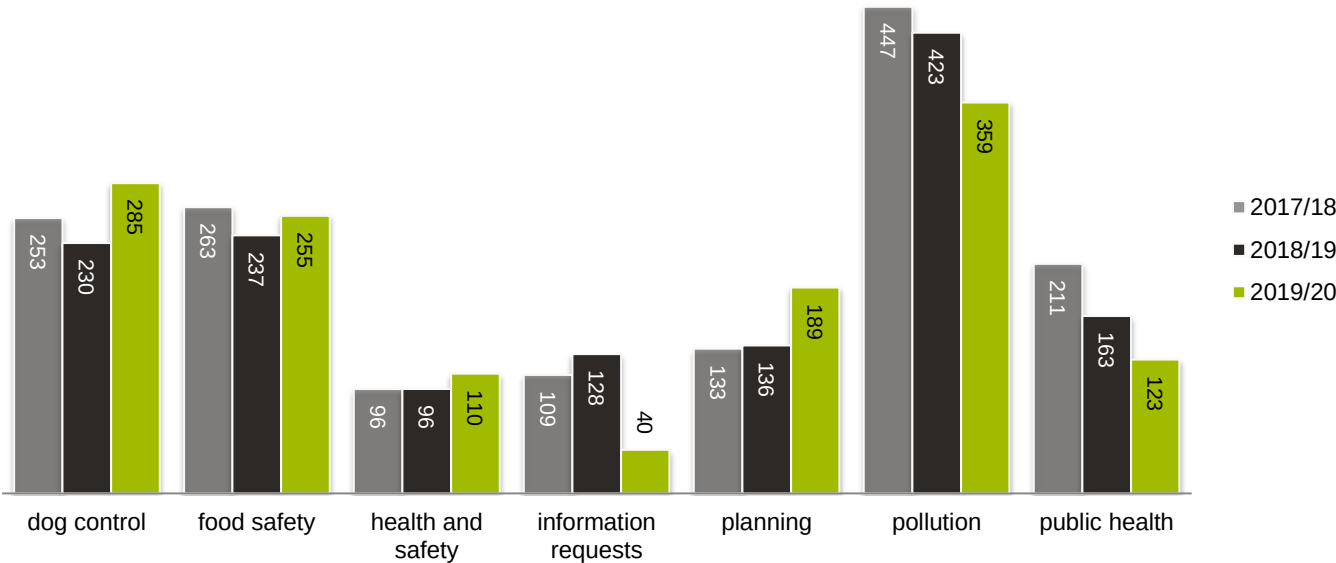


Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners – Worcester City Council

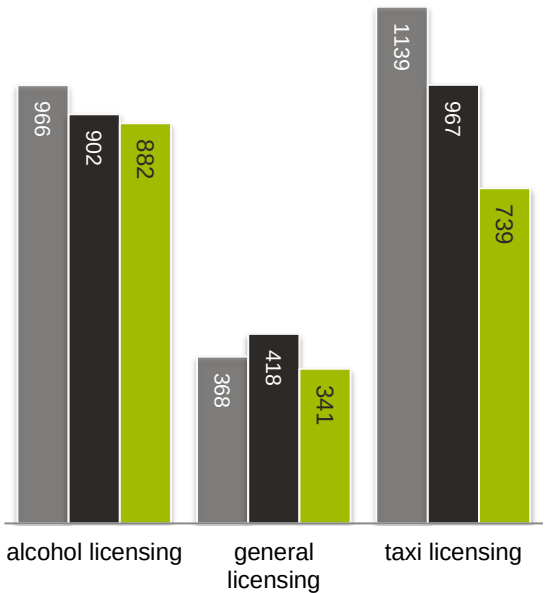
The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications and notifications) where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Worcester City.



environmental Health

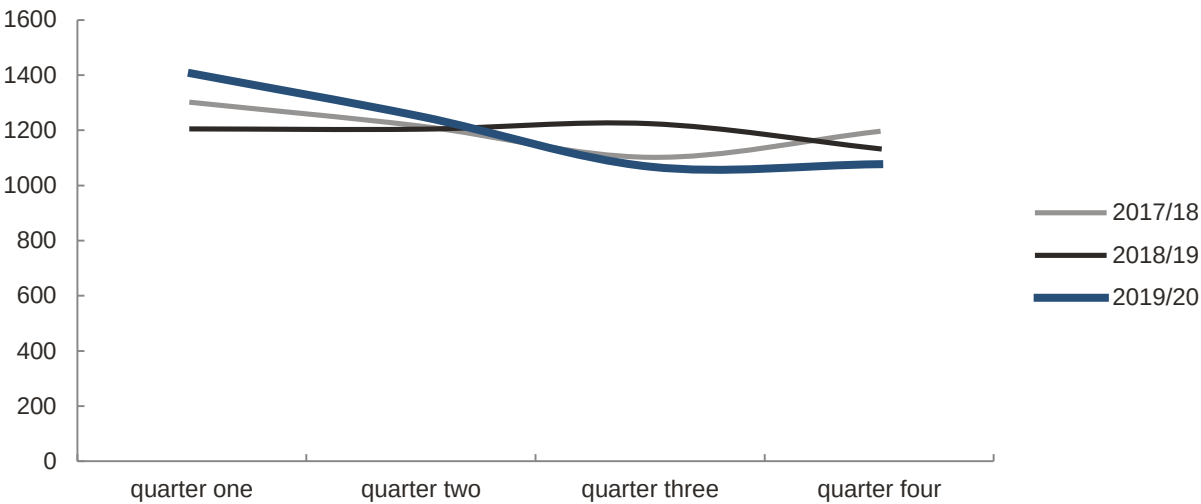


licensing

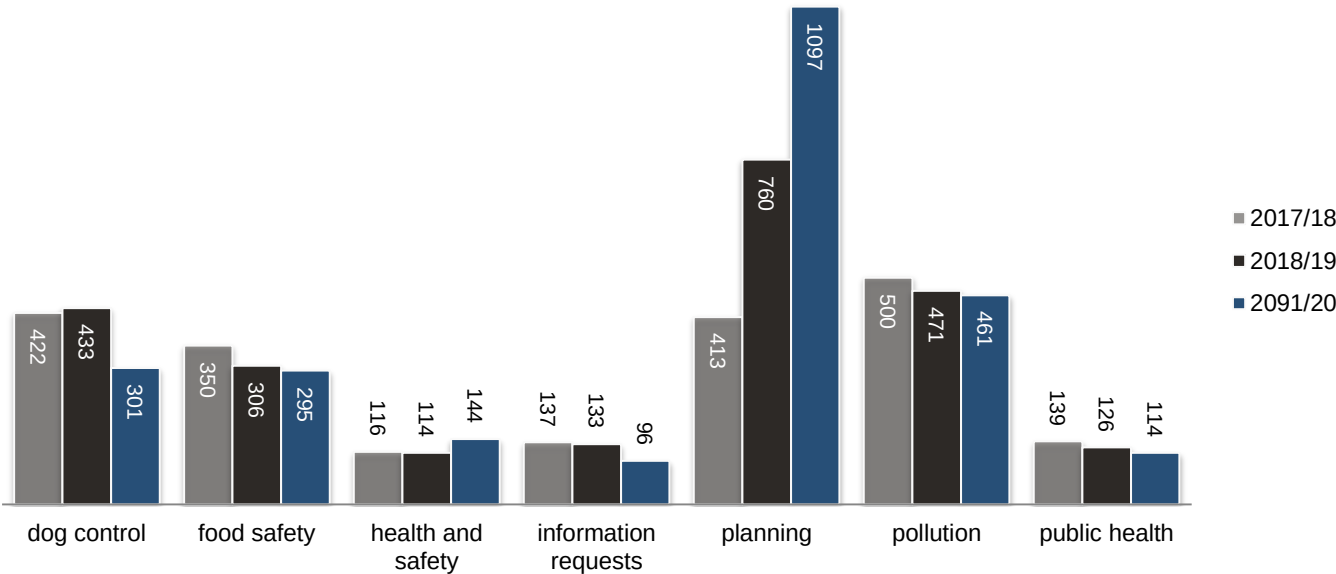


Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners – Wychavon District Council

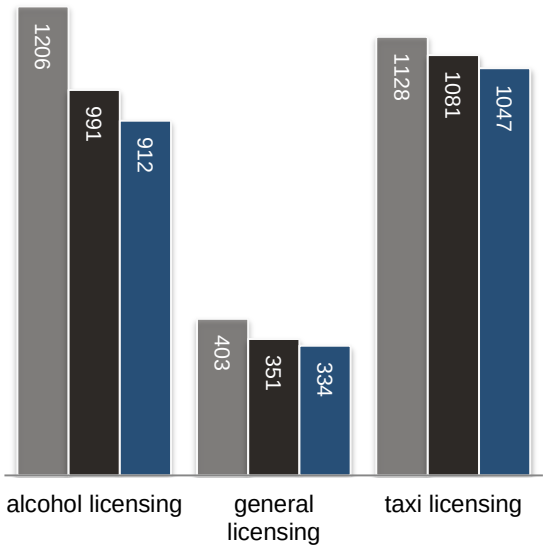
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environmental Health

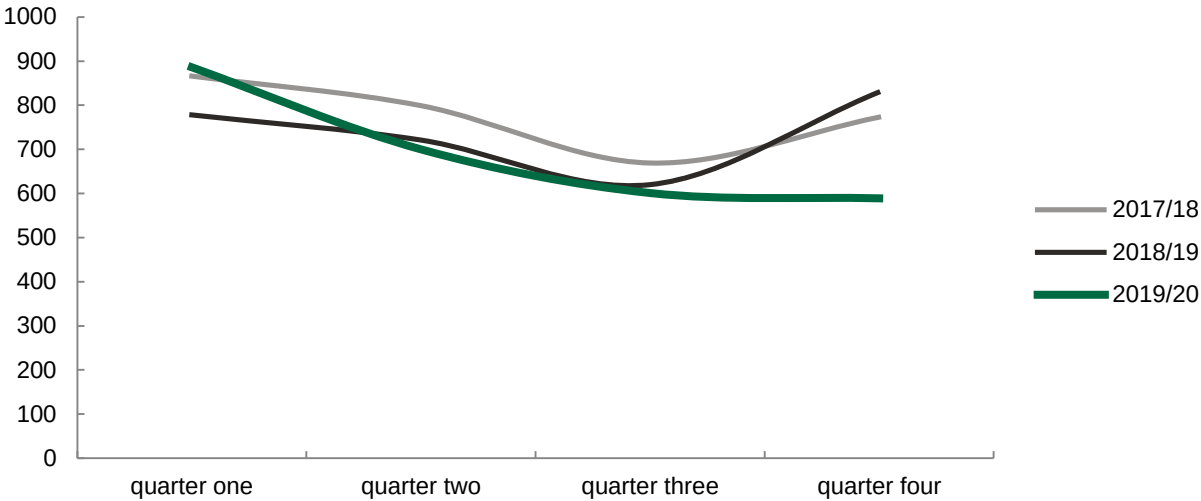


licensing

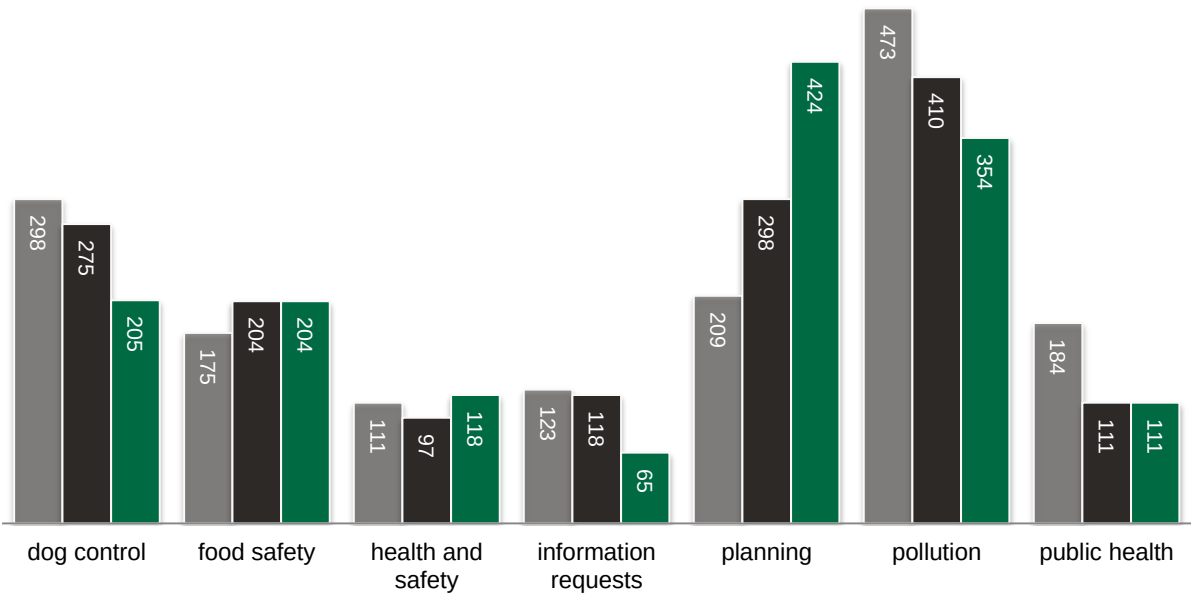


Appendix 5: Activity Summary for individual partners – Wyre Forest District Council

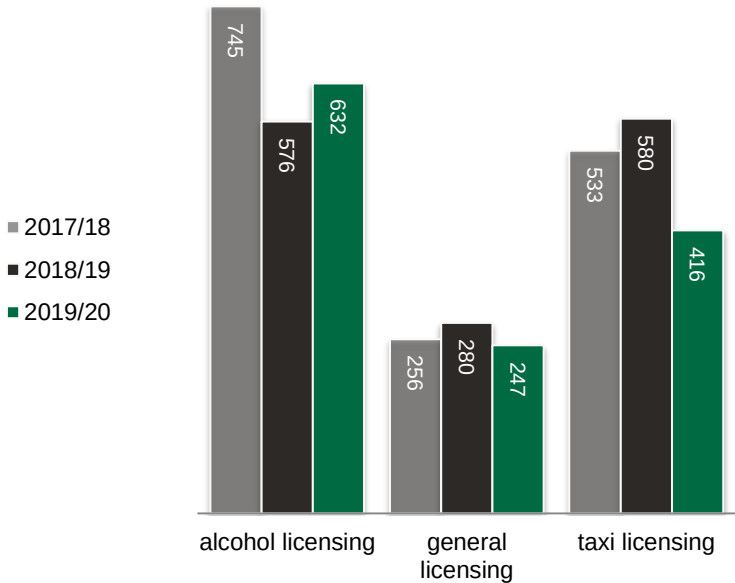
The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing cases (complaints, enquiries, applications and notifications) where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Wyre Forest.



environmental health



licensing



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WRS Board 18th June 2020

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES REVENUE MONITORING APRIL – MARCH 2020 & ANNUAL RETURN

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

- 1.1 Note the final financial position for the period April – March 2020
- 1.2 Approve £20k transfer to WRS reserves to purchase dog warden van
- 1.3 Approve the 2019/20 refund of £37k to the participating Councils.

Council	Refund from 2019/20 £'000
Bromsgrove District Council	5
Malvern Hills District Council	5
Redditch Borough Council	6
Worcester City Council	6
Wychavon District Council	9
Wyre Forest District Council	6
Total	37



Contribution to Priorities

The robust financial management arrangements ensure the priorities of the service can be delivered effectively.

Introduction/Summary

This report presents the final financial position for Worcestershire Regulatory Services for the period April – March 2020. In addition a number of financial statements are appended to this report.

Background

During the financial year quarterly financial reports are presented for consideration by the Partners and the Board.

Report

The following reports are included for Board's Attention:

- Revenue Monitoring Statement 2019/20 - Appendix 1
- Annual Statement 2019/20 - Appendix 2
- Annual Statement Analysis 2019/20 – Appendix 3
- WRS Income Analysis 2019/20 – Appendix 4
- Reserve Statement – Appendix 5

Revenue Monitoring

The detailed revenue report is attached at Appendix 1. This shows a final outturn of £57k, this represents 1.9% of the actual budget and is mainly due to:-

- Agency Staff required to cover vacant posts, maternity etc was lower than actual salary savings.
- Any grant funded expenditure is shown separate to the core service costs as this is not funded by the participating Councils.
- WRS managers set themselves an income budget of £490k for 2019/20, unfortunately due to the loss of one of the stray dog contracts, which generated around £60k worth of income, there was an income shortfall of £48k against budget .
- As requested by this Board Appendix 1 details explanations relating to the variances.



Agenda Item 8

- It is proposed that the £57k is allocated as follows:-
 - i. £20k to purchase a dog warden van. An assessment of whether electric vans are preferable requires a period of time post COVID 19 lockdown before a purchase can be made.
 - ii. The remaining £37k, is proposed to be refunded back to partners as per below:-

Bromsgrove District Council	£5,408
Malvern Hills District Council	£4,756
Redditch Borough Council	£6,514
Worcs City Council	£6,243
Wychavon District Council	£8,626
Wyre Forest District Council	£5,699

The refund to partners takes into account the adjustment for the overspend on Pest Control and all other charges to partners.

All partners have been advised of all recharges and refunds for completion of their statement of accounts.

Financial Implications

None other than those stated in the report

Sustainability

None as a direct result of this report

Contact Points

Jayne Pickering – 01527-881400

Background Papers

Detailed financial business case



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WRS - Profit & Loss Report 2019/20
Total WRS Final Outturn 2019-20

Appendix 1

	Full Year Budget 19-20	Committed Expenditure Apr - Mar 20	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Direct Expenditure			
Employees			
Salary	2,700	2,522	-178
Agency Staff	0	91	91
Employee Insurance	25	13	-12
Sub-Total - Employees	2,725	2,626	-99
Premises			
Rent / Hire of Premise	54	53	-1
Cleaning	1	1	-0
Utilities	0	0	0
Sub-Total - Premises	55	54	-1
Transport			
Vehicle Hire	13	1	-12
Vehicle Fuel	8	5	-3
Road Fund Tax	1	0	-1
Vehicle Insurance	5	4	-1
Vehicle Maintenance	3	2	-1
Car Allowances	80	73	-7
Sub-Total - Transport	109	84	-25
Supplies and Services			
Furniture & Equipment	34	39	5
Clothes, uniforms and laundry	2	1	-1
Printing & Photocopying	17	22	5
Postage	11	15	4
ICT	40	60	20
Telephones	21	14	-7
Training & Seminars	24	20	-4
Insurance	20	10	-10
Third Party Payments	144	144	0
Sub-Total - Supplies & Service	313	323	11

There has been vacant posts and two employees on maternity leave throughout the year, resulting in a projected saving in salaries. This is offset by the costs associated with additional agency staff being used to cover the vacancies and maternity posts and to support the service where staff are working on additional income generation projects.

Service was planning to replace one of the dog vans by 31st March 20 with an electric van, however this was delayed due to Covid 19 and a reserve of £20k was agreed to progress this in 20-21

Essential calibrations required on noise and dust monitoring equipment. Pace recording equipment has broken and needed replacing.

ICT refresh was required to stay security compliant and replace obsolete equipment

£100k BDC hosting / £44k WFDC ICT hosting

WRS - Profit & Loss Report 2019/20
Total WRS Final Outturn 2019-20

	Full Year Budget 19-20	Committed Expenditure Apr - Mar 20	Variance	
Contractors				
Dog Warden	145	86	-60	With the loss of the Police Force 22 Contract, the kennelling and veterinary charges were less than predicted. New working pattern of new staff has also meant more dogs collected in house rather than by contractor.
Pest Control	58	62	4	
Taxi / Alcohol / & Other Licensing	62	89	27	Due to change in Animal Activity licensing, additional £25k worth of vet inspections, which is fully recovered and also offsett in the income line.
Other contractors/consultants	3	0	-3	
Water Safety	5	6	1	
Food Safety	2	0	-2	
Environmental Protection	12	55	43	Bereavement / Works in Default to be charged to relevant partners, offsett in Income
Grants / Subscriptions	13	14	2	
Advertising, Publicity and Promotion	6	2	-4	
Sub-Total	305	315	10	
Income				
Training Courses / Bereavement / Works in Default / Sewer Baiting etc	-490	-442	48	See Append 4
Sub-Total	-490	-442	48	
Service Total	3,017	2,960	-57	
To be recommended				
Refunded to Partners	0	37	37	
Stray Dog Van Reserve	0	20	20	
Sub-Total	0	57	57	
Net Position	3,017	3,017	-0	
Grant Funded Spend / Reserves	Spend 19-20 £'000	Remaining Reserve Balance £'000	Funded By	
Health & Well Being	5	6	Primary Care Trust	
Worcs Works Well	8	32	Public Health Dept	
LEP	23	13	Worcestershire Local Enterprise	
Better Business For all	12	4	Regulatory Delivery	
County Buyout	43	131		
Brexit	0	40		
Stray Dog Van Reserve		20		
Grant Income	-91			
Total	0	245		

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Annual Return For Year Ended 31st March 2020

Accounting Statement For Worcester Regulatory Services

	Year ending	
	31st March 2019 £	31st March 2020 £
1 Balances brought forward	286,736	264,489
2 (+) Income from local taxation and / or levy	0	0
3 (+) Total other receipts	3,530,730	3,608,711
4 (-) Staff costs	2,680,896	2,776,843
5 (-) Loan interest / capital repayments	0	0
6 (-) All other payments	872,081	857,457
7 (=) Balances carried forward	264,489	238,900

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Regulatory Services Income received 19-20

Income from Partners

	£
Budget	3,017,000
Refund of Savings	-37,246
Pension Deficit	135,484
Bereavement/ Public Burials	41,422
Marlpool - Redditch	5,568
Pest Control Overspend - Wychavon / Wyre Forest & Redditch	15,420
Taxi Tests - Worcs City	2,800
Employee for Animal Activity - Apr - Dec 19	31,341
Employee for Primary Authority Work - Apr - Dec 19	23,936
Employee for Additional Gull Work - Apr - Dec 19 - Worcs City	30,484
	3,266,208

Grant Income

	£
LEP	6,254
Healthy Eating	5,188
Brexit	40,000
Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting	14,088
	65,529

Other Income

	£
Stray Dog Income	45,429
County - Mgmt / Admin / Legal etc	54,018
External Intelligence Support	535
Planning Support Work	28,616
Contaminated Land Work	22,908
PPC Work	11,083
Primary Authority work	32,966
Training / Risk Assessments of Water Supplies / Burials etc	3,957
Vet Fee Inspection Costs Recovered	27,915
Food Training Courses / Certificates / Food Hygiene Rating	10,759
Licensing - Pre-App Advice	2,701
Savings incurred due to Bromsgrove District Council paying for forward funding pension costs 3 years in advance - year 3 of 3 savings	31,000
Taxi Admin Work / Taxi Database / Victorian Fayre / Trans Tapes	5,089
	276,973

Total Box 3 Accounting Statement

3,608,711

Regulatory Services Employees 19-20

Box 4

	£
Employees Related Costs	2,776,843
	2,776,843

Regulatory Services Other Costs 19-20

Box 6

Premise Related Cost	53,609
Transport Related Cost	83,844
Supplies & Service	720,004
	857,457

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services Income Received 19-20

Income from Partners	£
Budget	3,017,000
Refund of Savings	-37,246
Stray Dog Van Reserve	-20,000
Bereavement/ Public Burials	41,422
Marlpool - Redditch	5,568
Pest Control Overspend - Wychavon / Wyre Forest & Redditch	15,420
Taxi Tests - Worcs City	2,800
Employee for Animal Activity	31,341
Employee for Primary Authority Work	23,936
Employee for Additional Gull Work - Worcs City	30,484
	3,110,724
Grant Income	£
Severn Trent - Sewer Baiting	14,088
	14,088
Other Income	£
Stray Dog Income	45,429
County - Mgmt / Admin / Legal etc	54,018
External Intelligence Support	535
Planning Support Work	28,616
Contaminated Land Work	22,908
PPC Work	11,083
Primary Authority work	32,966
Training / Risk Assessments of Water Supplies / Burials etc	3,957
Vet Fee Inspection Costs Recovered	27,915
Food Training Courses / Certificates / Food Hygiene Rating	10,759
Licensing - Pre-App Advice	2,701
Taxi Admin Work / Taxi Database / Victorian Fayre / Trans Tapes	5,089
Savings incurred due to Bromsgrove District Council paying for forward funding pension costs 3 years in advance - year 3 of 3 savings	31,000
	276,973
Total Income	3,401,785
2019/20 Base Budget from Partners	-2,959,754
Total Income Excluding Budget	442,032

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services 19-20

Earmarked Reserve	Balance 1st April 2019	Transfers Out 2019/20	Transfers In 2019/20	Balance 31st March 2020
	£	£	£	£
Worcs Works Well	39,585	-7,884		31,701
LEP	35,740	-23,047		12,693
County - Exit Fee	173,147	-42,500		130,647
Better Business For All	16,017	-12,158		3,859
Stray Dog Van			20,000	20,000
Brexit			40,000	40,000
Total	264,490	-85,590	60,000	238,900
Conditional Reserve	10,911	-5,063		5,849
Total Earmark Reserve & Conditional Reserve	275,401	-90,652	60,000	244,749

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WRS Board: 18th June 2020

Update on Income Generation following provision of additional resource

Recommendation	Members are asked to note the report and to recommend that the relevant Officer Members of the Board agree to the continuation of this fixed term post.
Background	WRS regulate a large number of industrial processes across Worcestershire on behalf of the District Councils under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Businesses that require a permit to operate a specified process have to make an application. The purpose of the permit is to enable the local authority to regulate emissions to atmosphere (and in some cases land and water) such that they represent suitable practice, minimise pollution and comply with the regulations. Due to our size and history of investment in staff training and development we have gained a reputation for knowledge and experience across the region and beyond. WRS now sit on three DEFRA industry sector technical panels and in recognising our experience and expertise when we assisted them in dealing with non-compliance issues at one complex site we now undertake this work for Gloucester City Council as well.
Report	The interaction between the local authority and any business that requires a permit is largely supportive, providing businesses with advice on how to comply with the regulations. The interaction between WRS and the business is valued as the companies we deal with recognise that experience and knowledge gained from visiting similar businesses and competitors and having liaison with Defra. During 2017/18 the value of WRS's Permitting Team was demonstrated by a number of businesses starting discussions around possible contractual arrangements with us to provide assured advice under the Primary Authority arrangements. Initial discussions with businesses suggested there were a number very interested in paying for advice and assistance across a variety of industrial sectors. The scope of this new area of potential income to support the WRS budget was recognised as well as the possible demand placed on a small team of four Officers. There were concerns that we would not have the capacity to take on the work for these businesses and deliver the service's commitments to the 6 partners and existing district council customers. In order to assist the team, the creation of an additional fixed term post was approved by the Board on the "invest to save" principle to see if sufficient income could be generated to fulfill the additional capacity and support the WRS budget. The post was filled in Q2 of 2018/19 with the post holder assisting all the technical teams by freeing up the more



technically able and experienced team members to secure contracts and deliver the work plans associated with them. Having the additional capacity within the service has allowed the team to chase a number of income streams including Primary Authority work.

Primary Authority Contracts (for Environmental Permitting)

Since the appointment of the post holder, WRS has been successful in gaining two Primary Authority Contracts for environmental permitting with CEMEX and Wienerberger, the first of their kind nationally for this regulatory area. Initial discussions with the companies were very promising, but since the contracts were signed, both businesses have only agreed to limited work programmes with us. Both companies, but Wienerberger in particular, continue to value our involvement with their company and have agreed to a couple of one off pieces of work.

For a primary authority contract to be fruitful for both parties, the company needs to agree to a significant programme of advice. Generally, those most in need will be those struggling with compliance with the regulations. Dealing with such businesses places some reputational risk on WRS. The companies that most welcome working with the regulators in a Primary Authority relationship are generally those that are well organised and willing/able to achieve regulatory compliance with the minimum of input.

The service will continue to look for new potential Primary Authority arrangements in this area to maintain budgetary support from this source. It is a relatively safe income stream, albeit each agreement has a potentially limited financial yield in the medium to long term.

Medium-sized Combustion Plant Directive

There are a number of organisations including public bodies who operate diesel powered generators. The government brought these into the environmental permitting regime last year for the first time with the introduction of the Medium sized Combustion Plant Directive. The permits for this activity are enforced by the Environment Agency, however, due to WRS' experience with environmental permitting and our reputation, we have been offering support to a number of NHS Trusts and other public bodies to assist their compliance with the regulations. We have already completed work for South Devon & Exeter NHS Trust, Yeovil NHS Trust, South Warwickshire NHS Trust and the Gibraltar Government Administration and we have completed a significant proportion of the contract with the MOD. As a result of the work for Exeter and South Devon NHS Trust, they have asked WRS officers to undertake other paid-for activities in other areas of environmental compliance. The law allows public bodies to contract together without having to go through the significant costs of tendering as long as they can show good value for money from the work.

As well as NHS Trusts, we are investigating the demand for this type of work with other public bodies and private organisations who operate medium sized combustion plant.

Contaminated Land and Air Quality Advice

This is an area of work that members will be familiar with WRS providing an income from. By cross skilling the post holder of the fixed term appointment and utilising those skills we have been able to undertake discreet one off projects in providing contaminated land and air quality advice and support. The existing team providing this work is already working at capacity and delivers services for three additional local authorities in Gloucestershire and further afield.



Known and likely Income in Q1 2020/21

The current MOD contract is divided into Phases and we have completed the first four of six. This included production of a technical standard with case study examples to be rolled out nationally. We are commissioned to provide training for their sector leads (Navy, Airforce, Army). This work was delayed by COVID-19 restrictions and will now be rolled out using Zoom rather than as initially required by the MOD.

We have been continuing to supply technical advice to Worcester City Council and Worcestershire County Council in relation to contaminated land advice in the absence of an employed Contaminated Land Officer at the authority (contaminated land is not within WRS scope for Worcester City).

Following a reduction in Primary Authority advice in the final quarter of last year due to COVID-19 impacts, discussions are now taking place on picking up the work programme and for CEMEX, the provision of Assured Advice.

Future prospects

In addition to the contract awarded with the MOD there is a strong possibility that this will lead to further work during 2020/21 as they identify the scale of work to be completed. Additional leads are being pursued with MCPD work for various NHS Trusts, Water Companies and others as either follow on projects or new permit applications. We are tendering for a contract with a private company for this type of work at the moment. The MCPD work is likely to be short lived in terms of years, but for at least the next two years, there will be potential opportunities to undertake this work as organisations struggle to become compliant with the regulations.

Budgetary position

Additional Income	Primary Authority	£5,132.50
	Permitting work	£17,903.20
	Contaminated land & Air Quality advice	£9,397.96
	Likely income in Q1 2020/21 in addition to above	£19,022.50
		£51,456.16
Cost	Fixed Term Technical Officer (Grade 5)	
	[1.75 years]	£43,014.92
Resulting income yielded beyond cost		£8441.24

The additional income achieved in this team would not have been possible without the additional resource provided. Delivery of the MOD contract and some of the others mentioned above have the potential to require significant resources to complete. We understand our costs and are well placed to arrange for further additional resources to be added to the establishment, on a temporary basis should it be needed and more permanently if these income streams can be established as safe in the long term.

The original post holder was successful in being appointed to a permanent position with the team, leaving the post to be covered by agency staff during the final quarter of the year. With the drop off in Primary Authority work we have not used the funds available for the final months of the fixed term appointment (April – June 2020). The resultant cost of



Agenda Item 9

the fixed term appointment was therefore less than the two-year period available. Without the capacity provided it would have been impossible to pursue much of the work set out above. The tables above outline the positive yield beyond the cost of investment that the additional capacity has created.

The yield is not as strong as we initially envisaged. This is partly due to COVID-19 impacts and will continue to be affected in part by those until businesses are operational once more. However, we have met our costs and produced a small margin to support our budget. This demonstrates the potential value of adding resource in the right areas to the WRS platform.

We believe that we have a realistic possibility of achieving the same again and increasing the income generated and on that basis would welcome the opportunity to extend the post for a further two years.

Contact Point

Mark Cox

Technical Services Manager

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WRS Board 18th June 2020

Activity and Performance Data Quarters 1, 2 3 and 4

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 Q4 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 With the exception of August, the number of food safety requests received during this year has been largely in line with 2018/19. Approximately 51% of cases were hygiene related; with three quarters of complaints relating to food products and a quarter to hygiene concerns at food businesses. The remaining 49% of cases were largely enquires, but also included requests for export health certificates and requests for re-ratings. Based on the 1242 inspection interventions undertaken this year, approximately 6% led to a non-compliant rating (a rating of 0, 1 or 2) being issued. The majority of businesses however have since been brought into compliance. It is worth noting that, towards the end of the year, proactive inspections of food businesses were suspended by the Food Standards Agency due to COVID-19. The number of stray or lost dogs reported continues to decline, with the total this year a reduction of 17% compared to the previous year. The type of cases recorded remains consistent however, with 69% relating to 'contained' stray dogs. This means dogs were found and held by, for example, a member of the public. Our dog wardens are not required to patrol areas collecting strays unless there is a specific complaint.



In general, WRS receives very few dog control complaints with the majority of service requests being described as third party requests and enquiries. Based on the 111 complaints received this year, 54 cases related to dog fouling or persistent straying whilst 48 cases related to dangerous dogs.

The number of health and safety cases received during this year is broadly in line with the previous year. There has however, been a continued decline in the number of complaints and enquiries.

Approximately 52% of cases were reports of accidents, with the greater proportion relating to injuries suffered by members of the public, or injuries leading to a worker being incapacitated for more than seven consecutive days. There were sadly reports relating to two fatalities this year and, whilst details cannot currently be disclosed, investigations are ongoing.

We have been saying all year that it was a quiet year for nuisance work and that it is how it ended albeit following a very similar pattern to previous years. The number of pollution cases received represented a reduction of 16% compared to the previous year. In parallel with previous years, approximately two thirds of cases were complaints relating to noise nuisance; with domestic noise the most prominent subcategory. A further 15% of cases were complaints relating to smoke nuisance, which may relate to the apparently growing public interest in air quality issues.

The number of public health cases received by WRS during the year is a reduction of 25% compared to the previous year. Approximately 60% of cases related to pest control and a further 25% were complaints relating to the accumulation of waste at domestic properties.

Of the 796 domestic treatments undertaken during this year, 45% were due to the presence of rats, 27% were due to wasps and 19% were due to the presence of mice.

Work to support planning officers across Worcestershire has kept the Technical Services team busy throughout the year, with the number recorded some 18% higher than the previous year. Approximately 89% of planning enquiries are consultations, whilst half related to contaminated land.

The last quarter of 2019/20 saw officers undertaking further auditing at Wienerberger's Kingsbury Brickworks in North Warwickshire and providing auditing services and advice at Ewhurst works in Surrey. All sites have been shut down for the time being and it is expected that primary authority work will cease for until the works re-open. With the building trade recommencing, this may be after mid-summer.

Newport City Council in Wales has now signed their legal agreement with CEMEX and we are pleased to confirm that we now have comprehensive primary authority arrangements in place for both England and Wales. WRS will now proceed to secure standardised inspections plans for all of



CEMEX's sites (around 360 nationally) through the BEIS approval system.

Officers have now completed the first draft of the Medium Sized Combustion Plant technical standard on behalf of the Defence Industry Organisation (DIO). The DIO have responsibility of ensuring that all MoD assets and estates (including USAF sites) comply with the standard and apply for environmental management permits where required. The technical standards will become the Ministry's go to document on assessing their heating, backup power and main energy supply systems. Scheduled training was set to take place in June/July this year however this is likely to be delayed until we can agree a platform for delivering this virtually. All other contract work on behalf of partners and client authorities remains unchanged during this time of writing.

Officers have commenced preparation of the partners 2019-20 Annual Status Reports for DEFRA that are due in June. It is anticipated that the reports should be completed on schedule however there may be some delay in laboratory test results and national bias adjustment factors due to the on-going lockdown, which may affect the Ministry's reporting deadline. In addition to the above DEFRA have not yet published their reporting template.

Work continued with Worcester City's Air Quality Action Plan with source apportionment work taking place in 2 of the 5 survey areas and the incorporation of LTP4 actions into the plan. however accurate up to date traffic counts have not been secured for all areas due to the COVID19 lockdown and there will be a need to glean this information before the report can be completed.

Predictive air quality modelling work around Comberton Hill and Chester Road junction in Kidderminster is making progress, however the project has been suspended due to the inability to collect accurate and representative traffic data due to the lockdown. It is anticipated that this project will recommence once the lockdown period comes to an end and that traffic levels return to normal.

Meetings with representatives from Bromsgrove and Wychavon council to progress the action planning of air quality in the Wychbold AQMA have also been suspended due to the lockdown. Work of the county-wide AQ partnership group managed by the County Council's Public Health team looking at interventions to improve air quality and the development of local air quality information for residents was postponed due to partners' involvement with the flood crisis in February and this has continued with the current Covid-19 outbreak control response.

The number of licensing applications received last year remained consistent with previous years. Approximately 44% related to alcohol licensing or gambling, with temporary event notices for alcohol the most prominent subcategory. A further 43% related to taxi licensing.

Whilst licensing generally receive a higher proportion of enquiries; 661 complaints were received this year with approximately 45% relating to taxi licensing.



Performance

Full details of the end of year performance are included in the Annual Report. For completeness, they are also included with this activity data. Members are reminded that indicators reported either quarterly or six monthly are cumulative across the year so the out-turn figure is a cumulative one.

Customer satisfaction figures at the end of Q4 are 69.5% which is down up on last year but still lower than years previous to that. Managers have been re-enforcing the need for officers to keep people up to date with progress and inform them of the outcomes of their interventions. This appears to have resulted in an improvement and, but for a poor last month where returns were low and mainly negative, 70% would have been achieved. Clearly a service like ours is never going to achieve 100% satisfaction but we will continue to try to eliminate the little things that annoy people, even if we cannot change everything that people want.

This should also be viewed through the lens of 163 service compliments as against 44 complaints.

Only 58.1% of customers feel better equipped to deal with problems after speaking to us, which is virtually the same as last year and has not improved in spite of some increase in satisfaction. Again, this may be difficult if people's issues are not resolvable. With people solving simple issues without our intervention, this may be an area that is difficult to improve.

Business satisfaction ended at 97.4%, again on a par with previous years.

Staff satisfaction measurement followed our usual formula, using the questionnaires previously making it comparable with previous years. As last year more than two thirds of staff participated and a score of 98% satisfaction was achieved. Further analysis as not possible due to time pressures but 68% of responses scored 8/10 or better for satisfaction with working for WRS.

The cumulative number of sick days per staff member is 4.44 days per FTE which is similar to last year and a third of year's figure of 12.45. Members may recall that officers spent a great deal of time understanding the sources of sickness and made extra efforts to use the host authority's HR processes to respond to poor attendance where this was not the result of understandable medical issues. The Management Team is very pleased with what is for the service a continued return to more normal levels of sickness.

The proportion of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives is slightly higher than last year but in a range similar to previous years. There remain some variations between individual districts. Looking back, it is now clear that the low numbers in 2016/17 were a blip and that current levels are the norm.



Given that, overall, nuisance complaints were lower last year than in previous years one would expect the rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population to be lower than previous years, which it is. Last year was probably at the low end of normal, looking back at previous years' figures and indicates that the general environment of Worcestershire is good but we should probably expect to see an increase potentially this year with Covid 19 forcing many more people to be at home for much of the time and with the hospitality trades being closed for around 1/3rd of the year.

In respect of income generation, total income excluding allocated budget was £442,032 which expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (2019/20) is at a very healthy 14.65%. The cost of the service per head of population for last year was £5.00. Unfortunately, because WRS does not discharge all of the functions of other local Environmental Health services it can be quite difficult to compare this with similar local authorities.

In summary, with the exception of non-business customer satisfaction, performance overall has been maintained and is broadly comparable with previous years.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

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



Appendix B: Performance Indicator Table 2019/20

Indicator	Reporting period	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/ Outrun
1. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to customers satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	70.7	73.6	73.5	69.5%
2. % of service requests where resolution is achieved to business satisfaction	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	98.3	98.3	97	97.4%
3. % businesses broadly compliant at first assessment/ inspection	Annually	97.4	Bromsgrove 96.8 Malvern Hills 98.5 Redditch 95.3 Worcester City 97.5 Wychavon 97.5 Wyre Forest 98.0 Worcestershire 97.4	97.4	Bromsgrove 97.1% Malvern Hills 98.1% Redditch 95.6% Worcester City 97.5% Wychavon 98.0% Wyre Forest 98.1% Worcestershire 97.5%
4. % of food businesses scoring 0,1 or 2 at 1 st April each year	Annually	2.6	Bromsgrove 3.2 Malvern Hills 1.5 Redditch 4.7 Worcester City 2.5 Wychavon 2.5 Wyre Forest 2.0 Worcestershire 2.6	2.6	Bromsgrove 2.9% Malvern Hills 1.9% Redditch 4.4% Worcester City 2.5% Wychavon 2.0% Wyre Forest 1.9% Worcestershire 2.5%
5 % of drivers licence renewal applications issued within 5 working days of receipt of a complete application	6-monthly	NA	78.5%	NA	Bromsgrove 74.2% Malvern Hills 78.6% Redditch 78.2% Worcester City 75.7% Wychavon 70.0% Wyre Forest 76.7% Worcestershire 75.2%
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	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 9 Malvern Hills 0 Redditch 14 Worcester City 4 Wyre Forest 1 Wychavon 1 29/1572 vehicles county-wide =1.8% of fleet	NA	Bromsgrove 9 Malvern Hills 1 Redditch 7 Worcester City 6 Wyre Forest 3 Wychavon 0 55/1572 vehicles county-wide = 3.5% of fleet



	fleet county-wide					
7	% of service requests where customer indicates they feel better equipped to deal with issues themselves in future	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	58.6	63	62	58.1
8	Review of register of complaints/ compliments	Quarterly NB: fig is cumulative	10/50	22/91	34 /138	44/ 163
9	Annual staff sickness absence at public sector average or better	Quarterly NB: figure is cumulative	0.85/ FTE	2.91/ FTE	3.82/ FTE	4.44 days/ FTE
10	% of staff who enjoy working for WRS	Annually	NA	NA	NA	98%
11	% of licensed businesses subject to allegations of not upholding the 4 licensing objectives	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 4.7 Malvern Hills 3.6 Redditch 6.1 Worcester City 5.6 Wychavon 4.0 Wyre Forest 6.5 Worcestershire 4.9	NA	Bromsgrove 6.8% Malvern Hills 5.7% Redditch 8.5% Worcester City 8.8% Wychavon 4.2% Wyre Forest 8.5% Worcestershire 6.8%
12	Rate of noise complaint per 1000 head of population	6-monthly	NA	Bromsgrove 0.66 Malvern Hills 0.64 Redditch 0.86 Worcester City 1.01 Wychavon 0.89 Wyre Forest 0.91 Worcestershire 0.85	NA	Bromsgrove 1.96 Malvern Hills 2.07 Redditch 2.79 Worcester City 2.78 Wychavon 2.01 Wyre Forest 2.37 Worcestershire 2.35
13	Total income expressed as a % of district base revenue budget (16/17)	6-monthly	NA	5.3% i.e. £160,534/3,017,000	NA	14.65% i.e. £442,032/3,017,000



Agenda Item 10

14 Cost of regulatory services per head of population (Calculation will offset income against revenue budget)	Annually	NA	NA	NA	£2,959,754/ 592,057 = £5.00 (£4.99.9)



Worcestershire
Regulatory Services
Supporting and protecting you

Activity Report | 2019/20



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



Malvern Hills
District Council
www.malvern hills.gov.uk



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
making a difference
www.redditchbc.gov.uk



Worcester
CITY COUNCIL



WYCHAVON
DISTRICT COUNCIL
good services, good value



Wyre Forest
District Council

Contents

Headlines

WRS Summary

Air Quality
Contaminated Land
Dog Control
Environmental Permitting
Food Safety
Health and Safety
Information Requests
Licensing
Planning
Pollution
Public Health

Partner Authority Summaries

Bromsgrove District Council
Malvern Hills District Council
Redditch Borough Council
Worcester City Council
Wychavon District Council
Wyre Forest District Council

Contract Authority Summaries

Foreword

Welcome to the final activity data report for 2019/20.

With the world dominated by the Covid 19 pandemic and, before that the flooding pre-and post Christmas dominating the headlines, it would be easy to forget that there were other things going on between January and March..

Looking at the figures, the fact that we were very busy responding to the flooding either side of Christmas was helped by lower than average reactive demand in a range of service areas. Many of the graphs in the document show similar patterns of demand through the year but at a lower level than average.

Key exceptions to this are licensing and planning. Demand for applications has followed the trends, although other complaints and service requests, like other aspects of work was down for the year. Planning work has bucked the trend and, other than the odd dip, has remained high and that team has been very busy.

In the current climate, it would be easy to forget the BREXIT preparations we were making earlier in the year. No doubt, as we move towards December and assuming that the disease control measures maintain a grip on Covid 19, we have no doubt that this will come back to the fore.

We hope you find the report interesting and if you've any questions please do contact myself or one of the Management team.

Many thanks



Simon Wilkes
Head of Regulatory Services

Headlines - Quarter One

Dog Warden Update

The Dog Warden Team has had a busy first quarter with a total of 430 dogs being reported to us as strays many of which have spent time at our kennels or vets. Of these over 300 were reunited with their owners and a further 65 were successfully rehomed by WRS through reputable charities. Sadly 10 of the dogs collected in the first quarter were welfare cases which ranged from dogs that had severe skin conditions and soreness, to open wounds and emaciation as a result a number of improvement notices were issued to owners. In addition to this a further 7 dogs required vet treatment for other ailments. We have also collected and boarded a number of dogs, on a commercial basis, on behalf of owners who have had to spend time in hospital and not been able to get alternative care.

Gull Update

The work for Worcester City in respect of the Gull population continues. Letters have been sent out to local landlords providing advice on how they can assist in minimising the negative impact of Gulls within the City centre. Following the withdrawal of the General Licence by Natural England, that was used to control gulls in the City, our contractor applied for and received an Individual licence which enabled the egg replacement scheme to get back underway. The egg replacement scheme has been able to get back underway, with round two having recently been completed. There has been much media interest which has included newspaper articles, radio interviews and an appearance on BBC news following a meeting with WRS Officers, Cllr Amos and residents from Lower Wick that are experiencing issues with Gulls in the area.

Arrow Valley Visitor Centre prosecuted for Food Safety Offences

This prosecution followed the closure of the premises for an active mouse infestation. The Food Business Operator, Mr Creaton, pleaded guilty to offences of failing to have adequate pest control, failing to protect food against risk of contamination, failing to ensure that all articles, fittings etc likely to come into contact with food were clean and failing to have adequate food safety procedures and controls in place. AVVC Ltd was fined £700 on each offence, a total of £2,800 plus £2,200 costs and a victim surcharge of £70. Mr Creaton was Conditionally Discharged for 12 months and ordered to pay £500 costs and a victim surcharge of £20 – payable within 28 days.

E.coli O157

Officers have investigated a case of E.coli O157 which caused the hospitalisation of a 2 year old girl. Working closely with Public Health England, officers were able to identify two potential sources within the county. E. coli O157 is shed by livestock, and the young girl had attended two animal encounter attractions. Both were inspected and advice was given regarding zoonotic disease prevention. There was no indication that either venue was at fault.

Headlines - Quarter Two

Planning

During the last quarter the team has reviewed and provided advice on over 500 potential sites for Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment to inform the review of the South Worcestershire Development Plan. The sites were reviewed in relation to potential contaminated Land, noise and air quality impacts. It is hoped that this information will provide essential insight into the suitability of the preferred options consultation that will be made available to the public as part of wider consultation in the autumn.

Dog Warden Update

The Dog Warden Team has once again had a busy quarter with a total of 418 dogs being reported to us as strays many of which have spent time at our kennels or vets. Of these over 300 were reunited with their owners and a further 67 were successfully rehomed by WRS through reputable charities. Sadly 8 of the dogs collected in the second quarter were welfare cases which ranged from dogs that had severe skin conditions and soreness, to open wounds and emaciation where possible improvement notices were issued to owners. In addition to this a further 9 dogs required vet treatment for other ailments. We have also collected and boarded a dog on a commercial basis, on behalf of owners who have had to spend time in hospital and not been able to get alternative care. The owner was taken into permanent care which sadly resulted in Sam having to be put to sleep due to his temperament.

Gulls

Work to reduce the negative impact of the Gull Population continues with more businesses and residents being provided with advice on steps they can take to help contribute to this effort. The egg replacement programme for this breeding season has drawn to a close with a total of 153 nests being treated within the treatment zone, this is a reduction on the 177 that were treated last year which indicates that there has been some success in limiting breeding opportunities in the City Centre. Following the media interest last quarter a great deal of work has been conducted to explore all methods of controlling the Gull Population this has included liaison with the UK's leading Gull Expert and Natural England. Work is underway to prepare for next years breeding season, including making arrangements to conduct a full survey of the Gull Population.

Headlines - Quarter Three

Dog Warden Update

The Dog Warden Team has once again had a reasonably busy quarter with a total of 326 dogs being reported to us as strays many of which have spent time at our kennels or vets. Of these over 200 were reunited with their owners and a further 67 were successfully rehomed by WRS through reputable charities. Sadly this quarter saw 4 welfare cases come in and one dog was identified to be a banned breed and was therefore required to be put to sleep. In addition to this a further 9 dogs required vet treatment for other ailments. We have also collected and boarded two dogs and a cat on a commercial basis, on behalf of owners who have had to spend time in hospital and not been able to get alternative care. Sadly the owner of one of the dogs passed away whilst her dog was in our care. We have since rehomed the dog to a member of the family. The owner of the dog and the cat has now returned home, however due to an ongoing medical condition with the dog we have arranged for the dog to be rehomed by us to ensure the best care for the dog, the cat has recently been returned to the owner.

Licensing Update

Licensing have had a very busy quarter with a number of partnership working initiatives taking place alongside planned enforcement activity.

WRS were asked, and took up the opportunity, to work with the West Midlands Safari Park on executing their emergency plan. We helped arrange and facilitate a number of exercise's with a variety of stakeholders including the police, fire and rescue, highways and local authority representatives to name a few with a view to test the plan of action in a emergency situation.

December saw us asked again to carry out enforcement work at the Victorian Christmas Fayre which, like previous years, received a very positive response from all involved. This has been beneficial to both officers at WRS and those involved in the organisation of the fayre.

In October WRS licensing officers undertook a test purchase plying for hire exercise in Worcester City Centre. The exercise was arranged in response to concerns being raised by Worcester licensed HC drivers that vehicles and drivers licensed by neighbouring LA were operating illegally in Worcester City Centre. The exercise consisted of officers approaching HC/PH vehicles who were not licensed by Worcester City and who appeared to be parked in and around the city centre waiting for a booking. Upon approaching the vehicle officers explained to the driver that they had not made any booking and asked to be taken to a pre-arranged destination. Upon arrival at the destination the driver was greeted by two further licensing officers, who informed him that he had just picked up two licensing officers illegally and that he would be reported for the offence of plying for hire and no insurance. On that evening officers undertook two un-booked journeys by two WDC licensed drivers, both drivers are being reported to WC for further legal action.

During April, MHDC LSC made the decision to revoke the licence of a dual HC & PH driver on Medical grounds. The driver had been referred to the LSC as he was unable to meet the “group 2 medical standards” as required by MHDC, due to the onset of dementia. Upon listening to the case members made the decision to revoke his dual hackney carriage and private hire drivers licence. The driver exercised his right of appeal, lodging an appeal with the Magistrates courts against the decision of the LSC. On 19 July 2019 the Magistrates at Worcester considered the drivers appeal and upon listening to all of the evidence present by the driver and WRS on behalf of MHDC dismissed the appeal, upholding the decision of the LSC. The driver exercised his right of appeal against the decision of the Magistrates court, lodging an appeal to the Crown Court against the decision of the Mags. On 4 Oct 2019 Worcester Crown Court considered the drivers appeal and upon listening to all of the evidence present by the driver and WRS on behalf of MHDC again dismissed the appeal, upholding the decision of Mag’s and the original decision of MHDC’s LSC.

Finally Worcester City Council successfully prosecuted a taxi driver who refused to carry an assistance dog earlier this year. The driver arrived to collect a pre-booked fare but then refused to pick up his blind passenger as they had an assistance dog with them and he claimed to suffer from allergies that meant he could not carry the animal. Despite his claims, he had never requested a certificate from the Council exempting him from the requirement to carry assistance dogs on medical grounds.

Community Environmental Health Update

In November the Team responded to the floods in Evesham. We contacted all affected food businesses providing pre-opening advice and support and followed up with visits to ensure that good hygiene conditions were met before they re-opened.

In preparation for Brexit your Team contacted all potential food exporters to appraise their needs in the event of a “no deal” Brexit. Contingency plans were put in place which involved stakeholder engagement and a plan to identify where support was needed. With food products the issue is that many are high risk with short shelf life so there cannot be any delays in providing a certification service. We have provided a strategic single point of contact for Brexit work and the Food Lead within the Team has taken operational responsibility. Liaison arrangements are in place with Worcestershire Trading Standards who are responsible for Food Standards and Website information has been updated to ensure that businesses can readily access current information. Duty Officers with expertise on the export process are available to take relevant calls. WRS have also contributed to the West Midlands CEO response to Government in respect of Food Safety implications of a no deal Brexit.

A simple Caution was issued to a mobile food business in the north of the county for food hygiene contraventions and several nuisance cases are working their way through the legal system including two regarding barking dogs, one in respect of the accumulation of dog faeces in a domestic garden and others for dark smoke emission and noise from a car wash.

Your Officers remain engaged in several long standing and complex health and safety investigations with another fatality and a near miss being reported this quarter. The team also showcased the work done to date with the Worcestershire LEP and local food businesses and producers in creating the Worcestershire Food and Drink Association at the London HQ of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy at their Best Business for All conference.

Headlines - Quarter Four

Technical Services Update

WRS undertook a tendering exercise for all contracts to assist with the delivery of our Dog Warden Service. The exercise was partially successful with the appointment of contractors to assist with Dangerous Dogs, provision of Dog Warden cover and veterinary services. However, we have retendered to contract for kennelling provision with the intention of being able to increase the geographical spread of kennels we are able to use; and we have not appointed to the out of hours stray dog collection contract. Instead this is currently being delivered on a temporary basis in-house initially, with a view to increase the services' ability to provide a robust service for Partners, existing clients and tender for new contracts.

Natural England delayed the release of the Individual Licences for the control of specific gull species until 15th March, however on behalf of Worcester City Council, WRS have successfully obtained a licence for the gull control work in 2020 and assisted other landowners in obtaining theirs. Providing an increasingly coordinated approach this year. Whilst COVID-19 restrictions has meant some aspects of the gull control work has had to be adapted, a hawking trial in Britannia Square has commenced.

Licensing Update

Licensing as many other services have had a very unpredicted quarter. At the beginning of the year Licensing officers took part in a large multi-agency visit to an unauthorised caravan site in the Wychavon District. The visit involved officers working alongside colleagues from West Mercia Police and also a variety of other agencies and officers who carry out functions at Wychavon District Council including Housing, planning Enforcement, Council Tax and Benefits.

Although follow up actions are still in process due to the complexity of the issue the partnership working will be continuing and Licensing officers have prepared a file with a view to taking formal action against the owner of the land for using the land as a caravan site without a licence.

Licensing Update (Continued)

Licensing had a number of activities planned for the quarter but due to Covid 19 the team had to divert their attention to dealing with many queries from the taxi trade and business owners. The team have been working hard to introduce a legal process through delegation of taxi matters for five of the six districts. This has included implementing new processes to follow and allowing enough time for matters to be heard with or without representations.

WRS officers have also worked proactively with the five districts to ensure that both the Taxi Trade and Businesses are given more opportunity in these uncertain times for the collection of their fees. This has included implementing a six month deferral process for both Taxi and Animal Licensing renewals in circumstances whereby they can not afford to renew their licence and relaxing the 5 day suspension rule for business premises annual fees to 90 days.

Towards the end of the quarter the team have looked to start moving towards business as usual working with Worcester City to resume work by the Task and Finish Group on the Worcester City Taxi Strategy putting in place a revised timeline for ongoing work and implementation.

Community Environmental Health Update

In February the Team responded to the severe floods in Wyre Forest, Worcester, Malvern Hills and Wychavon. We contacted all affected food businesses providing pre-opening advice and support and followed these up with visits to ensure that good hygiene conditions were being met before they re-opened. This included swabbing to check that food preparation surfaces were safe to use. We also provided advice and support to the Hublets which were set up to help the affected communities.

March saw your Officers responding to the Covid-19 epidemic. To reduce social contact the government required certain businesses and venues to close, by law, to members of the public. The Community Environmental Health Team provided advice and guidance to businesses and continue to provide assistance to business and monitor compliance with these regulations. Proactive patrols were organised including over the Bank Holidays and intelligence led investigations were carried out in partnership with West Mercia Police. Whilst compliance in Worcestershire was found to be high, several businesses breaching the regulations were subject to prohibition notices.

Air Quality & Contaminated Land

Officers have commenced preparation of the partners 2019-20 ASR reports for DEFRA that are due in June. It is anticipated that the reports should be completed on schedule however there may be some delay in laboratory test results and national bias adjustment factors due to the ongoing lockdown that may affect the reporting deadline. In addition to the above DEFRA have not yet published their reporting template.

Work continues with Worcester City's Air quality Action Plan with source apportionment work taking place in 2 of the 5 survey areas and the incorporation of LTP4 actions into the plan. However accurate up to date traffic counts have not been secured for all areas due to the COVID19 lockdown and there will be a need to glean this information before the report can be completed.

Predictive air quality modelling work around Comberton Hill and Chester road junction is making progress however the project has been suspended due to the inability to collect accurate and representative traffic data due to the lockdown. It is anticipated that this project will recommence once the lockdown period comes to an end and that traffic levels return to normal.

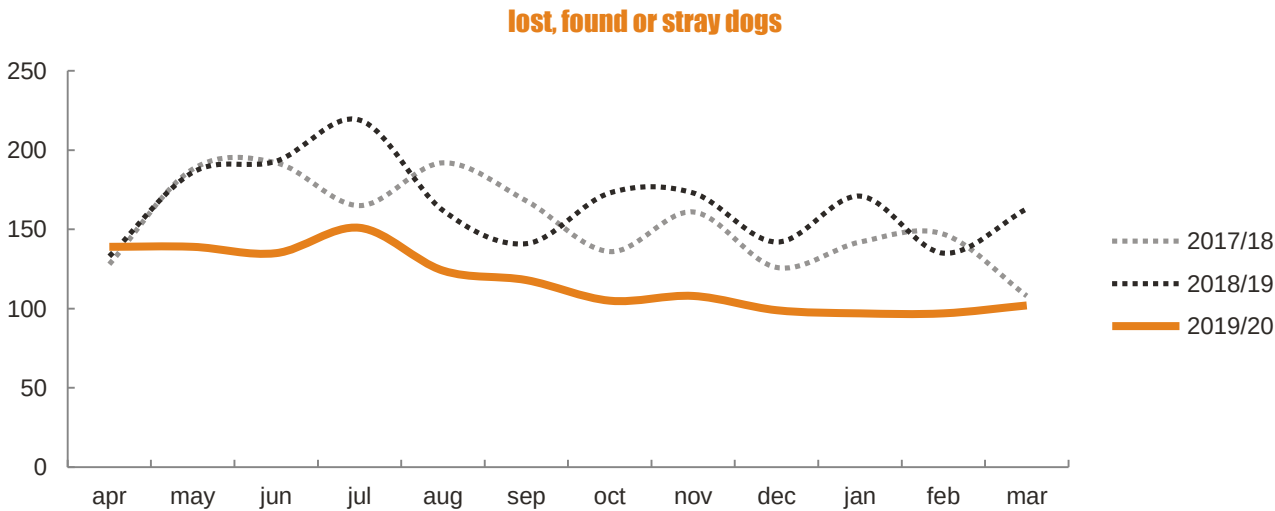
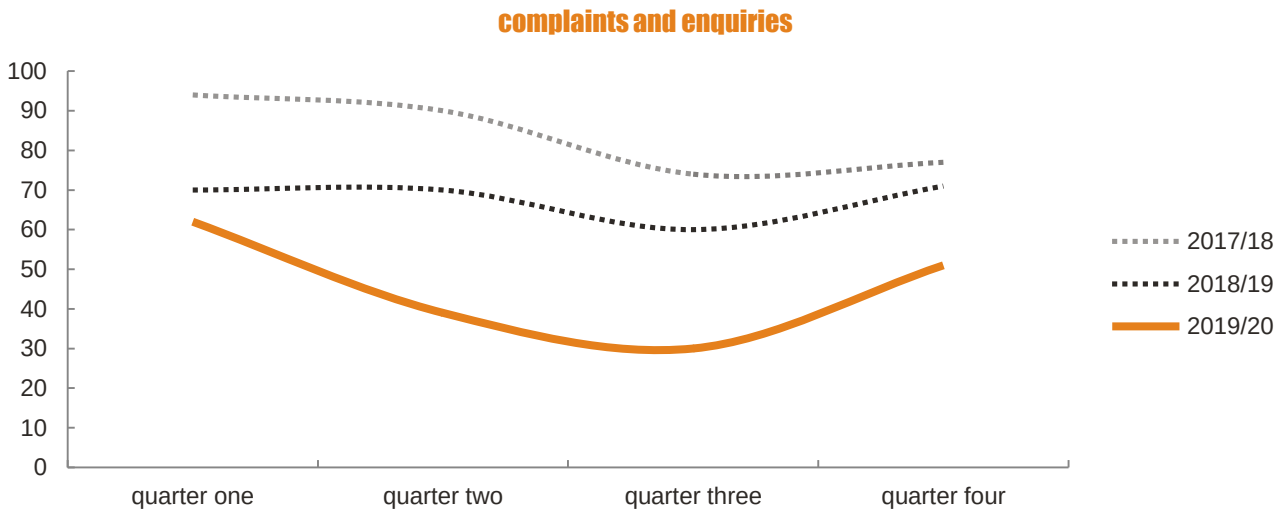
Meetings with representatives from Bromsgrove and Wychavon council to progress the action planning of air quality in Wychbold's AQMA have also been suspended due to the lockdown. Work of the DoPH AQ partnership group on Public Health interventions to improve air quality and the development of local air quality information for residents has also been postponed due to partners involvement with the flood crisis in February and the current Covid-19 outbreak control response.

Dog Control

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to dog control. Types of cases recorded under this category include fouling and persistent straying, dangerous dogs and welfare. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of dogs recorded by WRS as lost, found or seen straying.

The number of stray or lost dogs reported continues to decline, with the total this year a reduction of 17% compared to the previous year. The type of cases recorded remains consistent however, with 69% relating to 'contained' stray dogs. This means dogs were found and held by, for example, a member of the public.

In general, WRS receives very few dog control complaints with the majority of service requests generated third party requests and enquiries. Based on the 111 complaints received this year, 54 cases related to dog fouling or persistent straying whilst 48 cases related to dangerous dogs.



Environmental Permitting

All partners have now been provided with detailed billing information for 2020-21 subsistence fees. It is anticipated that there will be a delay this year to the commencement of inspection work due to the COVID-19 outbreak. WRS awaits DEFRA's release of PRTR and annual performance return documents which should arrive in the next quarter.

Primary Authority

Last quarter saw officers undertaking further auditing at Wienerberger's Kingsbury Brickworks in North Warwickshire and providing auditing services and advice at Ewhurst works in Surrey. All sites have been shut down for the time being and it is expected that primary authority work will cease for until further notice.

Newport City Council in Wales has now signed their legal agreement with CEMEX and we are pleased to confirm that we now have comprehensive primary authority arrangements in place for both England and Wales. WRS will now proceed to secure standardised inspections plans for all of their sites (around 360 nationally) through BEIS approval system.

Contract Work

WRS have now completed its first draft of the Medium Sized Combustion Plant technical standard on behalf of the Defence Industry Organisation (DIO). The DIO have responsibility of ensuring that all MoD assets and estates (including USAF sites) comply with the standard and apply for environmental management permits where required. The technical standards will become the Ministry's go to document on assessing their heating, backup power and main energy supply systems. Scheduled training was set to take place in June/July this year however this is likely to be delayed until further notice due to the lockdown. All other contract work on behalf of partners and client authorities remains unchanged during this time of writing.

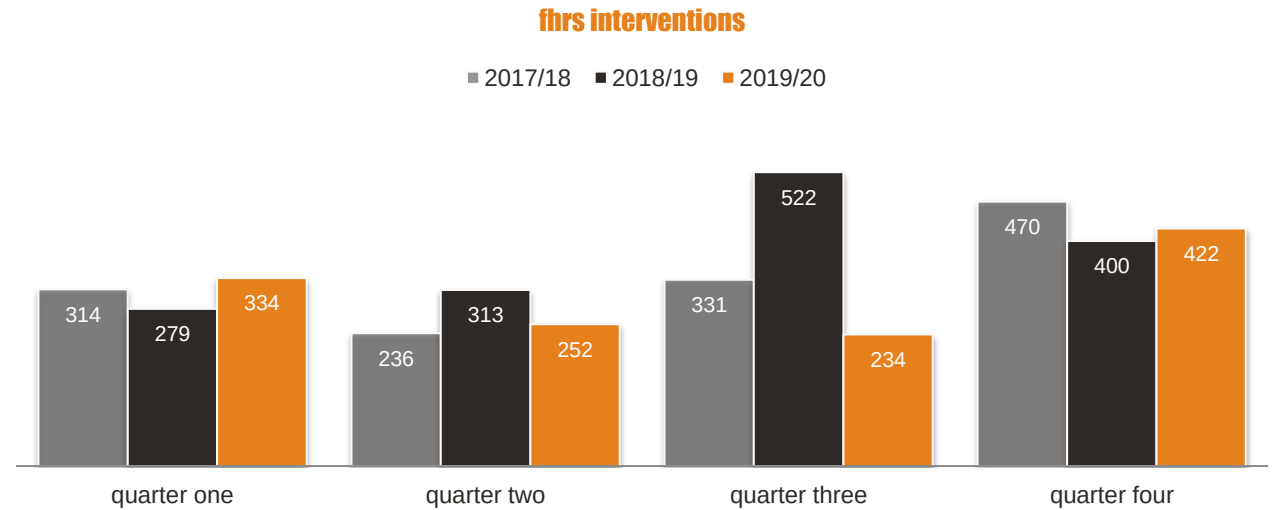
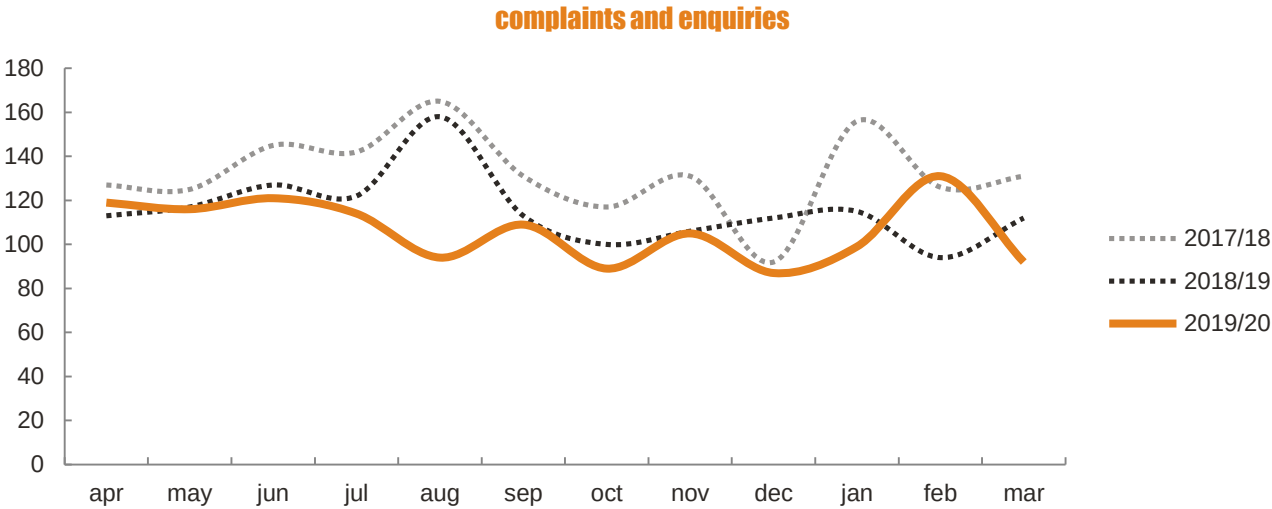
Food Safety

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to food safety. Types of cases recorded under this category include complaints about food products, hygiene of premises complaints and requests for business advice. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of interventions conducted by WRS at premises included in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, commonly known as FHRS.

With the exception of August, the number of food safety requests received during this year has been largely in line with 2018/19. Approximately 51% of cases were, with three quarters of complaints relating to food products and a quarter of hygiene concerns at food businesses.

The remaining 49% of cases were largely enquiries, but also included requests for export health certificates and requests for reratings.

Based on the 1242 interventions undertaken this year, approximately 6% led to a non compliant rating (a rating of 0, 1 or 2) being issued. The majority of businesses however have since been brought into compliance. It is worth noting that, towards the end of the year, proactive inspections of food businesses were suspended due to COVID-19.



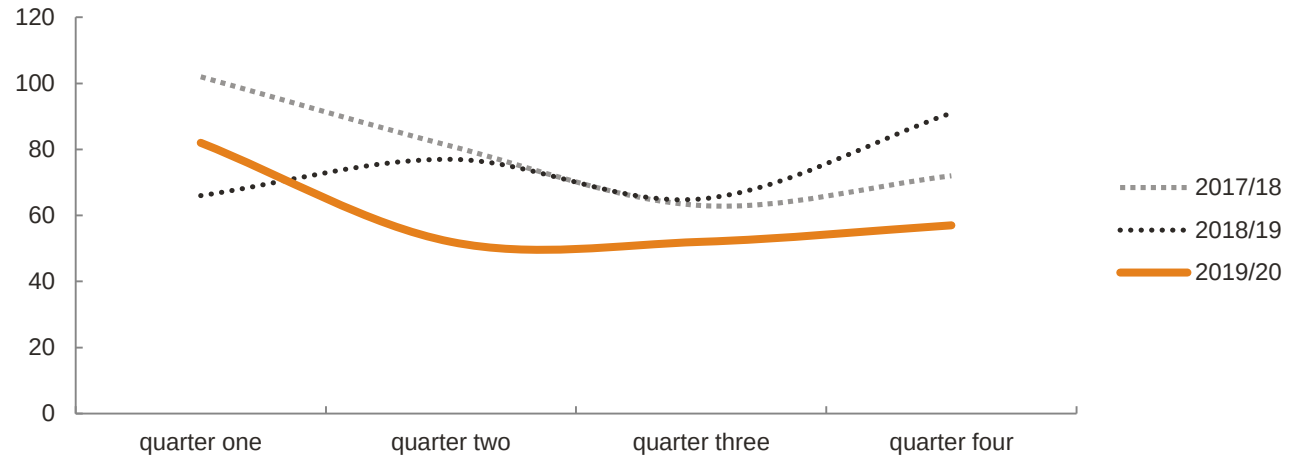
Health and Safety

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to health and safety. This includes requests for business advice. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of notifications received by WRS relating to accidents.

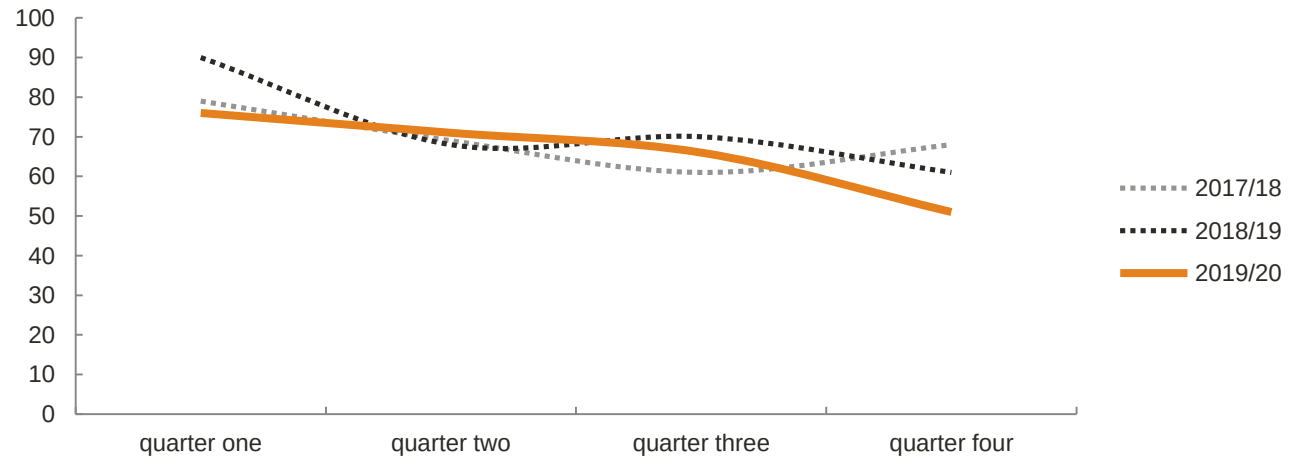
The number of health and safety cases received during this year is broadly in line with the previous year. There has however, been a continued decline in the number of complaints and enquiries.

Approximately 52% of cases were reports of accidents, with the greater proportion relating to injuries suffered by members of the public, or injuries leading to a worker being incapacitated for more than seven consecutive days. There were sadly reports relating to two fatalities this year and, whilst details cannot currently be disclosed, investigations are ongoing.

complaints and enquiries



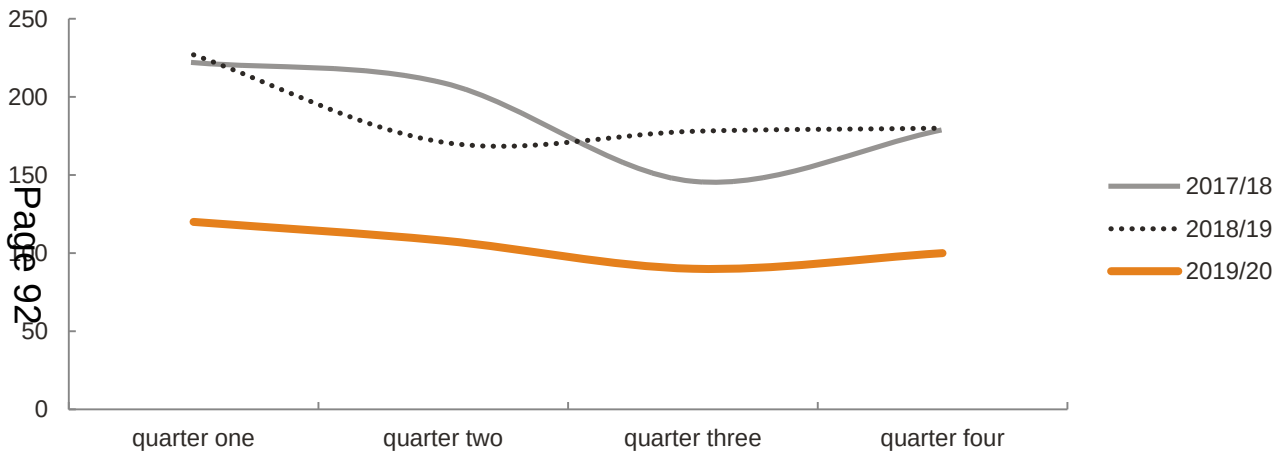
accident reports



Information Requests

The chart (right) shows the number of information requests recorded by WRS over a three year period. Information requests relate to the following;

- Evironmental Information Requests
- Freedom of Information Requests
- Requests for information under the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation



Licensing

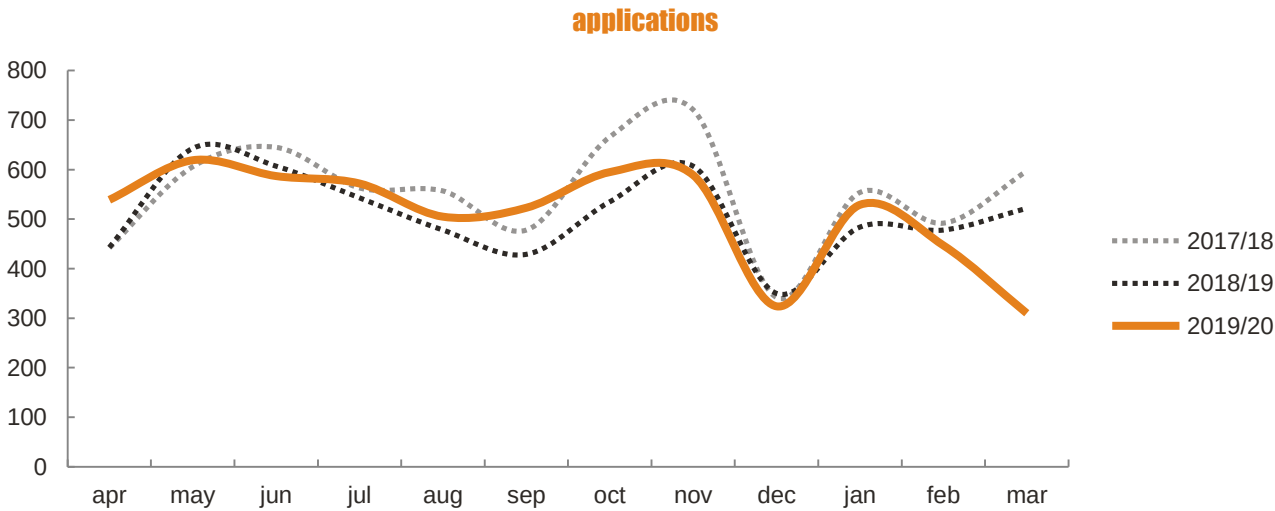
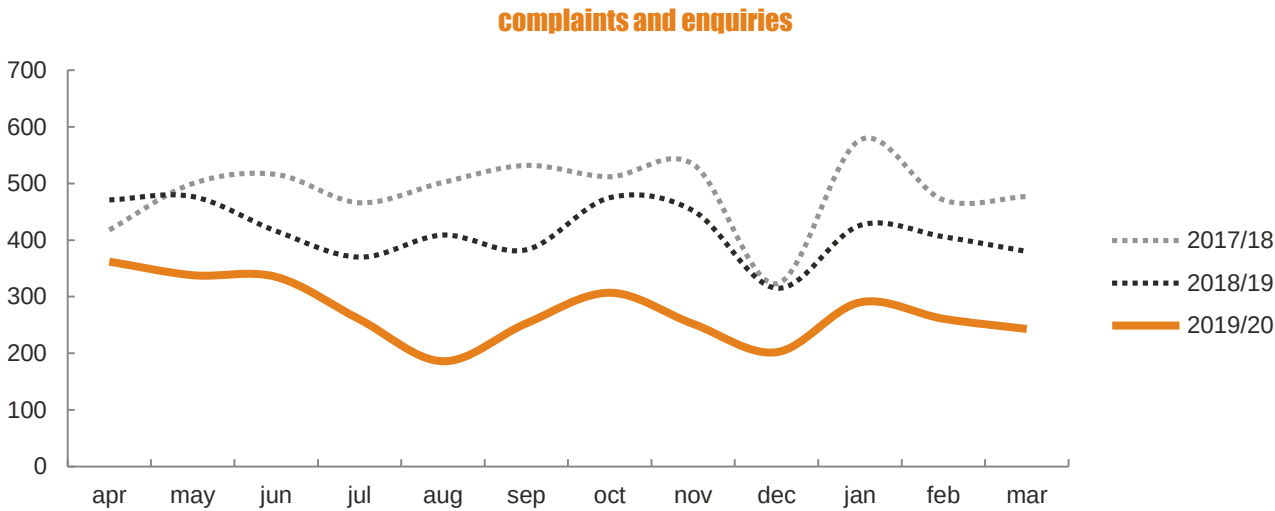
The chart (top right) shows the number complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to licensing. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of licensing applications.

Licensing complaints, enquiries and applications relate to the following;

- Alcohol and entertainment (including gambling)
- Animals
- Caravans
- Scrap metal
- Sex establishments
- Skin piercing
- Street trading
- Taxis

The number of licensing applications received remains consistent with previous years. Approximately 44% of applicaitons received this year related to alcohol licensing (includuing gambling), with temporary event notices the most prominent subcategory. A further 43% related to taxi licensing.

Whilst licensing generally receive a higher proportion of enquiries; 661 complaints were received this year with approximaetly 45% relating to taxi licensing.

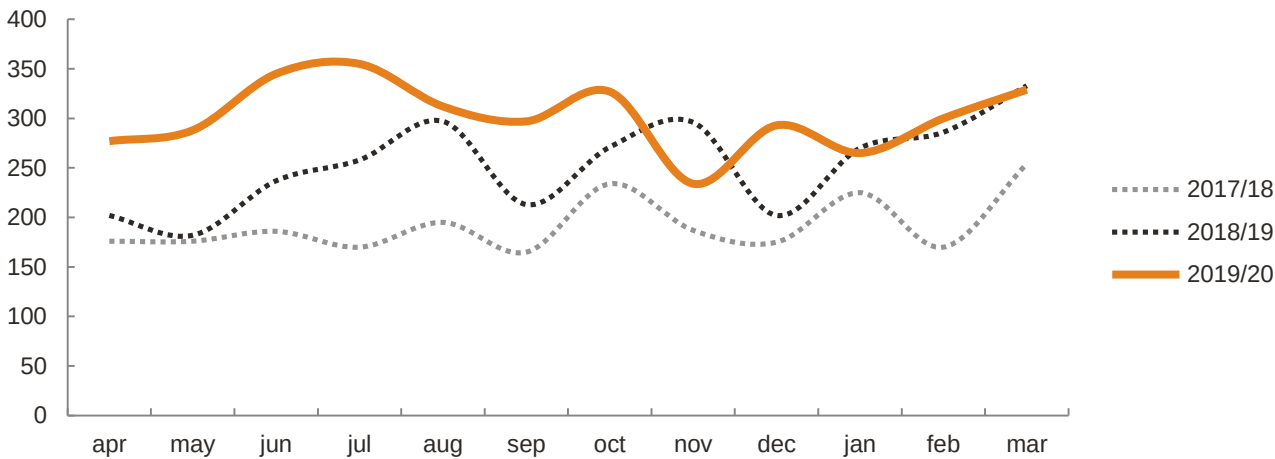


Planning

The chart (right) shows the number of planning enquiries completed by WRS over a three year period. The majority of these requests are consultations but can also include requests to discharge conditions.

Planning requests relate to the following;

- Air Quality
- Contaminated Land
- Environmental Permitting
- Food
- Health and Safety
- Nuisance / Noise
- Private Water Supplies



The number of planning enquiries continues to increase, with the number recorded this year 18% higher than the previous year. Approximately 89% of planning enquiries are consultations, whilst half related to contaminated land.

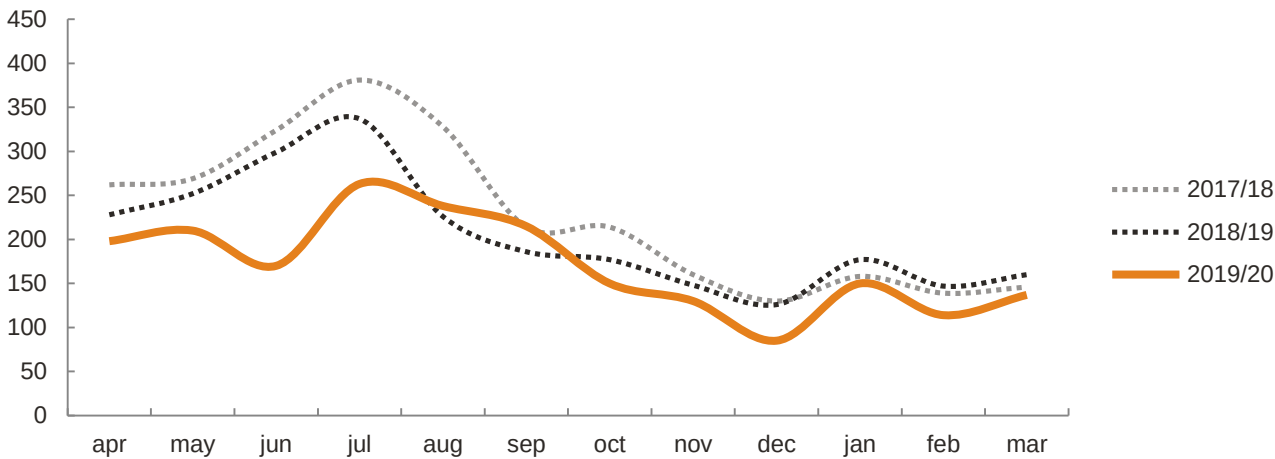
Pollution

The chart (right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to pollution. Types of cases recorded under this category include contamination incidents, air pollution (smoke, fumes and gases), light pollution and noise pollution. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries relating to noise pollution.

The number of pollution cases received this year is a reduction of 16% compared to the previous year. In parallel with previous years, approximately two thirds of cases were complaints relating to noise nuisance; with domestic noise the most prominent subcategory. A further 15% of cases were complaints relating to smoke nuisance.

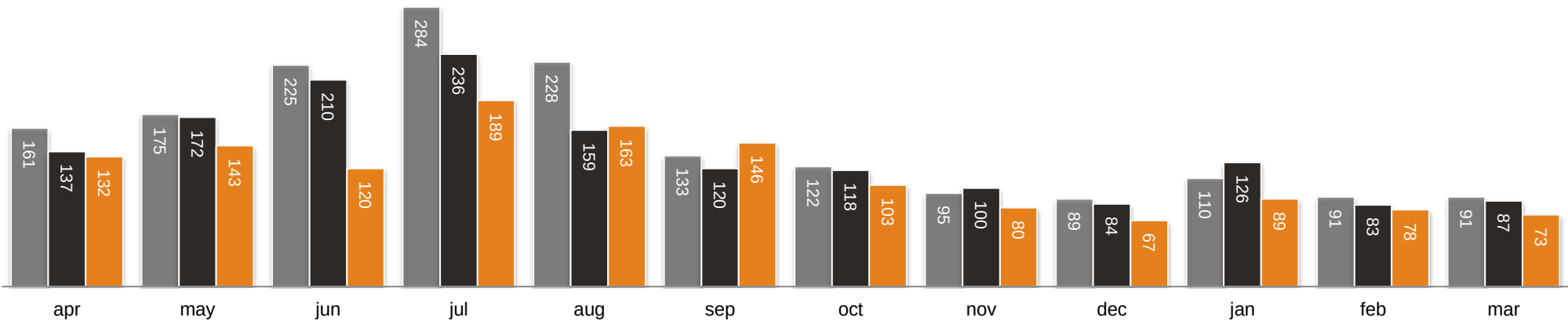
Page 95

complaints and enquiries



noise

■ 2017/18 ■ 2018/19 ■ 2019/20

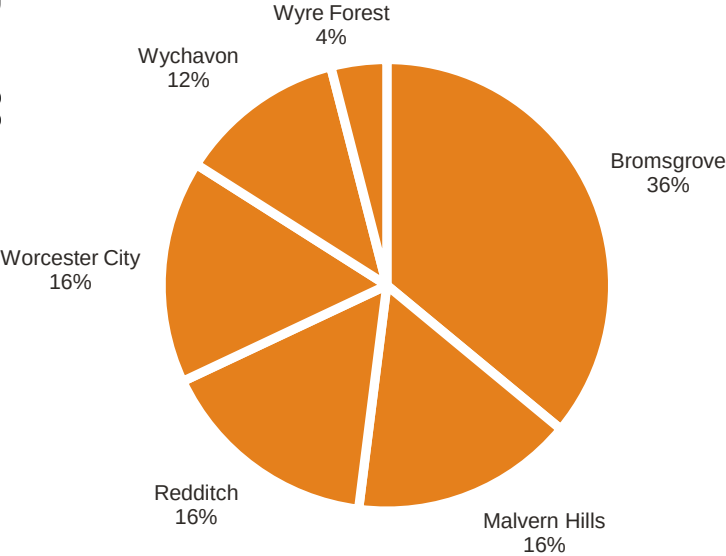


Noise

The table (right) shows the top 25 wards in Worcestershire with the highest case rate for noise pollution cases. It also shows the relative population and the number of cases recorded. The chart (below) shows the top 25 wards by district.

Note: Data shown on this page represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.

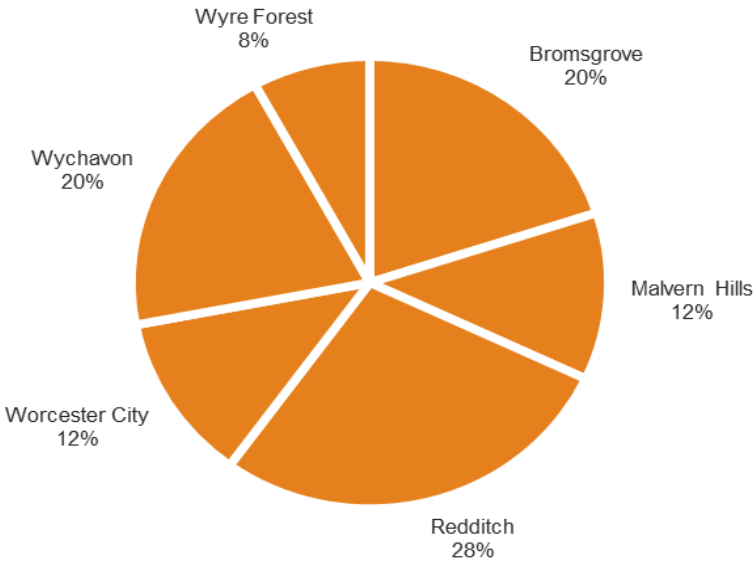
Ward	Total	Population	Rate
Droitwich Central	13	2,570	5.06
Cathedral	54	11,488	4.70
Upton And Hanley	18	4,153	4.33
Rainbow Hill	23	5,525	4.16
Lowes Hill	12	2,888	4.16
Charford	15	3,670	4.09
Charford	15	3,670	4.09
Catshill North	11	2,818	3.90
Offmore And Comberton	35	9,726	3.60
Barnt Green And Hopwood	10	2,866	3.49
Warndon	20	5,754	3.48
Batchley And Brockhill	30	8,727	3.44
West (Malvern)	14	4,112	3.40
Avoncroft	11	3,242	3.39
Lodge Park	19	5,608	3.39
Bredon	9	2,666	3.38
Rock Hill	10	2,969	3.37
Arboretum	21	6,301	3.33
Abbey	21	6,323	3.32
Winyates	26	8,257	3.15
Sanders Park	11	3,559	3.09
Sidemoor	12	4,021	2.98
Pickersleigh	19	6,446	2.95
Alfrick And Leigh	10	3,493	2.86
Pershore	22	7,716	2.85



Noise (2018/19)

The table (right) shows the top 25 wards in Worcestershire with the highest case rate for noise pollution cases. The data covers 2018/19 and is intended to be a point of reference for the data highlighted on the previous page.

Ward	Total	Population	Rate
Sanders Park	36	3,456	10.42
Cathedral	63	11,160	5.65
Charford	20	3,638	5.50
Norton	16	3,175	5.04
Abbey	29	6,232	4.65
Warndon	27	5,928	4.55
Batchley And Brockhill	38	8,628	4.40
Morton	9	2,060	4.37
Wells	14	3,258	4.30
Upton Snodsbury	11	2,692	4.09
Central	27	6,659	4.05
Longdon	8	2,068	3.87
Headless Cross And Oakenshaw	31	8,539	3.63
Lickhill	9	2,535	3.55
Barnt Green And Hopwood	10	2,838	3.52
Bowbrook	10	2,907	3.44
Broadwaters	32	9,326	3.43
Matchborough	21	6,152	3.41
Lodge Park	19	5,630	3.37
Bengeworth	23	7,301	3.15
Droitwich Central	8	2,549	3.14
Bretforton And Offenham	9	2,883	3.12
Greenlands	29	9,298	3.12
Alvechurch Village	9	2,899	3.10
Gorse Hill	17	5,520	3.08



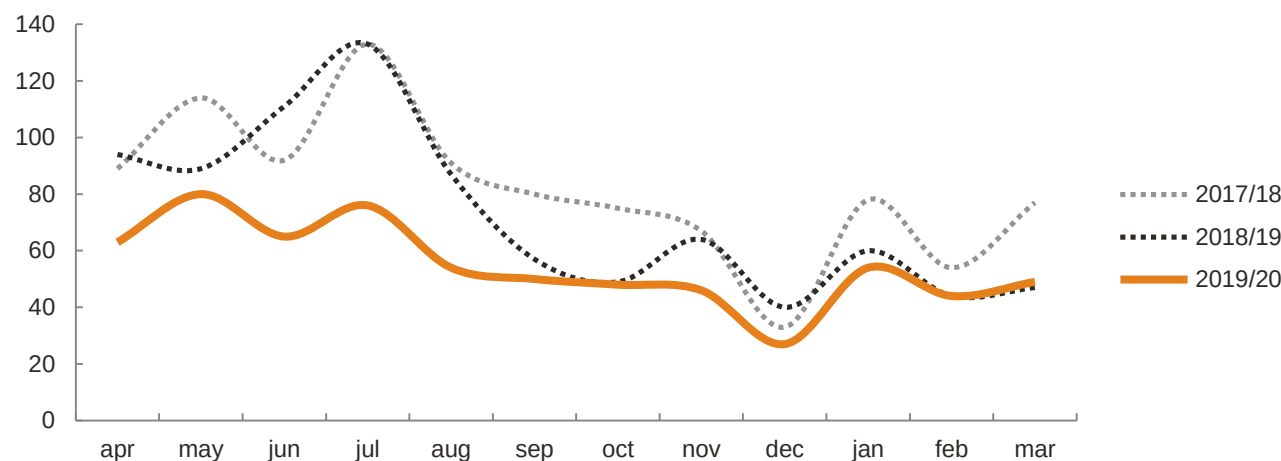
Public Health

The chart (top right) shows the number of complaints and enquiries recorded by WRS over a three year period relating to public health. Types of cases recorded under this category include accumulations, public burials and pest control. The chart (bottom right) shows the number of subsidised pest control treatments have been carried out by contractors at domestic properties in four Worcestershire Districts (Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wychavon and Wyre Forest). Malvern Hills and Worcester City do not offer a subsidised pest control service.

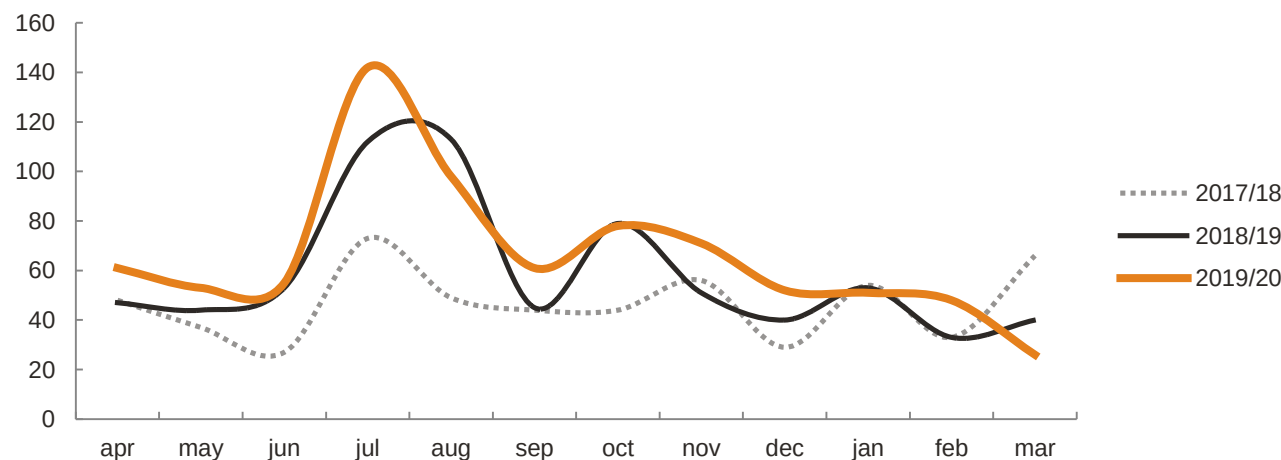
The number of public health cases received by WRS during the year is a reduction of 25% compared to the previous year. Approximately 60% of cases have related to pest control, whilst a quarter of cases are complaints relating to the accumulation of waste at domestic properties.

Of the 796 domestic treatments undertaken during this year, 45% were due to the presence of rats, 27% were due to wasps and 19% were due to the presence of mice.

complaints and enquiries



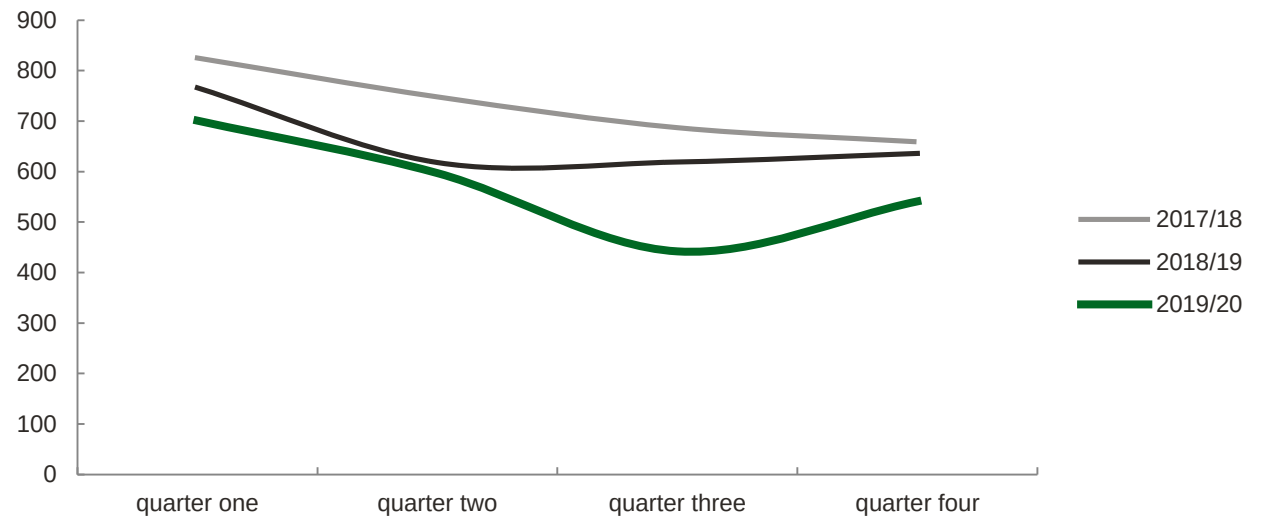
pest control (domestic subsidised treatments)



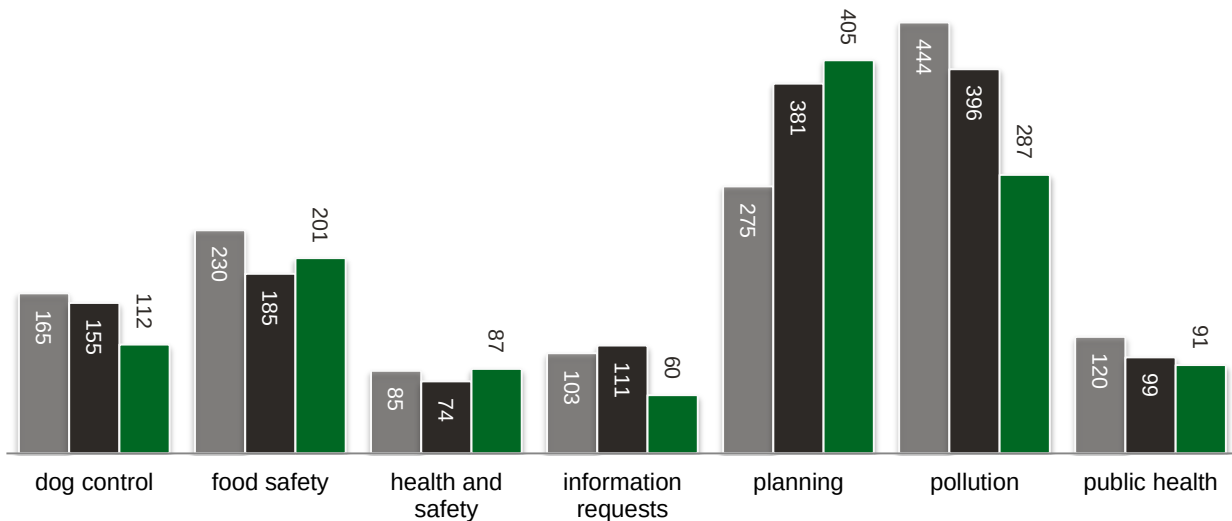


The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Bromsgrove.

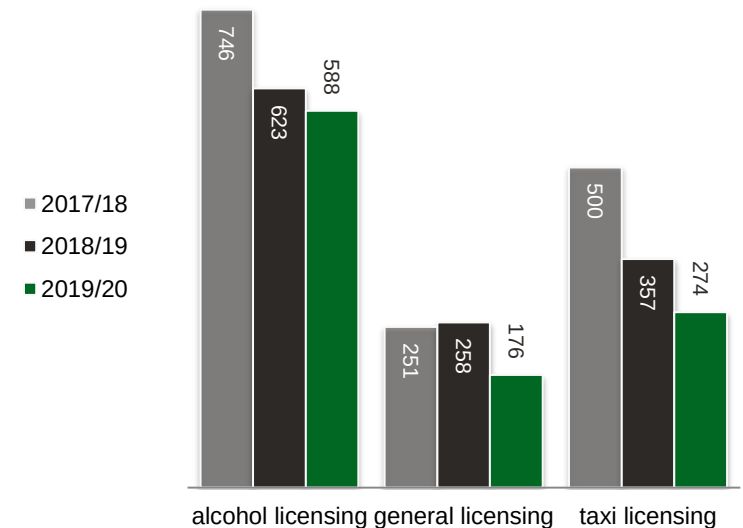
Note: The charts (below) show the number of cases recorded against each of the main functions undertaken by WRS. The total for 2019/20 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



environmental health

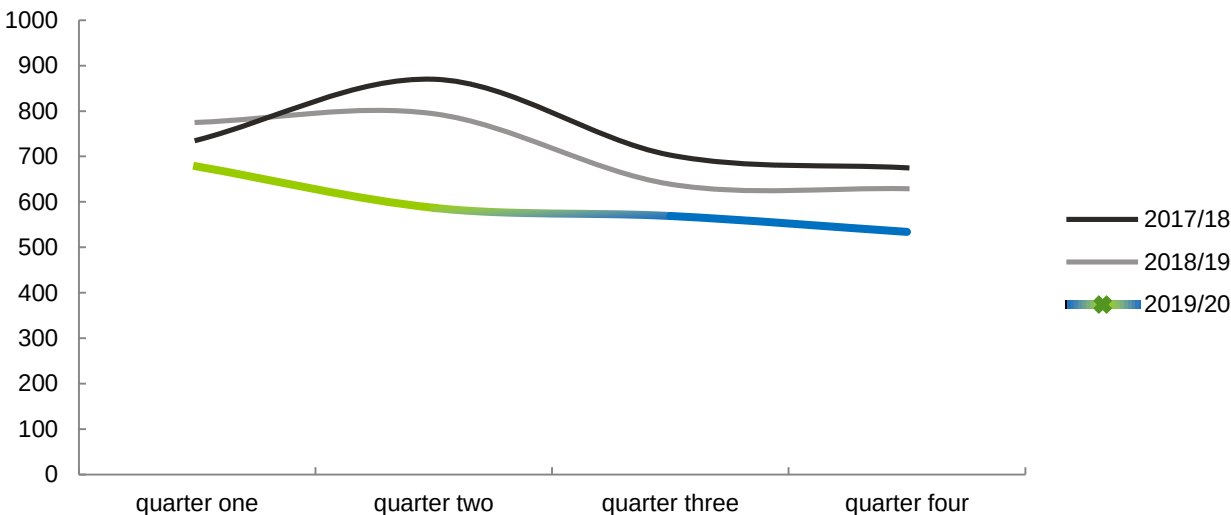


licensing

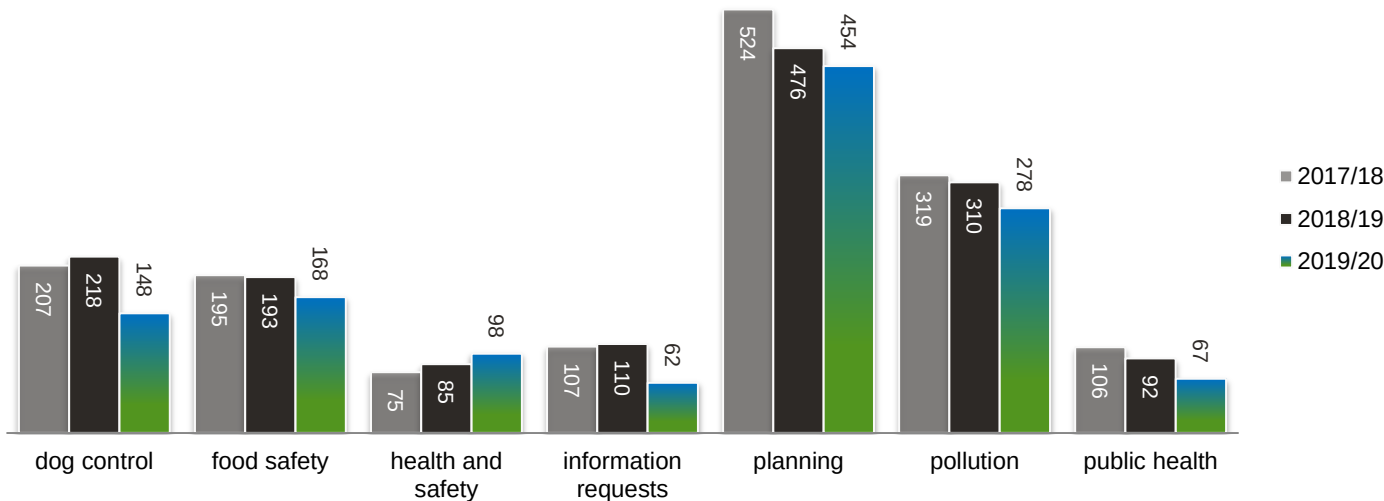


The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Malvern Hills.

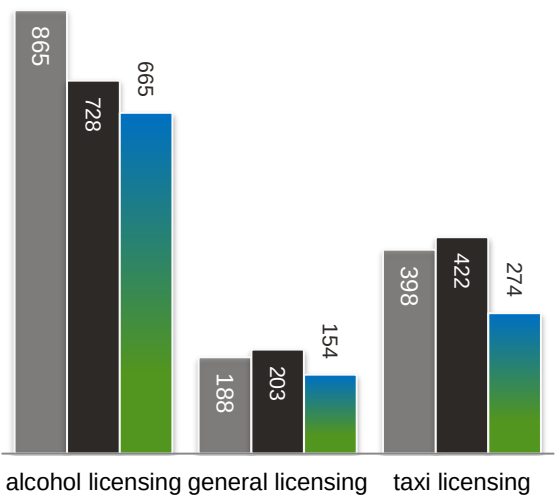
Note: The charts (below) show the number of cases recorded against each of the main functions undertaken by WRS. The total for 2019/20 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



environmental health

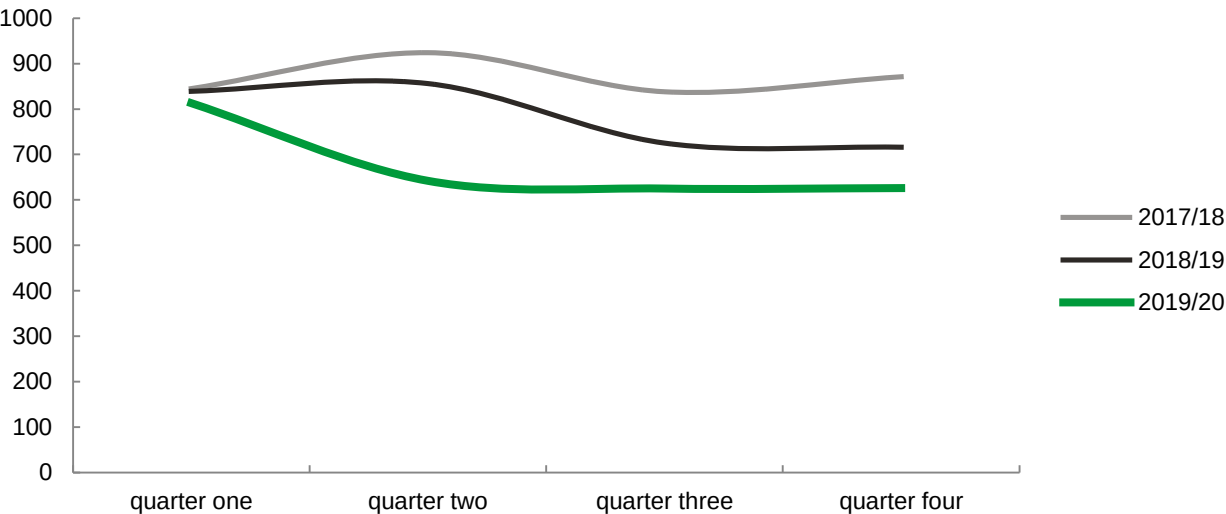


licensing

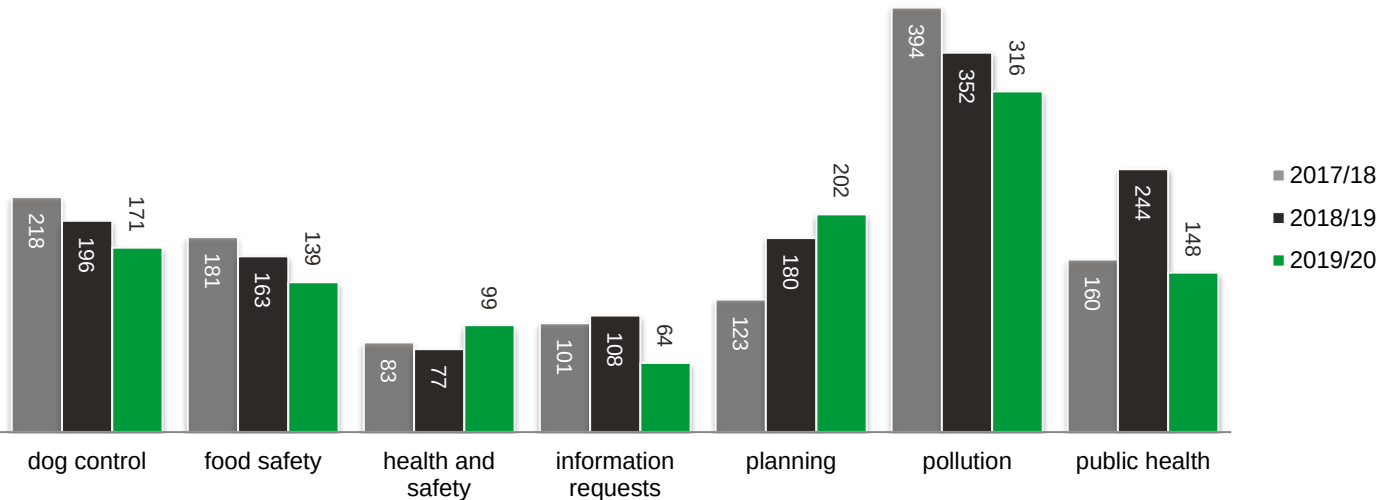


The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Redditch.

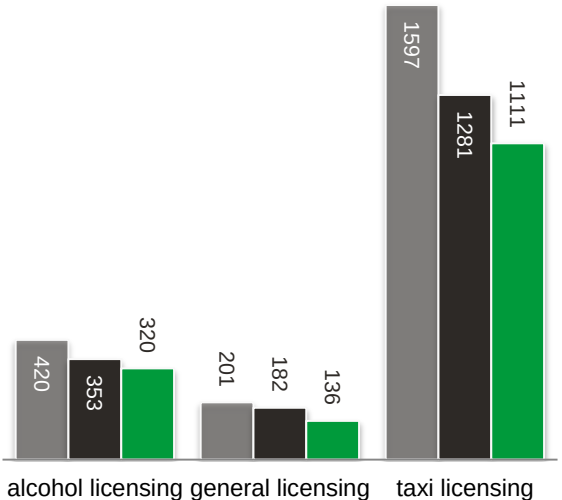
Note: The charts (below) show the number of cases recorded against each of the main functions undertaken by WRS. The total for 2019/20 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



environmental health

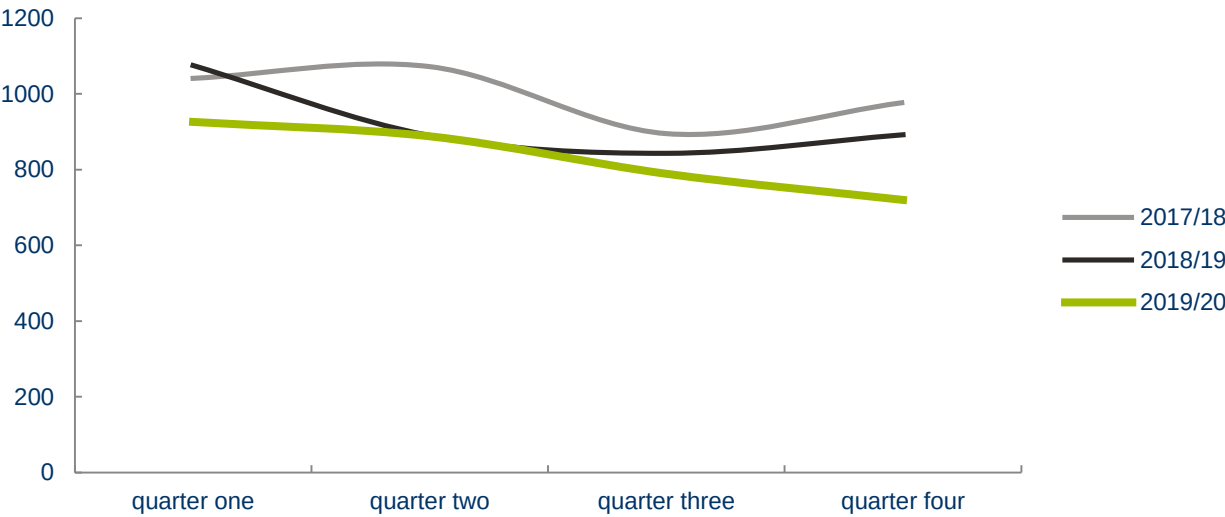


licensing

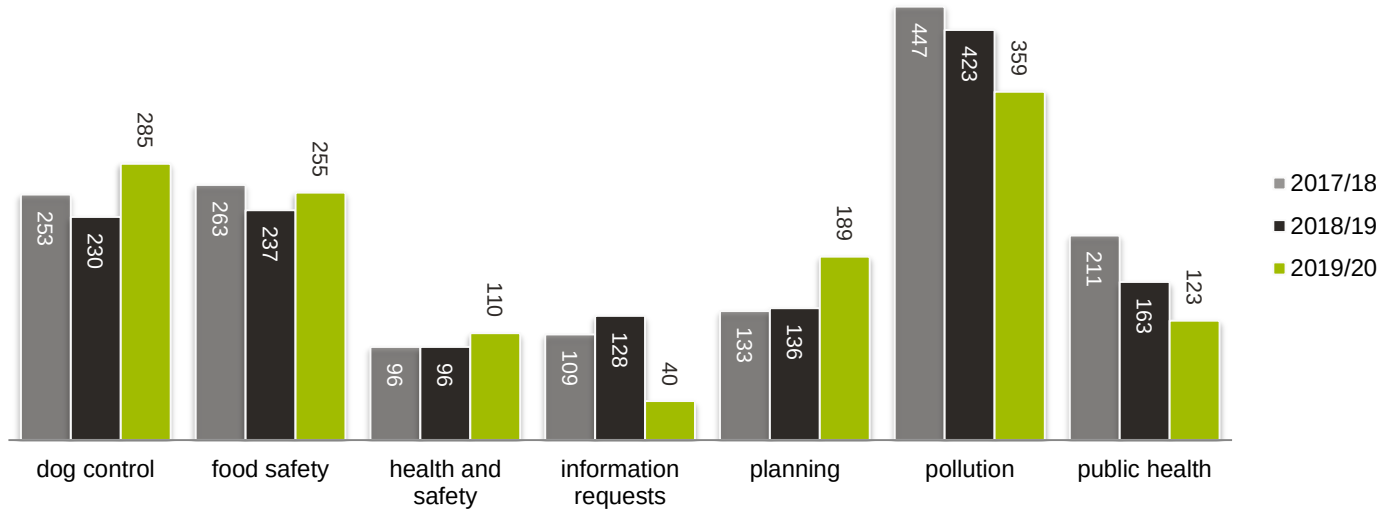


The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Worcester City.

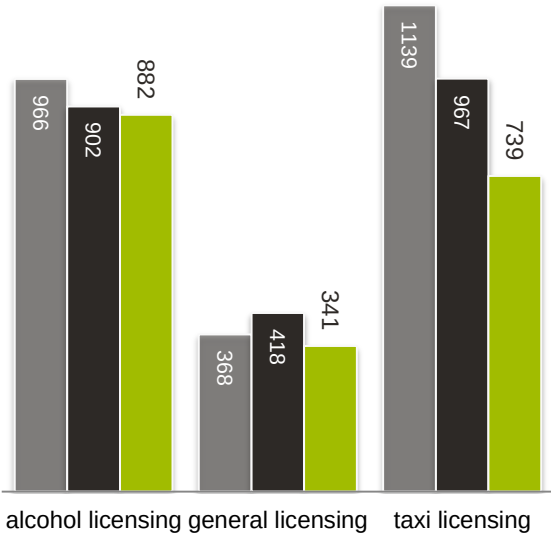
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environmental Health

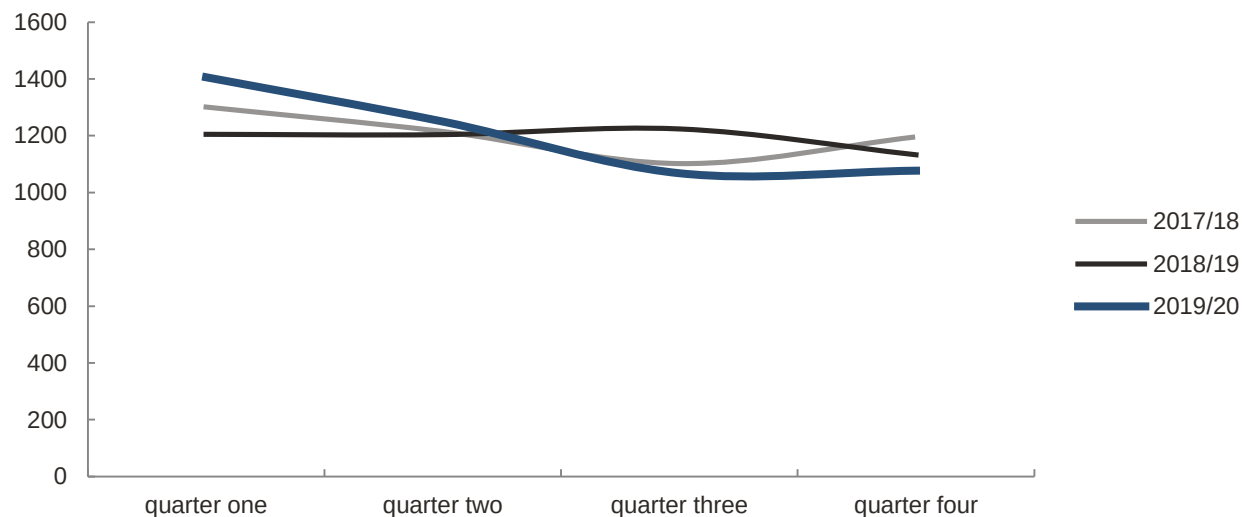


licensing

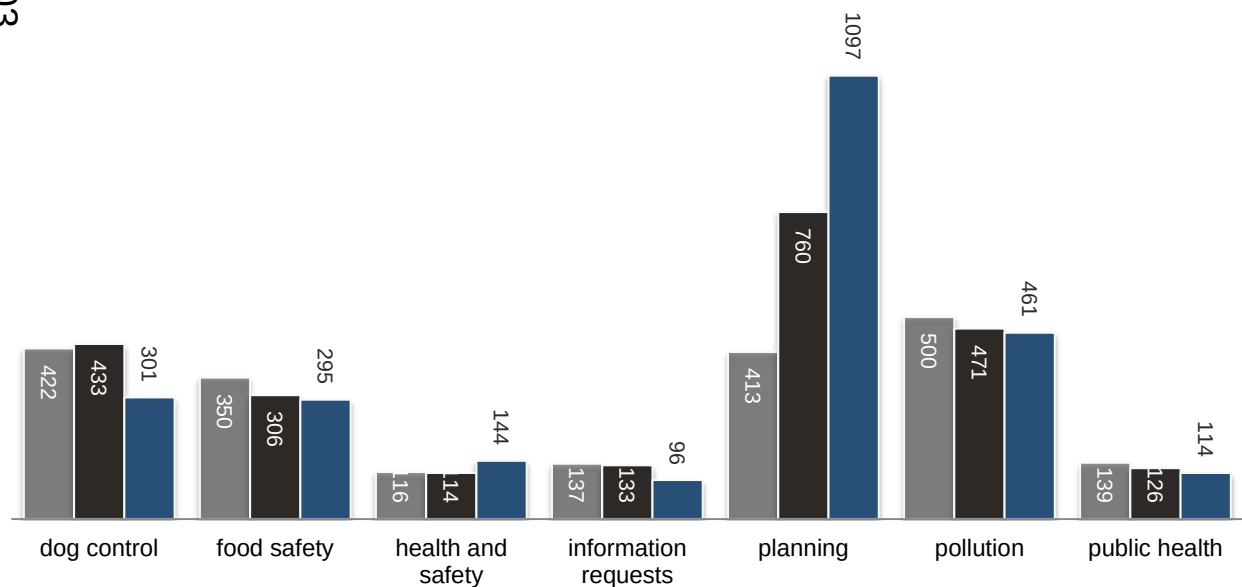


The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Wychavon.

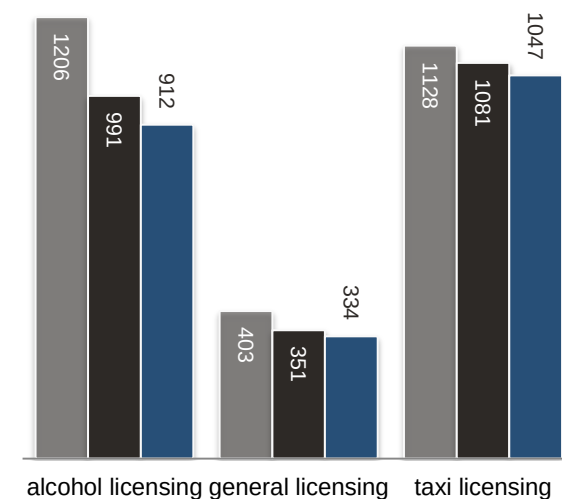
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environmental Health

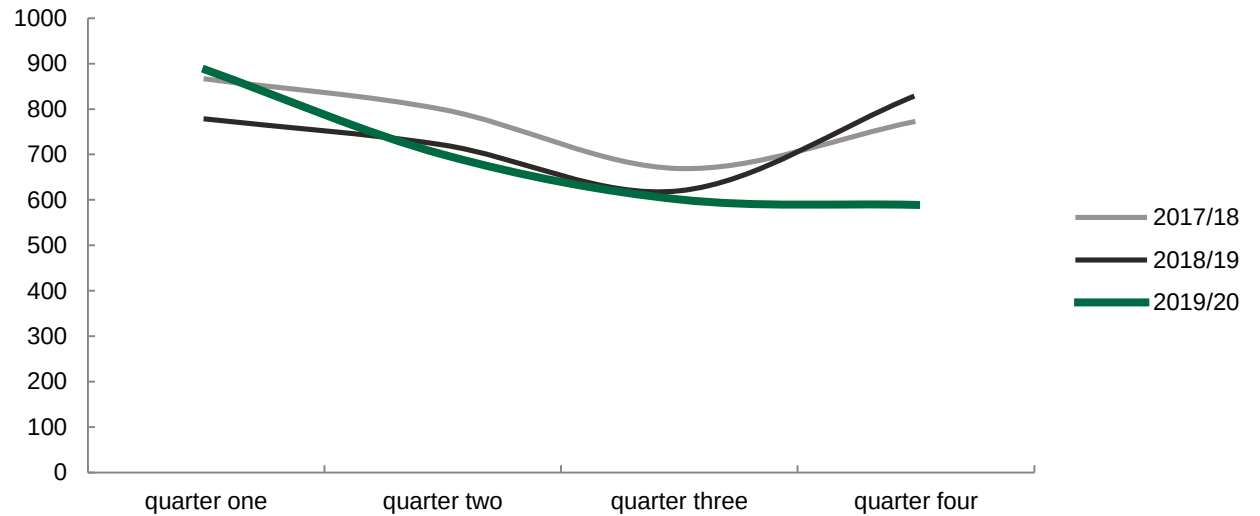


licensing

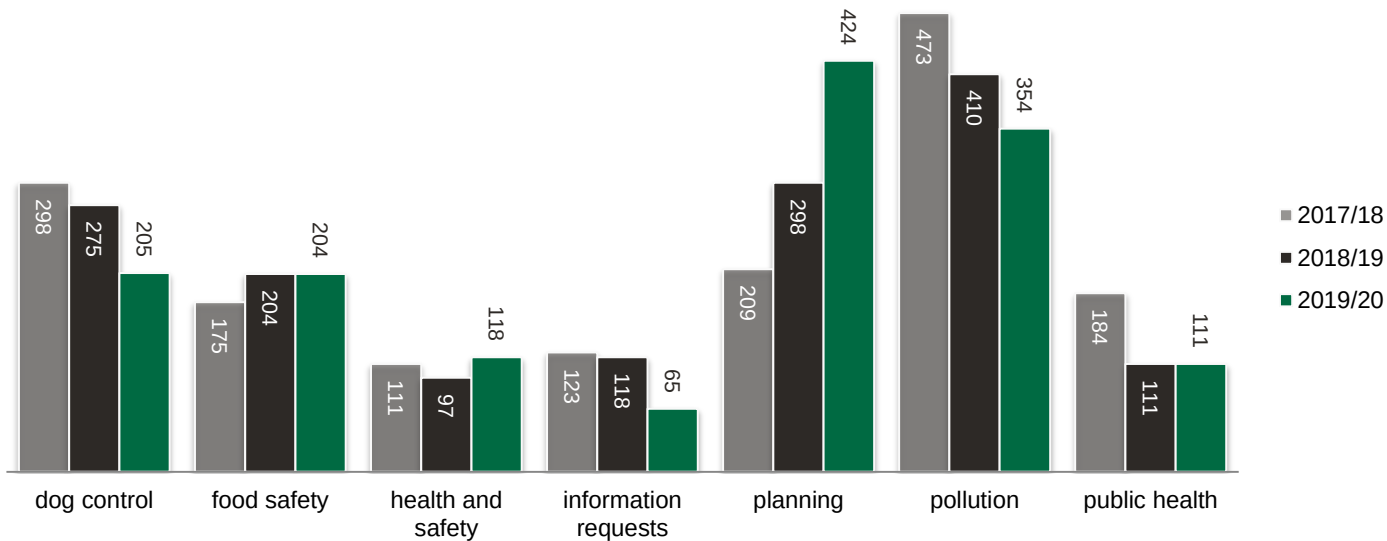


The data on this page relates to Environmental Health and Licensing complaints, enquiries, applications or notifications where the subject or enquirer was located within the district of Wyre Forest.

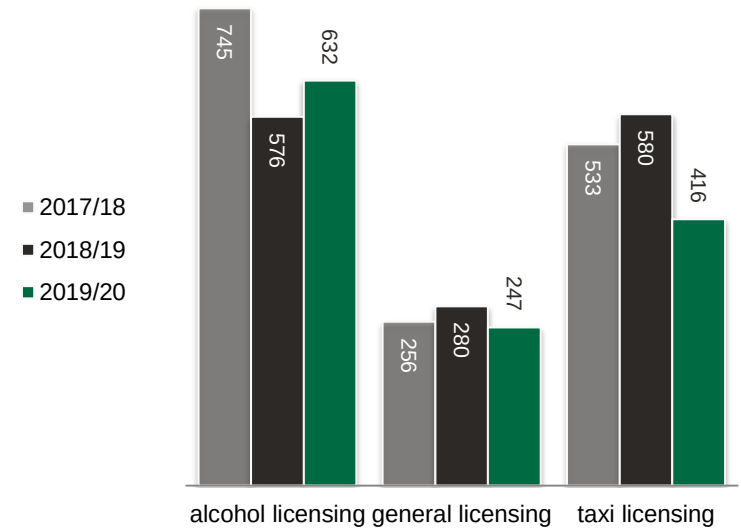
Note: The charts (below) show the number of cases recorded against each of the main functions undertaken by WRS. The total for 2019/20 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



environmental health



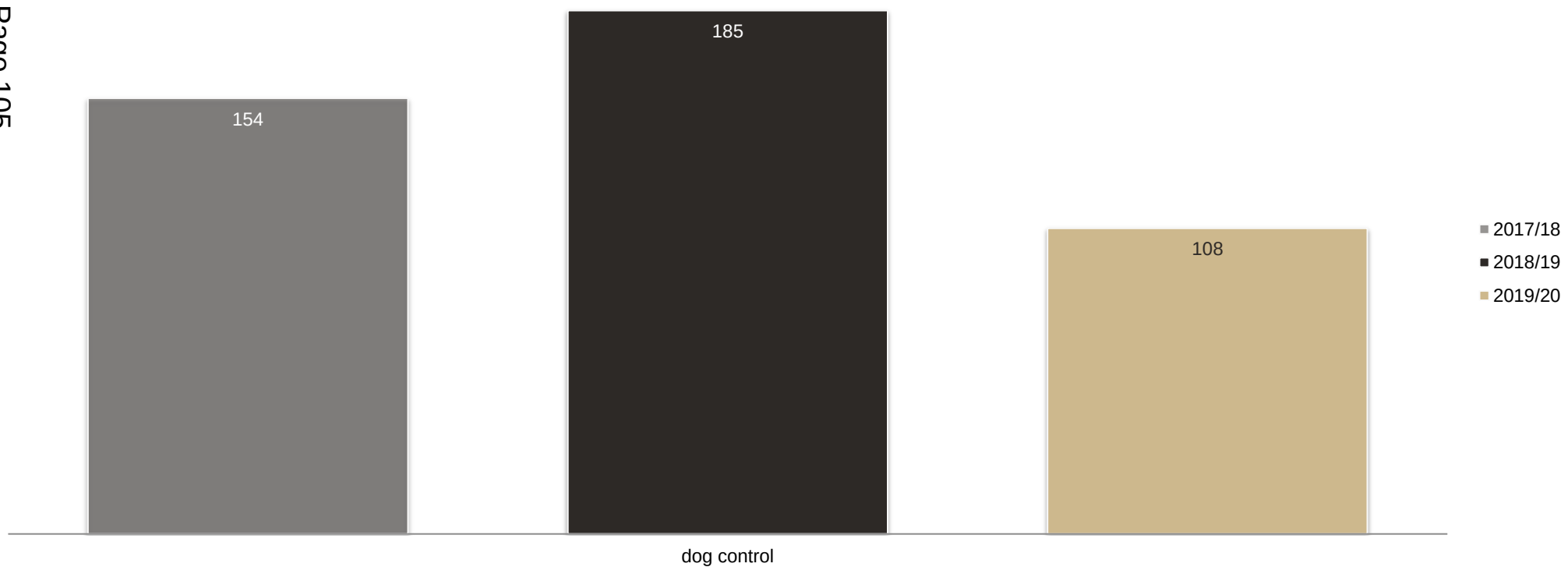
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Cheltenham Borough Council

The dog control work WRS undertake for Cheltenham Borough Council is part of a three year contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities (from 2017) to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was renewed following delivery by WRS for the previous 3 years and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Cheltenham Borough Council, utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. The number of stray dogs reported this is year is lower than previous years.

The chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against the function undertaken by WRS. The total for 2018/19 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.

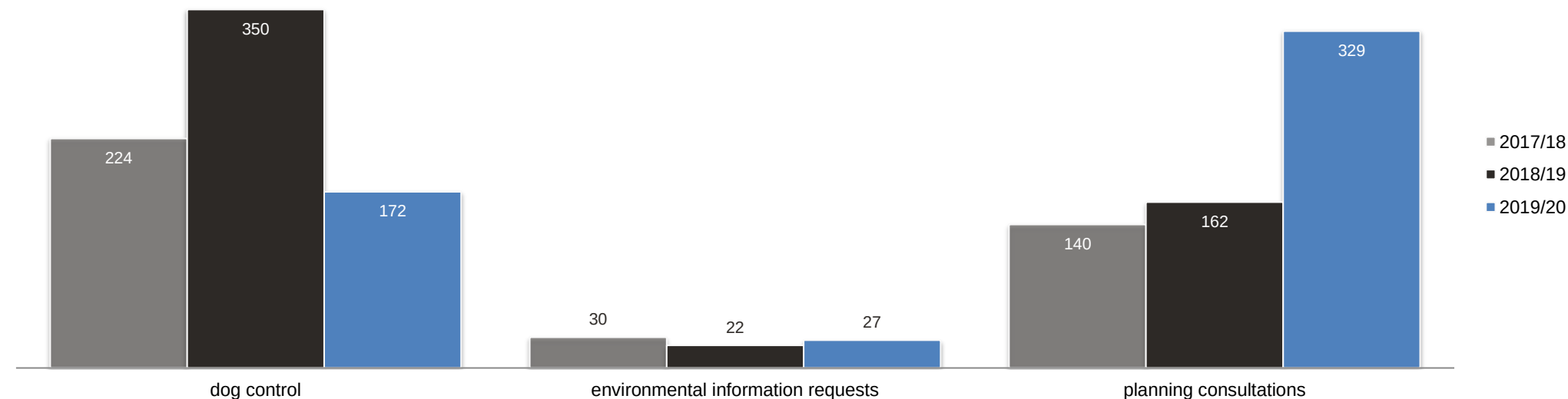


Gloucester City Council

The dog control work WRS undertake for Gloucester City Council is part of a three year contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities (from 2017) to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was renewed following delivery by WRS for the previous 3 years and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Gloucester City Council, utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. As with other Gloucestershire and Worcestershire authorities, the numbers of stray dogs are reducing annually. There has been a marked reduction in the number of dogs collected in quarter three and this would indicate a continued annual reduction is likely.

Planning work continues to grow for Gloucester City with the addition of noise and nuisances categories of planning consultations being undertaken this year. Inspections for Gloucester City Permitted sites were fully completed last year. WRS officers sitting on the DEFRA foundries technical group are currently assisting Avon Metals (A2 Process) with the process of delivering compliance with new emissions standards which will be introduced by the 2020 Sectoral Guidance note.

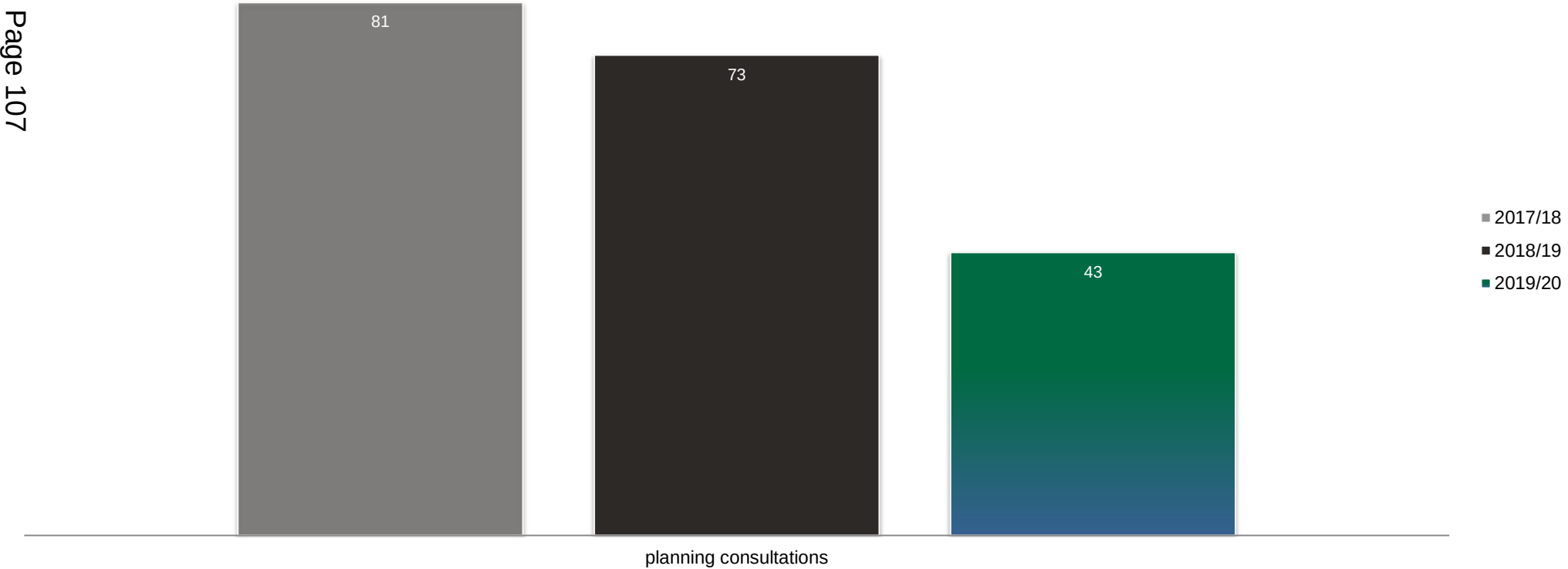
The chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the functions undertaken by WRS. The total for 2018/19 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



South Gloucestershire Council

South Gloucestershire being located on the outskirts of Bristol was subject to significant contaminative industries and activities historically. Pressures on brownfield development recently have presented the authority with a large volume of planning applications on significantly contaminated and complex sites. For a number of years now WRS has been asked to assist with this work focusing on the complex sites, so whilst numbers of referrals remain low (and lower than last year) they continue to be time consuming and complex. The expertise the Partner Authorities pooled with the formation of WRS has enabled us to provide a high standard of service during this period. Planning work has dropped considerably in comparison with previous years.

The chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against the function undertaken by WRS. The total for 2018/19 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.



Tewkesbury Borough Council

The dog control work WRS undertake for Tewkesbury Borough Council is part of a three year contract with two other Gloucestershire authorities (from 2017) to deliver the collection, kennelling, returning of dogs to owners and rehoming of stray dog functions. The contract was renewed following delivery by WRS for the previous 3 years and has been highly successful in reducing stray dog numbers for Tewkesbury Borough Council, utilising existing WRS resource and expertise. Such arrangements enable economies of scale to be realised and the continued retention of valuable assets to the benefit of Partner Authorities. Planning work remains steady, with consultations for the last quarter being comparative to previous years work.

The chart (below) shows the number of cases recorded against each of the functions undertaken by WRS. The total for 2018/19 represents the 'year to date' and will continue to increase each quarter until the end of year report is published.

